

EFFECT OF GROWING INSECURITY ON AGITATION FOR SELF-DETERMINATION IN SOUTH-WESTERN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Unchallenged insecurity occurs on daily basis throughout the country and is one of, if not the most disturbing and discussed issue in Nigeria presently; thus seriously threatening the unity and cooperate existence of the country. The main objective of this study therefore is to examine the effect of unchecked security threats on the heightened agitations for self-determination by Yoruba ethnic nationality from the Federal Republic of Nigeria. After years of unaddressed marginalization by federal government, ethnic cleansing and insecurity targeting Yorubas notably masterminded by Fulani terrorists and herdsmen from Northern Nigeria, Yoruba self-determination agitators strongly insist that they are no longer interested in any other appeasement from government but in having an Oduduwa Republic. The research adopts Aggression-frustration theory and makes use of both authors' close observation of events in Nigeria and secondary sources of data. The justifiability or otherwise of these secession agitations under international human right laws some of whose instruments are domesticated by the Federal Government of Nigeria; roads to self-determination from countries across the globe and efforts of the agitators to draw international attention are considered. This paper recommends creation of employment opportunities for the teaming youths; impartial dispensation of justice and trust building for all Nigerians; provision of basic needs of the citizens and precaution in the use of force by security agents on agitators to the federal government of Nigeria to reduce the degree of violence often witnessed during protest and rallies.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is no doubt faced with different kinds of security threats such as armed robbery, kidnapping, political thuggery, ethno-religious conflicts, organized violent groups, economic based violence, gender-based violence, sexual abuse, menace of Boko Haram and most recently arms-bearing-herdsmen attacks. In fact, Nigeria's last sixty years have been perilous and appear to bear a semblance of Job's biblical account of his years: few and full of evil! Insecurity that started off as small-scale criminalities has grown in alarming proportions and has become a global concern with no end in sight. Like a die with many sides and akin to cancer, Nigeria's security challenges over the years evolved into several strains. Insecurity in Nigeria is so worrisome that Nigeria is one of the most unsafe places to live and work in. According to Dataphyte, insecurity caused over 70,000 deaths in Nigeria between 2012 and 2020; since 2011, Boko Haram insurgency has led to 37,500 deaths, 2.5 million displacement, and 244,000 refugees. In just two years, farmer-herder clashes claimed 10,000 lives and resulted in the displacement of 300,000 people; Nigeria has one of the world's worst kidnap-for-ransom incidence, with 685 kidnaps reported in the first quarter of 2019 alone; between June 2011 and March 2020, Nigerians paid about \$18.34 million as ransom.

An international rights organization, Global Rights Nigeria, reported that 4, 556 Nigerians were killed in 2020 as the insecurity situation remains worrisome across the country. The report called 'Mass Atrocities Report 2020' was made public by the Country Director, Abiodun Baiyewu. She stated that the citizens are frustrated with the state of affairs throughout the year, especially in October 2020, which was shown during the #EndSARS# movement, which was "not just about police brutality, but about insecurity, and social injustice. It was a cry for good governance starting with one theme. The Western Nigeria Security Network (WNSN) code-named Operation Amotekun, subscribed to by all the governors of South Western Nigeria states, for all intent and purpose was a vote of no confidence in the federal

government's ability to secure their states. "The state no longer has the monopoly of force, it has lost control and from the north to the south, life has become nasty, brutish, and short." Idayat Hassan, director of Centre for Democracy and Development, told The New Humanitarian.

The point remains that millions of Nigerians are dissatisfied with Nigeria as it is presently constituted and it would be foolhardy to pretend that this is not so. This is how Nigeria has become a problem unto herself, how national unity has been seriously threatened to the extent of irreversibility. The truth of the matter is that Nigerians are already transparently manifesting their anger through agitation for self-determination, which some observers misrepresent as treasonable. In this regard, whoever argues that an effort at self-determination constitutes a treasonable offence cannot but be looking at the issue myopically, disregarding the essence of self-determination in contemporary international diplomatic practice and during the colonial era. Ojukwu (1989) argues that self-determination becomes the norm when the right possessed by a group of people to make a choice that works for them and the person they desired to lead them is taken away from them. In fact, the way the Yoruba people are going about it not only makes the threats by the security chiefs to deal with Igboho and Kalu completely irrelevant, and therefore missing the point, but also believe that the threats will be used to fast track the dismantlement of Nigeria. Put differently, the Yoruba people, for instance, are not talking in terms of war but going through international diplomatic processes. The Yoruba memorandum to the United Nations speaks volumes on their resolve for self-determination.

