

# Defense security and sustainable development in Africa: Emerging challenges and response

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**Abstract**

The endemic nature of insecurity in Africa stands out as one which is disastrous, thereby making African a shadow of itself. This study examines defense security and sustainable development in emerging democracies of Sub-Saharan Africa. Methodologically, Cross-sectional descriptive survey design was adopted in the study, while primary and secondary sources of data were relied upon, interview and focus group discussion (FGD) were used as primary instruments of data collections. The social contract theory is adopted as the framework of analysis. Finding of this study revealed that bad governance has perpetuated class antagonism which breeds dissatisfaction amongst people in a bid to seek equality and justice in the distribution of power and economic resources. This process conceives conflict and the result for which many take to demand for rights which are unmet, hence unleashed terror to secure inalienable rights, access to power and economy. An analysis on Sustainable Development in this study, does reveal that denial and lack of access and opportunities are fundamental premises under which devastations of an economy can ensue and hence the entrenchment of the reign of terror. This process, as applicable in Africa, did also permeate the preponderance of reserved armies of unemployed under the guise of mendicant friars that further heightened the predominance of the terrorist regime in Africa amidst destruction of lives and economy. A way out of this is to create mechanism to open up more equitable access to power and economic opportunities which could lead to full capacity utilization of people's potentials and subsequently empower them with incomes and improved living conditions. This requires both commitment and diplomacy of the government and to undertake under the banner of collective responsibility and good governance.

## Introduction

The African state over the years have sailed like a troubled and sinking ship on a turbulent sea being tossed up and down in sight of no shore to anchor. To mitigate the heightened tension in such a sinking ship, the African state have adopted the posture of suffering and smiling, praying and hoping that the ship will one day anchor and offer them some respite. For many decades Africa has been seen by many critical observers as a collapsed state which though not in a state of war is a nursery bed for impunity and lawlessness. The situation of the continent paints a picture of a jungle state where everything goes plundering and looting of the public wealth is allowed and even considered a blessing and the life of its citizens is worthless and the destruction of it is inconsequential. This may not be far from the truth. After all, the Rwandan genocide, in which nearly a million people lost their lives, the Liberian, Sierra Leone and Congolese civil wars just two decades ago with their unholy contraption known as child soldiers, provide veritable material with which to substantiate these kinds of portraits (Abdulyakeen, 2021; Ibrahim and Cheri, 2013).

To date the complete anarchy in Somalia, the piracy in Ethiopia, the near-total breakdown of law, order and instruments of governance in Nigeria Africa's most populous country are all part of the litanies of the African dilemma. To these may be added that Africa has the highest illiteracy rate, highest poverty rate and highest mortality rate in the world (Acheoah, 2018), the lamentation appears unending and has been blamed on bad leadership (Igwe, 2010) on corruption (Isiguzo, 1999) and, on overabundance of human and natural resources. This depiction does not however provide an objective picture of African and its predicament. It merely presents a continent grappling with itself, but it does not present any objective explanation on how it found itself in this pitiable state. The political environment of Nigeria has been bedeviled with a lot of socio-political and economic maladies which have resulted to lack of development and systemic failure in both rural and urban settings. This makes Okoli & Ugwu (2019) to aver that "Nigeria is, arguably, a country under distress." Another author agreed to this by saying: "There is insurgency in the North-East, pipeline vandalization and activities of militants in the Niger Delta in the South-South and endemic cattle rustling and rural armed banditry in the North-West and North Central Zones respectively" (Rufai, 2018).

Africa currently grapples with the operation of terrorism and insurgencies which seem to operate in different dimensions. Research on the prevailing precarious security situation of northern Nigeria has been perennial, albeit with disproportionate emphasis on the phenomenon of Boko Haram insurgency and herdsmen-farmers disturbances (Olayoku, 2014; Okoli and Iortyer, 2014; Bagu and Smith, 2017). For example, Boko Haram and bandits majorly occur in the Northwest geo-political zone of the country. In 2009 the activities of the Boko Haram were tagged as a terrorist group, the concept of armed bandit became prominent with the emergence of cattle rustlers in 2014. Their activities were felt more in Zamfara, Katsina, Sokoto and Kaduna. Today, other neighboring states like Kebbi state, Niger are also affected. Cattle rustling and armed banditry have become major problems in Zamfara State. Rufai (2018) subscribed to this by saying that, the phenomenon has increased since 2010, leading to violent conflicts between the

Fulani people and their supporters from the Republic of Niger on one side and the farmers on the other. The phenomena has claimed many lives and left thousands homeless and poor.

