# Banking on Regional Security Agencies- Internal Security Challenges and Operation Amotekun in South West Nigeria

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***Abstract***
*In this modern and fast paced world, we live in, national security, especially internal security, is now more important than ever. It is, therefore, not an anomaly that internal security is one of the most popular subjects in the world today. Almost every day one hears about the senseless loss of life and property caused by terrorist activities and wars, not only in our country Nigeria, but also elsewhere in the world. In Nigeria, there is no disputation that despite the concerted efforts that have so far been made in tackling the internal security threats and challenges, the security problems are still very much with us. Thus, all over the country they are now posing great threats and challenges to our earnest efforts to maintain peace, security and promote national development. There is no question that for peace, security and sustainable national development to be reasonably achieved in this country; and at the rapid pace and rate we are all expecting, there is need to tinker with the current national security architecture, especially as it concerns policing the entire Federation of Nigeria. Today, Nigeria is the only large country with a Federal System of Government that still operates a unitary police system. Is a Unitary Internal Security and Police System (UISPS) in a large Federal System as Nigeria, not a misnomer? Should the Unitary Internal Security and Policing System, be changed to a Regional Security and Policing Architecture? Has the Unitary Security and Policing Architecture failed Nigeria, given that it has not been able to address effectively the growing security threats and challenges that are getting even more severe by the day in Nigeria? Should Nigeria not be banking on the Regional Security and Policing Agencies' Model, such as the Operation Amotekun, that has been started by the State Governors in the South Western Zone of Nigeria? These are the questions that we have attempted to answer in this Paper. The case of Operation Amotekun provides the substantive basis for this discussion. We then conclude with some policy recommendations as the way forward that could hopefully tackle the growing security threats and challenges in and to Nigerian when implemented.*

***Keywords:*** *Regional Security Agencies, Internal Security, Operation Amotekun, State Police, National Policing Architecture, Peace, Development, Nigerian Police Force, South West Nigeria.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

In this modern and fast paced world, we live in, internal security is now more important than ever. It is therefore, not an anomaly that internal security is one of the most popular subjects in the world today. Almost every day one hears about the senseless loss of life and property caused by terrorist activities and wars, not only in our country Nigeria, but also elsewhere in the world. In Nigeria, there is no disputation that despite the concerted efforts that have so far been made in tackling the security threats and challenges, the security problems are still very much with us. Thus, all over the country, they are now posing great threats and challenges to our earnest efforts to maintain peace, security and promote national development (Mou, 2017; 2020; Oduyela, 2017).

There is no question that for peace, security and sustainable national development to be reasonably achieved in this country; and at the rapid pace and rate we are all expecting, there is need to tinker with the current internal security architecture, especially as it concerns policing the entire Federation of Nigeria. Today, Nigeria is the only large country with a Federal System of Government that still operates a unitary police system.

In this Paper, we shall examine these issues, with particular emphasise on Operation Amotekun, a newly established Regional Security Agency for the States in South Western Nigeria  We shall also look into the need for and how to tinkle appropriately with the current internal security architecture for the effective securing of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.  A nation's internal security system is predicated on her internal interest as well as her strategic calculations within its region of influence and in the global arena. For there to be an effective and result-oriented internal security architecture, the socio-economic terrain and the entrepreneurial needs of the nation must be well enhanced (Mou, 2021). These are catalysts that propel inclusive growth and development, which in turn assure the well-being of the citizenry and provide the dividends of democracy to all and sundry.  It is a well-known fact that without peace, security and development, these can never be achieved in any society or Nation.

## II. IMPERATIVES OF PEACE, SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT: CONCEPTUAL ARTICULATIONS

The key concepts that are central to this paper and have appeared throughout this discussion, calling for immediate definition 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 Nowegian 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, 1999).

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 book, 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 few 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, 1999).

(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 Horrieder 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 hinge 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, who 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 a religious group, 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 he 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 are 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; Meridith, 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 'econo development', and that the **Brundtland Repor**t
> 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 concerns 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

*Dan Mou, 2023, 8(1):23-42*

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).

This cannot be achieved by one sector or tier of government in a federal setting alone. A combination of all elements of national power and strategic alliances would have to be harnessed. Since the return to democratic rule in 1999, Nigeria has witnessed different forms of conflicts, ranging from sectarian to ethnoreligious crises, whole sale abduction, hostage taking, arson, incidents of cattle rustlings and terrorism, especially in the Northern part of the country. Our nascent democracy has also been tested by rampant crimes of armed robbery, and kidnappings in the East, pipeline vandalism, crude-oil theft and civil unrest in the South as well as abduction, hostage taking and ritual killings, especially in the West. These issues have resulted in major internal security operations by the military across the six geo-political zones of the country, since the Nigerian Police, whose major responsibility it is to deal with internal security challenges, were not able to cope with them fully.

