UNDERSTANDING THE NEXUS BETWEEN DEFENCE, NATIONAL SECURITY, AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FROM NIGERIA PERSPECTIVE

Austeen Adigwe Ndubuisi[1]

Abstract

The entire spectrum of man and indeed human affairs is propelled by the need to defend himself including his actions and territory in the effort to secure his heritage against any existential or imagined threats. Understanding the nexus between defence and national security is instructive in pursuing the goal of sustainable development in today's global community of which Nigeria is not in isolation. Generally, security encompasses the pursuit of an anxiety-free state of affairs predicated on the guarantee of total well-being. Merriam-Webster dictionary sees this possibility as the quality or state of being free from danger; the freedom from fear or anxiety. Getting to this level requires efforts to guard against whatever is an affront to the state of being secured. Generally, defence and national security maintain a thin line of difference as both concepts are akin to a determined effort to ensure the individual and collective well-being of the human element against all uncertainties. Thus, while security refers to measures taken to protect against all eventualities including the assured freedom from the poverty of the individual, the state-centric approach is both at the social and kinetic levels. This connotes at a higher level, the safety of a sovereign state against threats by subversive elements like espionage, and terrorism including situations of war. Defence always comes in the form of resistance against potential, or real dangers. Hence, interrogating the concepts of defence and national security in Nigeria, there exists a huge gap which impacts negatively sustainable

[1] Austeen Adigwe Ndubuisi is with Department of International Relations, Air force Institute of Technology, Kaduna State. austeentops2014@gmail.com.

development in Nigeria. This informs the application of the descriptive approach to investigation anchored on functionalism as the theoretical praxis of this exploration. Consequently, the findings of this article have shown that a huge gap exists in key areas of defence and national security. The human and food security components, the security of the biological sex called gender, and fundamentally the security of lives and property requires urgent national attention if sustainable development is attainable in Nigeria. This paper considers it needful for the Nigerian state to keenly addresses the lacuna that exists in these key areas by deploying both her human and natural resources appropriately to this end.

Keywords: Defence, National Security and Sustainable Development.

Introduction

The challenge of defence and national security is a global phenomenon in which the Nigerian state in relative terms, has had an unfair share to this day. The questions about human and food security, the challenge of equity and gender equality are among other factors that impinge on sustainable development in Nigeria. Achieving the goal of defence and national security at a sustained level is increasingly becoming a huge price to pay in today's global community. This is because as technology multiplies its prominence in our world, new levels of concern are thrown up concerning its implications for defence and national security. The global community today is confronted with new levels of unanticipated threats to the safety and collective well-being of humanity beyond the respective domestic enclave of each individual nation-state. The necessity for defence and national security in the light of sustainable development is eliciting global attention however, its scale and dimension vary from one society to another in relative proportions. There are yet common areas of concern were natural and environmental factors are posing a huge threat to all nation-states regardless of their years of existence, wealth, technological advantages and disadvantages. It is on these fronts that concerted efforts are required by the entire global family to pull all energy and resources

together to combat such existential threats to human safety, such as the impact of global warming, ozone-layer depletion, desertification etc. and their very negative implications.

Aside from the above scenario, the developed and developing worlds confront the imperatives for defence, national security and sustainable development at varying degrees and dimensions. The fate of Nigeria today clearly shows a huge gap between defence and national security in the face of seemingly intractable challenges of terrorism, kidnapping, banditry, absolute poverty, etc. all of which are impediments to the attainment of sustainable development. The combination of national, human security and food security shortfalls has made the Nigerian state vulnerable on multiple fronts. The Bruntland's Commission appraisal of sustainable development "as the development that meets the needs of the present society without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (WCED, 1987) exposes several loopholes and areas of concern that the Nigerian state should seek to address.

This piece of academic work intends to explore how Nigeria could harness both her human and huge natural resources in key functional areas to address the needs of today and guarantee a future for the next generation. The structural functionalist theory will be most appropriate in this exploration. It will therefore begin with an introduction, clearly depicting a general overview of its structural framework; the clarification of concepts hinged on understanding the nexus between defence, national security and sustainable development. It will further establish its theoretical praxis using the descriptive approach as its methodological thrust. It further intends to interrogate sustainable development from the Nigerian perspective drawing on some key elements where the Nigerian state should deploy all the energy it can muster towards harnessing its huge natural and human resources for promoting the entire spectrum of defence, and national security for the attainment of sustainable development. The concluding section will be followed by references to the materials consulted in course of this exploration.

