

## Pending Issues for the House of Representatives Ad-Hoc Committee on Incessant Killings and Other Security Concerns in the Country

**Note:** I was asked to intervene in a document produced by this Committee some time back when I paid an unscheduled visit to the House of Representatives. My intervention was impromptu and unofficial. I had consulted for one of the Committees and the Clerk who presided over the affairs of this ad-hoc Committee enlisted my intervention in the period the Committee was working.

Below was the text of my intervention. The recent addition was Numbers 15,16 and 18.

I would like to draw attention to the followings as it concerned the central thesis in the discourse of the Ad hoc Committee. The central thesis is SECURITY.

1. What we call and know as security in Nigeria did not come from a policy on security
2. What we call security derived from the functions of statutory agencies in law enforcement and in particular defence with the latter enshrined in section 217 of the constitution
3. Nigerians were socialised into the role of the armed forces which was described as security when they were both the professional managers of defence and the governing elite
4. The armed forces as the governing elite elevated its professional role as the agency saddled with defending the country's territorial boundaries into security. This role was sharpened when as the governing elite they were unable to provide the all encompassing services required of a government. Thus was born the crisis and conflict that characterised their administration of Nigeria which they described as insecurity. It was their bringing their defence role rather than their governance role to manage this crisis and conflict that gave birth to security described as physical safety. This was the beginning of the association of the armed forces/law enforcement services as security.
5. There is a functional difference conceptually, theoretically and methodologically between the armed forces perspective on security and those of the elected representatives - in the executives and legislatures - in their governance role to the people.
6. Since 1999, the perspective of security that resonated among the elected representatives is the armed forces perspective. The elected representatives have yet to define their perspective on security in tandem with the governance mandate from the people

7. The central task for the Ad hoc Committee is to get this perspective straightened out in a policy for which will form the basis of strategy. Strategy which is the task the Committee set out to accomplish cannot precede policy. It is time we have a security policy!

8. The electoral democracy in place since 1999 has no voice of its own on security even as the executives and legislatures were put in place by Nigerians to secure their lives through governance.

9. The armed forces voice on security derived from section 217. It is NOT security and even if it is, this represents an insignificant percentage out of one percent of what security represent.

10. The elected representatives were so elected to provide security through governance and hence their term of reference is deriving from the Constitution. The constitution is the document from which their power derives. This is the security that their mandate is expected to fulfil.

11. Arising from this what is the elected representatives' position on security?

12. Is their intervention on security driven from knowledge of security based on policy? Or is it driven by their socialisation under the military rule from where the military's defence role equate to security? Do we have a security policy in Nigeria?

13. A security policy, beside the Constitution, is the next most important policy document in the life of a country. A security policy is that important because once it set out the security philosophy of a country, all other policies whether in agriculture, education, defence, space, police, prisons, science, technology, children, people with disability, IT, youth, language etc should and must have security objectives taken from the country's security policy to be accomplished. Do we have a security policy? Do other policies in Nigeria have security objectives taken from the security policy? On what basis do we define the current interventions on security by the executives and the legislatures?

14. A security policy should answer the following four fundamental questions:

- what is security?
- whose security?
- what count as issue(s) of security?
- how can security be achieved?

At this moment, do we have any document called security policy providing directions with answers to these questions?

15. The first three questions represent issues of policy and it is the responsibility of the Legislature (national, states and local government levels). The input of the executives (national, states and local government areas) is welcome in its formation

16. The last question represents issue of strategy and it is the responsibility of the executive (national, states and local government levels). Since it is envisaged that the security policy will have security objectives for each area of administration and since other policies of government will have security objective derived from the policy to be attained in their respective jurisdiction, each policy will come up with a strategy toward attaining its objective.

17. What we think or claim we know on security was not studied within the four walls of any school in Nigeria as no tertiary institutions<sup>1</sup> – the public ones – have any programme of security studies. To this extent we do not have a repository of researches within indigenous curriculum not oblivious of the practices elsewhere that examine security from the point of view of studies. We have not examined security from Nigeria's history, experience and reality (HER).<sup>2</sup>

18. A security policy will set the direction or framework for academic explorations and discourses on security in Nigeria. The absence of security policy currently hampers scholarship as academics rely on external input in their intervention in theories, concepts, methods, issues etc around security. Should there be a policy in place, their discourses will reference the policy and hold the government accountable.

19. What we think or claim we know on security is the practice of law enforcement and defence which in policy term and in the context of Nigeria's history, experience and reality do not represent security.

20. What we need at this moment is the voice of Nigerians represented by their elected officials in the executives and legislatures on security. This security should represent their governance role and should derive from the careful consideration of Nigeria's history, experience and reality (HER) in its making. The absence of this type of security is the reason Nigeria is perpetually bleeding.

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<sup>1</sup> In 2015, the Institute of Governance and Development Studies, Nasarawa State University, Keffi under its Security and Strategic Studies began MSc and PhD programme. Hopefully, the Institute would commence undergraduate programme in Security Studies when the resources is available.

<sup>2</sup> see the link "stripping" on [adoyionoja.org](http://adoyionoja.org) for the theory of security based on history, experience and reality