

Issues and Challenges of Democracy, Development and Security in Nigeria's Context

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Abstract

The notions of Free Market economy, Democracy and Security are the key ideal for Neo-liberalism, engendered development and free humanity from the shackles of authoritarianism. With the advent of democracy and the collapse of Socialist ideology, the score card of the core tenets of Free Market and democracy reveals disappointment, despair and desperation. Indeed, the material condition of people in most parts of Africa raises more questions with regard to the promised developmental efficacy of democracy. Nigeria, (whose population the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division put at 196 million people in May 2018), has a feeling of national insecurity. Specifically, ethno-religious conflicts, abuse of political power and authority, armed banditry, corruption, poverty, the problem of debt burden, inflation, infrastructural decay, lack of basic needs such as health, food, water, education, housing etc., unemployment, Boko Haram insurgency in the North-East, the phenomenon of herdsmen, restiveness of youths in the Niger-Delta and Kidnapping are among the many factors contributing to this feeling. Using secondary sources of data, this paper addresses the relationship between democracy, development and security. It questions whether democracy is entrenched into factors that impede development and pose credible threats to security notwithstanding what connects democratization, violent conflicts and lack of development in most third wave democratic societies in Africa. The implication is that national insecurity can pose serious challenges to democratic consolidation and development which tends to undermine a country's democracy, development and security. It is recommended that, unless democracy is permeated into the mechanism for effective management and resolution of conflict and strict compliance adhered to, democratic consolidation and development in Nigeria or anywhere else cannot be achieved.

Keywords: *Democracy and security, development and security, democracy and security, Boko Haram, Nigeria security context, third wave democracies*

Introduction

Democracy like most concepts in the social sciences has no universally accepted definition. This is so because scholars have conceptualized it from different perspectives. The development of democracy and the dynamism that characterized its development have led to varying democratic theories, each explaining different type(s) of democratic systems. These differences have compounded our understanding of democracy as a concept and as a system of government. For instance, there is a serious theoretical tension between democracy defined as a form of rule characterized by universal suffrage, regular elections and basic civil rights and democracy conceptualized as Political equality in actual practice (Tar & Mustapha, 2016). This tension according to Kura (2009) stems from procedural and substantive democracy. *Proceduralists* emphasize on meeting the basic criteria of democracy; of establishing all necessary institutions of democracy, irrespective of whether they function according to the basic tenets of democratic values (Kura, 2009). Furthermore, Kura (2009) attests that *Substantivists* on the other hand, go beyond the basic procedures to define a democratic system as one whose institutions are indefatigably functional. It is vital, however to emphasize that using empirical illustrations from Nigeria, it can be argued that establishing mere elements of democracy does not make a country democratic.

Be that as it may, it is vital to look at a few definitions of democracy as advanced by scholars. Lord-Mallam (2016) sees democracy as a form of government in which the sovereign power resides in and is exercised by the whole body of free citizens directly or indirectly through a system of representation as distinguished from a monarchy, aristocracy or oligarchy. Democracy is a moral imperative, as it entails a permanent aspiration of human beings for freedom, for a better social and political order, one that is more human and more or less egalitarian. It is a form of rule based on the respect for the rule of law and political civil rights of individual citizens. For Bawa (2012), democratization is a process of change towards more democratic forms of rule-that is, a process in which a political regime opens up and extends more civil and political liberties to individual citizens in an attempt to achieve basic goals of good governance, transparency, and equality among citizens. A country is democratic depending on the extent to which institutionalized mechanisms exist. Democracy is supposed to provide a functional government and a responsible citizenry.

The rise of globalization has brought to the fore the issue of democracy and democratization in Africa and other parts of the world. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have been used as tools by the Western World to propagate the gospel of Western type democratization which tends to disempower third world states in their quest for economic growth and development. Tedheke (2016) argues that democracy requires equal development, otherwise it cannot give equal opportunities to all, and it cannot incorporate all to articulate their interests and to negotiate them. It cannot also produce a political community in which all are able to enjoy rights and avoid compromising justice. This is because it takes the development of consciousness

and capabilities to seek and enjoy justice. That is why development especially equal development in this broad sense, is an integral part of the process of democratization.