These various operations involve huge deployment of military assets and manpower. However, the greatest challenge to the Nigerian Government is that this Military and Security operations are being carried out at a time when the Federal Government of Nigeria is experiencing decreases in the National Revenue. This was as a result of the falling prices of crude oil which is Nigeria's major export earner in the world market. Besides, Nigeria has now been fighting against terrorism and insurgency within the last ten years, thereby stretching the military too thin. In the North East, there is *Operation Lafiya Dole*, which handles the overall Counter-Terrorism and Counter-Insurgency Operations with expanded scope, scale and depth comprising three divisions and more than five states. This has dovetailed to other specialised operations like *Operation Crackdown* to wind down the war against insurgents and clear the remnants of the Boko Haram sect in Sambisa Forest. *Operation Gama Aiki*, which serves same purpose in the northern part of Borno State. It also includes *Operation Safe Corridor*, set up for the de-radicalisation and rehabilitation of repentant Boko Haram terrorists.

North Central has *Operation Safe Haven* stationed in Plateau State, with an area of operation extending to Benue, Kogi, Nasarawa and Kwara States, to quell ethno-religious conflicts, militant herdsmen invasion and other criminal activities. In addition, there is *Operation Ayem a Kpatuma* (Cat Race), based in Benue State, covering all the other North Central States of Nigeria. There is also *Operation Sara Daji* and *Operation Harbin Kunama* that are being carried out in the North West. These are specifically designed to prevent the criminal activities that are going on in those places, such as the armed bandits, cattle rustlers and armed robbery. These criminal activities are particularly prominent in Zamfara, Kaduna, Sokoto, Kebbi, Katsina and Kano States.

Down south, the military has a major operation codenamed *Operation Delta Safe* which was formerly *Operation Pulo Shield.* It is now complemented by the Nigerian Army's *Operation Crocodile Smile*,

*Dan Mou, 2023, 8(1):23-42*

and Navy's *Operation Tsera Teku.* These operations are all aimed at crushing the resurgent Niger Delta militancy and other acts of criminality like oil theft, vandalism, and bunkering in the region.

In the South west, there is *Operation Awase* with a mandate to contain the criminal operations around Ogun-Lagos axis, particularly in Arepo where illegal oil bunkering and pipeline vandalism are regular occurrences. South East has *Operation Iron Fence* to combat armed robbers, hooligans and kidnappers. There was also *Operation Python Dance I and II* to contain the growing agitation for a separatist state of Biafra. In addition to all these operations is *Operation MESA*, which is a Joint Task Force (JTF) operation against all forms of criminal activities in all the states of the federation.

As a result of all these internal security operations, which could have been handled by the police, the military has been stretched to its limit with soldiers spending years in the operation with the attendant process of demoralization setting it. This is one of the major reasons why the war against Boko Haram and all the criminal activities that necessitated the internal security operations in the country have been floundering.  It is also the major reason why President Muhammadu Buhari, GCFR directed recently, that the Armed Forces should withdraw from all internal security operations and handover to the Nigeria Police Force, whose mandate it is to deal with them.  The military are however, directed to focus now mainly on strictly military duties.

Thus, there is now an emergency situation that calls for the Federal Government of Nigeria, to consider the relevant legislative ways or Constitutional challenges, by which they can tinker with the current internal security and policing architecture in Nigeria to address the prevailing and even growing internal security threats and challenges to the nation.  These are outlined in the section below.

## III.     INTERNAL SECURITY THREATS AND CHALLENGES

The major current security threats and challenges to the peace, security and sustainable national development of Nigeria are briefly listed below:

(i)      Boko Haram Insurgency

Since it started in 2009, the Islamic religious insurgency group, known as Boko Haram, has constituted a great threat to Nigeria.  It is more prominent in the North Eastern part of the country.  However, it is gradually expanding to the North Central and other parts of Nigeria. It has already staged very dangerous attacked in the North Central, including the attacks on the United Nations Building and the Nigeria Police Force National Headquarters, at Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, to name just a few.  This terrorist organisation is clearly a very potent challenge to Nigeria.