Clarification On Defence, National Security, And Sustainable Development

Defence: Words such as protection, security, and guard are synonymously used with defence. At the individual level, defence connotes any action taken to protect oneself or someone or something against an attack. As a state-centric concept, the word is used under the framework of national security and the survival of the state. The concept of defence and security bears the same understanding as the prism of the traditional state system. And within the framework of national security, both concepts revolve around guaranteeing protection for the individual and the state by ensuring freedom from danger and threats to a state's ability to protect and develop itself and promote its cherished values and the well-being of its citizens. It is a form of resistance against danger, attack, or harm, and protection from any hurt from the external environment.

From the strategic point of view, defence is the organization of a country's armies and weapons and their use for the protection of the sovereign and territorial integrity of the state against external aggression and sometimes against extreme domestic unrest. In its general connotation, whatever is deployed to protect against hurts and ensure individual or group survival in the face of imminent threat and adversity is what defence is all about.

In line with the goals of sustainable development, therefore, defence encapsulates all the measures put forward to protect national assets, harness their potential for growth and guarantee a continuous flourishing life for the citizens of a state (collinsdictionary.com/english/defence).

National Security: Security is the underlining factor that governs the actions of every mortal. From the individual to the group; and the nation-states, security attracts the primary place of influence on all human actions and sometimes inactions. The traditional perspectives on security before and during the cold war emphasized the state whose primary concern has been the protection from real or imagined threats to her national interest. Today the scope of security has expanded

beyond this traditional notion to include economic security, environmental security, food security, human security etc. The traditional view of the role of the modern state is her primary focus on ensuring the physical survival of its populace, the protection of its territorial space, maintenance of its status of political independence within the international system plus ensuring equality of lives and social wellbeing of its citizens (Grizold,1994).

The above submission finds acceptance with the contribution of (Mjiah, 2007) who defined national security as "the freedom from danger, or threat to a nation's ability to protect and develop itself, promote its cherished values and legitimate interests and enhance the wellbeing of its people. Mijah's account offers the framework for establishing the intellectual premise for understanding the interconnections between defence, national security and sustainable development. The concern of defence and national security as protective garbs is the prioritization of the total well-being of the individual against existential, real or imagined including psychological threats to his peace. The concept of defence has been narrowed to the realist's view as the protection of state entities from perceived or real aggression through the deployment of her technological and military capabilities. However, in light of the prevailing circumstances in today's world, the values and cultural heritage of nation-states equally need to be defended against the evasive forces that are promoted through the globalization of the media.

It is important to stress that in the interface among nation-states; both national security and defence are subjective and objective conditions that can be measured in relative terms. This is why the quest and locus for national security vary from one state to another. In its objective sense, national security zeros in on the absence of threats to acquired values, while in the subjective connotation, it measures the absence of fear that such values could come under attack (Wolfers, 1952).

Sustainable Development: The keyword 'development' is a many-sided process that transcends the individual, and group to the national levels. On these fronts, development implies increased skills and

capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material well-being (Rodney, 1972). A society develops when its members increase collectively their capacity for dealing with the environment where they live, and this is correspondingly achievable based on their understanding of the laws of nature and the extent to which such knowledge is practicalities by designing tools for organizing the system of labour in such society (Rodney, 1972).

Sustainable development is a global initiative designed to ensure improved health, promote development, and guarantee equity needs through a systems approach at all levels. Sustainable development goals (SDGs) are a set of global goals for fair and sustainable health at all levels; from the planetary biosphere to the local community (UNDP, 1994). It represents a framework of goals that are scientifically crafted as robust strategies for building on the progress made by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). SDGs aim to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that all people enjoy the virtues of peace and prosperity, now and in the future (Stephen, M. 2007). Its goals have been adopted by all member states of the United Nations in 2015 and it was intended to last between 2016 and 2030. Its priority is to provide the global community with the best chance of ensuring the necessary collaboration and alignment by the global family for the implementation of the necessary approaches for securing a fair, healthy and prosperous life for the present and future generations of mankind.

Strategically, the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals are (1) Zero Poverty (2) Zero Hunger (3) Good Health and well-being (4) Quality Education (5) Gender Equality (6) Clean Water and Sanitation (7) Affordable and Clean Energy (8) Decent Work and Economic Development (9) Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure (10) Reduction in Equality (11) Building Sustainable Cities and Communities (12) Responsible Consumption and Production (13) Climate Action (14) Life Below Water (15) Life on Land (16) Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions (17) Peace and Partnership. The fundamentals of these goals can be summarized into 5 thematic areas of critical importance namely; People, Prosperity, Planet, Peace, and Partnerships. These goals were adopted by the United Nations General

Assembly in September 2015 and its scope is from 2016-2030 under the frame of 'Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development' (United Nations). From its commencement date, it has become the international blueprint for the vision, principles and commitments for attaining a fairer and more sustainable world for the global family.

