

PEACE, SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

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ABSTRACT

This paper analyses the various dimensions of the social, political, economic and other conditions in Nigeria that have, over the years, affected the peace, security and sustainable national development of Nigeria. It argued that to properly understand the challenges or otherwise to peace, security and sustainable national developmental issues in Nigeria, several factors or dimensions are involved. No single factor explanation, the paper shows, will be sufficient. This is because socio-political issues of this magnitude never readily yield themselves to single factor explanations. Consequently, we examined the complex issues that have affected negatively or positively the peace, security and sustainable national development of Nigeria. We concluded the discussion of each of the factors with recommendations regarding the way forward on the matters discussed therein. The paper suggested strongly that careful analyses of the issues at stake are required to avoid hasty conclusions, discussions, comments and actions that may not be in the best national interests of Nigeria. It called on the need to draw on and learn from history, as Nigeria attempts to tackle the challenges besetting her at the moment that have to do, especially with the peace, security and sustainable national development in Nigeria.

Key words: *peace, security, sustainable development, Nigeria, and national interests.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Contemporary global events have, no doubt, drawn attention quite clearly, to the fact that peace and security of life and property are essential to sustainable national development. The evidence, including in Africa, has further shown beyond doubt, that these are better accomplished where there is democratic rule and good governance. Democracy and good governance ensure that such peace, security and development become more inclusive and promote the rights, prosperity and welfare of all citizens of those nations. (Ake, 1999; Meredith, 2006; Young, 2012; Mou, 2016, 2017).

The position taken here therefore, is that no peace, security and sustainable national development will ever be possible in Nigeria, without reasonable social, political and economic

justice for all the citizens and social cleavages in the nation. By social cleavages here we mean, following others, those divisions in the Nigerian society that are based on ethnicity, classes, region, gender, language and even caste. (Nnoli, 1978, Parkin, 1971, 1979 and Mou, 2015).

For this to happen in Nigeria, it cannot be left to the Government of Nigeria alone. All stakeholders must be involved in the process of bringing such peace, security and sustainable development about. The Private Sector, the Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Public Policy experts must not just be involved, but should actually be committed also to Nigeria meeting the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, as proclaimed World-Wide by the United Nations.

The paper is concerned mainly with **the Peace, Security and Sustainable National Development in Nigeria under the Contemporary Challenging Economic, Social and Political Conditions**. Whether one is concerned with the “baking” and “sharing” of the proverbial “National Cake”, or the political unity and stability of the Nigerian society, peace, security and sustainable national development must be top on the Agenda. This is because, the peace, security and sustainable national development of Nigeria must not just be done: but it has to be done correctly and properly. By this we identify ourselves completely with those who hold the view, including the United Nations, that it must be equitably done as much as possible, to promote the prosperity and progress of all the social cleavages that make up Nigeria (Ake, 1996; El-Rufai, 2013 and Mou, 2015, 2016). In other words, social, political and economic justice are prerequisites for peace, security and sustainable national development in Nigeria, as elsewhere in the world.

The paper analysis the various dimensions of the social, political, economic and other conditions in Nigeria that have, over the years, affected the peace, security and sustainable development of the country. It investigates the problems and prospects quite carefully and examines the way forward in the light of them. In fact, the current clamour for “restructuring” of the nation, are as a consequence of all these. The paper argues that to properly understand the challenges or otherwise to Nigeria’s peace, security and sustainable development or even to her national unity, religious harmony and socio-political accommodation, several factors are involved. No single explanation will suffice. This is because socio-political, national security and sustainable developmental issues of this magnitude, never readily yield themselves to single factor explanations. There are usually several dimensions to them.

Consequently, we examine these complex issues that have affected negatively or positively the peace, security and sustainable national development in Nigeria from a multi-dimensional perspective. We conclude the analysis and discussion with recommendations regarding the way forward on these matters.

Before then, however, it is necessary to deal with the conceptual and definitional issues involved in this discussion. This is to ensure that we are all on the same page as we read this paper. These are covered in the section that follows, however briefly.

II. CONCEPTUAL ARTICULATIONS

The key terms or concepts that are central to this paper and have appeared throughout this discussion, calling for immediate definition or explanation before we proceed are:-

- (i) Peace;
- (ii) Security; and
- (iii) Sustainable National Development.

(i) PEACE

The concept of peace is defined differently by different scholars and policy makers. There is no universal definition of peace accepted by all. However, peace has been defined by most analysts, as the absence of war, fear, conflict, anxiety, suffering and violence (Francis, 2006; Igbuzor, 2011). But as Igbuzor (2011) notes correctly, this conception of peace has been criticized by many scholars, such as Ibeanu (2006); Reychler (2006); Wiberg (2006) and Bajpay (2003), for being inadequate for understanding the meaning and nature of peace. To overcome these limitations in the prevailing definitions of peace, the Norwegian peace theorist, who is certainly one of the leading experts on the issue of peace, Johan Galtung (2006), has distinguished three types of violence that can help to understand the concept of peace. These are:-

First, he considers the issues of direct violence. Direct violence is manifested by physical, emotional and psychological violence. Second, Galtung talks of structural violence. Structural violence, he says, comes in the form of deliberate policies and structures that cause human suffering, death and harm. Finally and thirdly, he talks of cultural violence. Cultural violence involves cultural norms and practices that create discrimination, injustice and human suffering.

In addition, Galtung outlines two dimensions of peace: The first is what he calls “negative peace”. Negative peace, according to him, is the absence of direct violence, war, fear and conflict at individual, national, regional and international levels. The second he calls “positive peace”. Positive peace depicts the absence of unjust structures, unequal relationships, justice and inner peace at individual levels. The obvious implications of Galtung’s findings and conclusions are that any useful conceptualization of peace must therefore; go beyond the narrow focus on the absence of war, fear, anxiety, suffering and violence.

Okey Ibeanu (2006), has also attempted to offer a comprehensive and holistic conception of peace. He also links it directly to the issue of sustainable development. He defines peace as a process involving activities that are directly or indirectly linked to increasing development and reducing conflict, both within specific societies and the wider international community. Ibeanu (2006) points out that there are philosophical, sociological and political definitions of peace. Many philosophers see peace as a natural, original, God-given state of human existence for men and women. Sociologically, as Chris A. Garuba has pointed out, peace refers to a condition of social harmony in which there are no social antagonisms (Garuba, 1999a, 1999b).

Politically, however, Ibeanu explains that peace entails political order. That is, the institutionalization of political structures in a way that makes justice possible. Thus, he argues that it would be wrong to classify a country experiencing pervasive structural violence as peaceful.