1.1 Statement of problem

Escalating insecurity in Nigeria appears to be strengthening self-determination movements across the country and different ethnic nationalities are seriously agitating for self-determination threatening the cooperative existence of the country. Firstly, in January, 2020, Indigenous People of Biafra, (IPOB), a group agitating for self-determination of the Igbos in Eastern Nigeria, launched an armed security unit known as Eastern Security Network (ESN). The aim of the outfit was to push back armed Fulani herders, who are often blamed for attacking farmers and carrying out criminal acts in the region. Secondly, Yoruba separatist groups have been calling for the creation of an independent state known as the Oduduwa Republic following what they refer to as unchecked invasion and unmitigated attacks on Yoruba land by Fulanis from Northern Nigeria. The republic would include the southwestern parts of the country, including Nigeria's economic capital, Lagos. This paper will place the growing insecurity vis-à-vis current calls for self-determination in South Western Nigeria in context by examining the effect of insecurity on agitations for self-determination which have characterized the Nigerian society in recent times.

1.2 Conceptual clarifications

1.2.1 Concept of Insecurity

In order to explain the concept of insecurity clearly, it is important to put into proper perspective the concept of security. In the light of the above Omede (2012) considers security as a dynamic situation that includes the capacity of the State/Country to ward off any threats to its deep rooted values and interests. For Achumba I.C., et al (2013); Onifade C. (2013), security is seen as the condition that is present as a result of putting in place ways for the protection of persons, information and property against hostile persons, influences and actions. It has to do with a situation where people within a given space natural or otherwise can move about without any threats both real and imagined to their lives or properties. According to Igbuzor (2011; Oche, 2001; Nwanegbo and Odigbo, 2013; Ewetan and Urhie, 2014), security entails absence of threats to peace, stability, national cohesion and integration, political and socio-economic objectives of a nation. Security also entails a situation that enables a person or nation realizes its potentials freely and smoothly. For Nweke and Nwachukwu (2014) it entails having a reasonable level of predictability at different levels of the social system, from local communities to the global level. In the views of Otto and Ukpere (2012), security relates to the presence of peace, safety, happiness and the protection of human and physical resources or the absence of crisis. Thus, security encompasses all approach toward safeguarding human as well as material resources in the state against all forms of aggressions or violent conduct.

Conversely, there are no agreed definitions of what precisely insecurity is, but there is a general agreement that insecurity is linked to chronic threats of terrorism, disease, hunger and poverty. Insecurity is the state of being subject to danger or injury and the anxiety that is experienced when one feels vulnerable and insecure. Michael Ezemonye (2011) affirms the above definition of insecurity as "a state of being not secure, lack of confidence." Insecurity is simply the very opposite of what we have as security. Insecurity just as security is seen also in diverse ways. Some people would take it to mean absence of safety or presence of danger; hazard; uncertainty; want of confidence; doubtful; inadequately guarded or protected; lacking stability; troubled; lack of protection and unsafe (Achumba et al, 2013). Insecurity can make one to lose confidence, be afraid, unsettled, feel oppressed, lose focus, and be devastated and lose one's humanness.

1.2.2 Factors that Heighten Insecurity in Nigeria

Many factors have been postulated as causing unrest in Nigeria but these factors according to Omede (2012) may be part of the causes of unrest in Nigeria. Omede sees these factors as symptoms, shadows and not the substance. He insists that corruption, lack of good or bad governance, ethnic superiority and domination of one community or person by the

other are all moral and value problems (Omede; 2012:315). However this paper will examine the following causes of insecurity in Nigeria:

Porous borders: Again the porous nature of the Nigerian borders has enabled non documented migrants from countries like Niger, Chad Benin, Mali and Niamey to invade Nigeria with their criminal tendencies (Adeola and Oluyemi, 2012). The free flow of migrants from other countries to Nigeria through our unguarded borders allows criminals to enter the country without check. Concomitant closure of borders by federal government has achieved little or nothing considering the accusation of foreign nationals by government officials as the brain behind some serious criminal activities being perpetuated in some parts of the country.