The Nexus Between Defence And National Security

There seems to be a lack of conceptual boundaries between defence and national security. The concept of security bears a broad framework that encompasses all the priority areas where the human element yarn for a life that is free from all imagined and existential threats. It is in this light that Makinda (1998) conceived of security as the preservation of the norms; rules, institutions and values of society. The word preservation as used bears a wider scope that takes as a priority, the military and non-military protection of all institutions, principles and societal structures and their people. Doing this entails taking some deliberate and pragmatic measures the responsibility of which rests squarely on the shoulders of the political leaders who must enunciate policies that provide social services in critical areas for the attainment of security to the benefit of the people. It is in this perspective that national security should be seen as the ability of a state to cater for the protection and defence of its citizens against every imaginable threat both from within and outside its territorial borders. National security, therefore, aligns itself more with all the elements deployed to ensure the safety of the citizens against direct physical assaults. Security at the complimentary angle includes both the soft and hard shields provided for the citizens to guarantee their unhindered access to the good life. Achieving all these at a sustained level to the overall benefit of the present generation but also ensuring that the future of the unborn child is not jeopardized is the philosophical thrust of sustainable development.

Theoretical Persuasion: Structural-Functionalism

The architects of this theory such as Comte, Spencer, Darwin and Gabriel Almond, etc. put it forward as a general theme that society

(political system) is a living entity bearing a life and a structure of its own. The usual analogy used by them to explain how a political system and society works is that of a living organism which, to survive in an ever-changing environment, has to adapt and evolve, maintain its 'equilibrium' and ensure that every part of its body is 'functioning' properly (Durkheim; 1958) cited in Martin, S. (2003). Thus, as an adaptation of the systems approach to the survival of any political system, the functionalists uphold that every political system must function in the purview of adaptation, goal attainment, integration and latency (Martin, 2003).

The choice of this theory is instructive based on its prescriptions for maintaining social stability, collective functioning and social evolution. It elucidates what role each institution of the state should perform for the well-being of the entire system. This perspective captures the relationship that must of necessity exist between all the agencies of the Nigerian state that are saddled with the role function of defence and national security for the attainment of sustainable development. Its major limitation is its conservative stance that the survival of any society is hinged on institutional practices alone to the exclusion of whatever contributions gifted individuals can make to the advancement of the fortunes of their state or country.

Achieving Sustainable Development In Nigeria

Sustainable development is multi-dimensional in focus and covers economic growth with the commitment to attaining social inclusion in the areas of decent jobs, cities and human settlements, industrialization, and environmental protection with a focus on oceans, ecosystems, energy, climate change, sustainable production and consumption, peace and justice, etc. Although global collective action is advocated in these areas, the onus is now on the Nigerian state to take her destiny into her own hands by activating the relevant structures and institutions of the state to this end. The government of Nigeria should focus on key aspects of the goals of sustainable development where the right mix must be activated if she must not be left behind and become an

impediment to the global community in the match towards a better future for the global community.

Imperatives Of National Security

This is the state-centric view on security which is premised on the physical protection of the territorial enclaves of a nation-state against military attacks by potential aggressors including states and non-state actors. The visible attestation to the sovereign status of a modern state is not only on the existence of the armed forces, but one that is ever-ready to confront any assault against the state. The armed forces of any state are an instrument of international politics and the strength of a state's armed forces is the most critical element in the power equation. Given the primacy of national security, one way to assess state power and by extension, the development status of a state in an anarchical global community is the size of the armed forces, the quality of weapons at their disposal and how ready they are to confront any threat to national security.

Nigeria is at a cross-road with the present spate of insecurity that has infested the entire landscape of Nigeria as a sovereign state. The activities of these non-state actors popularly known as ISIS, ISWAP, Boko-Haram, Fulani Herders, Bandits, 'unknown' gunmen and other insidious elements must be brought to a complete halt if sustainable development is our national goal. The most regretful aspect of the assault by these criminal elements is the obstacle it precipitates to foreign investment and domestic productivity. The Nigerian state should shun sentiment and all primordial considerations in the appointment of the right calibre of manpower in the nation's security architecture. Doing this requires that square pegs should be put in square holes to achieve the right results in the fight against insecurity in the country.