In his books, Chris A. Garuba further argues in effect, that even though war may not be going on in a country, if there are pervasive poverty, oppression of the poor by the rich, police brutality, intimidation of ordinary citizens by those in power, oppression of women or monopolization of resources and power by some social cleavages in the society or nation, it would still be wrong to say that there is peace in such a country or society (Garuba, 1999a, 1999b).

(ii) SECURITY

The definition of security, just like the one of peace, is equally contentious. Security has been defined by Otive Igbuzor (2001), “as the condition or feeling of safety from harm or danger, the defence, protection and preservation of core values and the absence of threats to those values”. However, within the context of peace, security and sustainable national development, the concept of security, that is usually applied and therefore, more relevant for consideration here, is the one of

“national security”. This makes the state or government the key actor or stakeholder in the process of seeking actively for the peace, security and sustainable national development of the country.

A traditional definition of the State often attributed to Max Weber, as Dan Mou (2015, 2017) points out, requires as a necessary condition, the effective monopoly of the use of violence within a given territory. The security of the State was, therefore, threatened by any change that might threaten that monopoly of violence, whether it was through external invasion or internal rebellion. National Security was therefore, viewed purely from the military perspective.

Consequently, National Security was narrowly understood and insufficiently conceptualized. From most of the literature available, adopting this narrow view, National Security concept is given an essentially strategic meaning by equating military defence with security as a whole (Mou, 2016 and 2017). This insufficient, essentially strategic, understanding of the concept, is evident in the definition provided by Michael Louw. According to him, National Security can be defined as the condition of freedom from external physical attack (Louw, 1985).

The same conclusion is advanced by Amos Jordan and William Taylor who see National Security as a term that signifies protection of the Nation’s people and territories against physical attack (Jordan and Taylor, 1998). Similarly, Welfram Horriender and Larry Buel in their book, *Words and Arms*, defined National Security as the protection of the nation from all types of external aggression, espionage, hostile reconnaissance, sabotage, subversion, annoyance and other inimical influences (Horriender and Buel, 1984). These are military centred definitions of National Security.

It can be seen that the above strategic definitions of National Security are largely concerned with the protection of a nation-state from external aggression only. This overwhelmingly military approach to national security is based on the erroneous assumption that the principal threat to a nation’s security comes from other nations. Little attention is paid to the fact that the greatest threat to the security of a nation could be internal, particularly when one is considering a transitional or developing society. It is such internal threats that make states susceptible to external attacks (Mou, 2016, 2017).

Avner Yanor, a Russian military scholar, was thus right when he stated that “the ability of a nation to survive in conflict or even to win a war hinges not only on its military capabilities, but also on economic potential for war and the level of social mobilisation. Over-emphasizing one of these elements of national security while disregarding the others may be natural in the course of a brief crisis, but it could be disastrous in the long term”(Yarnor, 1985). For the public to be mobilized to defend the nation, they must also be allowed to have access to the public interest at stake. There are also the strategic definitions and the economic non-strategic definitions of National Security.

The first set conceives National Security in terms of abstract values and is concerned mainly with the preservation of independence and sovereignty of nation states. The second set, however, is concerned with both the maintenance of the flow of vital economic resources and non-military aspects of nation-state function. The idea of perceiving others’ security as one’s own insecurity will, on the whole, generate mutual insecurity. At the policy level, requirement for security, defined as vital, basic, and core values, will have so high a priority rating that the state will be looked upon as the main mechanism for the preservation of the society’s basic values. This defective outcome has been pointed out by a considerable number of analysts as strengthening the role of the elite and, hence, increasing the dichotomy in the society (Ruskin, 1979; Mou, 2016).

The tendency, as can be seen from the essentially strategic definitions of security above, is to equate military defence of the territorial integrity of the state and the preservation of

independence as the state's core value with security as a whole. This conception is based on the misleading assumption that the principal threat to a nation's security comes from other nations. However, this assumption is debatable. There is no doubt that the greatest threat to a country's security could be internal. Internal threats make more easily the susceptibility of a country to external attacks.

Moreover, as Dan Mou (2016, 2017) explains, the assumption is faulty even if considered strictly from the military-centred perception, because the ability of a nation to survive in conflict hinges not only on the level of its military preparedness, but also on the economic potential for war; the level of social mobilization and political stability (which depends partly on the strength of the media to mobilise the public based on public interest). Thus, to over-emphasize one of these dimensions of security and completely disregard the other is an erroneous conception.

National Security as stated above, does not therefore, have to do with military defence alone. The concept of national security must be located where it rightly belongs by attaching to it a broader meaning that emphasises not only development in the military or defence sense; but also political, economic and social development of the society. Development is thus a central concept in our understanding of National Security. There is in fact a dialectical relationship between the concept of development (which depicts both quantitative and qualitative improvement in the conditions of existence of a nation and its nationals) and national security. This includes improvement in political, economic and social conditions (Mou, 2016, 2017).

According to McNamara, as development progresses, security progresses, and when the people of a nation-state have organised their own human and natural resources to provide themselves with what they use and expect out of life, and have learnt to compromise peacefully among competing demands in the larger national interest, then their resistance to disorder and violence will enormously increase (McNamara, 1968). As a matter of fact, no country, no matter the level of military development, can be regarded as secure if its economy continues to be described as a predicament, if unemployment, poverty, hunger and inequality continue to exacerbate.

Similarly, National Security can be seen as protecting the interest of the dominant group/elite, which control the security apparatus of the state (Mou, 2016, 2017). It has also been seen as protecting the strategic interest and way of life of the people in a given society, by defending the territorial integrity, cultural values and norms of the society (Mou, 2015). Finally, National Security can also be seen as about development.(McNamara, 1968; Mou, 2016). Technically speaking, Dan Mou (2016, 2017), has concluded that National Security can in fact be seen in three basic ways: (a) the Captured National Security System; (b) the Autonomous National Security System; and (c) the Relatively Autonomous National Security System. We consider them briefly below:

a. The Captured National Security System: Under this system as Mou (2016, 2017) shows, the dominant social cleavages, be they classes or ethnic group, collectively referred to as the dominant elite, usually takes control of the state apparatus, so that the national security policy and implementation are influenced by this elite group. This elite group uses the nation's security apparatus as the oppressive tool for their economic, social and political exploitation of others. The interest of the public, defined as whatever in the society that is for the common good of all, will not be given priority under this regime of national security system and information for public consumption will be distorted for the interests of the elites as well. Opposition media houses will be oppressed with government machinery. Classic examples of these are Germany under the

control of the Nazis, and the apartheid period in South Africa. Under this system the government security apparatuses were used by the minority white people in South Africa to control the majority black citizens. In Germany, the State security apparatuses were instead used to exterminate other races, especially the Jews.

b. The Autonomous National Security System: Here, as Mou (2016, 2017) points out, the state security apparatuses are operated independently of the dominant social cleavages, be they class, ethnic, gender or religious. National Security policy and its apparatuses are therefore, more rational and objective in carrying out the security policies and operations that concern or carter for all its citizens. Security information management too, is easier, since public interest and national security become similar.

c. The Relatively Autonomous National Security System: This position according to Mou (2016, 2017), presupposes that the national security apparatuses are neither captured by any social cleavage such as class or ethnic group, nor autonomous. In most democracies, the national security systems are relatively autonomous because they are not totally captured by the dominant elites, but they are not totally autonomous either. Sometimes they are controlled to serve the dominant elites. Yet, at other times, they are allowed freedom to do their work without interference. The media has access and is empowered to some degree to seek for information. However, laws of secrecy exist and not all information is available at all times to the public.