Fear, distrust and perceived injustice from government: what the current trend of violence is imprinting on the psyche of Nigerians is that the government security apparatus is incapable of guaranteeing the safety and security of its people. As observed by Obasi (2017), the use of force by President Muhammadu Buhari in responding to the IPOB's agitations has not been productive as it inflames passion and increases people's sentiments on separation that may eventually lead to political instability. The Nigerian army's invasion of Nnamdi Kanu's home happened 24 hours after it announced the commencement of its operation Python Dance (Part Two) in the South-Eastern states (Ogbonnaya-Ikoku, 2017). The IPOB leader's home invasion has not brought any peace between the agitators and the Nigerian government. As made known by Adonu (2018), some Biafrans were taken away and killed in cold blood without any cause at the time of September 2017 operation's Python Dance and they have not been buried until now. According to a report by Scannews (2018), on the 20th of September 2017, Justice Kafarati with an order proscribed IPOB and designated it a terrorist group upon an ex parte application by the attorney general of the federation and minister of Justice, Abubakar Malami. Declaring the group a terrorist group implies that the group from now will be handled as terrorists by the security forces if they should be found gathering or engaging in any of their activities (Gabriel, Agbakwuru, Yakubu & Agbo, 2017). It is unarguable that the mutual distrust between the government and the governed in Nigeria occasioned by growing insecurity comes amid increasing agitations for the independence of the Republics of Biafra and Oduduwa by mostly Igbo and Yoruba groups from the eastern and western parts of the country. Energy around the movement has been growing. For example, Nnamdi Kanu, leader of the Indigenous Peoples of Biafra (IPOB) was detained for nearly two years on several charges that included treason and operating a pirate radio, Radio Biafra. He was denied bail, despite several court rulings granting him bail. He was later granted bail in 2017 and two weeks to his arraignment Nigerian soldiers invaded his Umuahia home. This made him to escape from the country to Europe where he became a fugitive. On June 2021 he was illegally extradited from Kenya and kept in department of State Security Services facilities. His prolonged incarceration turned him into a cult figure among his followers. Some analysts also believe that agitation for self-determination in the country is a metaphor for Nigerians' frustration with the Federal Government, even as they argue that such clamours may stop if government treats every section of the country fairly and equally (Agbajalike, 2016). One of the consequences of this attitude of government is that many groups have institutionalized memories of hurt or perceived sense of injustice, which they popularly express as "marginalization." These issues have strongly effected the general psychology of the people as the situation promotes fear, distrust, anger against the government, self-help tactic as well as increased agitation for self-determination.

Unemployment and poverty: This situation creates an avenue for the youth to engage in criminal activities that lead to insecurity according to Nwagboso (2012). The stark reality of poverty and consequent lack of food makes the poor to indulge in violence and antisocial activities which threatens the security of the State, (Egbefo and Salihu, 2014). These people who are mostly youth are easily recruited into militant groups and trained to rob, kill, kidnap, smuggle, hijack to mention but a few because idle minds can become devil's workshop.

Ethnic/religious intolerance: There are more than 300 different tribal groups in Nigeria, "all of which belong to the political definition 'Nigerian' but are distinct from one another in terms of social and cultural practices. Added to this are economic disparities among the various groups, as well as potential for conflict on religious grounds" (Ejimabo, 2013:1). Almost all violent crises in Nigeria are rooted in this ethnic/religious intolerance factor. Adagba, et al, (2012); Achumba, et al, (2013), equally maintained that the control of things like scarce resources, power, land, markets, traditional and political offices have resulted in mass killings and destruction of properties among groups in different parts of the country. Plateau and Benue States often experience attacks and reprisal attacks by ethnic militia unleashing insecurity in these areas. Starting with the usual religious/ethnic oriented conflicts to the Jos ethnic/religious/political conflicts of 2008 till date, the northern states have shown that security of persons and properties is still far from being realized.

1.2.3 The Concept of Self-Determination

Weller (2009) sees self-determination as the people's right towards the freedom of determination of the state of their politics and at the same time follow up with the evolution of their economy, social well-being, and their culture. The people's economy, politics and sociocultural aspects of life have been embedded in the foregoing definition. According to Carley (1996), self-determination is about putting an end to colonialism and bringing about new states. Conversely, Anna'im and Deng (2006, p. 202) see self-determination as it is related with the right of people in the areas colonized to attain independence; but many ethnically or religiously based internal conflicts indicate pressures to extend the principle