Nigeria and most African countries suffer the challenges of poverty, insecurity and underdevelopment. And more recently, insecurity, which is bedeviling the entire country, is the hot topic of the day. In order to redress these socio-economic challenges, the government initiated several policies and programmes aimed at promoting economic growth and development. These include post independent national development plans (NDPs), industrialization strategies and agricultural development policies (Salawu, Muhammad, Adekeyer and Onimajesun, 2006; Olowookere, 2012). However, researchers have opined that these social problems persist because of a number of factors, namely: poor implementation of national development plans and national industrial policies, as well as corruption and political instability in the country (Iwuchukwu and Igbokwe, 2012; Raimi, Shokunbi and Peluola, 2012). Consequently, the failed government's socio-economic programmes/policies created 12 million unemployed youth in 2009 and 14 million in 2010. Available records show that unemployment is on the increase (National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2020) found that unemployment increased from 23.1% in Q3, 2018 to 27.1%, and underemployment is 55.7%). Youth unemployment in Nigeria is alarming and the consequence manifests in increasing vulnerability of youths to exploitation by some unscrupulous individuals, thereby resulting to anti-social behavior. Indeed the recent incidence in North-East and North-West is argued to represent a classical evidence of such vulnerability where youths are recruited by bandits or "Boko Haram" group for their social and economic gains. Regrettably, the Nigerian government is still unable to find a lasting solution to the problem.

## Statement of the problem

The emerging and seemingly endemic challenges arising from armed banditry that Boko Haram latently caused by numerous factors and manifesting in the form of farmers-herdsmen conflicts, kidnappings, cattle rustling, ethno-religious violence, abductions, community raids and invasions have worsened the security situation in Africa. Escalating conflicts among the diversity of occupational, ethnic and religious groups could potentially generate violence on a larger scale capable of crippling the region's economy, destroying the ever-eroding social cohesion among groups and weakening the state's capacity of instigating mass and direct action by different categories of victims. Bad governance in Africa is said to have been largely responsible for the increased rate of the poor, ignorant, deprived and displaced population across the country. The high rate of poverty and unemployment in the country is largely attributed to the bad governance framework that overwhelmed the country for years. This trend has over the years reproduced incessant violence such as, ethnic and religious violence, armed robbery, militancy, armed banditry among many others security challenges.

The endemic nature of insecurity in Africa stands out as one which is the most disastrous, thereby making even the African state a shadow of itself. Whereas uncoordinated efforts by governments at federal and state levels continue to define the weak response strategy against

the endemic spate of banditry in the Nigeria's North-West, al-shabab in Somalia, Boko Haram in the Sahel region, military response and dialogue with bandits have been counterproductive. Bad governance and poor rural policies are generally attributed to the rising incidences of banditry in this part of Africa. The rising poverty incidence among the rural population caused largely by a combination of climate change consequences and massive public sector corruption have left many rural dwellers vulnerable to being recruits of armed banditry as substitute to loss of livelihood. Thus, while rejuvenating the security sector is key to tackling criminality, the human security dimension of the rural population appears to be even more relevant and likely effective in designing appropriate response to the dreadful incidences of banditry/insecurity across the states in the Nigeria's North-West/Africa. The local government as the third tier of government in Nigeria's federal system needs to be reinvented as the most closet government to the rural dwellers. The basic social services required of the rural population can be effectively provided by the local governments if their autonomy is restored and corruption checked and controlled. The general objective is to look at Defense Security and Sustainable Development in Africa: its emerging challenges and the response to them. The specific objectives are to:

1. Examine the underlying causes of the current Defense Security and Sustainable Development in Africa.
2. Examine the impact of insecurity on Sustainable Development in Africa.
3. Examine the lessons learnt by Africa and the responses made by African's policy makers.
4. Recommend policy measures to reduce the negative impact of similar crisis in the future.

### Conceptualization: defense security

According to Robert McNamara (1968), security means development and development means security. He argues that without development there can be no security. Security is not military force although it may include it; security is not conventional military activity, though it may encompass it; security is not military hardware, though it may include it; He argued further that any society that seeks to achieve adequate national security against the background of food shortages, population increase, low level of productivity and income, low technological development, inadequate and inefficient public utilities and persistent problems of unemployment has a false sense of security. He further argued that, national security is a sensitivity of self-assurance that the tragedy of hostilities and the problems of global political life can be avoided by effective management, to ensure that the state and its institutions can continue to exist in an essentially unimpaired manner (McNamara, 1968).

Insecurity is the most discussed topic in Nigeria and Africa. Thus, Eme and Onyishi (2011) define insecurity as actions that constitute breach of peace and tranquility arising from historical tension, socio-political, ethno-religious and economic factors that result in destruction of human lives and property in society. More so, Otto and Ukpere (2012) viewed insecurity as the opposite of security, the presence of peace, safety, happiness and the protection of human and physical resources or the absence of crisis, among others. Arguably insecurity can be classified

