

Globalization and Security in Nigeria

Globalization is the ability by man to crisscross the world irrespective of geographical boundaries. Unhindered movement is an evidence of human development from simple manual efforts at achieving things in ancient times to sophisticated technological means in contemporary times. The free access to other nations is double edged, that is positive as well as negative however. The effect of globalization on the security of Nigeria shall be the focus of the paper. The type of weapons at the disposal of citizens before and after colonialism shall be examined. The sources of such weapons as well as their sophistication shall also be examined.

Keywords: Globalization, industrialization, World War II, Security, Technology.

The paper's objective is to examine Globalization as a concept and its effects on Nigeria. Like every other society, traditional Nigeria has had her security issues in the form of intra-communal conflicts and fracas. Hence Globalization cannot be totally blamed for the insecurity experienced in Nigeria today but may have increased its contemporary dimension nevertheless. This is the point of view of this paper. Globalization came to be as a result of World War II and its economic hardship and inflation on societies. Globalization is the crisscrossing of developed countries to other countries, especially the under-developed or developing countries. It is the sharing of materials by the developed nations, with the developing nations. Materials here encompass all tools, equipment, machines, textiles, etc. The economic crunch of World War II necessitated the expansion of markets, sales, profits and mutually beneficial economic growth, as well as improved living standards of the world's people (1).

The entity known as Nigeria, broadly speaking, is made up of three major tribes, these being the Igbos in the East, Hausas in the North and Yorubas in the West. Dozens

of other minor tribes exist along with these major three. Interestingly almost each of these is distinct with a culture and a dialect or language of her own. Due to the foregone, inter-tribal and communal clashes were common occurrences before the advent of colonialism. Although Nigeria was amalgamated in 1914, there still exist great differences in the cultures of the people. Culture, being an embodiment of the ideas, customs and art of a particular society (2), with the amalgamation of different societies, each having her peculiar belief systems, customs, superstitions and myths, considerable measure of maturity and self-constraints is required in order to avoid or minimize conflicts. Although this marriage of diverse societies has lasted one hundred years (100)- by the year 2014, there still abound inter-tribal misunderstandings.

The issue of security becomes paramount with the case above in mind. To better understand the link, it is necessary to define security. A version says; "For a thing, person, country or community to be secure is for that entity to be free from risk of loss, violation and unwanted access"⁽³⁾. Security from this point of view is the ability for one to

have privacy, the ability for one to control the entry and/or exit of another from the former's territory, property or life. To this extent, security can be defined as safety, which is "the state of being certain that adverse effects will not be caused by some agent"⁽⁴⁾. Security and Safety can be said to be "two sides of the same coin for a weakness in one equals a weakness in the other"⁽⁵⁾. Safety of a place implies adequate security measures being in place, hence the impenetrable nature of the place in question. This is in line with Merriam-Webster's definition of security as "the state of being protected or safe from harm"⁽⁶⁾. Harm in this sense could originate from vandals, thieves and in contemporary times, terrorists, ritualists and assassins amongst others. To maintain safety implies the acquisition of tools or equipment with which to ward off intruders. Hence the definition of Wikipedia becomes relevant. It sees security as "having a feeling of safety; precautions to keep something safe, or keeping something from being stolen"⁽⁷⁾. In this respect, a thing is secure when it is not violated or vandalized or tampered with or altered.

When a person, property or environment or boundary is respected and allowed to remain in its original form or state, it can be interpreted to mean that such is safe and secure. Security is very necessary therefore to the well-being of a person, thing or community. Globalization in a nut-shell is the drive to see the whole world as a single market. Its advent is basically economic and its intent is to exchange goods and services between nation-states. One of the effects of World War II was inflation and depression. Before the war, the then developed world that is, the United Kingdom and United States of America had shifted grounds from agriculture to industrialization. This is in the form of machine producing items such as the printing press, the looming and weaving machines for textiles and production of wears among others.

In an attempt to discourage competition and competitors from other countries, goods were protected from being exported by stipulating high rates. In this way monopoly was exercised over goods produced. After the 2nd World War however, scarcity of funds coupled with its attendant inflation, pushed the producers to open wide their doors in order that buyers from across boarder could have access to the products. Much more than waiting for the market at home, Harper says that the developed world went in search of "market expansion, sales, profits and mutually beneficial economic growth, as well as improved living standards of the worlds' people"⁽⁸⁾. The main intent of globalization is market expansion with an intent to sell off products and make maximum profit.