Another related concept to National Security is Internal Security. Internal Security is often used interchangeably with the term National Security. It appears to mean different things to different people in different situations as well. The definition of internal security on the one hand, according to Mou (2016, 2017), covers the whole spectrum of the individual's concept, as providing safety and freedom from danger and anxiety, to that of sovereignty, which is, the ability of a nation to protect its values from both external or internal threats.

In a narrow context, as Mou (2016, 2017) explains, internal security could also mean the citizen's expectation of government to provide protection from violence in the form of civil wars, riots insurrection and repression. They also look for protection from structural violence of exploitation, security of their jobs, protection of their life and property. This concern for security apparently stems from the felt need for survival and unhindered development of a nation (Mou, 2016, 2017). It is the desire to fulfil this expectation of the citizens that every government; and indeed every nation, including Nigeria, have gone to great lengths in their attempts to update their security apparatuses.

The above explanation by Mou (2016, 2017) helps to make it clear that there are two different but inter-related broad aspects of security. There is the security of the individuals or people, and the security of the nation, albeit the sovereign, that is, the government of the day or the territorial integrity of the State. Public Security, therefore, refers to the general security of the people and the guaranteeing by the government of adequate protection of the lives and properties of its citizens from internal and external aggression and danger. This is usually in the public interest. In practical terms, this is indeed, public interests.

The concept of public interest is complicated, as the idea of what constitutes public interest is itself problematic. This is because, as Mou (2016, 2017), explains, in every society, there is no "one public" given the plurality of the social cleavages in that society. By social cleavages, as stated above, we mean those divisions based on social classes and cultural pluralism, such as religion, ethnic groups, region, language, race, gender, etc. In general, "the public" is not a

homogenous entity. Consequently, issues of National Security and the Public Interests therefore, are highly problematic. The question of what constitutes public interest therefore, has to be constitutionally defined. Thus, the **1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria** defines public interest within the context of the Rule of Law, which controls the activities of the citizenry. Consequently, any act or action that infringes on a citizen's right under the Rule of Law is generally not in the public interest.

Based on the Rule of Law, therefore, National Security and Public Interest become related in such a way that the two policy actions are the main or primary objectives of any democratic government to its people. Section 14(4) (b) of the **1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria** provides, that "The security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government." Thus, **the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria** sees National Security and Public Interest as opposite sides of the same coin.

(iii) **SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The concept of development is also difficult to define, as there are differences in opinion and conceptualization of it. For one thing, times and situations tend to shape the thinking about and the approach to development (Mou, 2014, 2015).

For another, Mou (2014, 2015) argues that development and development strategies, such as "sustainable national development", are not "value-neutral", but "value-loaded". This is because, the very fact that:

"Development strategy is an attempt to identify a clear connection between what is to be done and the 'pooled' interest of all the groups and classes constituting a given society, it cannot be value neutral" (Deng and Mou, 1985, p.34).

What is to be done, in essence, determines the ideology of development. However, there is growing consensus in the literature as regarding what should be seen as development. It is now understood that development is not synonymous with growth (Ake, 1996; MacNamara, 1968; Meredith, 2006; Mou, 2015, 2016 and 2017). Growth simply involves quantitative increase in the indices such as income per capital, national income and gross national product. Development has been seen instead as certain processes among which are increasing productivity and the equitable distribution of these gains among all social classes and groups in the society or nation (Ake, 1996; MacNamara, 1968; Meredith, 2002; Mou, 2015, 2016 and 2017).

In fact, when one turns to the question of "sustainable national development", it becomes even more controversial. The **Wikipedia Encyclopedia** (2016) documents copiously these contentions over the concept of "sustainable development". We therefore quote it here at length:

"The concept of sustainable development has been – and still is – subject to criticism. What, exactly, is to be sustained in sustainable development? It has been argued that there is no such thing as a sustainable use of a non-renewable resource, since any positive rate of exploitation will eventually lead to the exhaustion of Earth's finite stock: this perspective renders the Industrial Revolution as a whole unsustainable. It has also been argued that the meaning of the concept has opportunistically been stretched from 'ecoservation management' to 'economic development', and that the **Brundtland Report** promoted nothing but a business as usual strategy for world development, with an ambiguous and in substantial concept as a public relations slogan" (**Wikipedia Encyclopedia**, 2016).

The modern concept of “sustainable development” was basically derived from the **Brundtland Report**. But it is also rooted in earlier ideas about sustainable forest management and twentieth century environmental concerns. However, as the concept developed, it has shifted to focus more on economic development, social development and environmental protection, for future generations. Thus, it has been suggested that “the term ‘sustainability’ should be viewed as humanity’s target goal of human ecosystem equilibrium (homeostasis). While ‘sustainable development’ refers to the holistic approach and temporal processes that lead to the end point of sustainability” (Shaker, 2015, p.306).

The concept of “sustainability” itself is defined as “the practice of maintaining processes of productivity indefinitely – natural or human made – by replacing resources used with resources of equal or greater value without degrading, or endangering natural biotic systems” (Kahle and Gurel-Atag (ed.), 2014). In this case, it can be seen that the concept of sustainable development ties together concern for the carrying capacity of natural systems with the social, political, and economic challenges faced by humanity. Hence, sustainability science becomes the study of the concepts of sustainable development and environmental science. The purpose being to understand how the present generation can and should take on the responsibility to regenerate, maintain and improve planetary resources for the use of future generations (**World Conservation Strategy**, 1980).

For our purpose here, however, sustainable national development can be defined simply as “the organizing principle for meeting human development goals while at the same time sustaining the ability of natural systems to provide the natural resources and ecosystem services upon which the economy and society depends. The desirable end result is a state of society where living conditions and resource use continue to meet human needs without undermining the integrity and stability of the natural systems” (Wikipedia Encyclopedia, 2016).