to ethnic, religious and linguistic areas. All these factors as religion, culture, linguistics are not exactly the same case in countries with conflicts, as there are differences which boil down to politics and historical backgrounds. Accordingly, Umzurike (1997) and Imhonopi and Urim (2013) argue that the principle of self-determination honors the freedom of the people to arrange their tomorrow in the areas of politics which may be a unitary system, federal system, or a confederal system or other formation that the people will be satisfied with. Thornberly (1997) posits that self-determination represents the right of people in the determination of their own destiny. In other words, people can make their life to be worth living or not, but whatever they make out of life remains their choice. Akanji (2012) maintains that a mere explanation of the concept of self-determination references the right of the people to possess a state of their own, enjoy self-government, and have self-management or home rule. The notion of self-determination as expressed by Anaya (1996) is based on the philosophical affirmation of the push of humans to change what they want to achieve into a real form in addition with the postulates of inherent human equality. According to Pei-linghu (2014), the term, right to self-determination is made clear as people's right. This reminds one about the homogeneity of people: do the people seeking freedom have things in common or are there still great internal differences that will likely pose challenges to the achieved freedom? The end result is stated by Ojukwu (1989) when he argues that, the submerging and alienation in a state of a group that already has a partial or total feeling of being part of the state can lead them to demand separation from the nation. Some of these groups may have suffered deprivation of their needs while some may be working towards the prevention of such an ugly occurrence. The right to self-determination is well recognized at the world level and needs to be respected. In the United Nations Charter, the right to self-determination, which is a key human right, is enshrined. The Charter has stated that each state has the right to freely choose and develop its political, social, economic and cultural systems (Cristecu, 1981). The position of the United Nations here has buttressed the freedom of people as they demand self-determination, whether it is about social, political or economic freedoms. These three factors cover virtually all aspects of man's life.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This paper adopts Aggression-frustration theory to enable it explain the effect of insecurity on agitation for self-determination in South Western Nigeria. Frustration-aggression model is developed by John Dollard and his associates in 1939 but was expanded and modified by Yate (1962) and Berkowitz (1963), drawing mainly from the psychological basis of motivation and behavior. The theory provides explanation for forceful behavioral disposition resulting from the inability of a people to fulfill their human needs. It is based on the general premise that all humans have basic needs which they seek to fulfill and that any blockade to the fulfillment of these needs by individuals or groups elicit aggressive responses. Frustration-aggression theory emphasizes the difference between what people feel they want and the discrepancy however, marginal, between what is sought and what they get, the greater the violent reaction. In the face of these frustrated expectations, a group is most vulnerable to embark on violent destructive behavior or be a ready army to be used to cause crisis. Central to this explanation is that aggression is the natural outcome of frustration. In a situation where the legitimate desires of an individual or group is denied either directly or by the indirect consequence of the way a society is structured, the feeling of frustration can compel such persons or group to express their anger through violence that is directed at those perceived to be responsible for their misfortune or others who are indirectly related to those frustrating their expectations.

The relevance of the Frustration-aggression theory to this academic work is better appreciated when viewed against the backdrop of widespread insecurity in Southern Nigeria. The most dreaded set carrying out wave of insecurity in Nigeria is the herdsmen, attacking majorly farmers leading to food insecurity causing hunger and poverty. Since 1999, these attacks have left a body count of 19,000. According to the International Crisis Group, the mounting conflict between herders and farmers was six times deadlier in 2018 than Boko Haram insurgency. Over 1,300 people lost their lives between January and June 2018 because of these clashes. A 2019 report by Foreign Affairs put the death toll from farmer-herder clashes at 10,000 within a two-year period. Under this pathetic conditions, victims of these attacks and other frustrated persons are left with no option than agitation for self-determination which in most cases leads to crashes with security operatives who appear to be protecting the armed herders.

2.1 Movements for Self-Determination in selected countries around the World

Separatist movement is a global phenomenon, fortunately, the right to self-determination has been upheld by different international and municipal courts in the course of the modern international system. In the legal consequences for States of the continued presence of South Africa in Namibia (South West Africa) the International Court of Justice (ICJ) held that South Africa was under an obligation to withdraw from the country and that UN member States were obliged to recognise the illegality of South Africa's presence there. In secession of Quebec, the issue was whether Quebec, a French-speaking majority province of the mainly English-speaking Canada, that was claiming the right to self-determination, could secede from the country after a referendum on agitation for secession anchored on unique culture, language and fear of Anglophone assimilation. Referenda were conducted in 1980 and 1995 for the determination of the popularity of the agitations of Quebecers for sovereign independence from the Federation of Canada. On both occasions, majority of the voters said "no." However, during the second referendum, the agitators only narrowly failed by 1%; the result of the vote was 50.58% in favour of "No" and 49.42% in favour of "Yes". The Supreme Court held that Canada and the other