Globalization thus is the dream of the world powers to centralize all continents, peoples, cultures and economies of the world by decentralizing territorial and geographical boundaries. It is the attempt to bring culturally distinct communities to interact with each other⁽⁹⁾, says Lechner. Due to Globalization, contemporary markets are no longer concrete places but are now reduced to abstractions that represent the necessary interaction between the costs of production and the prizing on the one

hand, and the consumers' funds for the goods and services. Through the medium or initiative called Globalization, economic, social and cultural integration among peoples and nations has been effected. The availability and use of products such as Coca-Cola, Colgate, Nokia, Television sets, Computers, and their use worldwide among others is an example of the feat achieved through globalization.

Globalization is the brain child of the "More Developed Countries" (MDC^s) focused at the "Less Developed Countries" (LDC^s) among who are India, China and Africa. The MDC^s later came to be known as Multinational Corporations or Companies (MNC^s), or at other times called Trans-nationals. The MDC^s operated with some basic tools. The very first is the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT), which was struck in 1948 by the major MDC^s. This is an agreement geared towards the realization of a free market backed by trade rules, policy statements and dispute resolution where one arises. Records have it that between 1948 and 1996 the GATT had eight rounds of talks with "each resulting in freer flows of international trade"⁽¹⁰⁾. The European Union (EU) is another tool used by the MDC^s whose focus is on the reduction of tariffs, arrangement and procurement of cross-border labour, passport and license agreement. Perhaps, this is the body that is advertising for such things as VISA Lottery, work permits among others for other nationals into places such as the U.S., Canada, etc. Its focus could also be the attainment of a common currency across borders.

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) being one of the tools, focuses on free exchange of products, commodities, services and investments. As a result of its activities between 1989 and 1991, a free trade agreement has evolved among the U.S., Canada and Mexico. The World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) which came into existence in 1944 is another veritable tool as this provides development loans to nation-states which is laudable, except that their preference for certain projects that are beneficial to only the elites creates a divide between the elites and the masses.

The World Trade Organization (WTO), a further tool of Globalization is mainly concerned with the rules of trade between nation-states. The aim is to assist the conduct of businesses in conducive atmospheres. Established in 1995, its headquarters is in Geneva, Switzerland, having 159 countries as members. This is as at March 2013⁽¹¹⁾. The aims and objectives of Globalization, which are mainly economic are targeted through free trade, Protectionism and managed trade. Free trade is simply the notion of administering trade between sellers and buyers with no discrimination⁽¹²⁾. This also assists countries to focus and specialize on the production of goods that they are better at, while acquiring others from sister or neighboring nation-states. Protectionism further regulates the inflow and outflow of products in order to eliminate competitors and competitions. This is sometimes achieved by reducing the quota for importation or introduction of stiff tariffs on such goods or at other times outright ban of such goods.

Between Free trade and Protectionism is managed trade, when either free-flow or restriction on products is done discretely. An evaluation of Globalization shows the huge exchange of goods and services across borders. Since the 1960s, goods such as Ovaltine, Colgate, Kellogs Cornflakes, Palmolive Bathing soap, etc. have crossed borders in large quantities. Wears that have crossed into the nation-state of Nigeria cannot be counted, not forgetting household materials such as washing machines, hand driers, dish driers, as well as farm tools such as machetes, tractors, harvesters, fertilizers, pesticides and germicides.

With the aid of Information Technology (I.T.), today, Globalization has rendered geographical boundaries and national identities redundant, this is more so with e-banking, e-mailing, e-marketing, e-trading of goods. In the words of Paasi, Globalization has “challenged the ideas of fixed boundaries, identities...”⁽¹³⁾. Indeed Globalization has redefined boundaries and borders to mean areas of “mixing, blending, blurring and hybridizations”⁽¹⁴⁾ of nation-states. The “blending and mixing” has touched all areas of each nation-states’ total life.