into macro level and micro level analysis. For instance, from macro-level analysis, insecurity in Nigeria manifests itself in four different ways, such as Ethno-Religious Conflict, Politically Based Violence, Organized Violent Groups, Economic-Based Violence (Eme and Onyishi, 2011; Raimi, Akkhuemonkhan, and Ogunjirin, 2015). At the micro-level analysis, insecurity has seven elements such as Economic security, Food security, Health security, Environmental security, Personal security, Community security, and Political security (Tadjbakhsh, 2008; Raimi, Akkhuemonkhan, and Ogunjirin, 2015). Thus, Adebakin and Raimi, 2012 argued that the absence of any of these elements creates a state of insecurity characterized by fear, threat and phobia. Therefore, security is an important ingredient for the sustainable socioeconomic and political development of the nation. In meeting the commitment to engender peace and security of lives and properties, including preservation of oil installations in the Niger-Delta, the federal government doled out monthly the sum of 150 million naira (\$1.3 million) to military authorities for logistics (Courson, 2008). And more recently, the Nigerian government spent huge amounts of money to tackle insecurity in northern Nigeria. Despite the huge spending on security, the issue of threat to lives and properties continues to reoccur. Several multinational firms in Nigeria have relocated their employees due to insecurity (Enterprise Resilience, 2008). While defense in military terms is the act of resisting attack in order to protect the individual, property and a group of people who are vulnerable to the attack, defense security is aimed at coordinating all necessary human and material resources to resist an attack from a hostile neighbor or foe (Alabi and Fage, 2003). This, however, involves the method of acquiring or developing the weapon system, training and deployment of personnel for the purpose of attaining defense objectives which comprise the maintenance of territorial integrity, protection of national economic interests, national independence, etc. Many scholars have expressed this narrow, militaristic point of view. Wolfer (1965) maintained that the concept of national security presupposes a preoccupation with issues such as the protection of the physical territory of a state against external aggression, subversion, sabotage, alliance building, etc. which are automatically biased towards the military. By implication, this school holds that once the physical territory of a state is secure, all other concerns of the state would automatically fall into place. There has however been a growing consensus among scholars in the field of strategic studies that while the sanctity of national territorial integrity is hardly in doubt, it is not in any sense synonymous with the political and socio-economic survival of a nation. While not oblivious to the primacy of the physical safety of a nation, Oberg (1984, p. 29) rightly asserts that:

Security measures must be directed towards also immaterial objects like lifestyle, culture, freedom, identity and the protection of nature. An individual who has not satisfied his or her basic needs like food, cloth, housing, health, education and work can hardly be called secure-no matter how much weaponry the individual may have at his disposal. Furthermore, an individual lacking in basic rights to speak, travel, meet and communicate is also not a secure human being.

The point of view of Oberg and other scholars who share the integrated approach to the question of national security is that underdevelopment and poverty are as potentially destructive

as guns in the physical elimination of a larger percentage of mankind (WCED, 1987). In other words, their obvious position is that while man continues to be threatened by bullets and guns, non-availability of bread and butter are no less potent threats.

## Development

It can be argued that the exponential growth of a lot of economies around the world is not necessarily depictive of the plight of the poverty stricken majority of the world population. Though it can be said to be really true that globalization has helped the economies of a large segment of the world in significantly increasing their standard and quality of life. In essence, their human security has been greatly guaranteed. This however is not the case in most nations in Africa.

That is why the United Nations (1994) on Human Development Report states that though the human development progress has been impressive on many fronts, the gains have however not been universal among countries, social groupings, races etc. as it is with human security, so also is the paradigm shifts from the extant focus which previously dwelt on economic development to human development. Human development refers to the process of enlarging the range of people's choices in the pursuit of their goals and values (NHDR, 2015).

The term "development" has various meanings to different people and can be explained in different contexts. Ben (2018) citing Seers (1972) asserted that "development means the conditions for realization of the human personality. Its evaluation must therefore take into account three linked criteria: where there has been a reduction in (1) poverty, (2) unemployment, (3) inequality". According to Pearson (1992) development involves "an improvement qualitative, quantitative or both in the use of available resources". He also asserts that development does not refer to one particular perspective on social, political and economic betterment. Instead, it is a hybrid term for a myriad of strategies adopted for socio-economic and environment transformation from current states to desired ones. According to Ake (1996), development is a multidimensional process of change in the social structure, attitudes, institutions as well as the general acceleration of economic growth through the reduction of inequality and poverty.

## Sustainable development

The term "sustainable development" appeared in the late 1970s and was definitely consolidated in 1987 by the aforementioned Brundtland Commission. This commission prepared the most broadly accepted definition of sustainable development: Sustainable development is a transformation process in which the exploitation of resources, direction of investments, orientation of technological development and institutional change are reconciled and reinforce present and future potential, in order to attend to needs and future aspirations. The concept of sustainable development has been addressed by many scholars. This depends on the ideological perspective which the concept is viewed by the different scholars (Lele, 1999). According to the United Nations Organization (1987), "sustainable development refers to the development that is designed

to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.

A synthesis of the above definition will bring to mind that it is quite vivid and clear. It can be deduced that it refers to all the indicators of basic needs of the present generation such as good roads, access to pipe borne water, institutional, physical and social infrastructures etc. It equally takes care of future generation, yet unborn (Cooper and Varyas, 2004). Development also harps on the need for the overall transformation of the economies of both the less developed countries (LDC) of the world, as well as the industrialized and advanced nations. To put it simply, sustainable development seeks to make the world a better place for all generation of mankind (Dernback, 2003).

Akinjude, O. (2002) contends that “sustainable development is the pathways which are needed to both developed and underdeveloped countries. This requires a high level of dialogue, cooperation, collaboration and most importantly, trust that is simply not reflected in today multilateral institutions or regions”. If the latter sentence is reversed to reflect the yearnings and aspirations of the vast majority of population residing in both rural and urban sectors of Nigeria economy, sustainable development will be realizable in the near future.