III PEACE, SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT: THE NIGERIAN EXPERIENCES

Some of the complex issues that have affected negatively or positively Nigeria’s peace, security and sustainable national development date back to the colonial days. British colonial administration and its policies impacted the Nigerian society up to independence in 1960 and even beyond. In doing a diagnosis of the status of Nigeria’s peace, security and sustainable national development, therefore, one cannot help but begin with the Nigerian experience under the colonial era.

Because of the enormity of the factors involved in the diagnosis of the Nigerian experience with reference to her peace, security and sustainable national development, from the colonial era to date, we shall examine them under several categories. Such an examination will certainly not cover all these issues and factors. They have, however, been chosen in such a manner as to make them representative samples of the rest of the others. The ones selected are:

- (i) The Colonial Experience;
- (ii) The Political Experience;
- (iii) The Economic Experience;
- (iv) The Social Experience;
- (v) The Religious Experience; and
- (vi) The Governmental Experience.

VI. DIAGNOSIS OF THE NIGERIAN EXPERIENCES

(i) The Colonial Experience

Several studies on the colonial era are conclusive on the fact that right from inception as a Nation-State in 1914, Nigerian history has been dominated by conflicts and crisis. These have negatively impacted on her peace, security and sustainable national development. The colonial masters and their nationalist collaborators nurtured and fostered consciously or unconsciously, disunity in this country (Dudley, 1974; Nnoli, 1978; Mou, 2014, 2015). The colonialists de-emphasized peace, security, sustainable national development, economic and cultural integration. Instead, they placed more emphasis, as a matter of deliberate colonial policy, on politico-constitutional structures.

It is on record that within a period of forty years (1914-1950), Nigeria went through several stages of political/constitutional changes. The amalgamation of the Southern and Northern Protectorates took place in 1914 and by 1916 witnessed the Nigerian Council. In 1922, there was a new Constitution. In 1939, a Fussionary Federation was tried. In 1947, the Richards Constitution was introduced. Barely a year after, this Constitution was replaced by the Mac-Pherson's Constitution which was itself replaced by the Littleton Constitution in 1954 (Dudley, 1974; Joseph, 1999 and Mou, 1986; 2014).

Dan Mou has argued that even though the Northern and Southern Protectorates were amalgamated in 1914 to form a single geographical entity called Nigeria, no concrete steps were taken to fuse in the different ethnic, cultural, economic, religious and social groups (Mou, 1986, 2014). The amalgamation, even according to Ayandele therefore, was "purely a matter of administrative and financial convenience in which the people were not taken into partnership (Ayandele, 1989).

Thus, Mou has concluded that the peace, security and sustainable national development of the country taken into consideration the 1922 Constitution, which was supposed to be a first step towards political integration that will eventually earn the people political independence, peace, security and sustainable national development isolated, instead of uniting the country (Mou, 1986; 2014). The Richards Constitution worsened the situation by dividing the country into a tri-national state structure. This structure was dominated by the three major ethnic groups in Nigeria of Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba and Ibo. This marked the beginning of regionalism, which was to create many difficulties in terms of integration, peace, security and sustainable national development for the emergent political ruling class (Mou, 2016). The 1954 Constitution simply reaffirmed the Federation of the three disproportionate Regions – Northern, Western and Eastern Regions.

Pre-occupied with the quest for power and impending take-over from the withdrawing colonialists, Nigeria political class did not even bother to question the rationale for the tripartite division of Nigeria in three large Regions. Instead, they operated from their various ethnic groups. While seeking for power from the colonialists, the nationalists, allowed themselves to fall into the divide and rule traps of the colonialists. The country called Nigeria, became hopelessly divided along regional, religious, ethnic and class lines (Dudley, 1974; Nnoli, 1978; Mou, 1986, 2014).

By the time of the fall of the First Republic, it became already clear that the tripartite structure could not make for unity, peace, security and sustainable national development. The ethnic minorities within the Regions, such as the Tivs, Idomas, Ijaws and Urhobos, were already in conflict with the major ethnic groups in the various Regions. Through the demands of these ethnic minorities for the creation of more centres of power, General Yakubu Gowon, who took over as Head of State after the assassination of General Aguiyi Ironsi, yielded to these pressures and created the twelve States structure in Nigeria (Mou, 2016, 2017; Joseph, 1991).

However, this came too late as the regional sentiments, insecurity and disunity had already matured beyond redemption giving birth to a disastrous Civil War, “Biafra War”, between 1967 and 1970. Hence, the basis for disunity, religious disharmony and economic under-development had clearly been planted by the British colonialists in Nigeria before their departure at independence in 1960.

(ii) **The Political Experience**

Politics is about power and the game of power sharing. Mainstream social science research sees politics essentially as the authoritative allocation of valued resources in the society. These “valued resources” could either be material or status in nature (Easton, 1967). It could be for a region, an ethnic group, or some other form of socio-political configuration or even an individual (Edelman, 1977; Lasswell, 1958 and Lijphart, 1977).

But we do know that politics is also about the legitimation of the prevailing social system. This is because, inherent in human society, such authoritative allocations tend to be unequal in the perception of those who compose such a society, whether real or imagined. Thus, legitimation becomes necessary to prevent such a society from falling apart or disintegrating (Edelman, 1977).

Nigerian political landscape suffers from these similar problems. These have, in fact, been magnified with the 1993 political crisis following the annulment of “June 12” Presidential Election and the subsequent developments which led to the erroneous impression that political power, in the Nigerian context, was the preserve of a favoured region and an ethnic group, i.e. the North as a region and the Hausa-Fulani as an ethnic group. Whatever the fallacies of such perception, a Constitutional Conference became necessary so as to offer the nation an opportunity to re-examine itself and shed off some of these otherwise very dangerous and negative stereotypes (Mou, 2016). It was not until President Olusegun Obasanjo and later, President Goodluck Jonathan became Presidents from the Western and South-South Regions of Nigeria that these feelings reduced.

Of recent, the debate over political power in Nigeria has elevated the issue of power sharing into what has popularly become known as the “National Question”. National Question deals with the forms and patterns of power sharing within a nation-state among the social cleavages that exist in that society (Mou, 2016). By social cleavages here we mean, as stated above already, those divisions in a society that are based on ethnicity, regionalism, language, religion, caste, race, gender and even statism.