In security matters, which is the subject of this paper, Globalization has had a major effect in Nigeria. Lintner, investigating crime, understood it as a combination of both native and foreign ideas⁽¹⁵⁾. Nigeria with her numerous tribes and their unique cultures has had conflicts from time immemorial. The duo of Best, S. G. and D. V. Kemedi gave us an insight into what arms were like in traditional Nigeria and what they are like in modern times. It is almost agreed that in Nigeria, Awka (Anambra state) is the seat of local crafting and manufacture of small arms. This was largely by imitating imported supplies. When the civil war started in 1967, the United Kingdom fed the Federal Government of Nigeria with weapons, while France fed the Biafrans⁽¹⁶⁾. Although the war ended nine months after, the use of arms continued, perhaps more by armed bandits. In December 1980, the country woke up to be confronted by the Maitatsine Islamic fundamentalists’ brutal attacks on fellow Islamic adherents adjudged not to be true followers of the tenets of Prophet Mohammed. These however employed the use of traditional weapons such as bows, poisoned arrows and machetes. This was generally attributed to the self-imposed closure of the Northern borders to everyone and everything western. Perhaps if there was internet and mobile phone services, maybe there would have been a wider coverage of the happenings which could have resulted into either more rampage or better control.

The civil uprising in 1993, following the annulment of the June 12 victory of the late M. K. O. Abiola, as elected by the Nigerian populace, carried out by the then Military Government of Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida, was limited in reporting and coverage nationwide. As at then, none or few broadcast stations broadcasted round the clock, nor were satellite stations available for the use of the citizens. As successful as the uprising was, the difference can be compared to manual operations versus automatic operations of machines.

Due to inter-tribal violence and bloodshed in Plateau state, a state of emergency was declared on the 18th of May 2004 which lasted six (6) months⁽¹⁷⁾. This implies that the clashes and resultant violence and bloodshed were prolonged. Where were the ammunitions coming from is the pertinent question. In the same year i.e. 2004 the then Rivers state was different due to the presence of crude oil, oil companies and the state of the indigenes. Prominent groups such as the Niger Delta Peoples Volunteer Force (NDPVF) and the Niger Delta Vigilante (NDV) already existed and were forces to be reckoned with. It is said that rifles such as AK-47, Czech SAVZ.58, G3, FN FNC, FN FAL, Beretta AR-70, FNC, Light machine guns and Pump action shotguns were common among the armed groups in Rivers state. In fact Musah and Thamson states that by 2004 weapons such as AK-17 with two magazines, a 200 – round machine gun, pistols and automatic rifles sold freely in the Niger Delta⁽¹⁸⁾. These to my mind are beyond the crafting and manufacturing skills of the craftsmen of Awka. A member of the NDPVF generally referred to as ‘General Commander’ by name British Columbus Epedaba further stated that weapons in the class of General purpose machine gun (GPMG), Machine guns (MG) and Self-loading rifles (SLR) were in abundance in the Niger Delta⁽¹⁹⁾.

The sources of these weapons are not far-fetched. ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) participants from the Nigerian Army bring in some, while groups or persons that support armed groups within the oil industry supply some. Furthermore it is alleged that traditional leaders seeking support from armed personnel also source for and equip such persons. Again weapons that are seized from local stocks are largely unaccounted for- by and large, while some are seized from over-powered Nigerian Mobile Police or Nigerian Army Personnel. At other times, some members of the Nigerian Army or Police force also sell/trade some out. The Cameroonian soldiers that are stationed in the Bakassi Peninsula also serve as another source, as they trade off some, while vessels that are anchored off the coast of Nigeria further supply some. Again smugglers from Guinea – Bissau, Gabon and Cameroon purchase weapons off sailing vessels and sell off to prospective buyers (among whom are Nigerians). It is also said that Ghanaian gunsmiths assist in training Nigerian blacksmiths in gun making skills⁽²⁰⁾.

It may not be an exaggeration to state that between the 1990s and the early 2000s “Estimates suggest between one million and three million arms were in circulation throughout the country (Nigeria)”⁽²¹⁾. This pile of weapons is used by either conflicting tribal groups or regional militant and/or political groups. In Nigeria such conflicts have occurred between the Sayawa – Hausa and the Fulani in Tafawa Balewa local government area of Bauchi state, the Tiv and Junkun communities in Taraba state⁽²²⁾, the Chamba and Junkun – Kuteb in Taraba state⁽²³⁾, between the Bassa and Egbura in Nassarawa state⁽²⁴⁾, between the Ife and the Modakeke in Osun state and the Ijaws, Itshekiris side by side the Urhobos. All these were characterized by

unprecedented use of arms⁽²⁵⁾.