## Research methodology

The methodology captures the strategy and design employed in executing the research. It explores the design, methods and sources of data. It deals with methods involved in the collection and analysis of all data collected through the use of interview for the research. It further focuses on research instruments validity and reliability, procedures for data collection, methods of data analysis that are adopted in appropriate sequences.

## Research design

This study used cross-sectional descriptive survey design. The study was mainly descriptive in nature, because of its heavy reliance on description, interpretation of the various views and ideas of the respondents. It was cross-sectional since the data was collected from the informers once at a time. This was considered appropriate because it engenders careful description and explanation of factual and detailed information about the opinion of the respondents on Defense Security and Sustainable Development in Africa.

## Method of data collection

The methods of data collection for this study were grouped into two, namely; the primary and secondary data collection. The both sources of data (for instance, primary and secondary sources) were extensively used for the purpose of drawing an empirical conclusion for proper analysis of the study so as to come up with objective findings.

## Primary data

Primary data for the study was also generated from formal interviewing of respondents to supplement the secondary data. The researcher conducted interview with diplomats and university lecturers. They were chosen on the basis of the researcher's knowledge and judgment that their wealth of experience will help make this research work formidable, unique and stand the test of time, hence my request for their expertise view and contribution towards the success of this research is apt.

Focus group discussion was also used to gathered data. The participants who participated in focus group discussions were drawn from religious, political and traditional leaders. This was apt to find it convenient while discussing among their peers. This method of data collection, in reality, helped the researcher discovered the Security and Sustainable Development challenges in Africa.

## Secondary data

Secondary sources relating to the topic and its relevant material are derived from the various books, articles, academic theses and online databases that elaborated more on the topic. The above sources of information enabled documentary analysis on Defense Security and Sustainable Development in Africa.

## Instrument of data collection

The instruments for gathering data for this study include the following:

1. **Documentary Instruments:** This research work involves the collection of documentary materials written by various scholars and also some official administrative documents and records from Accra Central Library, Ghana; Aminu Kano Centre for Democratic Research and Training (Mumbayya House, Kano); Arewa House, Kaduna, and Johannesburg City Library. These documents were collected, organized and subjected to critical analysis. This was done to enable the researcher to make a comparative study of the data from the literature reviewed and responses from respondents.
2. **Personal Interview:** The researchers also made use of personal interview so as to obtain first-hand information in the course of this study. It is a data gathering instrument that enables the researcher to have in-depth knowledge of the research topic through face-to-face interaction. This instrument was used because it gives opportunity for deeper probing into issues of study. In the entire interview conducted, only three respondents permitted that their response be tape-recorded. The others permitted note-taking. These responses were then synthesized and analyzed.



## Validity and reliability of instruments

The success of any research depends on the validity and reliability of its data gathering instruments. In order to effectively ensure the validity of the instruments used for this study, the instruments were subjected to content validity measurement which involves face validity and predictive validity. Therefore, in order to ensure that the instruments are reliable inferences and conclusions, internal consistency method was effectively adopted. Finally, in order to ensure this research possesses high validity, external criterion method was adopted and was achieved by checking how correct the findings of a particular instrument is by comparing the results with existing knowledge as well as the findings of the research gotten from questionnaire. These methods described above were carefully employed so as to ensure that the study is highly reliable and valid.

## Emerging challenges: Secessionist agitation

Africa at present is rocked with cases of secession. Sudan has split into Sudan and Southern Sudan. Independent Sudan was historically burdened with the 38 years long civil war between the central government and southern rebels who demanded regional autonomy and independence later on. The first civil war burst in 1955 and lasted until 1972 when Addis Ababa Agreement, granting regional autonomy to Southern Sudan, was signed. The conflict between the Central Government and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) re-emerged in 1983 and lasted until 2005 when the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was negotiated and signed. Under the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) of 2005, South Sudan was given six years interim period before conducting referendum on independence. The initial support for federation was championed by John Garang. However, his death in 2005 begun shift to more pro-independence position as propagated by new SPLM/A leader Salva Kiir (Idris, 2013). According to Riegl and Dobos (2014), South Sudan massively voted in favor of independence in January 2011 and was declared a sovereign state on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2011 and fully recognized internationally.

On issue of secession again, in reaction to the state institutions' failure in Somalia, after the dispose of S. Barre in 1991, the Somali National Movement (SNM) unilaterally declared independence of the north-western region of Somalia comprising the territory of a former British protectorate as the independent Somaliland in 1991 Act which was reaffirmed in 2001 referendum. Unlike the South Sudanese case where the referendum was negotiated with the central government and approved by the international community, Somaliland unilateral action did not lead to the international recognition of the newly created entity (Riegl and Dobos, 2014). This aspect of secession however, if Nkrumah's philosophy "Towards African Unity" is deeply understood, is the greatest ingredient of disunity that he was afraid of. More recently, the English speaking southern Cameroon has begun similar journey and also the Biafran movement in Nigeria. All of these are unfortunate scenarios as far as African unity as buttressed by many Pan-Africanists is concerned.