Unfortunately, Nigerians have now wrongly developed some funny notions that there exist “first class citizens” and “second class citizens”, or as others put it, “blue blooded citizens” and “non-blue blooded citizens” (Usman, 1977). Thus, the blue blooded citizens are seen as consisting some form of an “upper caste” in our midst whereas the majority of Nigerians who are of “non-blue blooded” origin, have come to be treated as a “lower caste”. It is imputed from all these that there exists somehow a “hidden agenda” by the “blue blooded”, to “perpetually hold onto power” in this country and “dominate” completely the politics of this society and other Nigerians. This too has become a source of disunity, insecurity and lack of sustainable national development.

It is possible for us to speculate here right away whether a “secret agenda” by the “blue blooded” exist. Nonetheless, leaders and Governments must realize that in politics, it is the perception that matters and not necessarily the validity thereof (Edelman, 1977). Consequently, if proper care is not taken, such perceptions might divide this country or at least undermine the peace, security and sustainable national development. In which case, it is advisable that political leaders in Nigeria and the Federal Government should ensure that the unity, peace, security and sustainable development of this country is clearly preserved. In fact, the peace and unity of Nigeria is to be

regarded as one of those settled issues that cannot and should not even be tabled for discussion, despite the numerous calls now for political restructuring of Nigeria at any fora, including the National and State Assemblies.

Another way of ensuring that such fora do not degenerate into an avenue for precipitating the disintegration of Nigeria, is by insisting that the peace, security and unity of Nigeria is a forgone conclusion and not open to negotiation. This is very important because, already, certain radical, regional and ethnic groups or even eminent personalities, are advocating for separatism or for that matter, dismemberment of Nigeria. The Indigenous Peoples of Biafra; the Arewa Youth Forum; The Oduduwa Republic Forum, etc. are such examples.

There are also those who are now calling for a Sovereign National Conference in which eminent citizens are elected and/or chosen to debate the state of the Nation, including, of course, its Constitution or Constitutions. They are arguing that the outcome of the National Conference may or may not be referred to the Government in power for approval, before their implementations become obligatory on the regime in power. In short, when it is a Sovereign National Conference, such outcomes are not referred to the regime in power or even the National Assembly at all or even sometimes, not subjected to a National Referendum, before they become law and subject to implementation at all cost (Mou, 2017).

It is our suggestion, therefore, that the sovereignty of the Constitutional Conferences, even when called again to discuss restructuring should be limited. Whatever decisions they arrive at should be subjected to the approval of the National Assembly. In this way, Government would be able to forestall the promulgation into law of certain decisions that would be arrived at out of the deliberations of such a Constitutional Conference which might be anti-ethical to our national interest, which include a united, secured, peaceful, harmonious, and prosperous one Nigeria.

(iii) **The Economic Experience**

Part of the Nigerian public sentiments that have some negative impacts on peace, security and sustainable national development relate to the economic situation in the nation. Inherent in the capitalist developmental approach which Nigeria adopted at independence, is regional inequalities. Capitalism, by its very logic, does not promote even-development (Akor and Mou, 1986). In the Nigerian case, Governments over the years, have attempted to arrest this unfortunate consequence through the instrumentality of National Planning. No peace, security nor sustainable national development can ever be accomplished without consciously planning and putting the plans into practice.

Yet, it is true that structural inequalities still exist, both in resources endowment and location of industries that are promoting conflicts, insecurity and hindering sustainable national development in Nigeria. Some of these elements of uneven-development date back to the pre-colonial days. Others are as a result of nature. But there are some that could be regarded as man-made, that is, the quality of the leadership Nigeria has had at the various levels of government (Mou, 2016, 2017). Whatever the sources of such uneven-development or economic inequalities in Nigeria, the truth is that it does affect the form and manner of contributions that the different regions, states, or even ethnic groups do make to the Nation. It therefore, affects the peace, security and sustainable development of the Nation as well. Some of these are already manifest in the various paid publications that have appeared in Magazines and Newspapers since the Government made public its intention to support some form of devolution of power, especially from States to Local Government, which President Muhammadu Buhari himself stated.

There is abundant historical and contemporary evidence in Nigeria to suggest that under severe economic hardships, as have now been occasioned partly as a result of the fall in oil prices and the consequent over devaluation of the naira and the economic recession, it becomes difficult for social cleavages to appreciate Nigeria's unity, peace, security and the benefits of a united and sustainably developed country. This is because deepening economic crises tend to generate more societal conflicts and anxieties, based on social cleavages that are quite detrimental to national unity, peace, security, development and cohesion. The fact is that as the economic fortunes of the society shrink as a result of the deepening economic hardship, these classes and cultural pluralist conflicts tend to increase. The struggle for resources or as Nigerians love to put it the "National Cake", becomes more intense (Mou, 2016, 2017).

All social cleavages or factions thereof, attempt to hijack the "national cake" for their exclusive use, particularly if it is located within their territorial area or soil. Corruption also increases as office holders engage in favouritism and primitive accumulation of capital for their personal, ethnic, or regional benefits. These developments make it very difficult for those who would want to continue to preserve the peace, security, unity and territorial integrity of the whole nation-state (Mou, 2016, 2017). Sub-national agitations by ethnic or regional groups from those areas from which the central and subordinate governments are getting most of their resources or revenues tend to want to secede from the nation with the selfish motive of commandeering these resources for their exclusive benefits.

No Region in Nigeria can claim to be innocent from these selfish manoeuvres. For instance, Mou (Mou, 2016, 2017) points out that when groundnut and other agricultural produce, such as beniseed that are based in the Northern part of Nigeria, were yielding a lot of foreign exchange, the North capitalized on that to agitate for the Northern Region to become a separate country in 1953.

Similarly, Mou explains that when cocoa, rubber and palm produce exports derivable mainly from the Western Region of Nigeria, were yielding a lot of foreign exchange for the nation, the West, led by the Yorubas, canvassed severally for their autonomy as a separate nation. They sought autonomy from the rest of Nigeria, first in 1954 and again in 1964 – ten years after (Mou, 2016, 2017). It is the same selfish sentiments and the desire to hijack resources of a region for the exclusive use by that region that made the Eastern Region to declare their secession from the rest of Nigeria in 1967 and plunged the country into a devastating civil war, the "Biafran War" (Mou, 2016, 2017). The resources at stake there were the oil, petroleum, and its allied products, which were discovered massively in the area and for which commercial exploitation had begun yielding extensive foreign exchange for the nation.

It should not come to us as a surprise, therefore, that during the current debate in Nigeria, oil has again surfaced as a motivating factor for the Southern minorities, even when they are small in population as the Ogonis, to still want to be an independent nation of their own so as to have total monopoly over the oil revenue from their land and peoples (Mou, 2016, 2017).