In the middle belt of Nigeria there have been conflicts between cattle rearers/herders and the farmers, and later between the Christians especially in Plateau state. Free use of weapons such as AK-47, G3 assault rifles, SLRs, submachine guns, light machine guns, pistols, revolvers, craft single and double barrel shotguns as well as dane guns has been on the increase⁽²⁶⁾. Even if these are crafted and manufactured by Nigerians, the ammunitions that are relevant to their use are imported. It is consequently suggested that outpost communities and border nations such as Chad, Niger and Cameroon are likely inlets.⁽²⁷⁾

The rise of vigilante groups also encouraged and increased the influx of arms into Nigeria, either due to non-availability of security operatives from the relevant governing bodies or their non-efficiency. In the South-South of Nigeria, the Niger Delta Vigilante (NDV) formerly known as the Okrika vigilante or Kelanders⁽²⁸⁾ led by Tom Ateke came into existence in order to fight criminal gang activities in Okrika. The latter is a major town in Rivers state. The Nigerian Police force could not curb or curtail the activities of the criminals hence the NDV stepped in, and the latter in order to arrest the situation made use of a lot of arms. It is said that they funded most of their purchases by embarking in illegal oil bunkering.⁽²⁹⁾ Gradually politicians also engaged their services which is an additional source of arms as well as empowerment/legalization.

The Niger Delta Peoples Volunteer Force (NDPVF) was formed after the group concept of the late Isaac Boro of the 1960s. It is led by Asari Dokubo with a social concept that the Niger Delta be provided with amenities such as electricity, roads, portable water, among others. Being a major source of the crude oil that has made Nigeria prominent, this group is fighting for attention. The extensive use of weapons is implied and its main source of funding is illegal oil bunkering.⁽³⁰⁾

In a bid to control oil processing territories and oil bunkering routes, the NDV and NDPVF became rival groups (this is aside other small groups in the region) engaged in fights, using arms and ammunitions freely. This resulted in hundreds of citizens either dying or displaced from their settlements⁽³¹⁾. As preparations for elections came to a peak, it is said that "most (people) rallied behind the key groups of Asari and Ateke to facilitate access to arms and resources"⁽³²⁾, either for self-defense or for communal safety.

In 1997, the Federated Niger Delta Ijaw Communities (FNDIC) came to be, solely due to the "series of bloody ethnic clashes between the three main Delta state ethnic groups, (that is) the Ijaws, Itshekiris and Urhobos (which) erupted in Warri, a major commercial city"⁽³³⁾. Its main purpose is to protect the Ijaws and with her nearness to the coast and ports, it is suspected to have been fully armed with assault weapons.

The Egbesu Boys of Africa (EBA) is an offshoot of the Ijaw Youth Council (IYC), established in December 1998. These are militant in nature and their focus is to have a

greater control of Niger – Delta oil wealth. The Niger Delta Volunteer Force (NDVF) led by Bello Orubebe, a lawyer from Warri, is agitating for an increase in the revenues that are disbursed to the oil producing states in Nigeria, particularly the Niger Delta states. A further agitation of theirs is that oil companies that are operating in this area should be committed to employing its indigenes. This group may be pressing her points home by employing legal means, but it is possible also that arms are involved somehow. In the East of Nigeria, the Onitsha Traders Association (OTA) came to be in the late 1990s in response to the incessant criminal activities perpetuated against traders, customers as well as the markets. The OTA members made use of various weapons in executing their goal until the year 2000 when the then Anambra state government despatched a detachment of the Bakassi Boys to replace the former.

The Bakassi Boys was a combination of Anambra state Vigilante Service (AVS), Abia state Vigilante Service (AVS), Imo state Vigilante Service (IVS), Onitsha Traders Association and ASMATA Boys. This new body was formed in 1999 and stood against armed robbery, extortion and harassment of traders particularly in Aba. After their victory in Aba, they served as Vigilante in big cities in the South East of Nigeria. To effectively achieve their aim, the use of arms is implied even though the source is not mentioned. The South West made up of Oyo, Osun, Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun and Kwara states is predominantly under the control of the Oodua Peoples' Congress (OPC), led by Mr. Frederick Fasheun. It is a force to be reckoned with as things in politics as well as Vigilante groups in communities. Its main thrust is to fight oppression, crime and robbery. Its members serve as Vigilante in different communities and make use of assault weapons in the execution of their duties, even though the source is not disclosed.