provinces in the country have no option than to respect a successful pro-secession referendum. The court also held that the federal government cannot deny the right of the Government of Quebec to pursue secession, should a clear majority of the people of Quebec choose that goal, so long as in doing so, Quebec respects the rights of others. Negotiations would be necessary to address the interests of the federal government, of Quebec and the other provinces, and other participants, as well as the rights of all Canadians both within and outside Quebec.

It is incontrovertible that, under the watch or supervision of the international community, including the League of Nations or its successor, the United Nations, over 30 new sovereign nations have emerged from hitherto independent modern States in Europe, Asia and Africa after referendums or unilateral declarations of independence under international human rights law in the last 100 years. In 2016, United Kingdom citizens voted by 52% in a referendum to separate from the European Union (EU) and Brexit is now a reality. In 2014, Scottish voters voted in a referendum to decide whether they wanted Scotland to become independent from Great Britain. The 45% vote results wanting independence could not secure independence for it. In 2014, Crimea separated from Ukraine to become the Republic of Crimea after a series of street protests and military support from Russia. In March 2014, the country conducted a referendum in which majority of the Crimeans decided to be a part of the Russian Federation. In 2011, predominantly Christian South Sudan, while invoking an internationally brokered 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement and a January 2011 “leave” referendum, separated from predominantly Arab Muslim Sudan after decades of complicated and trouble-filled amalgamation that provoked Africa’s longest civil war. In 2008, Kosovo unilaterally declared its independence from Serbia and has since been accorded recognition by about 100 countries, including the US and most members of the EU, but not Serbia and Russia fortunately for them International Court of Justice held that the unilateral declaration of independence did not violate any international law. In 2002, predominantly Christian East Timor separated from predominantly Muslim Indonesia through a successful 1999 “leave” referendum, with 78.5% in favour, after decades of complicated and trouble filled amalgamation. In 1993, Czechoslovakia peacefully split into two to become Czech Republic and Slovakia. In 1992, the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was dissolved to give way for the emergence of six new sovereign nations: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia (with the Kosovo and Vojvodina regions) and Slovenia. In 1991, USSR was dissolved to give way for the emergence of 17 new sovereign nations: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Transnistria, Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. In 1991, Eritrea gained independence de facto from Ethiopia after a 31 years’ war of independence (1961-1991) and independence de jure through a 1993 referendum conducted under the auspices of the UN. In 1989, the Senegambia Confederation was dissolved after seven years to give way for the re-emergence of fully independent Senegal and the Gambia. This dissolution was accentuated by the Gambia’s fear of domination by larger Senegal. In 1947, British India had been partitioned into the two States of Hindu majority India and Muslim majority Pakistan in accordance with the provisions of the Indian Independence Act of 1947. In 1971, alleging violent crackdown by the Pakistani Army, East Pakistan successfully declared itself an independent sovereign State of Bangladesh. In 1965, Singapore separated from Malaysia after intractable political and economic differences had provoked racial riots in 1964.

In 1924, Israel, Egypt, Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria in the Middle East became free from the stranglehold of the Ottoman Turkish Empire. This was a result of their liberation by the British Empire’s Egyptian Expeditionary Force’s (EEF’s) campaigns of 1917 and 1918 during the First World War (1914-1918), 1917 Balfour Declaration, 1920 Sevres Peace Treaty between the Allies and the Ottoman Empire, Mandate for Palestine given to Britain over Palestine by the League of Nations formed in 1919 and the 1923 Peace Treaty of Lausanne, ratified on August 6, 1924 and its Protocol XII. Article 9 of the Protocol XII provided for the subrogation of the successor States in respect of the rights and duties of Turkey as they stood on October 30, 1918 in the territories detached from Turkey. In the case of Catalonia, organizers say 90% backed independence, but the Spanish leadership declared the votes as illegal (BBC News, 2017). The Catalan parliament then openly made a declaration of their independence and this was met with Madrid suspending the independence of the Catalans, removing their government and forcing on them a direct rule. In the case of Puerto Rico, the Americans took them over from Spain in 1898 and granted all of them US citizenship in 1917, thereby solidifying the complex position of the Island (Tihanyi, 2015). Similar to numerous events in other islands, the Indigenous People of Puerto Rico were nearly brought to extinction at the time they were conquered by Spain and the people that resided on the Island in contemporary times do not have in existence the rightful inheritors (Rasmussen, 2010).