(ii)      Niger Delta Militants

The Niger Delta Militants are about the oldest insurgency groups in Nigeria.  The Amnesty Programme had addressed these problems, but they are still far from being resolved. Because Nigeria relies heavily for her National revenue on Oil and Gas from the South-South Zone, their activities constitute great threats to peace, security and development of the country.

*Dan Mou, 2023, 8(1):23-42*

(iii)     Indigenous Peoples of Biafra

Compared to the level of death and destruction, the Indigenous Peoples of Biafra (IPOB), has been relatively far less dangerous than both the Boko Haram and Niger Delta Militants. However, because it is a separatist movement, and given Nigeria's history of civil war involving that same South East Zone, it is considered a very serious security threat as well.

(iv)     Herdsmen and Farmers' "Conflicts"

Even though herdsmen and farmers have always been involved in minor clashes in the past, the current terrible situation is clearly a more dangerous dimension.  Since 1999, it resulted in the death of over 15,000 persons, including women and children, especially of farmers.  This also involved the destruction of billions of Naira worth of farms, houses and other properties.  In 2018 alone, it became even worse, resulting in the death of 3,600 farmers and over 1,500,000 of them displaced.  In fact, statistics show that the death toll from the herdsmen and farmers' conflicts are now far higher than those from even Boko Haram, as the herdsmen continue their wanton invasion and destruction of farmers' settlements and other properties.

This is particularly very sad because the farmers were on their farms and in their villages peacefully.  The herdsmen travelled long distances from other lands to come, invade, attack and kill the farmers in their thousands.  It is even wrong to call this as "conflicts" between farmers and herdsmen.  It is actually a terrorist attack and invasion of farmers, their farms and homes by herdsmen!  It is sad that this aspect has so far, not been emphasised enough!

(v)     Social, Economic and Political Consequences of internal security problems

Aside from death and maiming of humans and animals, these internal security problems have also come at a great cost to social, political and economic lives of the people affected by them and the development of the Nation.

In particular, it has resulted in, among others, to:

(a)     Threats to foreign and local investments in the affected areas;
(b)     Threats to Agricultural Production and therefore challenging the Food Security Policy of the Nation;
(c)     Threats to Religious and Social life as religious buildings and communities and villages are massively destroyed;
(d)     Threats to General Commerce and Trade as because of these problems, the local people have become afraid to go to local markets or travel long distances to go and buy and sell; and
(e)     Threats to harmonious existence of the different ethnic and religious groups in the Nation.
(vi)     High Levels of Poverty and Inequalities in the Society

The Federal Bureau of Statistics (FBS) has recently revealed that 71% (seventy-one percent) of Nigerians are living below the extreme poverty level of one dollar a day. With such high levels of poverty, banditry, kidnappings, armed robbery and other forms of crimes in the society are bound to rise.

(vii)     High Levels of Unemployment

It is not possible for peace and security to exist in a society where there are very high levels of unemployment, especially among the youths.  Estimates are that the unemployment rate is now about 29% for the general population.  Among the youths, however, 35.8% of them are said to be unemployed.  This certainly, is a great threat to peace and security.

(viii)     The Challenges of Bad Governance and Public Corruption

Despite the concerted efforts over the years, these issues still constitute great problems in the country.

(ix)     Mono-Cultural Economy, leading to over-dependence on Petroleum, Gas and their allied Products

Despite all efforts at diversification in the areas of Agriculture, Solid Minerals, Tourism, the Performing Arts, etc., Nigeria is still a mono-cultural economy.  This is a big national security challenge; and

(x)     Extended and Porous Borders

Nigeria has a large, expanded and porous borders with her neighbours.  These are: The Republic of Benin; the Republic of Niger; The Republic of Chad; and The Republic of Cameroun.  This makes it very difficult for the Nigerian Immigration Service, the Customs and the other Security Agencies to more effectively control our borders.  Coupled with the ECOWAS Treaty on Free Movement of Persons, Animals and Goods, the Challenges have even been intensified.  These have even been recently intensified by the liberalization of Visa Policy of Nigeria, which now allows all African travelers to simply obtain Visa on arrival.  A lot has to be done to ensure that foreign criminals and terrorists do not capitalize on all these to enter illegally and cause great security and other problems for Nigerians and Nigeria in the country.

