

An Assessment of Nigeria Security Sector Reform, 1999-2010

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Abstract

This research work is necessitated by the poor perception and understanding of the security sector in Nigeria. Prolonged military rule in Nigeria undermined professionalism of the security forces. This is as a result of lack of effective civilian oversight or relations. This research paper set out with four objectives: First to examine the place of security sector reform in Nigeria, and second to examine the programmes and policies on security sector reform in Nigeria. Thirdly, to determine the challenges facing security sector reform in Nigeria. Finally, to propose necessary strategies for successful security sector reform in Nigeria. The research work was mainly descriptive in nature and the study relied mainly on primary and secondary sources. The major findings were that the programme Military Professionals Resources Incorporated was the major security sector reform programme which embarked upon by President O. Obasanjo administration and that security sector is those

organisations, which have authority to use or order the use of force or the threat of force, to protect the state and its citizens, as well as those civil structures that are responsible for their management and oversight. The research findings were that security sector reform reflects those policies, legislations and actions taken by governments to ensure that the security sector provides safety for the citizens efficiently and effectively without inhibitions. However, the outcome of this research should be useful to the security agencies as well as policy makers in Nigeria.

Keywords: Security, Security Sector, Security Sector Reform, Armed Forces, Security Agencies, National Security

Introduction

The topic “security sector reform” has evolved considerably over the last thirty years culminating in a re-branded, more holistic package of actors, policy and programmes.¹ Since the end of the cold war there has been deepening emphasis on the concept of security. For instance, non-military security issues such as political, economic, societal and environmental aspects are now broadly accepted as component parts of the security agenda.² The origin of security sector reform concept stems from the crucial role a well governed and efficient security sector plays in the provision of security and as a pre-condition of sustainable development.

However, security sector reform has also become an issue for post totalitarian states which have embarked on

transition to democracy, especially the post-communist states in Eastern Europe and post- Soviet states which undertook and are still undertaking efforts to democratise. Other areas where security sector reform has gained acceptance are post-conflict societies emerging from internal or intra-state conflict, embarking on a process of reconstruction of the public sector which had been destroyed during the past conflict. South Africa, Liberia and Sierra Leone are typical examples, and to a later extent, Nigeria after the civil war.³

Many African countries have made considerable progress in transforming their security sectors, some of which have chosen the defence sector as a suitable entry point are South Africa, Rwanda, Kenya and Uganda.

The political changes that occurred in Nigeria since 1966 following the military intervention in political governance and the civil war that followed resulted in the destruction of some national institutions.⁴ The military and others security institutions were adversely affected. Administrative and operating procedures became disorganized, underpinning the near collapse of basic structures of the armed forces and other security agencies. The near collapse did not only undermine Nigeria's development, it also affected the people's security as well.

The peaceful transition to civil rule in Nigeria in May 1999, the more violent and disastrous conflicts in Sierra Leone, Liberia, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the crisis in Sudan and Cote d' Ivoire, exhibited one of the common challenges that required reforming the security sectors, the

major challenge has been in restructuring the armed forces to reflect an optimal performance in the democratic system.⁵ In acknowledging the validity of the above statement, it is important to point out that it is not only the Armed Forces, but also the security sector. The Nigeria Police Force and other security agencies that constitute the National Security Sector of Nigeria also need to be reformed.

The security sector is taken to mean those organisations which have authority to use or order the use of force or the threat of force, to protect the state and its citizens, as well as those civil structures that are responsible for their management and oversight.⁶ In Nigeria the security sector includes the military forces that is, the Nigeria Army, Navy and the Air force. It also includes the Nigeria Police Force and the paramilitary security organisations which are consisting of the Nigeria Customs (NCS), Nigeria Immigration (NIS) and Nigeria Prison Services (NPS).

The Intelligence Agencies were also included which are made up of the Department Security Service (DSS), the Nigeria Intelligence Agency (NIA) and the Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA) are the intelligence services in the security sector. Others are those civil structures responsible for the management and the oversight of the security sector in Nigeria such as the Ministry of Defence (MOD), the National Assembly, the Executive and the Judiciary arms of the government. The newly established National Security and Civil Defence Corp are also included in the security sector. Security sector reform is aimed at ensuring

that all elements of the security sector are reoriented towards those tasks for which they are most appropriate.