On the other hand, the issue of continental government for Africa, as suggested by Nkrumah, has also not been in place adequately. That is especially visible in the areas of a unified military and defense strategy, overall economic planning on continental basis and a unified foreign policy and diplomatic strategy. The crisis in the Darfur region of Sudan has underscored not only the urgent need for adequate funding and the logistic capabilities to handle peace-keeping operations in Africa but has also exposed the inability of the African Union AU to provide for common security for the continent. The conflict has cost at least 200,000 lives and forced more than two and a half million of people to move from their homes, according to the United Nations, though Khartoum contests those estimates, saying 9,000 people have died. The peace-keeping effort by the AU was too weak to handle the humanitarian disaster escalating into genocide. Despite financial and logistic difficulties, the AU agreed to extend the mandate of the AU peace-keeping force in the Darfur region, at which time it was supposed to be replaced by a larger hybrid UN/AU force in Darfur. An agreement was reached with the Sudanese government in April, 2007, which was to allow a hybrid force of 20,000 AU/UN troops into the country to strengthen the 7,000 AU troops that are already on the ground in the Darfur region of Sudan. But the Sudanese government, which reluctantly accepted AU peace-keeping force, has later refused to completely endorse the deployment of the planned UN troops in order to end the tragedy of Darfur (Adogomhe, 2008). This clearly defines that absence of continental military and defense strategy suggested by Nkrumah is what is causing the inability of Africa to combat insecurity and ensure security stability to herself. The question rose by Nkrumah that; which African state can defend its territorial sovereignty against any of the imperialist aggressor (Nkrumah, 1975)? In a personal communication, a religion leader asserted that:

In the present situation of African states, most states could not even defend themselves against some forms of internal subversions and other forms of internal disorderliness. Apart from the mentioned case of Dafur, Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria and other similar cases in Mali and other African states were serious security issues that those states could not be able to content alone. President Buhari of Nigeria visited Cameroon in 2015; the two governments announced the formation of Multinational Task Force to combat Boko Haram after the terrorist group killed 60 people in Chad within a month (DW, July 30, 2015).

The Multinational Joint Task Force comprises of troops from Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon, Chad, and Benin Republic (UN News, March 4, 2017). According to Chimton, (February 20, 2015) there was a battle between the Rapid Intervention Battalion known as BIR of the Cameroon military and the Boko Haram insurgents. It was as an attempt to cross the El Bied River, which separates Gambaru in Nigeria from Fotokol in Cameroon. It's against this backdrop, a Key informant opined that:

It is however, clear that the coming together to form the Multination Joint Task Force was not only influenced by the inability of each country to subdue the insurgents but also because the other country's territory was affected by the insurgents' attack. To Nkrumah, a Continental Military Command

should be charged with the responsibilities of protecting the entire African territory from external aggression and all forms of internal subversion and all manner of disorderliness in African societies (DW, July 29, 2016).

## Sit-tight culture in Africa

The introduction of numerous thuggish totalitarian rulers following independence, according to Calderisi's (2006) exhaustive account of Africa's recurrent problems with bad leadership, institutional failure, and widespread corruption, made these issues worse. The fact that "Africa has never had good government", he continues, and that "no other continent has seen such extended dictatorships," is the simplest way to comprehend the continent's challenges. The long-running dictatorships in African nations are to blame for the corruption epidemic, according to Ayittey (2012). Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia (44 years), Omar Odimba Bongo of Gabon (42 years), Moammar Gaddafi of Libya (42 years), Gnassingbé Eyadéma of Togo (37 years), and Hosni Mubarak of Egypt are all examples of long-serving despots (31 years). Similar to those in Angola, Teodoro Mbasosgo in Equatorial Guinea, Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe, and Paul Biya in Cameroon are among the current tyrants who have governed for more than three decades. These rulers or dictators, like many of their contemporaries, who held positions of authority for an extended period of time, spent their entire careers enriching themselves, intimidating political rivals, eschewing all but the barest forms of democracy, actively thwarting movements toward constitutional rule, and at times subtly, at others blatantly thumbing their noses at the international community. They had no separation between their personal and governmental wealth and ruled like monarchs (Calderisi, 2006). Their success, according to Ayittey (2012), may be ascribed to their dominance over the major governmental institutions, such as the central bank, electoral commission, civil service, judiciary, and military.

## Military disruption

It would be an understatement to say that Africa is where military intervention began. Of all the continents, it has experienced the most coups d'état in both its recent and immediate postcolonial past. The coup scenario occurs frequently, quickly following one another in a short amount of time, like a wildfire that resists all attempts to be put out. In 1963, substantial military action in Africa began in Togo, Congo (Brazzaville), and Dahomey, aside from military mutinies that did not result in coups. The 1960s and 1970s were labeled a "decade of coups" on the continent by Guttridge (1975), who noted that 14 noteworthy military coups occurred in Africa between January 1963 and the end of February 1966, and that by early 1968, there had been no fewer than nineteen successful coups. That's not all, though. The total number of coups in eight years had reached close to 30 by the end of 1970. (Gutteridge, 1975, p. 1). Over 70 successful coups and a sizable number of unsuccessful coup attempts had taken place in Africa as of 1999. (Amadife, 1999). Duzor and Williamson (2022) painted a grim image of military coups in Africa, as seen

in Table 1. Out of the 486 coups that have been attempted worldwide, they noted that more than 214 had occurred in Africa.