## IV.  THE EMERGENCE OF OPERATION AMOTEKUN

In the recent past, the establishment of the Western Nigeria Security Network, otherwise known as "Operation *Amotekun*," on January 9, 2020, has dominated the news. We see the emergence of a fundamental concept, Amotekun, that has touched on the sensibilities of the various social cleavages in Nigeria. By social cleavages here we mean those divisions in Nigeria that are based on ethnicity, regions, classes, language, religions and even gender. By this, we mean that virtually everything in Nigeria, no matter how well-meaning, ends up getting ethnicised, politicised, or religionized and so forth. This, to us, is at the root of the Nigerian dilemma that often throws up the fault lines of the Nigerian state.

The establishment of the Operation *Amotekun,* however, should not be generating the controversy it has been generating. Because of the changing security requirements of the Nation, it should be clear to everyone by now that we need to decentralise internal security, especially the policing architecture, to effectively curb the daunting security challenges we are contending with. These internal security threats and challenges are bound to persist and even become worse following the recent pronouncement by President Muhammadu Buhari GCFR that the military should withdraw from all internal security operations and allow the Nigeria Police to take charge. The Military are now to act, especially on typical military functions and roles. If we do not have regional or state security

arrangements or architecture, such as the Operation *Amotekun,* to fill the lacuna that the military withdrawals will create, we may end up creating far bigger internal security problems.

We agree with what the French poet, writer and philosopher, Victor Hugo said in the 19th century: "No force on earth can stop an idea whose time has come. Nothing is stronger than an idea whose time has come." It would appear that the time has indeed come to take a serious look at the concept of state or regional police architecture in this country. In doing this, we should establish regional or State Police Forces as complementary to the usual role the Nigeria Federal Police will continue to be playing in securing the nation.

## V.     HISTORICAL RECORDS

Before proceeding, it would be appropriate to ask ourselves some pertinent and fundamental questions on what propelled the South West region to think of conceiving a security network of their own. By the way, the North West, the South East and the South South Zones have already stated to come out with their own similar security outfits. Why are we "suddenly" contending with spates of crimes like insurgency, kidnappings for ransom, ritual killings, armed robbery and other forms of violent crime? Why have we not made serious headway in the fight against Boko Haram in the last ten years? Are we still dealing with the same old Yusuf-led Boko Haram? Why is the highly rated Nigerian military – adjudged at a time as one of the best in Africa - that brought peace to Liberia and Sierra Leone struggling to contain Boko Haram? If a war strategy isn't working shouldn't there be a change in strategy? And if there should be a change in strategy, what should that change or changes entail?  Should we not be banking now on Regional or even State Security Agencies, such as Benue State Volunteer Force (BSVF), to address the growing internal security threats and challenges in Nigeria?

For some time now, many have appeared on both Channels TV and African Independent Television (AIT) discussing these issues, in addition to other platforms, including myself. We can recollect vividly that they did mention the need for the establishment of State Police, which will collaborate with the Federal Police in tackling internal security challenges. We suggest that in addition to what the National Assembly is doing, a National Council of State meeting should be called by President Muhammadu Buhari GCFR to deliberate on strategies that would allow state Governors some autonomy when it comes to security issues in their states or regions, as the case may be. These calls are being made against the background of the serious security challenges Nigeria has been grappling with, pending when a constitutional review by the National Assembly and State Legislatures, would be in place to firm out how these arrangements would work.

Why then did the South West Governors decide on setting up the Amotekun security outfit? We can only hazard a guess at this juncture. Perhaps, they have reached out to the authorities at the federal level to officially voice out their concerns. The next step, like is often done in Nigeria, is to "shake the table" a little bit in order to gain attention. But is their action of "shaking the table" appropriate and justified? We think it is. It has forcefully brought the issue of national security and especially policing, in a federal system into the front burner, which should be fully supported by Nigerians because the protection of life and property is the most basic concern of any Government in any modern society. Temper with this and you may be on the road to anarchy or near anarchy.  This appears to be behind the increasing number of "failed States" in the World, today.

*Dan Mou, 2023, 8(1):23-42*

Beyond establishing *Amotekun*, what major fears are these Governors trying to contain? The real threat these South West Governors – and indeed most Nigerians – are scared about today is from the Greater Sahel, Wider Sahara and Libya. With Libya still boiling years after the death of Muammar Ghaddafi, Niger and Chad Republics bleeding from insurgent activities and Cameroon dealing with agitation for self-determination from its Anglophone region, the threats are far reaching and beyond Nigeria. If we do not monitor these developments closely and be prepared, we may be caught napping. In essence, beyond the internal security issues, our present predicament is equally transnational.

The national threat the South West Governors – and most others – are quick to point out is the threat of being under siege from a highly equipped and trained transnational terrorist organisation that knows no border.