If these countries emerged under the modern international system from their parent countries under the watch or auspices of the League of Nations or the United Nations since the end of the World War I, on what basis can any political leader, public officer or anybody in or outside Nigeria claim that any ongoing non-violent agitation for self-determination in Nigeria is treasonable, criminal or otherwise unlawful? Only those who are being mischievous or ignorant of the relevant international law instruments, customs and practices would say that. In fact, if there are loud and popular agitations for secession as we have in Nigeria now, the Nigerian Government and the international community have the responsibility to conduct a referendum to determine the popularity of those agitations.

2.2 Yoruba Memoranda and Agitation for Self-Determination

Yoruba's quest for self-determination cannot be said to be recent. It is on record that a 27-year old Headmaster, Mr. Modiyu Adeniyi-Osinowo organised a one-man campaign that Yoruba land should separate from Nigeria as Pakistan separated from India. The call for separation was in reaction to his perceived shabby treatment spewed on Chief Obafemi Awolowo by the Fulani-led Federal Government on the day of Nigeria's independence in 1960. As reportedly quoted, 'let's have our own Pakistan. If they could rubbish Awo like this, sooner or later, they will be defecating on our heads.' It is noteworthy that there have been growing complaints against the Fulani people in Nigeria since 1960. The current situation of insecurity in the country is nothing more than the tipping point of the problem.

Recently, Yoruba groups on the platform of Assembly of all Yoruba Groups Worldwide set aside June 12, 2021 as the day of referendum for Yorubas on self-determination. This was among resolutions reached at the meeting held at the Oyo State Secretariat, Ibadan, on March 18, 2021 with the theme: "The Paramountcy of Yoruba Unity in Tackling the Insecurity Menace in Yorubaland." As contained in the memoranda titled 'Yoruba People's of Nigeria Memoranda for Yoruba Nation Independence', read by Otunba Deji Osibogun, the meeting held that Yoruba self-determination is non-negotiable. The meeting also urged Yoruba groups to organise relief materials for victims ravaged by Fulani attackers.

The paramount ruler of Somolu and Bariga, Oba Gbolahan Timson, eloquently expressed support for Sunday Igboho, and foreclosed the idea of Yorubas continuing with the Nigerian entity. Oba Timson, like many people who have given up on Nigeria, says the time for restructuring has passed. Talking about Yoruba peoples, an attempt is made to underscore the point that there are different sub-ethnic groups: Akoko, Igbomina, Ijebu, Ijesha, Ilaje, Egba, Egun, Ondo, Onko, Oshun, Owo, etc. In fact, the memoranda identified 27 categories of peoples in Yorubaland and noted that a modern State in international relations since the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia is believed to exist when there is a union of government, territory and people or population. Consequently, by firstly going through the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation (UNPO), the Yoruba leaders have well, in advance, secured the solidarity of all other peoples in similar situation. UNPO was put in place on 11 February, 1991 in The Hague, Netherlands, with the mandate to facilitate the voices of marginalised nations and unrepresented peoples worldwide. Only indigenous peoples, minorities and unrecognised or occupied territories are eligible to be members of the UNPO. The mere membership of the organisation of the Yoruba people necessarily puts their complaints against the Government of Nigeria worldwide.

In officially welcoming the membership of the Yoruba World Congress (YWC) on August 20, 2020, the XV Assembly of the UNPO said the YWC 'has joined the UNPO because they want Yoruba people to be able to exercise their right to self-determination, which they aren't able to do as a part of Nigeria.' Additionally, by also going through the UN Security Council, which has the mandate to ensure maintenance of international peace and security, the Yoruba leaders have also ensured that the international community would be there for them in the event of commission of war crimes and crimes against humanity by the Government of Nigeria. And perhaps more significantly, the Yoruba strategy necessarily prevents potential and irrelevant arguments of treason at the municipal law level, but which does not hold waters in international law and relations. Thus, the Yoruba memoranda was addressed to the UN Security Council in the main, through the incumbent UN Secretary General, Mr. Antonio Guterres (GCC, GCL) and to Her Royal Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, through the Rt. Honourable Boris Johnson, the British Prime Minister and the British Parliament. The memoranda was copied to 43 people and other traditional rulers in Yoruba land.