The present development too has arisen because of the prevailing economic conditions which now force all the component parts of Nigeria and their fortunes to be dependent on the oil industry. This is because exports from all other sectors combined are still less than 10% of the Nigerian national revenue, especially her foreign exchange (FOREX). The remaining 90% is basically from the oil sector alone. Thus, the oil sector brings the greatest part of the oil revenue coming into the Federation Account from which the Federal Government makes routine allocations to itself as well as to the other tiers of government (states and local governments). It is because of this basic fact that the oil producing areas have now constituted themselves into a serious threat to

Nigeria's unity, peace, security and sustainable national development by agitating for their independence from Nigeria or Confederalism (Mou, 2016, 2017).

One must carefully note the fact that, when these oil producing States are not threatening secession; they are still calling for a re-negotiation of the minimum new terms or restructuring that will favour them mostly, if Nigeria must continue to exist as one entity, with them as an integral part. The clarion call by them now is for some form of Confederation or restructuring, if not for their total independence. Oil has really become an instrument for tribal, regional and ethnic chauvinism and agitations of disunity for Nigeria today. All these are threatening the peace, security and sustainable national development.

It is now a matter for history - that has to be quickly redressed - to note that Nigeria's oil reserves are not concentrated only on the soils of the Southern minorities alone. Records show clearly that, in the early days of independence when Nigeria was busy prospecting for oil, large quantities were also found in the Benue Valley, the Niger Valley and stretching all the way through Katsina and Borno States to the Lake Chat Valley (Mou, 2016, 2017). It is now a matter for hypothetical counterfactual that no national resources were committed, to the same degree as was done within the lands of the Southern minorities, to exploit these oil reserves in the North. It is again the uneven-development in the oil industry across the country, even though oil reserves were discovered in commercial quantities also in the North that has now become a weapon of "blackmail" of the rest of Nigeria by the Southern minorities. The negative consequences of all these for the peace, security and sustainable development of Nigeria are obvious.

The importance of the forgoing discussion is that no reasonable regime can allow selfish agitations, based on the contemporary economic conditions in the country, to destroy the unity of this great nation for which a lot of blood was spilt to keep one. While individual regions, states, and even ethnic groups, may fail to see the long-term benefits of remaining together because of their myopic economic considerations; it is the responsibility of the central Government to look ahead and prevent the disintegration of Nigeria under the current threats of oil politics by the Southern minorities and the new "Biafra" movement in Eastern Nigerian. The unholy reaction by selected youths in the North, the Arewa Youth Forum, to give a dateline for the Igbo in the Northern part of Nigeria to leave, constitutes great threats to the peace, security and sustainable national development of Nigeria.

This, we believe, can be done in two ways: First, the Federal Government must insist that the peace, security and unity of this country is not open to debate and therefore, tackle diplomatically, and stop all the agitations that are targeted at dismembering the country. While they should be allowed to table their cases for fair treatment; they should be prevented from raising extra-territorial matters that border on separatist ambitions. Second, the Federal Government has to quickly institute action to develop oil industries in the North, where such resources have already been discovered. In short, the Buhari Government has already directed that action should be taken on this. This will bring a new twist to oil politics in Nigeria, thereby promoting Nigeria's national peace, security, unity and cohesion. This will also create more avenues for sustainable national development. Third, the Federal Government should consider seriously calling a Constitutional Conference where issues of restructuring, which are currently on the front burner in Nigeria, can be discussed and peacefully settled. Alternatively, these matters should be directed to the National Assembly as the best place to discuss, resolve and legislate on them appropriately.

(iv) **The Social Experience**

Public temperament that has to do with the social dimension in our society can be divided into two broad and distinct categories. The first set is those that relate to the nature of our social structure. This is what we have referred to above as the social cleavages existing in Nigeria.

The second set has to do with what is generally referred to in Nigeria as social services. These include the performance of government agencies that are responsible for the provision of social services in Nigeria. Some of these agencies include National Electric Power Authority (NEPA) now known as the Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN), Nigerian Postal Services (NIPOST), Nigerian Telecommunications Limited (NITEL), etc. The critical social problems here hinge on poor performance and massive corruption.

Within the first sets of social problems, a few will be discussed simply as illustrations of the kinds of problems they pose for the peace, security, unity, harmony and sustainable national development of Nigeria. Those to be discussed here are ethnic chauvinism and religious bigotry.

Ethnic Chauvinism

It is already a known fact that with the approach of independence and the talk of introduction of a British model of liberal democracy, there came an avenue for the display of ethnic sentiments (Dudley, 1974; Joseph, 1991; Mou, 2016, 2017). Nigerians, who had made their fame in their strong nationalist agitations, such as Nnamdi Azikiwe, Obafemi Awolowo, Tafawa Balewa, to name only a few, saw an opportunity in the emerging “politics of numbers” to seek ways of taking over from the colonial administrators. In their desire for political power, they evoked ethnic and regional symbols in order to appeal to the majority of people who were, largely, politically unsophisticated. The truth is that Nigeria’s problems, since independence, have derived in large measure from the tensions, anxieties, and fears which have arisen between the various ethnic groups. Yet, the hostilities between them came about not from the ethnic differences themselves; but from the utilization of ethnic symbols and myths by a few ethnic chauvinistic leaders to gain political and other advantages (Dudley, 1974; Joseph, 1991; Mou, 2016, 2017). These leaders, in their search for wealth and political power, evoked ethnicity and regionalism when they fail to accomplish their aims on other platforms.

In the recent calls for organizing a “Restructuring Conference”, it is these sets of leaders that have started to advocate strongly for a Confederal System and Separatism. Confederalism is an arrangement which calls for the down-grading of the powers of the centre and re-enforcing those of the sub-national units. These sub-national units could be Regions, States, or Local Governments. The aim here is to create for themselves very powerful regions over which they hope to preside (Dudley, 1974; Joseph, 1991 and Mou, 2016, 2017). It is in this light that we have seen the emergence of regional leaders and associations, such as the Northern Elders Forum, the Yoruba Forum, the Ndigbo Forum and the new “Biafra Movements”, the Middle Belt Forum, Committee for the Defence of the Southern Minority Rights, etc.

Dan Mou points out that four types of autonomy are currently being agitated for by some of these regional groupings (Mou, 2016, 2017). First, is the financial autonomy of the sub-national units. Here, it is argued that the resources of a particular region, state or even ethnic group, should be left primarily for the exclusive benefits of the region, state or ethnic group from which they are derived.

Second, the monopoly of power autonomy. Here, the various regions, are now advocating for a separate Police Force and a few of them even a regional Army. But as Mou explains, such demands, even when they occur under the guise of restructuring or confederalism, may be nothing but steps towards separatism (Mou, 2016, 2017).