**Table 1.** Success Rates of Coup in Previous Decades

Decades	Total Coups Attempts	Successful	Success Rate (%)
1950–1959	6	3	50.0
1960–1969	41	25	61.0
1970–1979	42	18	42.9
1980–1989	39	22	56.4
1990–1999	39	16	41.0
2000–2009	22	8	36.4
2010–2019	17	8	47.1
2020–2022	8	6	75.0

Source: Powel and Thyne (2022), Cline Centre University of Illinois, VOA Research, 1950-Jan.25, 22, adopted in Megan Duzor and Brian Williamson (2022), VOA News, February <https://projects.voanews.com/africancoups>.

According to the table above, a total of 106 of the 242 successful coups in history have taken place on the continent. Concern has long been raised by the perception that military coups could occur in various regions of the continent. This has been supported by the fact that, of the 54 independent African states, 45 have experienced a military coup d'état, and that, of these, 13 have made coups an everyday occurrence (Duzor and Williamson, 2022). Similar to this are the coups that occurred in Africa starting in the 1950s between 1960 and 1999, namely during the Cold War. Military coups have decreased during the past two decades (2000–2009 and 2010–2019), partly as a result of the democratization process that took place after the end of the conflict.

The continent of Africa did not experience a break in the occurrence of military coups until the Cold War's conclusion sparked a rebirth of civil society movement for democratization throughout African countries in the 2000s. The traditional one-party states were replaced by multi-party systems during the third wave of democracy. Additionally, it cleared the way for a scenario in which military regimes lost popularity, partly as a result of a change in the global paradigm of support for the advancement of democracy and civil rights. These changes have created the notion that military intervention in Africa's political system is no longer an option. Contrarily, the episodes were far from done even if the time period in question had seen a relatively lower number of military takeovers — only 12 coups were recorded from 2000 to 2012 (Felter, 2021).

According to the turn of events, since 2012, military leaders have overthrown civilian governments in Zimbabwe (November 2017), Mali (August 2020), Chad (April 2021), Guinea (September 2021), Guinea-Bissau (February 2022), Sudan (October 2021), and Burkina Faso, among other countries, in the last five years or so (January 2022). The experience of military takeovers in Myanmar, South-east Asia, and Africa, especially in Sudan and the West African sub region,

where serial coup plots resulted in the overthrow of constitutional governments in four countries in 18 months (two of them in Mali within a nine-month period), led the United Nations Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, to denounce what he called a “epidemic of coups” (Nichols, 2021). Nowhere has this plague worsened as much as in Africa, which has caused many people to worry that the modest progress that some African nations had made toward democratization over the previous decades may be undone. At the heart of this is the terrifying worry that, unless extra care is taken to halt the ugly trend, the contagion effect of coups could easily drag back some nations into the abominable days of military authoritarianism, with its attendant suppression of civil society and denial of human rights and freedoms.

Generally speaking, despite Sudan tops the list of African nations with the most attempted and failed coups with 17, (out of this number six were successful). With eight successful coups carried out in 1966, 1974, 1980, 1982, 1983, 1987, 2014, and 2022, Burkina Faso holds the top spot. With eight coup attempts, Nigeria is the next country in line, and six of those were successful in July 1966, July 1975, 1983, 1985, 1993, and 1998.

## Corruption

Numerous high-profile examples show that corruption is a pervasive aspect of African politics. Before being overthrown in 1997, Mobutu Sese Seko, the long-time dictator of Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of the Congo), amassed a fortune of \$5 billion (Campos, Nauro, Dimova, Ralitza, and Ahmad Saleh, 2010; Pande, 2010). In the Goldenberg affair, millions of dollars were lost on “huge financial subsidies for bogus shipments of gold and diamonds” revealing systemic corruption under Kenyan President Daniel Arap Moi, according to Roubaud and Razafindrakoto (2010). Two further public figures involved in significant corruption scandals are Sani Abacha of Nigeria (Lawal, 2007) and Jackie Selebi of South Africa (Sundström, 2013). Recent Arab Spring events showed how hostile Africans are to corruption. Later, occupied Nigeria was established in protest of the loss of an oil subsidy that had supported an uneasy truce between some sectors of Nigerian society and the corrupted government (Anderson, 2011).

Africa is not the only continent with corruption, but it is nonetheless pervasive and among the worst in the world (Pande, 2009; Pallister and Capella, 2000). According to Transparency International (2019), only Botswana is rated as “extremely corrupted” and no African country is rated as “very corrupted” which includes the majority of the economically developed world. Six African countries are classified as “slightly corrupted” (scores under 20), and another 35 are classified as “least corrupted” (scores 20–39). Thus, approximately one billion out of Africa’s 1.2 billion people live under corrupted regimes, which is a higher percentage than the rest of the world.