Imperatives of Human Security

The United Nations Commission for Human Security (CHS) defines human security '……as protecting fundamental freedoms; the freedoms that are the essence of life'. It is conceived as the commitment by the

traditional state actor to protect their citizens from critical and pervasive threats and circumstances. Human security is predicated on adopting structures and processes central to building the strengths and aspirations of the people by creating political, social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems that add up to give human beings the building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity (UN,2009). In this perspective, human security transcends military protection to include all the elements that pose threats to the dignity of the human person. These non-military threats to the dignity of man include unemployment, poor health care delivery systems, environmental protection challenges, human rights abuse, and child labour among others.

The human security prism therefore should take the individual as the primary focus as opposed to the age-long notion of security propagated under the philosophy of realism. Its emphasis must focus on promoting the well-being of the individual by responding to their needs through eliminating all threats to his or her economic survival. The primacy of human security should go beyond the narrow notion of preventing man from hurt but a comprehensive framework that encompasses all issues about personal development, human rights, gender equality and social inclusion and justice for all. This proposition forecloses the freedom from want and freedom from fear by the human element which remains the constructive formula for addressing other aspects of human insecurity, threats and vulnerability.

One of the threats to human security today in Nigeria is poverty which has exceeded its relative proportions. Nigeria odiously became the world's global capital of extreme poverty in 2018 with 86.9 million of its citizens living below the $1.90 per day threshold. Seven million more of this miserable category are destined and programmed to fuel these statistics if nothing pragmatic is done by December 2022 (World Bank, 2018). The statistics on unemployment according to the National Bureau of Statistics is at a staggering 33.3 per cent (NBS, 2021). If development could be understood in the light of the questions posed by Dudley Seers on; what is happening to poverty, what is happening to unemployment, and what is happening to inequality? and where these

three have declined from high levels, then beyond doubt there has been a period of development for the country concerned (Dudley, 1970).

But taken from 2016 when the sustainable development goal initiative was launched to replace Millennium Development Goal (MDG), the figures on these development indices have worsened or increased to worrisome proportions. This situation calls for urgent and sincere efforts by the Nigerian state towards addressing job creation, the social inclusion of all groups including gender equality, human rights issues, and all threats to the safety of lives and property of all Nigerians irrespective of their religion, place of residence, status and gender.

In furtherance of this goal, agencies of government like the National Productivity Centre and its supervising ministry; the Ministry of Labour, should promote skill acquisition to empower the teeming population of unemployed Nigerian youths most of whom, contribute nothing to the growth of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) which is the indices on per capita of every employed Nigerian. This is what is needed now to guarantee inclusive socio-economic development of the country.

Imperatives Of Environmental Security

The contemporary global community has been drawn to the threats posed by increased human activity and interruptions in the world of nature which holds various implications for the well-being of humanity in general. The activities of man in the field of technological inventions and interventions as well as the unmitigated impact of human conflict within and beyond national borders elicit concerted global attention. The major thrust of environmental security is on the ability of the individual, community as well as state entities to cope with the negative impact of human activities on the world of nature and its attendant environmental risks, which are mostly worsened by unabated conflicts, dwindling natural resources and the impact of climate change.

There is yet a correlation between environmental security and waste management which has a direct bearing on the quality of health of the people. A good measure of efforts is being made by some sub-national governments like Kaduna state through the pioneering Urban

Renewal Programme of Mallam El-Rufai in the area of massive road construction with standard drainages in the city centres. But what is the percentage of people in urban centres compared to sub-urban settlements and rural dwellers? These suburban and rural dwellers are living in communities infested with poor and bad road networks with no drainage which is an invitation to flood disaster when the rains get to their peak. The sanitation in these places is a poor spectacle that precipitates a breeding ground for the potential outbreak of water-borne and other forms of diseases.

It is therefore expected that the Nigerian state should mandate all relevant agencies of the state like National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency (NESREA), National Biosafety Management Agency (NBMA), Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria (FRIN), National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency (NOSDRA) etc. to not only be alert but must also provide accurate statistics to determine and establish early warning signs to whatever precipitates a threat to the environmental health and safety of all Nigerians. These agencies of the state must collaborate with their counterparts in the world towards addressing both the anticipated and unanticipated global environmental challenges.