Three main points are noteworthy about the memorandum. First, the memorandum wears the toga of Yoruba people, but the founding of the ethnic Indigenous Nationalities Alliance for Self-determination (INAS) from the South-West, South East, South-South and the Middle Belt, clearly suggests that the Yoruba are not alone in the quest for self-determination. The INAS held a meeting on December 18, 2020 and issued a sovereignty dispute to the Government of Nigeria on the fears of possible extermination. In fact, many reasons for seeking to exit the Republic of Nigeria were given by the Yoruba leaders. The reasons clearly show that the current situation of insecurity in Nigeria only aggravated the grievances of the Yoruba, but not the originating factor of their grievance. The visible protection of the Fulani under PMB to the detriment of other ethnic groups, and particularly the horrible and heartless killing of Yoruba people in their own homes, on public roads, on their own land, on their own farms and the mistreatment of Yoruba surely hardened their decision to call it to thy tents O Israel.

2.3 Petition from Yoruba Strategy Alliance to The Hague: Evidence of mass insecurity and genocide against Yorubas

To this end Yoruba Strategy Alliance on July 8, 2021 petitioned the International Criminal Court at The Hague. They dragged Nigerian federal government officials including: Muhammadu Buhari, President; Hameed Ibrahim Ali, Comptroller-General, Customs; Ibrahim Kpotun Idris, Former Inspector General, Police; Mohammed Adamu, Former Inspector General, Police; Usman Alkali Baba, Current Inspector General Police; Tukur Yusuf Burutai, Former Chief of Army Staff; Farouk Yahaya, Current Chief of Army Staff; Sadik Abubakar, Former Chief of Air Staff; Ahmed Abubakar Audi, Former Commandant General, Security & Civil Defense Corps; Abdullahi Gana Muhammadu, Current Commandant General, Security & Civil Defense Corps; Muhammed Babandede, Comptroller General, Immigration

Service; Abubakar Malami, Attorney General, Minister of Justice to International Criminal Court for violating the court's articles as regards: killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about physical destruction in whole or in part; murder; genocide deportation or forcible transfer of population; torture; rape, sexual slavery, ...and other forms of sexual violence of comparable gravity etc. According to the group Yoruba people are suffering a slow-moving genocide at the hands of Fulani herdsmen who seek their ancestral lands. They insisted that since the Fulani began terrorizing the Yoruba, many Yoruba People have lost their lives, even while the government does nothing. They maintained that the images and videos at the web links below do not sufficiently capture the terror and the horror Yorubas and the indigenous people go through in the hands of the armed Fulanis.

These videos could be view with discretion in the links below:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CjGSiqWjrx-V38bu3NCzvelENg5KVJ69/view?usp=sharing>
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1euH203AjP5uAAbkV_nSmoQ4ASHqMugzQ/view?usp=sharing
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/12XkGzYcJi9cstP-rD6r0hOWMV7UpjIb5/view?usp=sharing>
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fGgj6qbMWXVKKOjKSguRDWdiuVlYJhN5/view?usp=sharing>
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OLlaJqAhm1Rd1iSU_08VR-6TZzIH-66R/view?usp=sharing
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1enhJ3p3sq7ia9GBEmDWNOpwSCE2PwVm5/view?usp=sharing>
https://drive.google.com/file/d/15Sx_GJn559fv-pICj_kCq7OjRNA1ATB/view?usp=sharing
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_UCIZR-PIUYjkS7XzkPjQD1b1OLAs53C/view?usp=sharing
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cmYZOg1YIyRep24AxHpLjr6s9cWvCHHn/view?usp=sharing>
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1y-rrC0iReqmxk2xPD8iCpg5rbgVTfvQF/view?usp=sharing>
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1LV-2nGFUpaNDWGEL4IMD6ntJHSH-RagZ/view?usp=sharing>
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1J5TE5j94vhosRQf1ETbml6CP5ExQEhnS/view?usp=sharing>
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1jXZDx789vzaphLGwLaBpXr2vW5bM0xhZ/view?usp=sharing>
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1iWXFbvjbkr4N3NuHgPFyC4ImFsfqdZbx/view?usp=sharing>
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1iQ13vDncif9On_shGsY4ngCNm_oH41Ev/view?usp=sharing
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HkB9K2levhGZh_oXa45_X1jKnyN4Lwh7/view?usp=sharing
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1izP1fqFC6bb5T4BxZirKN4i_m3EGVrtx/view?usp=sharing