According to the Transparency International Corruption Perception Index rankings of 2019, Somalia and Sudan are two of the most corrupted nations in the world. Based on our re-rank, they are also the most corrupt nations in our sample of 53 African nations. Contrarily, according to Transparency International rankings (TI), which took place Botswana and Cape Verde at 32 and 41, respectively. In 2000, Botswana, Madagascar, Namibia, and South Africa from the South;

Morocco and Tunisia from the North; and Ghana, Guinea, and Senegal from the West were the least corrupted countries. South Africa had the least improvement in corruption over the time period, while Namibia had the highest. Niger and Burkina Faso in the West, Ethiopia and Somalia in the East, and Mozambique in the South were among nations that had a change from low levels of corruption in 1984 to very high levels of corruption in 2000 rankings.

Africa's least corrupted nation, Botswana, is a regional leader in public services, infrastructure, and education. It also has a long history of relatively robust democratic institutions (Armah – Attoh, Daniel, Gyimah-Boadi and Annie Barbara, 2007). Measures to combat corruption and return stolen money have had various degrees of success (Scher, 2005; Lawson, 2009; Transparency International, 2009; Michael, 2004; Mbaku, 2008; Manga Fombad, 1999). The anti-corruption initiatives in Botswana take place in a setting that precludes comparability. Botswana already had relatively low levels of corruption, despite the fact that the country's Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC) was established in response to a number of corruption scandals in the early 1990s. In addition, the country benefited from a number of factors that make its situation unique: a relatively healthy economy, funds available for public services, a small (and relatively ethnically homogeneous) population, a lack of violent conflicts, and no history of significant corruption (Theobald and Williams, 1999; McFerson, 2009). In addition, the DCEC was modeled after and initially staffed by former members of the Independent Commission against Corruption in Hong Kong (Theobald and Williams, 1999). Although in other African countries, such an agency would be entrusted with tackling bigger corruption with fewer resources, Manga Fombad (2009) mentions the DCEC as an example of what a multi-pronged approach to corruption emphasizing prevention and supporting the rule of law can be, even in Africa (Theobald and Williams, 1999). The history and achievements of Botswana show the diversity of African countries and emphasize the importance of taking into account their political, economic, and historical contexts.

A dismal picture emerges from illustrations from Nigeria and Kenya. By November 2011, as many as 14 former governors of states, 2 former ministers and 59 former senior officials stood a trial accused of corruption. The woman who had achieved that quantity of inditement was dismissed from her job after president Jonathan had allegedly struck a deal with members of the National Assembly, who loathed her zeal, in exchange for their support for legislation in favour of dropping government "subsidy" for the pump price of imported petroleum products. The lack of civic virtue in these beneficiaries of "neo-representative democracy" is indicated by their attempts to subvert the rule of law punishing them for engaging in corruption.

## Summary of major findings

The summary of the above issues is that democracy is in progress in Nigeria. The same can be said of the other African countries like Nigeria, these countries are signatories to international conventions and treaties, apart from having elaborate provisions on democracy and the

rule of law, yet good governance has been a scarce commodity for most of them. However, there are some limitations on defense security and sustainable development in Africa. This includes:

1. Economic inequality, which has practically denied a large percentage of Africa's access to government. Poverty, hunger, unemployment, among other economic predicaments has limited people's participation in government in Africa's economies.
2. Ignorance and high level of illiteracy among the people have prevented a large percentage of Africans from benefiting from democratic principles.
3. Many years of military rule has delayed the development of the legislature, thereby subordinating it to the executive. For example, it is still vivid to us how the Federal Executive, under the leadership of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, muzzled down the legislature in Nigeria.
4. Similarly, the totaling regime of Mubarak of Egypt tried unsuccessfully to muzzle down the opposition and other democratic forces in Egypt. For over 30 years, Mubarak held sway in Egypt, democracy and the rule of law remained mere articles of faith. However, the recent revolution that swept Mubarak regime aside is a cheering news for the enthronement of democracy and the rule of law in Egypt, but whether it will facilitate good governance remains a hypothetical question. It has been noted that 'Egypt has had a great defiance for democracy. The entire citizenry has been so far been subjected to no leadership choice, and what that connoted is the governance would most likely become autocratic.
5. In a similar vein, a coalition of US and NATO, which backed rebels, succeeded in toppling the 42 year-sit tight regime of Muammar Gaddafi last year, and enthroned a National Transition Council (NTC), whose major task is enthrone democracy, the rule of law and ensure good governance in Libya. Whether the NTC will achieve this noble objective is also hypothetical. Although Mustafa Abdel Jalil, who was a former justice minister in Gaddafi regime and later decamped to the rebels and became their spokesperson, had warned 'all Libyans to exercise self-restraint and to respect the property and lives of others and not to resort to taking the laws into their own hands. It is not yet certain the direction of the new government in Tripoli. Laessing and Ryang (2011) have noted that as the loyal remnant forces of Gaddafi made last ditch stands in the capital, world leaders rushed to embrace the fractious rebel movement as new masters of Libyan oil riches. This means that the new government may decide to satisfy the glutton's desires of their new masters at the expense of good governance for the Libyan citizenry.
6. Generally, the emerging African democracies have ample provisions for democracy and the rule of the law, but good governance has been elusive. This largely accounts for low score or outright negative index of African democracies in the benchmark of good governance as corruption, election irregularities, poverty, unemployment, maladministration, gagging of the press, muzzling down of political opponents, emerging one party state, declining per capita income and Gross National Product (GNP) among other negative signals.

