

## In Search of "security" in Nigeria: Follow the Money

I am working on a piece titled "in search of "security" in Nigeria? Follow the Money". The piece is in line with my view that the undefined, uncharted and ungoverned space called "security" requires policy legislation in tandem with the democracy enabling environment in place since 1999. This is to distance security from the predominance of military, intelligence and law enforcement mindset.

In line with the need for policy legislation, I provided a framework of the envisioned policy legislation based on the P.D. Williams' four fundamental questions on security and security studies (4FOs). Again I find the framework useful in engaging with most if not all issues. The four fundamental questions of security and security studies are: what is security? whose security? what is security issue and how can security be achieved? The questions straddled policy and strategy or vision and mission of security. These – vision and mission of security – are solely lacking in Nigeria.

In my attempt to chart policy and strategy direction on security post military rule, I provided answers to the questions thus: What is security? Security is wellbeing; Whose security? Human beings/Individual/Group – Nigerians; What is security issue? Anything and everything that promotes and/or undermine wellbeing or security of Nigerians; How can security be achieved? Security or wellbeing can be achieved when ministries, departments and agencies saddle with specific task pursue wellbeing or security in their areas of specialisation.

Now anybody who has been to the North East and witnessed the coalition of interests both foreign and local would realise that these interests are pursuing their wellbeing or security in the name of fighting "insurgency" and/or "terrorism". Indeed both insurgency and terrorism have been used to describe Boko Haram interchangeably as if they meant one and the same thing. I had argued in a paper in 2015 titled "terrorism or insurgency in the northeast?: the military and the challenge of definition" that this was another of the orchestrated confusion of the so-called competent/technical authority defining a problem in order to provide solution and/or a clear case of ignorance by the competent/technical authority saddled with this technical problem (a little on this later).

Nigeria is the basket case in the coalition brokered by the French to battle Boko Haram because of these interests. President Idris Derby had no such interest and neither has Cameroun and Niger Republic. This may have accounted for the relative success they have recorded in tackling the menace of the group in the face of the orchestrated disaster that has characterised their Nigerians counterparts.

The North East Boko Haram situation is the new normal in Nigeria. As I titled the piece "Follow the Money" and there goes "security". It is the pursuit of security or wellbeing by the interests that makes Boko Haram intractable. It is not the military, intelligence and law enforcement that is security. It is the money that the crisis provides for the interests - political, business and MILE - that is security. The wellbeing or security of these interests is too important to discontinue the conflict that supports this.

It is also part of the political economy of the democracy in place since 1999 where the new political class need to protect and safeguard their position from the military, intelligence and law enforcement (MILE) that most threaten their hold on power. The elected political elite do this by acceding to the management of "security" by the MILE whose officer class's huge and considerable investment in political governance was truncated by the sudden democratic turnaround in 1999.

"Security" thus serves two political economic purposes: it protect the political elite in power from their nightmarish adversaries - the MILE and secure their access to slush fund in the name of providing fund for "security" and second it keeps the MILE busy and rewarded as partner in the new dispensation ensuring that they do not lose the pecks of political power their military predecessors and role models enjoyed while in power by relinquishing political power in 1999.

Not even the professional authority - the military - is interested in the resolution of the Boko Haram crisis in its pronouncements. As I said somewhere in this piece, this was either deliberate or borne out of ignorance. The military with the army in the lead has continuously confused rather than clarify its position on the Boko Haram crisis. As I noted in the 2015 paper which I updated recently, the army chief confirmed the orchestrated confusion and/or ignorance when he stated that insurgency had been defeated and that terrorism remained their major challenge on the one hand and on the other hand that sacking service chiefs won't end Boko Haram! This was too much contradiction to swallow.

As a result of the interests involved in Boko Haram in Nigeria, the efforts of Chad, Cameroun and Niger will continue to be rubbished by their Nigerian counterparts.

There is no better evidence and confirmation of security as wellbeing for those still "in search of security in Nigeria...assuming we examined security's history using its etymology, epistemology and metaphysics than to "...follow the money". A clear example was the claim by the Minister of Information that no Nigerian was hungry because of Covid 19 induced crisis as the government had disbursed N100 billion to poor Nigerians!!!

Boko Haram or insurgency and/or terrorism is a money spinner for the "security" (defined as name and work of the military intelligence and law enforcement) interests including the political, business and MILE class and their western external collaborators who saw nothing wrong in profiting from the crisis that is thousands of miles away from their borders in Nigeria.

Money is security. Money is wellbeing. This the elite of politics and their MILE associates know. However, this security or wellbeing is for the few only as the few continue to feed the rest of Nigerians with the falsehood of security as the military, intelligence and law enforcement.

Still "In Search of 'Security' in Nigeria? Follow the Money". This is because with money one can access most things including power and thus secure self.