The concept of security like the concepts of democracy and development respectively is prone to multiple interpretations. This is so because security is a multi-dimensional phenomenon. There are two basic trends concerning security: One is the strategic or conventional perspective which is predicated on the primacy and centrality of the state to preserve its independence and sovereignty (Bawa, 2012). Here, the military aspect of state power is highly emphasized. This then means that security must be the protection of all values previously acquired otherwise; it becomes irrelevant. If this is the objective view of security, then the subjective view is the absence of fear that such values will be attacked. The second is the economic non-strategic or non-conventional (Bawa, 2012). The point of emphasis here is on economic development as the essence of security. This perspective on security sees the creation and sustenance of conditions that allow people to meet their basic necessities of life e.g. food, shelter, clothing and other psychological needs as the essence of security. Thus, the security of any nation lies not solely or primarily on its military capability, but equally in developing relatively stable patterns of economic and political growth. Alkali (2018) suggests that the root of man's security does not lie in his weaponry but lies in his mind.

Be that as it may, contemporary opinions in development studies establish a close relationship between security and development. It is now widely accepted that security is closely interlinked with development in a mutually reinforcing manner. In other words, there can be no development without security just as there can be no security without development. Security is part of the essential ingredients for nation-building and development. Therefore, the importance of security as the driving engine for socio-economic and political development cannot be over-emphasized (Jae, 2018).

The emergence of this school of thought creates a new era for substantial understanding of real needs for security through development. Conceiving security along this line, Muhammad (2018), posit thus, security must start from the level of meeting what is basic to human life before moving to the provision of protection against physical violation. Similarly, Bawa (2012) sees security as the ability of a country to maintain its sovereignty, deal with its political, economic, social and other interests. Dunmoye (2012), in his analysis of security identifies three important aspects that link security with development. These are raising people's living standards which is their incomes and consumption of food, medical services, education, shelter, etc. through relevant economic process; creating conditions that are conducive to the growth of people's self-esteem through the establishment of social, political and economic systems and institutions which promote human dignity and respect and increasing people's freedom to choose by enlarging the range of their choices-social, economic and political.

Development presupposes the provision of basic needs which individuals require to survive and live a meaningful life: housing, clothing, food and minimal education. Development must seek to bail people out of primary poverty. Development implies freedom from want and ignorance and squalor which prevent people from determining their destinies (Tedheke, 2016). Improvement of global quality of life means the implementation of change that ensures every person a life of

dignity; or life in a society that respects and helps realize all human rights. These changes must include the eradication and alleviation of widespread conditions of poverty, unemployment, and equitable social conditions (Alkali, 2018). It should however be noted that development should be sustainable. Hence, sustainable development ensures the well-being of the human person by integrating social development, economic development, and environmental conservation and protection. Thus, sustainable development highlights the nexus between stable economic and social development and national security. It is true that national security requires stable socio-economic development. However, for socio-economic development to be stable, it has to be pursued on the basis of sustainable development (Omah, 2013). Development is basically about transforming the society, empowering the people to maximize their potentials and meet their daily human needs.

The capacity to ensure survival remains the most important pre-occupation of human beings, because nobody can engage in any productive or leisure activity unless the safety of life is assured. In other words, the meaning of security should go beyond the conventional perspective which sees security essentially as safeguarding a state from external attack but also meeting basic human needs (Bawa, 2012). What cannot be ignored however is the fact that to any nation-state, security is essential to human existence. (Salawu, 2010) contended that national security is multi-faceted, going beyond physical protection to encompass political, economic, environmental, cultural and social security. Moreover, Salawu (2010) concurs that national security means survival and pursuit of freedom from threat and ability of a state to maintain its independent identity and functional integrity against the forces of change, which are considered inimical to development. Therefore, security and development are intertwined and mutually reinforcing. Security promotes development of any nation and development on the other hand enhances the nation's security.

Since the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s, one of the dominant themes in academic and policy discourses the world over has been the dizzying pace of the globalization of the core tenets of Neo-liberalism. At the heart of globalization as a social phenomenon is the quest for the spread around the globe, of the notions of Free Market economy on one hand and Democracy and Democratization on the other hand (Lord-Mallam, 2016). Advocates of the ideals of Neo-liberalism, notably the United States, Britain, the Bretton Woods' institutions, etc., argue that the institutionalization of these mutually interacting and re-enforcing ideals will engender development and free humanity from the shackles of debilitating authoritarian forms of ordering society (Nwagboso, 2012). This line of thinking enjoyed near unrestrained spread due to the decline of Socialist ideology as a major contending ideology, and the disintegration of the defunct Soviet Union. However, following the end of the Cold War and the onset of the globalization process, almost half the countries of the World were democratic. According to recent data, more than 87% of the states of the world had turned the democracy corner by the end of the first decade of the 21st century (Lord-Mallam, 2016).