The Arewa Peoples' Congress (APC) in the North is the counter part of the OPC in the South West of Nigeria. It came to be in order to fight opposing political parties and ideologies that may want to encroach into the Northern terrain. Their foot-soldiers are mainly the 'almanjiris', mostly children and youths from the mosques or Koranic/Islamic schools. These are prone to obey instructions especially when they are coated in a religious undertone. The use of arms, both local and imported has been traced to them, although the source is not mentioned.

Other groups in the North of Nigeria include the Hisbah Groups. These are Islamic Vigilante groups that are inclined solely to the adherence of the Sharia law. There are speculations that their weapons are made up of sticks, knives, whips and curved weapons with blades⁽³⁴⁾. In Zamfara state the Vigilante Service (ZSVS) is so empowered that it is identified with a red uniform, described as a "ragtag volunteer army". Its assignment is "arresting anyone suspected of violating Islamic law"⁽³⁵⁾, and it is suspected that the arms used by this group may be locally crafted as well as imported ones. The group formed by the students of the University of Maiduguri known as Al-Sunna Wal Jamma or 'Taleban' has the singular goal of seeing Nigeria become an Islamic state.

The conclusion is that no matter the number of armed groups that are identified and listed in Nigeria, it is likely to be a mere tip of the iceberg⁽³⁶⁾, as it is impossible to assess their actual numerical strength. The reason is not far-fetched as there is the frequent denial of armed activities by both members and non-members. By the former in order to avoid sanctions by the government and by the latter in order not to be tagged as 'informant' or 'talebearer' or 'fearful'. Florquin and Berman are of the view that no matter how volatile Nigeria may be, "the ready availability of small arms and higher weapons contributes significantly to the outbursts of violence", ...⁽³⁷⁾.

The citizens would have been saner and controllable were arms not readily available for use, especially since the government cannot control the entry, purchase and consequent use of these. With so many porous borders as well as dissident and fraudulent officials trading weapons and human life and societal peace for a penny, globalization and all it represents has resulted in insecurity in Nigeria instead of safety.

Defining security to encompass lives, property, job, food, home, health, investment among others, Ikotun is of the view that globalization has compounded the problems and misfortunes of the people of Nigeria. He insists that globalization has made the divide between the rich and the poor more evident than ever in a way (the ability to own a weapon or not)⁽³⁸⁾. In another sense:

A comparative reality will present itself as we see the rich as epitomized by the oil multinational and the poor as natives who live in squalor. Oil exploration and how gas prices benefit New York, London and Paris, but not Rivers state⁽³⁹⁾.

The Niger Delta is besieged with a high rate of school drop-outs, bedevilled with rampant illegal means of making money from the oil industry, poor health indicators, few hospitals that are ill equipped, few trained personnel, non-existent roads, nor portable water. On the other hand, the quarters of the expatriates, the oil processors are decked with portable water, paved roads, powered through generators, lavishly furnished apartments and offices in Portakabins among others.

The implication of this is that the youths in Niger Delta and the citizens in other parts of Nigeria may not be this violent and volatile if the divide is not so evident and weapons are not easily accessible. With globalization, information on the operating methods of mafia groups are easily exchanged and can be reproduced readily, while some can operate as mercenaries. The operations of Boko Haram, assassins, kidnappers, robbers, bombers etc. are more coordinated and sophisticated, courtesy globalization and its exchange of goods and services among nation states, this being the positive as well as the negative. Easy accesses to assault weapons, information and economic hardship have made life more nasty, brutish and short. In the words of Amaechi, as quoted by Ikotun; "Booms of gunshots are more familiar sounds in Port-Harcourt and Warri (while)

people are kidnaped on a daily basis..."⁽⁴⁰⁾.

Globalization rather than secure the Nigerian populace and environment, "The climate of insecurity has forced many citizens, whose lives are in danger, to flee"⁽⁴¹⁾. This is more so, "when globalization has made borders irrelevant, at least for mobsters"⁽⁴²⁾, gathering together a networking people.

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