Conceptual Framework.

Security

Security is a widely used concept in the study is a relative subject, which is more easily applicable to things than to people. Like power, justice, peace, equality and freedom, security is a difficult concept, which defies the pursuit of an agreed definition within human security-framework. Security has to do with freedom from danger, or threats to a nation's ability to protect, promote legitimate values and interest in order to enhance the well-being of its citizen. These include widespread poverty among the citizens, breakdown of law and order, unemployment, diseases like the AIDS pandemic, drug problem, youth restiveness, ethno-religious crises and general insecurity. The paper adopted the human-centred security framework which is centred on; Military, political, economic, societal and environmental.

Security Sector

The understanding of what constitutes the security sector has undergone some changes since the end of the Cold war and the emergence of security sector reform concept framework in the 20th century. In this regard three possible options exists which Rocklyn Williams called approaches. The first is the maximalist approach that includes all institutions whether statutory or non-statutory, that has the provision of physical security as their

establishment Act. The institutions include the Armed Forces, Police, Gendarmerie, Border Guards, Militia and Para-military institutions. Others Intelligence Agencies contribute to the development of national security such as ensuring peace and stability. These agencies include criminal justice system and even within a broadened definition of human security, those civilian government departments concerned with the provision of welfare services to the citizen.

The second approach is a minimalist, which sees the security sector as being composed of those statutory forces that have traditional responsibility for ensuring the physical security of the state. These include the Armed Forces, the Police and Paramilitary Security Agencies. The third approach is the pragmatic approach, sees the Security Sector as traditional instruments of state-centred security which include; the Armed Forces, the Police, Paramilitary and Intelligence Agencies for eventual integration into new national security architecture of a state that played a positive role in contributing to the physical security of any state.⁷

The paper adopts the third approach because it is what is applicable in Nigeria and appears to be the most acceptable approach today in word and which is the governance perspective. The security sector covers the elements of the public sector responsible for the exercise of the state monopoly of coercive power which has traditionally been a key feature of modern nation-state. For the purpose of this study, Nigeria security sector comprises the Armed Forces, the Police, the

Intelligence Agencies, paramilitary organizations, and the civilian management and oversight bodies.

History of Security Sector Reform in Nigeria

Security sector reform (SSR) in Nigeria cannot be discussed without the pervasive influence of its military since independence in 1960, the role the military played in the political life of Nigeria History. The 50 years of the country independence, the military ruled the country for more than 30 years. The civilians have not actually had the required experience in political governance in Nigeria due to military interventions. In Nigeria, it is the reform of an entire political system that will redefine the shape of military and civil institutions that are involved in security sector.⁸

Nigeria has been bedevilled by many problems since independence. Notable amongst these are religious intolerance, ethnic rivalry, resource control question, and the problem of a credible electoral process. All these have made Nigeria's political arena very complex. While opinions on the problems and solutions may differ, there seems to be no doubt that these problems have been perpetrated and exploited by successive governments in order to consolidate their grip on power.⁹ The military and police that were the security agencies used during the internal security operations of Western region election crisis of 1962/1963 and the Tiv riot, the two events that probably encouraged the arrival of the military on the political scene of the country.¹⁰ The first military coup, led by Major Chukwuma Nzeogu in 1966, brought the military to the political arena in

Nigeria politics, this coup was probably the commencement of the present predicament of Nigeria.¹¹ While the military came in for what it called necessary intervention for the survival of the nation, it is the same military that was recently used under the Obasanjo civilian regime in Odi town in 1999, and later Zaki Ibiam in Benue state.¹² Some Nigerians were of the opinion that they were wrongly used but the government during that period insisted that it was right to use the military because the situation was beyond the capabilities of the Nigerian Police.¹³