Asian and African states (also known as Third Wave Democracies) were not left out of this trend. In almost all of so-called Third Wave democracies, the processes of democratization and market reforms were characterized by wide spread euphoria, high expectations of better health services, education, physical infrastructure, improved living conditions, greater freedom, liberty,

etc. However, almost two and a half decades after, the score card of the trend in the institutionalization of the core tenets of Free Market and Democracy reveals disappointments, frustration, despair and desperation. In Nigeria, the current population as estimated by Human Development report for instance has over 196 million people. Other variables indicate that adult Literacy is 44% and the percentage of people living in poverty is 49% as against 43% in 1985. The percentage of population without access to safe portable water is 60%; and the percentage of population without access to basic health facilities 49% while unemployment is pecked at 43.3% (UNDP, 2015). In 2015, the percentage of Adult Literacy was 59.6% against 51.1% in 2008 ([World Health Statistics, 2011](#)).

Despite the launch in 2005 of the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS), 14 years on in 2019, less than 10% of Nigerians have health insurance schemes (Hafez, 2018). In the same period, the frequency, intensity and sophistication of violent conflicts have increased almost dramatically. According to Bawa (2012), there have been more violent conflicts in Nigeria in the first five years since the return to democracy than there were in the corresponding period under military authoritarian rule. Indeed, since 1999, the militancy in Nigeria's Niger Delta, North East, Middle Belt, South East, South West, etc. assumed a more violent and destabilizing dimension as a result of which the peace, development and security of the nation were significantly adversely affected.

In light of the foregoing, one of the major questions that dominate discussions in academic and policy circles is; what is the co-relation between democracy, development and security? In other words, is democracy engrained into the factors that retard development and pose credible threats to security? If not, how do we explain the link between democratization, violent conflicts and stunted development in most third wave societies in Africa? These questions become particularly germane in view of the democratic reversals in Mali and Guinea Bissau on one hand and the reversal in the electoral fortunes of political parties in France and Greece owing to economic and financial crises on the other hand for instance. Answering these and other related questions has evolved two major categories of argument. First is the category that argued that on the contrary, authoritarian regime types are much more positively co-related to development a prevalence of secured society because they possess the required discipline with which to instill the change required for growth and development (Gaji, 2016). Often, such points of view readily point to Taiwan, Indonesia, Korea, China, etc. as examples of the capacity of authoritarian regimes to effectively organize the process of development.

On the counter side of this argument is the submission that, instrumentally, democracy has proved to be an institutional guarantee that the policies and laws created by a government will reasonably reflect or fit with, the fundamental interests of the people (Ingelhart and Welzel, 2009). Thus, if the rich and age-long engagements with this simple but fundamental question on the relationship between democracy, development and security has not yielded any conclusive answers, where then should we seek answers to the question? What is responsible for the seeming inability to explain how and why authoritarian states engender development in their society (China, Korea, Indonesia, and Taiwan), while democracies (Greece, Spain, Italy, France) face economic and financial crises typical of non-developed societies? The seeming inability to empirically establish a link between democracy and development could be due to *methodological*

flaws adopted by various studies on the subject matter. Mutua (2009) argued convincingly, that reasons behind the optimism that greeted the Third Wave of democratization, especially in Africa, are to be located in the attenuated capacity of Civil Society, the Character of the Post-Colonial African State and the role of the ruling elites. Simply put, we could ask; how democratic is our developmental process and conversely, how developmental is our practice of democracy? It is in view of the issues raised above that this paper is structured to re-examine the issues and challenges of democracy, development and security in Nigeria and threats to Nigeria's security and development.

