

Security is a Portfolio for the United States and Europe

Security IS a portfolio.

As a portfolio, the content of security was constructed to carry issues of existential threats to the welfare and wellbeing of the peoples and the countries with security philosophy. The portfolio contained in the order of need the most pressing issues that would make peoples and countries vulnerable and thus threatened from within and from the outside.

In the evolution of security in countries with security philosophy, security first addressed and consistently pursues the economic needs of the peoples and countries as sine qua non to other security concerns including physical threat to the ability of the state to function inside and in particular outside its border as the state goes in search of the first order of security.

The phase that today represent the face of security i.e. the containment of the threat to the ability of the state to pursue national interest on the international stage was occasioned into existence by the need to continuously source and exploit economic resources from far and wide in order to fulfil this first need – economic – in the security portfolio. The sourcing of this economic resources assist in the fortification of the capacity of the state in the short, medium and long term.

The countries of Europe had pursued the first phase of security in their relationship with one another necessitating the persistent wars they fought among each other until the evolution of the state system following the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648. While the Treaty did contain the struggle among Europeans in Europe, it did not address the struggle occasioned by the exploration, colonisation and exploitation of other parts of the world. Europeans would fight each other for resources in Africa, Asia and Latin America culminating in the internationalised European civil wars described as the First and Second World Wars.

These defining wars did pitch Germany and her allies on the one side and Britain and her allies on the other side as they battle each other for resource spaces all over the world. These developments would give the conception of security that prioritised the state first as the only security to pursue. However, the reality behind this security as the ability of the state to pursue its national interest anywhere in the world is the quest to fulfil the first order of security – the pursuit of economics – in order to enhance not only the welfare of the people but the ability of the state to fortify itself.

The intervention of the United States of America in these two European civil wars dubbed world wars was instrumental to their resolutions. It was also the opener for the construction of Pax Americana. The United States not only used the chance to begin to

extend its quest for the *American Dream* security beyond its immediate borders. It was the beginning of the progressive displacement European powers including Britain in world affairs in order to begin to stamp its mark on the world scene.

America had emerged on the scene by consolidating its growth through building a security model that prioritised the welfare and wellbeing of Americans through what became known as the *American Dream*. As at the outbreaks of the First World War, the economic resources aiding the building of *American Dream* was exhausting and reaching its limit requiring expansion beyond America's backyard.

The United States had developed the policy of isolation and staying clear of entanglement in foreign conflicts and wars especially those involving its cousins in Europe. However, the reality of the pursuit of its security – the *American Dream* – not only dictated otherwise. The internecine struggle of America's cousins in Europe was sure to draw America into its affairs.

The outbreak of the Second World War would overcome America's reluctance as the reality of world politics beckon on the intervention of the United States. The Soviet Union had emerged on the scene under an ideology that threatened all that America represented. The emergence of the Soviet Union would alter the course of world politics. Thus when America joined the war on the side of the allies following the Pearl Harbor attack in 1941, this would become a platform for the pursuit of the *American Dream* on the global stage as well as the construction and/or internationalisation of security as state-military-external environment.

In this security, America found a way to continue its *American Dream* First Order of Security by fortifying its military capacity in order to enable America source and bring home all the economic resource it can garner in order to maintain the welfare and wellbeing of Americans. The security that prioritised the state-military-external environment represented the phase in the construction of the logistics that will assist America pursue its primary security in the economy. Show me America pursuing security anywhere in the world and I will tell you that underneath this security is economics! Thus behind any foray in the name of security is the pursuit of the economic interest of America.

This phase of security – fortifying the military, intelligence and law enforcement equivalent to providing the logistics for security i.e. the pursuit of economic interest worldwide – was legislated into existence by the Congress of the United States passing the National Security Act of 1947. Subsequently different administrations have used the platform of the NSA to bring forth their policies on national security in the course of

their administrations. President Donald Trump is no exception as his America First National Security Policy demonstrated.