7. Rousseau, who equates democracy with the general will of the people, has argued that inequitable distribution of wealth in any society is counterproductive to good governance. He has argued that democracy will only thrive if the government provides for the materials welfare of the people, as well as remove gross inequality in the distribution of wealth in the society (Sabine and Thorson, 1985).
8. Most African economies, including Nigeria are off tangent to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). They (African economies) top the index table of corruption in the world as attested by the findings of the Transparency International. Civil wars, refugees problems, military coups, religious fanaticism, terrorism, kidnapping of innocent citizens and political opponents have persisted as the main features of the African countries.
9. The truth is that African people do not make substantial input either the selection or election of their leaders as the latter are usually accountable to their paid masters in Europe and America. Karl Marx has argued that those who control the means of production, distribution and exchange in every state, equally control the political power with which they reinforce and sustain their hold on the economy.

## Conclusion

The paper argues that democratic governance in Africa, has not ushered the necessary and desired development. The democratic experience in Africa has been a sharp departure from a people-oriented paradigm of governance. What the people get as their own dividends of democracy is despair and frustration and not improved welfare or overall development. Africa is endowed abundantly with both human and natural resources. The effective and efficient harnessing of these resources through a system that will ensure equity in resource allocation, improvement in the quality of life of the majority and the protection of rights of the poor appears to be the challenge. The quality of governance seems to be deteriorating resulting in restiveness and the weakening of some public institutions to the extent of the continent being contemplated to be ascribed as a failed state. Although Africa has recorded some level of progress in infrastructural and human capital developments, political tussle, corruption, the miscarriage of justice and the insecurity of lives and property have denied majority of citizens the much-needed dividends of democracy and accountable government, as promised by successive democratic governments. If Africa is ever going to witness the goal of sustainable development, this paper believes it will come only when the rest of the world sees a marked difference in the style of leadership, mindset, values and attitudes of those who leads. It is no longer in doubt that Africa is in dire need of committed leaders who will deliver on the gains of democracy. But what is in doubt is the possibility of change in the person of the leaders, structures and process of governance that will bring out sustainable development in our national economy.



## Recommendations

In order to avert violence and enhance the survival of sustainable developments in Africa, the following recommendations appear too central to the survival and well flourishing of our nascent democracy:

1. Military option as focused by the government cannot and will not provide solution to the security problems, but rather socio-economic development of the people will provide a lasting solution to the securities challenges. As Robert McNamara rightly said “security is not about military hard or software, though it may encompasses it, but rather, security is development and development is security, without development there will be no security”. This can be done by providing job opportunities for the jobless youths; poverty alleviation programmes for households; free medical facilities for the vulnerable; and subsidies on food and no-food items for the neglected rural majority.
2. Political offices should be made less attractive by regulating the salaries of politicians. As long as the salaries of political office holders quadruple those of Professors, Chief Justices, long standing engineers and other professionals, political positions will remain a gold mine which anyone that discovers, it will go and sell all that he has in order to acquire.
3. There must be sufficient enlightenment to discourage the African electorate from mortgaging their conscience by selling their votes to incumbent politicians. Where the electorate understands the future implications of selling their votes, they would refrain from such practice.
4. Government should regulate and monitor the proliferation of SALWs. It is because, research shows that the availability of SALWs also triggered conflict and violence.
5. Parents should inculcate the culture of values in their children such as respect for constituted authority, hard work and tolerance of one another among other values so that when they grow up, it becomes a part of them.
6. Both kinetic and non-kinetic approaches should be applied in order to bring to an end the menace of insecurity and sustainable development in Africa.
7. Government should as a matter of urgency, restructure the security architecture for effective intelligence gathering. There is a need for a holistic review of the nation’s security framework. The centralized system of defense and policing has proven to be ineffective in a country like Africa. Community policing strategies should be adopted so that policing of a particular region would be the responsibility of the indigenous people of that region who have the knowledge of the region’s peculiar challenges, local inhabitants, culture, and geography and can proffer peculiar solutions that would be commensurate with the region’s insecurity dynamics. There should not be a need for any police officer to be posted to anywhere other than his state of origin for effective citizen-focused security.
8. Most of the security challenges in Africa are rooted around lack of political will, bad governance, unstable economy, illiteracy, corruption, large economic gap and ineffective post-insurgency peace building strategies. The government needs to be proactive in

setting effective poverty alleviation strategies and economic policies that would ensure citizen-based development. For crimes to be properly controlled, our educational sector needs a thorough overhaul to create an educational system that must guarantee jobs at the end through curriculums that would ensure graduates being job providers rather than job seekers.

9. Finally, this study proposes the introduction of a mid-term evaluation of those elected into any political office. Politicians must be able to go back to their constituencies for re-affirmation of their mandate after two years of a four-year tenure or two and a half years for a five-year tenure. Such provision would ensure that politicians are responsive and responsible to deliver the dividends of democracy to the electorate that voted them into office.

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