Issues and Challenges of Democracy, Development and Security in Nigeria

The academic and policy debates posed by this discourse have raised the contentious issues of Africa's weak and fragile democracy. The inability of most states in Africa to have sustainable development in spite of being democratic as well as the security implications on the overall socio-economic and political development of the continent and Nigeria in particular leaves more to be desired. More than anything else, the greatest obstacle to the country's democracy is the pervasive insecurity of lives and property, as evidenced by the spate of armed robbery attacks, assassinations, kidnappings, armed banditry, ethnic and religious conflicts, coupled with the seeming helplessness of security agencies to handle criminal acts. The increasing number of unemployed Nigerian youths, some of whom are already recruits for criminal activities continue to plague Nigeria (Okechukwu, 2012). The above assertion from an editorial comment by the National daily epitomizes the central argument of this section. As rightly observed by Oshio (2009), for Nigeria and most African countries, the economies are in an abysmal state. The worsening economic conditions have been generating a mix of domestic, social and political tension. Nigeria is today plagued with social disorder, insecurity, poverty, illiteracy, balance of payment deficit, poor health statistics, ethnic and religious conflicts, corruption, crime and criminality among others which makes development elusive. The imperativeness of sustainable development in Africa is that the right to development implies the right to improvement and advancement of economic, social, cultural and political conditions. Improvement of global quality of life means the implementation of change that ensures every person a life of dignity; or life in a society that respects and helps realize all human rights (Lord-Mallam & Mijah, 2018). These changes must include the eradication and alleviation of widespread conditions of poverty, unemployment, and inequitable social conditions. Sustainable development ensures the well-being of people by integrating social development, economic development, and environmental conservation and protection. The goal of sustainable development is to permanently improve the living conditions of human beings. For this purpose, social and economic developments must be carried out in a way that is environmentally and ecologically sound; ensuring the continual rejuvenation and availability of natural resources for future generations.

In analyzing the historical perspective of the country's democratic and developmental challenges the crises of governance in particular, mounting foreign debt and balance of payments deficits, rapid socio-economic decline, the failure of military regimes to maintain legitimacy in the face of constant mass protests and civil society struggle etc. are pivotal factors in Nigeria's political history (Alabi & Aruna, 2016). This desperate situation influenced interventions from Western countries and donors by way of imposed regimes of structural adjustment and political

conditionality as terms for debt relief. However, rather than delivering democracy, good governance and empowering civil society, donor interventions reproduced socio-economic disparities and repressive state actions which were negating to the achievement or survival of democracy. As a matter of fact, Tedheke (2016) argued that liberal democracy, even at its best, is hostile to the idea of people having effective decision making power. The essence of liberal democracy is precisely the abolition of popular power and the replacement of popular sovereignty with the rule of law. As it evolved, liberal democracy got less democratic as its democratic elements, such as the consent of the governed; the accountability of power to the governed and popular participation became weaker. Tedheke (2016) contends that the problem is not that development has failed, but that it was never really on the agenda. He further maintains that political conditions in Africa are the greatest impediment to development.

The Nigerian state, like most other African states, has become corrupt and elitist while its economy has continued to be extroverted, exclusionary and inequitable. These attributes of the state were manifested in the apparent incapacitation of state's institutions and agencies to fight unbridled corruption, inefficiency and similar ills in society. Indeed, almost all sphere of public life, including the judiciary have been fingered severally for miscarriage of justice, its recent credentials in support of democracy notwithstanding. This nature of the state allowed for the appropriation of state resources for personal benefits, thereby denying the general public the much desired development infrastructures. As a result, despite the huge budgetary allocations road networks are bad as vital as they are to national economic development. Similarly, the energy crisis in Nigeria and its effects on development are testimony of the corrupt and insensitive nature of the Nigerian state. A major factor responsible for the collapse of industries and other economic engagements in the medium industries sector has been the unreliable power supply and the cost of maintaining private sources of electricity (Tedheke, 2016). This too, contributes to the problem of youth unemployment in the country. Indeed, in the context of the renewed vigor by the Nigerian state for the implementation of reforms in the country, the new found market economic policies have continued the polarization of the society along the inequitable patterns engendered by colonial interests, much of which remains in place. Thus, in Nigeria, economic management by the state (characterized by widespread and unrestrained privatization of the national economy, trade liberalization and the deregulation of critical sectors of the national economy such as the petroleum industry) have combined to sap the economic reform process of the vital ingredients for development and security (Tedheke, 2016).

The Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) was introduced in Nigeria in 1986 as a macro-economic policy aimed at halting the worsening economic fortune of the state. Following the global recession of the 1980s, the SAP was recommended by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as the appropriate cure for the economic situation in many African states. However, the premises and logic underlying the IMF therapy of structural adjustment have been found wanting (Alkali, 2018). This Western-inspired solution to the sea of economic crisis that bedeviled Nigeria in the early eighties yielded no positive but negative results. It merely reinforced the country's structural dependence on the West (Tedheke, 2016). This accounts significantly to the economic challenges i.e. balance of payment deficits, high inflation rate, high rates of unemployment, poverty and serious food shortages among others.

Politically, although there has been a flourishing and robust Civil society in Nigeria, especially since the return to civil governance in 1999, and significantly aided by the availability of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), its impacts as the counter force between state and society in Nigeria leaves much to imagination. Thus, despite the flourishing mass media (print, electronic and social), very little evidence of citizen journalism (or investigative journalism) that could check the state effectively exists. Issues get drawn to the domain of public discourse only to ebb out without the public knowing their resolutions. In other words, the conduct of the media as a vital component of civil society adds to the opaque nature of the official zone of public service. Similarly, the increasing privatization of labour laws and employment relations in the country attenuates the capacity of labour to effectively organize for the purpose of moderating the excesses of the state against society (Alkali, 2018).

Threats to Nigeria's Security and Development

In the discourse of security in Nigeria, several causes of security crisis in the country that pose grave consequences to national development have been identified. One of the major threats to internal security in Nigeria is the asymmetric war by Boko Haram religious extremists against the state (Osuji, 2013). Other threats include the militancy in the Niger Delta, Kidnappings, ethno-religious/sectarian conflicts, herdsmen crisis as witnessed in some parts of the country as well as armed banditry among other violent crimes. According to Osuji (2013), the activities of Boko Haram sect represent the greatest threat to Nigeria's internal security. The sect's objective is to destroy the present democratic institutions and for this reason, embarked on a series of bombing of public facilities and killings of innocent lives in a spate of terrorist attacks unprecedented in the history of the nation.

Nigeria is a multi-cultural and multi-religious society comprising of nationalities, sub-nationalities and various conglomerations of people with peculiar cultural identities, social structures and traditions. Hence, ethno-religious conflicts have greatly hindered development in the country. Salawu (2010) noted that ethno-religious conflicts is a situation in which the relationship between members of one ethnic or religious and another of such group in a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society is characterized by lack of cordiality, mutual suspicion and fear, and a tendency towards violent confrontation. In Nigeria, ethno-religious conflicts tend to have claimed many lives and this is unfavorable to development and security of the nation. In fact, ethno-religious conflicts appear to have bedeviled Nigeria (Jae, 2018). Over the past decades of her nationhood, Nigeria has experienced a palpable intensification of religious polarization, manifest in political mobilization, sectarian social movements and increasing violence. To a large extent Lord-Mallam & Mijah (2018) observed that, the structural imbalance in the ethnic, religious and regional composition of Nigeria and the manipulation of such identities can be said to be responsible for the various ethno-religious and even communal conflicts in Nigeria, especially in the more heterogeneous Northern part of the country. It also explains the attacks, in the past decade, on the Igbos in Kano on one hand, and the reprisal attacks on Northerners (Hausas) in Enugu and other parts of the Igbo dominated Eastern Nigeria, on the other hand; not to mention the various ethno-religious conflicts in Kaduna State and also the 2018 and 2019 Kajuru communal conflicts; Jos in 2002/2018 and Numan in 2003/2004/2019, etc. (Jae, 2018).

Another challenge facing development in Nigeria is the issue of unemployment. The rising spate of unemployment especially youth unemployment has attracted youths to engage in violent conflicts and social crimes in the country. Unemployment has a severe negative implication on national development in Nigeria as most of its productive force is unemployed (Alkali, 2018). As a result of the high level of unemployment and poverty among Nigerians, the youths are adversely attracted to violent crime (Adagba, Ugwu and Eme, 2012). In his own contribution to the debate on national development, Nwagboso (2012) argued that the failure of successive administrations in Nigeria to address challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequitable distribution of wealth among ethnic nationalities is one of the major causes of insecurity in the country. What this implies is that poverty and unemployment increase the number of people who are prepared to kill or be killed for a given course at token benefit. In addition, crime, prostitution, cultism, cultural decay, hunger and robbery among others are intensified as a result of unemployment.