Late last year, it was on record and widely reported that Governors Bello Matawalle and Aminu Maseri of Zamfara and Katsina States met, negotiated and appeased the bandits and cattle rustlers terrorising their States and neighbouring States, such as Sokoto and Kebbi. Why did these Governors break the protocol and publicly held meetings with these bandits in full public and media glare? Perhaps, they know more than we know and felt that was the "right" thing to do at that moment. But, is this a right strategy? We do not think so and will give our reasons below.

During the 1930s in Europe, the major European powers applied this strategy when they tried to appease Adolf Hitler. Rather than confront Hitler, they tried the easy way out hoping to speak to his "conscience." The result of not taking appropriate action when needed, led to the Second World War in which millions of people died.

The terrorists, bandits and cattle rustlers we are dealing with are not rational State actors governed by international laws and norms. They have their agenda which is mainly fueled by religious fundamentalism and the desire to have territories to control, as we have seen. Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq, are classic examples that are still fresh in our memory. ISIS made a bold statement by establishing a "Caliphate," as a result of the war in Syria, which provided the springboard and leeway for territorial expansion due to a large swath of ungoverned territory. That they moved into Libya after being dislodged from Syria, should be a thing of concern to us in Nigeria. Reports have it that they are now moving southwards, which is why countries like Mali and Burkina Faso, are presently on edge.

The growth of the State in the early modern period, was attributable to its monopolisation of warfare. In what have been called 'new wars,' that monopoly has been eroded for two different reasons. Powerful States – without their being aware - have withdrawn from their monopoly of war. Some - even powerful Western Nations – have employed private military companies to surreptitiously fight some of their battles. They employ asymmetric methods out of choice. Secondly, some "failed states" have permitted the privatisation of war out of weakness, and non-state actors have adopted asymmetric methods for the same reason. Clausewitz's original definition of war, as an act of force to compel our enemy to do our will, still provides an effective means to understand war, enabling us to see terrorism as a strategy (Clausewitz, 2012).

Warfare is changing, and not just in the most obvious and visible ways. Yes, there are new technologies, newly assertive foes, and new ideologies. But to fully understand how it's evolving, we must examine the broader context in which we are fighting. There are tectonic shifts underway,

gradual yet persistent, that we rarely think about as being a part of war. Yet, they directly affect what our Armed Forces face on the battlefield, now and into the future. This is the major reason that we have consistently advocated for "Thinking Outside the Box." Our leaders should be on their toes, seek for quality advice from experts and take appropriate actions before we are all overwhelmed (Mou, 2020; 2021).

The starting point is to critically review our counter-insurgency strategy and answer the fundamental question of why have we only "technically defeated" Boko Haram, after ten years of fighting? That Boko Haram is today stronger than ever is a testimony that our strategy is faulty and needs to be rejigged.

## VI.      THE OPERATION *AMOTEKUN - A* REGIONAL SECURITY AGENCY

Why did *Amotekun* materialise? According to the South West Governors, *Amotekun* would complement the mainstream security agencies in the country. Speaking during the flag off in Ibadan, Dr. Kayode Fayemi, the Governor of Ekiti State said: "Amotekun is a complement that will give our people confidence that they are being looked after by those they elected into office. So, we do not want this to create fear in the mind of anybody as we are not creating a regional police force and are fully aware of the steps, we must take to have state police. We do not want anybody to misconstrue the concept of Amotekun."

Fayemi also pointed out that insecurity of life and property, in recent times, was the main reason behind the formation of the regional security outfit. He added that the mainstream security outfits had not been forthcoming in arresting the situation.

> "It was in the context of the unfortunate development that we lost the daughter of Pa Reuben Fasanranti, the leader of Afenifere. And that further put pressure on us, as leaders in the Southwest, to do something about insecurity. As elected leaders, our primary responsibility, according to Section 14 (2) of the Nigerian Constitution 1999 as amended, is the security and welfare of citizens. That was what informed the Governors coming together to fashion out a way to complement the work of the mainstream security agencies overstretched in their efforts to arrest the menace that have afflicted the entire country," he said.

The Ekiti State Governor also said the announcement by Inspector General of Police, Mohammed Adamu, of the Police Force commitment to community policing strategy, was an indication that *Amotekun* had been embraced by the leadership of the mainstream security agencies. He said *Amotekun* was thus, a community policing response to the problem of insecurity in the country. The Governor said pending the time community policing strategy being put together by the Nigerian Police come into fruition, it was necessary to give the people a confidence boosting strategy. "So, if you ask me, *Amotekun* is nothing but a confidence building strategy for our people in the six states of the Southwest." On the mode of operation of the outfit, Fayemi said it would work as a joint task force with the mainstream security agencies. He said having deep knowledge of the terrain, language, culture and history of the community where they would work; the outfit would be set apart from other agencies they would work with.