The attitude of successive administrations from Prime Minister Tafawa Belewa's government towards security sector governance was shaped by their peculiar security priorities. The government's primary security sector priority after independence was to safeguard the fledging nation of Nigeria against external attack, from the mid-1960s, the focus of government shifted from external defence of the nation to internal security operations as a result of internal security challenges.¹⁴ In the 1970s after the civil war, General Gowon's reform programme was aimed at returning Nigeria to democratic rule.¹⁵ He did not embark on demobilization to reduce the size of the military following the explosion in the size as a result of massive recruitment during the Nigerian civil war.¹⁶ However, he is unable to return the country to democratic government which eventually led military regime of General Murtala Mohammed overthrew him. Murtala was assassinated, 200 days in office and was succeeded by his second in command, General O. Obasanjo.¹⁷

General Obasanjo eventually returned Nigeria to democratic rule in 1979. The democratic government bequeathed by General Obasanjo was interrupted in 1983 by General Muhammadu Buhari's group which accused the politicians of mismanagement of public funds and corruptions. Buhari's regime did not last long to enable Nigerians determine the achievement of the military government.¹⁸ The Buhari regime was overthrown by Ibrahim B. Babangida's group of Military officers in 1985, setting a long political agenda which to many was manipulated to sooth his personal agenda.¹⁹ Elections were held in 1993 aimed at returning Nigeria to democratic rule. Rather than uphold the results of the elections General Babangida annulled it and set up the Interim National Government of Chief Ernest Shonekan.²⁰ While Shonekan was the president of the interim national government, the military was in full control of governance.²¹ General Abacha quietly pushed Shonekan aside and set up his military agenda and he was forced out of office by death in 1998.²² General Abdusalami Abubakar succeeded Abacha and embarked on a programme to quickly return Nigeria to democratic rule and the military to its constitutional role of protecting the territorial integrity of the nation.²³ He indeed handed over governance to a democratically elected government in May, 1999, this brought Obasanjo back to power, this time as a civilian president following the 1999 elections.²⁴

Between 1960 and May 1999, it is safe to posit that no serious attempt was made at Security Sector Reform in Nigeria. Under Gowon's regime, the main determinant of security policy

was the management of the civil war while Mohammed/Obasanjo attempted some reform by dismissing corrupt military officers.²⁵ President Shagari attempted to affect some reforms but they were based mostly on regime survival and were unable to strike an acceptable balance between what the military needed and what civilians were prepared to give.²⁷ New equipment was procured for the military and many officers and men were sent abroad for training, however, there was no clear programme at reorientation of the military away from politics.²⁸

Buhari's reforms were mainly aimed at instilling a sense of discipline and orderliness in the country but the high-handed approach led to a bloodless coup and the installation of General Babangida as the head of state on 27 August 1985.²⁹ Under Babangida, the decadence in the military got to an unacceptable level. The hierarchical order in the military was neglected; junior officers were given appointments above their seniors for example some majors were appointed military governors. Attempt at returning the military to their constitutional role through return to democratic rule was aborted by the nullification of the 12 June 1993 election.³⁰

Some of the effective security structures left at Abacha's death were the ones intended for internal repression such as the Strike Force and the dreaded Presidential Bodyguards. As a result, General Abdulsalam Abubakar, who replaced General Sani Abacha on 9 June 1998, could not stem-even if he wanted to – the tide of anti-military sentiment in Nigeria.³¹ He quickly set out his agenda for return to democracy by promising to hand

over to an elected civilian government by May, 1999 which was aimed at returning the military to their constitutional roles. The some of the challenges faces by the Abdulsalami's military regime include, keeping the military united and out of politics, managing internal security, and increasing the accountability and the effectiveness of the armed forces and the police that were participating in Sub-regional and peace support operations.³²

General Abubakar Abdulsalami could only purge the extreme elements of the Abacha security apparatus, like the Strike Force while retaining those that, if removed could threaten his hold on power of his administration.³³ This was geared towards: guaranteeing a clear exit strategy, giving the democratic transition some form of credibility and ensuring that the military were placated and did not lose out completely while at the same time, trying to win civilian support.³⁴ It could therefore, be concluded that little was done to prepare the military for civilian democratic rule and that what Abubakar achieved was the handing over to civilian administration under a hurriedly produced constitution.³⁵ Obasanjo took over the challenge of Security Sector Reform from Abdulsalami Abubakar on assumption of office as the civilian President.