Imperatives of Food Security

The three priority areas of man's need hold food security as number one. Food security is guaranteed and evident when the majority of the population of a state has access to food in the adequate and right proportion in terms of quality and quantity consistent with decent existence at all times (Rentlinger, 1985; Idachaba, 2004). The inability to meet this fundamental need is the signpost to disaster based on its negative snowballing effect on society. With the progressive increase in the population of Nigeria, the determination to ensure the availability of food should be given heightened attention more than ever before in the history of this country. Quite unfortunately, the challenge of global warming is impacting negatively the propensity to grow more agricultural food crops and livestock as a result of prolonged drought. Sustainable development can only be attained or realized when food is

available and accessible to all Nigerians with acceptable nutritional standards in terms of minerals, vitamins, fats and oil, and proteins as required for the effective functioning of the human body.

The searchlight has always been beamed at the national government but there is a need for sub-national governments to get involved in the crusade to grow more food to feed the soaring population of Nigeria. The various state governments should evolve programmes of assistance to farmers through incentives like improved seedlings, subsidies on fertilizers and storage facilities to preserve the harvested farm products during peak periods. To take care of all the food components required for the health of the populace, there should be a programme of diversification of agricultural productivity like livestock farming by farmers from the southern part of Nigeria.

The huge impediment to agricultural productivity as it stands today is the intractable farmer-herders debacle which has paralysed farming activities across most communities in Nigeria. This supposedly has defied all institutional interventions to grow more food, especially by the Central Bank of Nigeria. This, therefore, restates the call for the Ranching Method of Livestock Farming as a panacea to this seemingly endless scuffle which has been exacerbated by the impact of climate change on arable grassland in the Sahel regions (north-eastern part) of the country. The shrinking of Lake Chad in recent years has caused incalculable damage to the socioeconomic lives of millions of people around the Lake.

The report by (UNDP, 1994) posits that there is food security when people at all times have both physical and economic access to basic food; a situation where there is enough food to go around but the situation today is a far cry from this proposition. If food is one of the basic entitlements of man as a right to living; then, no human right has been grossly violated in contemporary Nigeria as the right to food. Efforts should be made by the state to establish a climate-resilient economy by channelling resources towards building a greener and more inclusive future for all Nigerians, especially people living in the Lake Chad region.

Imperatives Of Gender Security

Another component of national security for the attainment of sustainable development is the security of the biological sex known as the female gender in Nigeria. The status and experience of this group concerning poverty which is occasioned by the low level of literacy and the corresponding unemployment of this group, their poor inheritance rights, etc. expose them to sundry risks and other social conditions that put them at a disadvantage. Development cannot be holistically addressed if the percentage of the female gender which form the larger chunk of Nigeria's population is left out of the social equation. The spate of trafficking of this group, and the spread of HIV/AIDS often linked to the sex trade makes them vulnerable in their quest for food, shelter and general human security.

The news media in Nigeria is awash with stories /news about all forms of dehumanizing experiences in form of rape, sexual molestation, domestic violence etc. which this group confronts daily. This tendency smacks development deficit. There is a litany of litigations about several women who are victims, and many others who die as a result of domestic violence. The case of Ifesinachi; a female gospel singer resident in Abuja whose untimely death was alleged to have been the result of domestic violence perpetrated against her by her husband. This situation calls for a serious legislative framework that prescribes serious punishments to deter such barbaric tendencies at this juncture. Similarly, the executive organ of government should equally evolve constructive strategies through policy formulation and implementation to guarantee the protection of this group in our journey to sustainable development.

Conclusion

It should be clear that though sustainable development is a global initiative, each country is required to pursue these development agendas differently in full recognition of its peculiar circumstances. The element of local flexibility demands that some key functional elements of each nation-state should harness their natural resources and mobilise other critical elements which are mostly human-centred to make the

most of this development opportunity that is championed on a collective scale but from the prism of each state's resource potentials. However, those critical aspects of sustainable development as enunciated in this piece are critical and require very urgent collective action. Time is of the essence and the ability of the global community to address those challenges that precipitate danger to the survival of mankind should be confronted through unreserved concerted efforts.

Nigeria should not be left out in this global effort. She must deploy all the required energy in addressing such global concerns as poverty among a huge percentage of her population, unemployment, affordable and clean health care for her citizens, housing, and educational deficits. There is a correlation between good nutrition and human resistance to diseases and the prevalence of diseases could put the global community at risk as it is now clear that the globalization of diseases is one of the implications of global interdependence and interconnectedness. All the agencies of the Nigerian state should be activated to live up to their statutory responsibilities to ensure that sustainable development does not remain a goal but a national achievement within the foreseeable future.

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