To show that the move of the South West Governors has the peoples' backing, an *Amotekun* Solidarity Walk led by state coordinators who are members of a group called 'Yoruba World Congress' – an umbrella group for all Yoruba socio-cultural and self-determination groups, was held

across the region. A statement issued by the Congress says: "All Yoruba people are urged to come out in their millions anywhere they are in Oduduwa land on Tuesday to show to the world that Amotekun has come to stay." Yorubas in Kwara State have been asked to join the protest.

Non-Yoruba residents in the South West have also been assured that *Amotekun* is for the protection of everyone in the South West, not only Yorubas. We are aware that the rally did strengthen the position of those who argued that *Amotekun* was an attempt by the South West to assert itself within the Nigerian Federation, and a hidden plan to introduce state police or regional police, through the back door, or perhaps an initial move towards the South West's demand for restructuring. Nonetheless, the suspicion that this is an anti-Federal Government initiative or a form of political rebellion, cannot stand because five out of the six Governors spear-heading "Operation *Amotekun*", are members of the ruling All Progressives Congress. Only Governor Seyi Makinde of Oyo State, belongs to the opposition Peoples Democratic Party.

It is a widely accepted belief that the security of life and property, is the most fundamental of all human needs. This is because we have to live before any other thing. Hence, most were surprised by the initial action of the Attorney General of the Federation, Malam Abubakar Malami (SAN). Quoting Article 45 of the Second Schedule of the 1999 Constitution (as amended) which gives the Federal Government exclusive powers over the Police. Malami insisted in a statement that the Western Nigeria Security Network was unlawful. However, other SANs like him, such as Femi Falana, Olisa Agbakoba and Chief Afe Babalola, and a senior legal scholar, Professor Itse Sagay, who is "pro-Buhari, pro-APC", and "pro-establishment", has also had cause to disagree with the AGF. It is interesting that the AGF himself has now withdrawn his extreme stand against Amotekun. He now says that the States in the South West simply need to, and have the right to, pass laws in their respective State Assemblies to make it legal. No one can argue with him on this. Thus, this has in fact now been done by all the six States of South Western Nigeria.

The politics surrounding *Amotekun* aside, we strongly affirm that the failure of the Nigeria Police to effectively protect all, is a common problem which is not entirely their fault. How to equip, overhaul and retrain the police, should also be part of a general overhaul of our internal security architecture. It has been said that *Amotekun* is an attempt to create state police or regional police. If so, what is wrong with that? Should we look away when Nigerians are being killed, maimed, kidnapped or their livelihood destroyed, because we want to be "politically correct"? Today, Nigeria is the only one, of the largest federations in the world, with a unitary police architecture. The rest have regional, state or even local police systems.

Historically speaking, we need to be reminded that state police or regional Police, is not new nor an abstraction, as many makes it out to be. The Police Force in Nigeria has colonial origins. Between 1861 and 1930 and even up to independence, Nigeria had a totally decentralised police system, in every part of the country. These were the Lagos Colony, the Niger Coast Colony, the Northern and Southern Protectorates, Police Forces. The Native Authorities and Local Governments also had their own Police Forces. Under the Indirect Rule system, local Police Forces were even under the control of Traditional Rulers, especially in Western and Northern Nigeria. The Native Authority Ordinance (No 4 of 1916) and later, the Protectorate Laws (Enforcement) Ordinance (No 15 of 1924), empowered Traditional Rulers to prevent crime and arrest offenders in their jurisdiction and employ persons for police work. This shows clearly, that there is a history to the clamour for State Police. The time for the re-introduction of Regional and/or State Police seems to be now. Otherwise, the prevailing internal security challenges cannot be effectively and efficiently dealt with.

We are aware that President Muhammad Buhari had, at different times, affirmed and reaffirmed Section 24 of the Constitution, which basically states that Nigerians have a duty to make useful contribution to the security and well-being of their communities. The President made inferences of this section of the Constitution, each time he proclaimed that national security requires the contribution of every Nigerian and every community. While we sometimes sympatise with the problems confronting the Nigeria Police, their inefficiency have also made matters worse. Complaints about police brutality indicate the scope of the alienation between the Police and the Public. However, it is the gross inefficiency that has been reported widely, that is the main problem of the Nigeria Police Force.

