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**SECURITY ISSUES IN NIGERIA**

Nigeria is a diverse unit with several languages spoken and multiple existing ethnic groups, It is also rich in all resources both mineral and natural resources. But despite all this Nigeria like any other country still has a lot of challenges which keeps it from that dream nation its citizens expects it to be.

Some of these challenges include corruption, an unstable economy, security and many more. But my focus is on one of the challenges that everyone will say is a debacle not only in Nigeria but the world in general, and that is on the issue of security.

Security first and foremost in layman understanding is the act of being safe being protected, the clear opposite of security is insecurity and Nigeria as a country has experienced a lot of that in every aspect in recent times and over the years, we’ll be looking at five major security issues posing a major challenge to the Nigerian government both past and present government.

The first issue we’ll be looking at is the terrorist group known as Boko Haram Islamic group which as destablished the North-East of Nigeria, since 2009 this group claimed tens of thousands of people and displaced millions more. About **2.5million people** fled their homes and towns, and the direct consequences of the conflict was that of the North-East which was plunged into a severe humanitarian crisis, earlier May 2015 the president Mohamadu Buhari claimed that his government will put an end to the national suffering inflicted by the Boko Haram. The government made significant military gains, reducing the number of Boko Haram deaths from more than **5,000 in 2015** to less than 1,000 in the past couple of years.

Nevertheless, the crisis is still not over, and it would be a grave mistake for the president to disregard the continued conflict. Suicide attacks and kidnapping have been carried out by the group this year.

Another security issue yet to discuss is the Farmer-herder clashes; The Middle Belt region of Nigeria has faced prolonged violent clashes between the predominantly Christian farmers and the mostly Muslim cattle herders (the Fulani to be précised). At the core of the conflicts are disputes over access and rights to land and water resources and rapid desertification which has changed the grazing pattern of cattle. These clashes were not necessarily new, but since 2015, the disputes have become more frequent and violent.

In 2018 alone more, more than **2,000 people** were killed in such clashes-more than the number killed in the past two years combined. The conflict now **claims an** **estimated six times** more than the Boko Haram crisis. The dispute is now being politicized and is stirring ethnic and religious tensions, which is very dangerous in a deeply divided country like Nigeria. The president must find inclusive and creative ways of addressing and deescalating this complex conflict.

One of the recent security challenges Nigeria is currently facing is the Islamic Movement of Nigeria (IMN) which is an Iranian backed Shia group in Nigeria. The leader of the group Ibraheem El-Zakzaky is **opposed to the federal system of Nigeria**, Israel, The United states of America and also opposes secular governments. Correspondingly, Zakzaky has called for an **Iranian-style revolution in Nigeria**. The group’s strong position on these issues and their regular protesting has resulted in clashes with security forces. However these recent clashes have become more frequent and more violent. In 2015 the leader of the sect was arrested, and in 2016 a judicial inquiry revealed that the army had unlawfully killed 347 members of the group in Zaira state.

Two years ago the security forces arrested 400 IMN members and allegedly killed dozens of civilians in the capital city Abuja and surrounding areas. According to the amnesty international, the security forces use of automatic weapons was an excessive and horrific use of force. The president then had to ensure the army has learnt lessons from how their dealing with Boko Haram and make sure the situation does not repeat itself again.

The Niger Delta, the oil producing core of Nigeria has for decades suffered from oil pollution which has lead tothe loss of livelihood and sources of food for locals. The area has also been neglected by Federal government even though the bulk of the country’s fund comes from the region. In the last decade, clashes between the armed group in the area and the security forces reached an all-time high; kidnappings were rife, and oil infrastructures were destroyed at a phenomenal rate.

In 2016, one of the prominent armed groups in the region, The Niger Delta Avengers (and other smaller groups) destroyed production infrastructure reducing production from **2.2 million barrels per day** to the two decade low of 1.4 million barrels per day. The infrastructure vandalism contributed to the onset of Nigeria’s worst economic recessions on record.

Another security challenge most Nigerians still don’t notice is that of her neighboring country Cameroon which is on the brink of civil war. The Anglophone minority -20% of the total population has felt marginalized since their independence. In 2016, what started as a series of protest by the Anglophone community against the use of French in their region, eventually turned into a full blown deadly crisis. The Anglophones are now calling for a secession of their territory which they call Ambazonia. Two years ago this intensifying conflict has lead to the deaths of about **420 civilians, 175 military and police officers and hundreds** ofsecessionist fighters.

As a consequence, over 437,000 people have been displaced from their homes, and about 32,000 pe3ople have fled to Nigeria. The increasing flux of refugees into the already fragile Niger Delta region will have untold consequences on local host communities and Nigeria as a whole. The government needs to be proactive in its response to the conflict through helping to mediate and deescalate the conflict and also through making proper arrangements for incoming refugees.

As with all these current challenges so will be a solution, if the government can make use of the possible solutions listed or find other effective means to tackle all this issue, then the government in no time will definitely put an end to all crisis and Nigeria will be a better and peaceful country.