The third category of autonomy such regional and ethnic champions are looking for, is administrative autonomy. Here, they argue, perhaps erroneously, that the membership of their ethnic groups in the Federal Civil Service is less than what it should have been. It is, therefore, better for them to seek to establish their powerful regional governments where their educated youths would also get greater opportunities to actualize themselves rather than be “bugged down” under the yoke of Federal Character, as enshrined in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (Mou, 2016, 2017).

It is among this category of people that one hears the argument that Federal Character was enshrined in the Nigerian Constitution to promote “mediocrity” and “favour the North”. Thus, the Federal Character principle, which was supposed to be a mechanism for promoting peace, security, unity, fairness and equal representation throughout the Federation, is now misunderstood and misrepresented as a “regional tool” for the Northern part of Nigeria to “dominate” the Federal Civil Service.

The fourth kind of autonomy some of these regional leaders are seeking for is legal autonomy. Here, as Mou further states, they believe strongly that if allowed the autonomy to operate in their regions without too much control from the central government, they would be able to formulate those laws that will better cater for their interests (Mou, 2016, 2017). But, we do know that regionalization, which prompted such disintegrative policies, such as “Northernisation Policy” for the North, “the East for the Easterners Policy” in the then Eastern Region, and “the West is Yoruba and Yoruba is West Policy” for the Western Region, served to perpetuate disunity, insecurity and uneven development, which invariably led to the civil war, beginning 1967.

Part of the reasons for the resurgence of interests in Confederalism, restructuring and regional autonomy, perhaps, relate to the fact that the intervention of the military in our polity, reinforced unitary tendencies. These, in turn, undermined the federalism principles which allowed for the sharing of power and responsibilities between the Federal, States and Local Governments, with the Federal Government having more powers and responsibilities than the rest, thereby acting as a senior partner in a mutual relationship.

This assessment of the Nigerian ethnic condition leads us to several conclusions. First, that the Nigerian Government should not allow the establishment of armies along regional lines since this will promote more disunity, insecurity and likely balkanization of the country in future. Having one central army for the country should also be considered as a settled issue that should not be open to debate at any restructuring Conference to be held in Nigeria. However, the possibility of allowing the partial localization of the Police Force could be discussed.

Second, we believe that the Principle of Federalism should also be regarded by the Nigerian Government as a settled issue not open to debate at any possible restructuring Conference. At best, delegates at any such Conference, if and when convened, could be allowed to discuss only how to make the Federal System in Nigeria to work even better.

Third, it is our view that the Federal Character clause in the Nigerian Constitution was designed to promote social justice, unity and fair representation of the diverse social cleavages in Nigeria. It should, therefore, be regarded by the Nigerian Government as a “no go area” for the delegates at any restructuring or Constitutional Conference in Nigeria, now or in future.

In fact, we believe that the principle of Federal Character should be more closely enforced, not just in the Public Service, but also in political appointments, the mass media, admission to government schools, the economy, and in the nomination of Ambassadors to serve in foreign countries.

(v) Religious Experience

As we have mentioned above already, in the 1960s, it used to be believed that the greatest challenge to nation-building and political co-existence in Nigeria was ethnicity. This was partially correct, given that ethnicity was at the heart of the Nigerian civil war of 1967-1970. In present day Nigeria, however, it is difficult to talk of unity, peace, security and sustainable national development that will lead to political stability, economic transformation and greater prosperity, without making reference to the phenomena of religion and religious bigotry.

Since the end of the civil war, religious conflicts appear to be the greatest threat to the internal peace and harmony in Nigeria. Many well-meaning Nigerians now earnestly fear that the ghost of religious bigotry, if not prevented by government, will continuously rear its ugly head. This has constituted the greatest bottleneck to all attempts at promoting peace, security and sustainable national development in Nigeria for sometime now.

Prior to the advent of Islam and Christianity in Nigeria, traditional religion existed. This religion was practiced by the various ethnic groups and communities. Unlike the foreign religions, especially Islam and to some extent, Christianity, traditional religion never preached conversion by conquest. In fact, outsiders were not allowed to even know the details of the religion or its practices unless they took the pains to voluntarily or allow themselves to be deceived, to undergo the rituals of initiation. Its spread was, therefore, accomplished mainly through peaceful means. Nowadays, cult wars have also become a daily affair, thus making traditional religion an increasingly dangerous practice.

The arrival of Islam and Christianity has changed the atmosphere. One of the greatest dramatizations of this phenomenon was the Maitatsine uprising, which started in Kano but spread to Kaduna, Maiduguri, Yola and Gombe. Yet, the worst display of extreme religious rascality, fanaticism, terrorism and intolerance is, of course, the Boko Haram Islamic uprising, which has now caused and is still causing, serious threats to Nigeria's national security, peace and sustainable development. In fact, with the exception of the civil war, Nigeria has not witnessed such bloody massacre and wanton destruction of lives and property as we now witness through Islamic religious uprisings, especially the Boko Haram one. The point of emphasis here is that the present Government must be extremely careful and maintain the delicate balance that exists between the Government and Religious groups for the moment, so as not to further elevate religion, once more, to a social monster that will further threaten Nigeria's unity, religious harmony, national security and development.

Three basic propositions, according to Mou (2016 and 2017), characterize the relationship between the State (Government) and Religion. It is important for us to briefly discuss these options so as to conclude on which one the Nigerian Government should continue to adopt towards its major religious groups. These are:-

- (i) The atheistic option;
- (ii) The totalitarian or assimilationist option; and
- (iii) The State neutrality option (Mailafia, 1984; Usman, 1987; Mou, 2016, 2017)

The atheistic option, according to Mou (2016 and 2017), requires that secularly based ideology be adopted by the State. This used to be the practice in socialist systems. Of recent, it is argued that secular ideologies, such as socialism and Zionism, are also some form of religion. The important point is that under this arrangement, the State does not recognize religion as a basic unit for sharing power, wealth or social amenities.

In the case of totalitarian or assimilationist option, as Mou (2016 and 2017) explains, there is usually one particular religion taken and elevated over and above others. This is what, for

instance, the Northern Chapter of Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) members are alleging has happened to Islam in Northern Nigeria. They have even served notices to the Federal Government and in the papers that these discriminatory practices should be reversed. In the totalitarian case, other religions are then prevented by force – this we do not recommend for Nigeria. In the assimilationist case, however, followers of other religions are persuaded or co-opted, through incentives, to join the preferred religion.

The third option – the State neutrality option, Mou (Mou, 2015; 2017) states, is where all religions are allowed to prosper and are considered as equals by the State. The State tries to stay out of religious matters, acting simply as a neutral arbitral or agent. In this case, State's secularity and impartiality to religions are the norm. This is the model we will recommend to continue to exist in Nigeria. This is because we strongly believe that it is more suited for a multi-religious democratic society such as ours. In Nigeria, religious secularity and impartiality are already enshrined in the Constitution. This should continue to be maintained. In addition, this model has greater potential for promoting peace, security and sustainable national development in the country.