Since the enactment of the legislation in 1947, the concept of National Security became the preferred name for describing security in America. Like all things America, the use of National Security is now global as most countries of the world particularly developing countries have used national security to describe their security. Beyond the name replication, the content of national security in America differs from the content of national security in these developing countries including Nigeria.¹ Indeed for Nigeria, national security simply refers to the ability of the ruling coalition of ethnic/regional/religious/MILE to maintain hold on the state in the duration they are in power.

The question of advancing America's economic interest in order to enhance the *American Dream* is behind the pursuit of National Security for America anywhere in the world. Thus when an analyst on Al-Jazeera noted that the "United States was happy to trade off democracy for security" in Egypt and the Arab world, the priority for America is security – defined as its economics and other interest in the Arab world and not the pursuit of the ideal of democracy. This position was borne of a careful assessment of the condition that makes democracy feasible or not feasible in the Arab world.

America's National Security interest is responsible for the Trump administration and President Trump in particular alienating his administration officials and America's allies in the numerous sole moves that characterised the course of his administration. For instance, few days back and against statement from his Secretary of State Mike Pompeo calling on General Khalifa Haftar to stand down and work within the framework of the United Nations internationally backed government in Tripoli, President Trump called to offered his support to General Khalifa Haftar for what Trump described as his fight against terrorism and protection of Libya's oil resources.

President Trump had gone against his intelligence agencies positions, other administration officials and Congress, to supporting Prince Mohammed Bin Salman over the murder of the journalist Jamal Khashoggi in the Saudi embassy in Istanbul; in Egypt, the national security interest of America outweigh other consideration when it came to supporting the regime of General al-Sisi as he consolidate power via a referendum with the leadership of the party he overthrew in detention; it was the same national security interest that explained the United States support for the Saudi coalition in the Yemeni civil war against the side made up of the Huthis, Iran etc.

¹ For a perspective of national security in Nigeria, see Adoyi ONOJA, *What is National Security in Nigeria?* (Monograph 2) and *A Critique of National Security Strategy* (Monograph 3)

In all these instances, what is security for Trump and America is its economic interest aside from other interests contained in the security portfolio. Thus when America calls on government around the world to strengthen security, it is to enable America fulfil its security interest as contained in its security portfolio beginning with attaining its economic interests first.

In most cases, what is security for these countries, in the absence of philosophy, legislation and policy on security, is, in this order first the ruling regime's safety, the moral support it gets from America and/or European countries and the technical assistance it receive in the form of discarded military/intelligence/law enforcement hardware, training and funds for its military, intelligence and law enforcement (MILE). The provision of these material key into the perspective of security held by these countries as the protection of the state – the regime in power specifically – and are oblivious of the fact that they are fulfilling one among the many security objectives of the United States and/or European countries.

The first of these security objectives is to hold their countries together to enable America exploit their resources – their resources being America's first and only definition of security. The offer of hardware to their military, intelligence and law enforcement and technical assistance merely furthered the economic dimension of America's national security. These countries are saddled with the importation of spare parts, training and support for the hardware from the United States in order to continue to make them serviceable as they indirectly serviced America's security objectives in their individual countries.

This is security as "riken kaho wani na tace nono" for most countries subscribing to this universalised national security imitated from America. Nigeria is one such country. The Hausa word mean security is holding the horn and someone else is milking the cow. It is a security constructed to suit America's history, experience and reality (HER).

This imitation of a security is empty and has nothing to offer the generality of the people except the ruling coalition in power. The security is bereft of philosophy that includes epistemology, etymology and above all legal and policy platforms. The security is impervious of history, experience and reality (HER) and bereft of the benefit of Studying, Thinking, Observing and Comparing (STOC). The security has no portfolio.

It is this imitated "security" and/or "national security" in practice that account for the reason this "security" failed, is failing and will continue to fail each time this "security" is invoked in Nigeria.