There has been a resurgence of violence in Nigeria's Niger-Delta which had resulted in economic and humanitarian tragedies. Ethnic militias and cult groups have emerged with available use of small arms and light weapons which made the Niger Delta, a devastated area. The phenomenon of ethnic and private militia, the availability and use of sophisticated fire arms enabled militant youths inflict severe damage on oil infrastructure thereby disrupting oil production. The crisis of the Niger-Delta was exacerbated by emergent issues of gross distortion of Nigerian federalism in respect of resource control, citizenship rights and environmental degradation (Ashimolowo and Odiachi, 2012). The activities of Niger-Delta People's Volunteer Force (NDPVF), Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger-Delta (MEND) and Niger-Delta Avengers (NDA) among other Niger-Delta militant groups has led to disturbing national security concerns. Certainly, militancy and youth restiveness in the Niger-Delta manifested by the disruption of activities of Multi-national Corporations (MNCs), illegal bunkering, pipeline vandalism and kidnapping among others, have grossly affected the oil revenue that accrue to the government and subsequently hampered the socio-economic development of the nation (Tedheke, 2016). Despite the Amnesty Programme put in place by the late President Yar'Adua to reduce militancy in the Niger-Delta area and Nigeria's government current initiatives to bring about lasting peace in the area, disruption of oil facilities have continued in the region; and this is unfavorable to the peace, development and security of the region in particular and the country in general. It is this trend in the dynamics of the Nigerian economy that combined with other factors to manifest in the form of the violent activities by militant groups in Nigeria's Niger Delta, the activities of the separatist group MASSOB (Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra) in the South-East of the country, and more significantly, of the insurgent terrorist group *Boko Haram* in the North of the country (Jae, 2018).

Further, the growing interconnectedness between nations and their economies, and the internationalization of the state, to the detriment of the local or national roles of the state for the service of international capital, as well as the rising influence and roles of international actors (state and non-state) in the governance of the public domain in most African countries have combined in several respects to challenge and even incapacitate the state with regards to the performance of its primary responsibilities to its citizens. This trend has had consequential

impacts on state-society relation and by extension on the dynamic interactions between democracy, development and security in most of Africa and Nigeria in particular.

To start with, a significant effect of the roll-back of the Nigerian state, and its subsequent internationalization has been the erosion of its legitimacy and the weakening of its capacity to effectively regulate the conduct of all the categories in its domain. Thus, today, the traditional claim by the state to the exclusive right to legitimate use of violence is openly challenged by violent non-state actors whose activities questions the state's sovereignty. Indeed, in more aspects than this, the low degree of compliance by citizens to state directives, even on matters of critical importance to the citizens, shows loss of legitimacy. This is the result of the violation of the wishes and expectations of the people as often expressed through elections.

Systemic corruption in Nigeria has been institutionalized and become part of the culture of most African countries. In Nigeria for instance, corruption is deeply rooted and widespread in our societies that many tend to accept it as a norm. Corruption has eroded national values in Nigeria. Iduh (2011) asserts that corruption has been described in the academic circles as a cancer militating against Nigeria's development. As rightly observed by Nwolise (2013), insecurity endangers human and national development, enhances poverty, discourages investment, and dampens the zeal for hard work. It manifests in stealing of public as well as private (corporate) funds (much of which have been unpatriotically transferred to Europe), abuse of office and power, and extortion of money from innocent citizens. Irrefutably, security is an essential condition for sustainable development and self-reliance in countries lacking stability and security such as Nigeria. It promotes business, catalyzes development, promotes social values, enhances moral life, attracts divine blessings and favor, and makes citizens stand shoulder high as a proud people anywhere in the world.

Conclusion

In summary, the general sources of national insecurity which pose serious challenges to democratic consolidation and development in Nigeria among others include, the abuse of political power and authority, armed banditry, corruption, poverty, the problem of debt burden, infrastructural decay, lack of basic needs such as health, food, water, education, housing etc., unemployment, Boko Haram insurgency in the North-East, the phenomenon of herdsmen and restlessness of youth in the Niger-Delta. These situations tend to undermine the country's democracy, development and security. In its very essence, democracy is inherently imbued with the mechanism for the effective management and resolution of conflict. Since sustainable development leads to security, this then implies that compliance to democratic tenets must be imbued into Nigerians and the Nigerian system to ensure a secured society. Also, effective mechanisms for the management and resolution of conflict must be put in place and by this; equity in the distribution of resources is first step. This is expected to cater for improvement and advancement in all facets of the society.

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