(vi) The Governmental Experience

Public Enterprises and Social Services

In their speeches on assumption of power, most Nigerian Heads of State or Presidents dwelt extensively on the conditions of Nigeria's public enterprises and social services. These have also assumed a major dimension in public sentiments and perceptions which have already been expressed in some of the paid advertisements in the country. Three aspects of public enterprises have particularly been singled out for public concern and debate recently in the newspapers. The first has to do with the poor performance of these enterprises; the second relates to the level of corruption that exists within these parastatals; whereas the third has to do with occupants of the boards and top management positions within these parastatals (Mou, 2016, 2017; Olapa, 2009).

There is no question that public enterprises such as NITEL, NIPOST, Power Holding Co. of Nigeria, Nigerian Ports Authority, General Hospitals, and so forth, are clearly performing below expectation. The Nigerian Airways, for instance, was liquidated by President Olusegun Obasanjo's Government because of corruption and poor performance. This is particularly worrisome when seen against the background that the costs of their services have continuously gone up; whereas the services themselves have either remained stagnant or have significantly degenerated. The public is particularly worried, that highly placed public officials, publicly state that some social services "are not for the poor". It is very ridiculous to hear Ministers and leaders, saying that air travels and telephone services "are not for the poor". The poor performance of these agencies of government has obviously created problems for Nigeria's peace, security, unity and sustainable national development.

On the question of public corruption, the general public is already very excited that a sense of discipline and accountability appeared to have returned back to Nigeria, especially with the Government of President Muhammadu Buhari coming to power. Anti-Corruption Agencies, such as the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) are now working harder. In fact, the numerous probes that have already been inaugurated have served to illustrate to the public that corruption would be truly and comprehensively tackled. The point to note, however, is that crimes, such as corruption and the notorious "419", could better be addressed by providing alternative avenues for the public, especially the young generation, to actualize themselves and accumulate resources legitimately for

their future. There is therefore, the need to find out more efficient and realistic ways of comprehensively tackling the issue of public corruption and the “419” crimes in Nigeria, that can also allow the youth to actualize themselves profitably.

Another aspect of the public enterprises debate that has surfaced now relates to the issues of ethnicity, regionalism, and religious bigotry as well as Federal Character, already discussed above. Newspapers and Magazines are full of paid advertisements indicating that some ethnic groups, regions, States or even religious groups are, usually, favoured in appointments as Chief Executives or Chairmen and members of these parastatals (Mou, 2016, 2017; Olaopa, 2009). These, too have featured prominently since President Buhari took over Government. President Buhari and his Government must clearly ensure and see to it that all Nigerians, regardless of religion, ethnicity, state and region are treated fairly in public appointments. Government should not be the one violating the Federal Character Principle, as this is a Constitutional matter that has grave implications for the unity, peace, security and sustainable national development of Nigeria.

The view here is that if the clause of Federal Character as enshrined in our Constitutions is being fully applied; such complaints, perhaps, might not have arisen. On this note, we further suggest that the Government should ensure the retention of the Federal Character clause in the Nigerian Constitution, even if and when a “restructuring conference” is convened. In short, the only way of ensuring this is to consider the question of Federal Character, as enshrined in the Constitution, as one of the settled issues and not subject it to debate. This will continue to help promote unity, harmony, peace, security and sustainable national development.

(V) SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This paper has examined the question of peace, security and sustainable national development in Nigeria under contemporary challenging economic, social and political conditions. It analysed the various dimensions of the social, political, economic and other conditions in Nigeria that have, over the years, affected the peace, security and sustainable national development of the country. It argued that to properly understand the challenges or otherwise to peace, security and sustainable national developmental issues in Nigeria, several factors or dimensions are involved. No single factor explanation, the paper shows, will be sufficient. This is because socio-political issues of this magnitude never readily yield themselves to single factor explanations.

Consequently, we examined the complex issues that have affected negatively or positively the peace, security and sustainable national development of Nigeria. We concluded the discussion of each of the factors with recommendations regarding the way forward on the matters discussed therein. The paper suggested strongly that careful analyses of the issues at stake are required to avoid hasty conclusions, discussions, comments and actions that may not be in the best national interests of Nigeria. It called on the need to draw on and learn from history, as Nigeria attempts to tackle the challenges besetting her at the moment, that have to do especially with the peace, security and sustainable national development in Nigeria.

The paper then discussed briefly the conceptual and definitional problems involved in an analysis of these topical issues in Nigeria. This was to ensure that we are all on the same page as we read this paper. It hammered on the fact that since the end of the Civil War, religious conflicts appear to be the greatest threat to the peace, security and sustainable national development in Nigeria. It made clear that most well-meaning Nigerians now earnestly fear the threat of a total religious war beyond the Boko Haram insurgency in not-too-distant future. It discussed ways and strategies by which policy makers and analysts alike, can better try and prevent the emergence of a

total religious war throughout Nigeria. It also examines ways to completely stop the ongoing Boko Haram insurgency in the North-East and North Central parts of Nigeria. We offered several suggestions on how this could be done, believing that without tackling the matter, peace, security and sustainable national development will be greatly hampered in Nigeria.

Some of the key complex issues that have affected negatively or positively Nigeria's peace, security and sustainable national development were also analysed and discussed. We argued that they could even be traced back to the colonial experience of Nigeria. British colonial administration and policies, in our view, impacted the Nigerian society up to independence in 1960 and even beyond. In doing a diagnosis of the status of Nigeria's peace, security and sustainable national development, we argued that, one cannot help but begin with the Nigerian experience under the colonial era. On balance, we submitted that the British colonial administration and the policies of the colonial era, negatively impacted on Nigeria's peace, security and sustainable national development. In short, part of the conclusion in this Paper is that the colonial masters and their nationalist collaborators nurtured and fostered consciously or unconsciously, these problems.

The bulk of the Paper examined the various experiences Nigeria has gone through and how they affected the matters under discussion. It examined the political experience; economic experience; the social experience, the religious experience; and the Governmental experience. On each of these themes, we attempted to analyse the key issues that were at stake and how and why they impeded or facilitated the peace, security and sustainable national development of Nigeria. We also concluded the discussion of each of these Sections with pertinent and we believe, well considered recommendations. We further believe strongly that if they are followed and meticulously applied by Nigeria's leaders, the peace, security and sustainable national development of Nigeria will be greatly enhanced in the years ahead.

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