This lacuna in effectively policing the nation, is at the heart of the emergence of all kinds of security outfits across the Country. Since 1999, these have arisen to take care of community policing and interests. There are vigilante groups at the moment, in almost all parts of Nigeria in the form of neighbourhood guards. There are also private sector security companies and vigilance groups, set up by State Governments. It is estimated that, there are over 250 of these operating in the country today. In Kano State and parts of the North, there are for instance, the Hisbah Police Units, which enforce Sharia rules. In the North East, the Borno State Government set up the Civilian Joint Task Force, to assist the military and other security agencies to fight Boko Haram, and ISWAP. The bravery and contributions of the Civilian Joint Task Force have been praised by both local and international analysts. In the South West Nigeria, there was the Oodua People's Congress. Also, in the Eastern flanks, the Bakassi Boys exist and in the South South, the Egbesu Boys are set up. All these point to the erosion of confidence in the Nigerian Police Force and the need to formalize and legalise by legislation, the establishment of Regional and/or State Police Forces, in the Federation of Nigeria, as well.

We believe it is now time to sit down and sincerely discuss the security challenges we are passing through. If we are not secure in Nigeria, how can we tell investors to came and invest in our economy? Without investment how can the economy grow and provide jobs for the millions of Nigeria's unemployed youths? The time to act is now! It is against these holistic concerns with internal security challenges in Nigeria, that Operation Amotekun should be viewed, interpreted and evaluated.

## VIII. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The establishment of "Operation *Amotekun*" means only one thing: the clamour for state or regional police will not die down, it will only intensify. The genie is already out of the bottle. The best solution is to honestly discuss, legalise it and ensure it serves its purposes of protecting life and property and not for the political purposes of the State Governors. It is very important that appropriate laws, checks and balances are put in place to ensure the arrangements are never politicised nor abused by Governors and/or even their operators. Consequently, we make the following recommendations:

    (i)       To start with, the state or regional police must follow the law. We affirm that the respective State Houses of Assembly in the South West should have enacted the relevant laws backing "Operation *Amotekun*" before the fanfare of public display. If they had had public hearings at the various State Houses of Assembly, the heated controversy about it being "restructuring through the back door", would probably not have arisen. They did put the cart before the horse as the laws backing *Amotekun* came later. Hence, they should have immediately legislated the outfit into being and come out with a law after

public hearings, where all stakeholders must be free to air their grievances – where such exist. They should have borrowed a leaf from the Ant-Open Grazing law of Benue State. This law followed due process with public hearings, which also involved the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association. It was therefore, little wonder that Taraba State – which faces a similar challenge like Benue – adopted the same approach. All the States in the Middle Belt and the Southern Zones of Nigeria, have now copied the Benue State Law against Open Grazing of Animals.

(ii)     Maintaining a police force is capital intensive. If the Federal Government with the greater resources at its disposal, is facing challenges in equipping and maintaining a police force, it will be difficult to see how some States that have not paid salaries to civil servant for months, or even pensions, would be able to cope with the added burden of a state police. To such States, we advise they adopt the regional approach where they can pool their resources and manpower together to achieve stated goals as the South West States have done. In a Federal arrangement, security is never centralised. Nigeria is perhaps the only Federal Republic where this is being presently done. This readily explained the emergence of outfits like the OPC, Bakassi Boys, CJTF etc. These outfits emerged to fill a yawning security gap, which quite frankly, does exist at the moment.

(iii)    The Federal Government should support regional or state police. As we mentioned earlier, no federal system in the world operates a centralised police force. Under normal circumstances, the federating units are allowed some level of security autonomy. The Constitution should be amended to reflect this reality. In essence, the sub-regional units must be given room to work according to the theory and practice of federalism. Since states are already investing part of their share from the federation account to maintain the federal police in their states through the provision of equipment and other logistics, it would be appropriate to allow them Regional or State Police in their respective States, where they can control as Chief Security Officers of their respective States. They should be able to have some level of control over the commanders of the state police in their respective states, when created.

(iv)    The Federal Government is already pursuing the policy of community policing, which is an honest way of saying there are lacunas that need to be filled at the State and Local Government. Community policing entails that the local community are to be involved in maintaining local security and the maintenance of law and order. Local Government Chairmen, Traditional Leaders, Religious Leaders' Development Associations and other groups, also have roles to play in maintaining security. They know the miscreants within their midst and when a stranger comes into their community they also know. Consequently, they are better placed to gather the necessary intelligence needed for maintaining law and order in their localities. In Socialist Systems, such as Russia and China, maintaining security starts from the village level upwards. This has proved very effective over the years.