The video below is of Ty Danjuma, Former Chief of Army Staff, stating that the Nigerian Armed Forces collude with “armed bandits.” The video can be viewed at this link:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kTjeILmO3cgv9QxhAW4yWFGGdF3tNUaN/view?usp=sharing>

Bala Mohammed, the current Governor of Bauchi State, admits that he is Fulani, and gives insight into the Fulani agenda to make Nigeria a home for Fulani from across Africa. The video of the governor's interview can be viewed at the following link:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1unOCICB5xi8YOsjjpMC6B7Q_IPOdzB15/view?usp=sharing

British Broadcasting Company (hereinafter “BBC”) interviewed Professor Wole Soyinka where the Nobel Laureate laments the incursions of Fulani herdsmen onto his land, and their crimes across Yoruba land, while the president and government remain silent. The video of the interview can be viewed at the following link:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/13NcJPVpwIh3cR3LZluQEaXJPQI7mtWdA/view?usp=sharing>

Senator Enyinnaya Abaribe stated on the floor of the Nigerian Senate, that “the federal government just turns a blind eye,” and has never declared herdsmen as terrorists. The video of the interview can be viewed at the following link:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1v0pde5W_3CR9dIpPjDJ7QCPkinrJSgD0/view?usp=sharing

The late human rights activist, Yinka Odumakin details the incidents how Fulani herdsmen accosted a professor travelling from Ekiti to Ilesha, shooting at his car, and attempting to kidnap him; the man went to nearly six police stations, all of whom refused to take his statement or investigate the allegation and how Fulani herdsmen took over a farm belonging to the son of the late president-elect, Chief MKO Abiola, and when he visited the police in Akure, he was told that they have no power to arrest Fulani herdsmen, because the president is their grand patron and also government's agenda to brand as “clashes,” the terrorism by Fulani herdsmen trespassing on the properties of Yoruba farmers, using cattle to consume their crops, and terrorizing them with grotesque violence. The video of Yinka Odumakin's interview can be viewed at the following link: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rhuXBk74bCfVSPiU5fN_J44_baLkvS95/view?usp=sharing

In a BBC interview a Yoruba monarch discussed the issue of Fulani terrorism of the Yoruba people in his city; this monarch confirms that people are not able to speak-up against Fulani terrorism without fear of prosecution. The video of the interview can be viewed at the following link:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IDxjuNsQ6CfQviRLCCTOjO1VZwygkFPC/view?usp=sharing>

Chief Engr. Martin Onovo, a Nigerian politician and political analyst, set forth several names and incidents, which serve as evidential bases that the Nigerian government is sponsoring the Fulani bandits, who are terrorizing the Yoruba people. The interview can be viewed at the following link:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/14FuMBhIM-_kBKlQTFDDUzZtZHE79CQq/view?usp=sharing

Report by a news outlet, Punch, documents Yoruba villagers from Ogun State that became refugees in Benin Republic, after Fulani bandits attacked their village. The first Punch documentary video can be viewed at the following link:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1g9LPmV5BAXFXh11F3bnoYJUgBNx_fvXD/view?usp=sharing

Lorry trucks have been arriving on Yoruba land, carrying scores of Fulani men, and dropping them off at various points across Yoruba land. The link below shows the video:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ff_MeBEUg86akXSIJ_UDyhmnr1Rh00R/view?usp=sharing

3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The effect and danger of insecurity cannot be over emphasize. Recently, we have experienced increased in violent activities in Nigeria which has claimed several lives and properties. When any nation is saddled with the problem of growing insecurity of life or property and the government appears unable or unwilling to stem the tide, undoubtedly this can lead to mistrust, anger, unrest and different agitations. Evidently the country's young democracy and unity are under serious threats. Yoruba movement for self-determination have the tendency of putting an end to the cooperate existence of Nigeria as a country. There abound many nations that were birthed through agitations for self-determination across the globe. Recommendations include: creation of employment opportunities for the teaming youths; impartial dispensation of justice and trust building for all Nigerians; provision of basic needs of the citizens and precaution in the use of force by security agents on agitators to the federal government of Nigeria to reduce the degree of violence often witnessed pretest and rallies.

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