(v)     There is the urgent need to develop citizens' security consciousness. This was not an issue in the past, but present exegeses entail it be put on the front burner. As state and regional police gradually materializes, they will perform the roles of improving security consciousness of the citizens.

(vi)    It is also in the interest of the Federal Government to support or allow state or regional police. All the blame about the present security challenges is being firmly placed at the doorstep of the Federal Government because they control the security agencies. This will

not be so if there are other levels of autonomy for security control within their domain. They can only appeal for federal assistance in instances where they are overwhelmed.

(vii)  The Government must ensure that the Federal Character Clause in the Constitution is strictly followed in making appointments in the Public Service, especially in the Security Agencies whose appointments are far more sensitive in nature. This is particularly more so in the Military Police and other Security Agencies. It creates a sense of justice and equality thereby promoting nation building and patriotism in the citizens.

(viii)  Just like in building a multi-story building, the type of security architecture is very important. When security challenges are at their highest, only an Integral National Security System (INSS) or Architecture can be appropriate in dealing with them. Thus, the former Inspector General of Police, Mr. Ibrahim Kpotun Idris, was correct in calling for "the need for an inclusive approach" to addressing security challenges in Nigeria. This may require the restructuring of the Office of the National Security Adviser (NSA) to more ably handle this task of coordinating and operating an Integrated National Security System or Architecture in Nigeria.

(ix)  The nature of the economic, political, social and other policies – in short good governance, is critical to facilitating the Military, the Police and other Security Agencies in doing their work. Nigerians must know that the foundations for effective, efficient and inclusive policing, begin with the national security system, good governance and the level of nation building the Government is undertaking. Good governance must therefore be the norm at the Federal, State and Local Government levels.

(x)  Government must ensure that the Armed Forces, the Police and other National Security Agencies carry out their mandates and assignments or operations in a professional manner. They must not be "captured" by a particular social cleavage or a set of social cleavages, be they of ethnic, regional, religious, language, gender, class or even caste. A situation where they are "captured" by any of these cleavages to serve their parochial interest is too dangerous. It damages nation building and precipitates more problems than solving them.

(xi)  To have a truly "inclusive approach" to policing, the Nigerian Police Force must mobilise the citizens as part of their strategy in conjunction with their regional or state Police Forces when established, especially under the policy of community policing. It is especially important that the Traditional Rulers and other community/religious leaders must be coopted into it. The Traditional Institutions in Nigeria have a fundamental role to play, not just in community policing; but also in nation building. They can effectively be involved in building a united, peaceful and prosperous country. The British Colonialists used them under the Indirect Rule Policy. The Nigerian Police, as well as the Regional and/or State Police, when established, can do the same at this time by giving them a key role in community policing. They will help improve the peace, security as well as law and order, in their localities tremendously.

## IX.    CONCLUSION

The controversy about Operation Amotekun, the Regional Security Agency set up by the Six States making up the South-Western Nigeria Region, should be viewed as an opportunity to tackle the glaring security challenges the country is grappling with in its quest to maintain peace and order. Given the increase in banditry, pastoralist invasion of farmers' villages and farms, kidnapping, insurgency, armed robbery and terrorism, what the Governors of the South West of Nigeria had demonstrated was part of the responsibility to protect their people. Their recognition of that

responsibility is worthwhile and trustworthy. They deserve to be commended, not castigated, as some are unfortunately doing at the moment.

Equally too, the present conversation on the appropriate National Security and Policing Architecture in a Federal System, is altogether useful. Operation *Amotekun* has generated fundamental questions around the 1999 Constitution and the Police Force as an institution, as well as the need for an appropriate policing architecture in a Federal System such as Nigeria. We can only expect one of the sharp legislators in the National Assembly, to propose a Bill for a reconsideration of Sections 214 and 215 of the 1999 Constitution to be amended, to move Nigeria away from the threshold of centralised policing architecture to people-focused, community-based policing. The Colonial Government constantly decentralised Police Forces in Nigeria between 1861 and 1930. Why is the Nigerian State, in a season of innovation and creativity in the world, so trapped in the past, unable to provide security for the people, yet resistant to change? This is a fundamental question we honestly need to address. We suggest that until, and unless a decentralised policing architecture will be put into practice in Nigeria, it will be difficult to address effectively the internal security challenges and threats that are now almost turning Nigeria into a "failed State".

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