The Obasanjo Administration and Security Sector Reform

The Armed Forces have been in power for many years, or whether they simply enjoy a disproportionate level of influence within the executive, a new government should initiate a fundamental overhaul of how the military operates in a democracy.³⁶ President Obasanjo was, therefore, quick at

finding ways to reform the military immediately he assumed office. He found solace in the services of Military Professionals Resource International (MPRI).

The MPRI is a private corporation made up of senior retired US

Military and governmental officials, the company provides a wide range of services, which include military, civilian and law enforcement training both in the United States and in countries around the world. President Obasanjo in his desire to reform the military prior to assuming office as the President in May 1999 visited US to discuss his desired need in revitalizing the Nigerian military. This is a combined programme administered by the US defence department and the Ministry of Defence Nigeria which was jointly funded with the aimed to enhance the revitalization of the Armed Force in a democratic society. The success of MPRI programme is built on five pillars, namely: Combined Action Team, Senior Leader Seminar, Functional Workshop, Functional Modules and In-Progress Reports. These Pillars support the revitalization of the Nigeria defence system in a democratic dispensation.³⁷

Civil-Military Stability assistance started in 1999. The first phase being action plan development and the second phase being implementation of the action plan which began in 2000 by the MPRI Team and the Nigerian counterpart. The implementation focused on roles, missions and procedures in the Ministry of Defence (MOD), the enhancement of the Ministry of Defence and civil-military relations. It also involved

professional development of the armed forces, force structure and doctrine and leadership seminar programme.³⁸

The Security Sector Reform is essentially aimed at the efficient and effective provision of state and human security within the framework of democratic governance. Resource Management, Civil-Military Coordination, Doctrine and Training Systems and Armed Forces Simulation Centre are the four functional areas of the combined action team operating in Nigeria during that period.³⁹ Therefore, any nation's Security Sector that is incapable of fulfilling the above aim effectively and efficiently to the satisfaction of tax payers that sustain them must be reformed to conform to democratic norms.⁴⁰ The functional areas discussed in subsequent paragraphs are meant to reduce democratic deficit, that is, lack of oversight over the security sector.

Civil-Military Co-Ordination

The civil-military coordination is intended to improve civil-military relations by assisting in some areas of the Nigerian security sector. The areas are oversight of the armed forces, cooperation between the national assembly and Ministry of Defence (MOD), civil-military relations that support civil authority and civic education to the armed forces.⁴¹ The key elements of this improvement are reorganization of the MOD, improved relations between MOD and the National Assembly, civil-military relations that support civil authority and training programmes of the Armed Forces and other security organisation that would enhance civil-military relations in

democratic system of Nigerian government.⁴² The success of this is premised on clear primacy of civilians in MOD and military establishments, with the senior military officer subordinate to a civilian official.

The combined action team's assistance and effort in improving oversight, cooperation, and enhancing the image and readiness of the armed forces is primarily reflected in their participation in the ministry of defence study group on functions and structure of the ministry in a democratic setting. This study group is comprised of representatives from the ministry of defence, each of the services, (Army, Navy, and Airforce) and MPRI. Also, the team's focus has been directed toward improving relations between MOD and the National Assembly in the development of recommended changes to civil-military laws, and to implementation civic education programmes in Nigerian Armed Forces Schools.⁴³

Doctrine and Training System

The doctrine and training system is intended to revitalize training systems based upon doctrine that prescribes how military forces train and operate in a democracy. The key element is the development of mission focused management system. This entails design of doctrine development process at the Defence Headquarters, establishment of staff training programme and establishment of non-commission officers' education system in the members of the armed force.⁴⁴

The overall aim of the doctrine and training functional area is to revitalize armed forces training systems based upon doctrine that prescribes how the forces will train and operate to meet new security demands of Nigeria as a democracy.⁴⁵ It will be acknowledged commanders in the armed forces seem to know how to train based on their experiences and performances in the field.

Furthermore, such a system enables military leaders to translate training requirements to the legislature for funding and provides transparency by clearly defining defence needs in support of national security requirements.⁴⁶ The aim of the doctrine development process is to produce a joint doctrine and revitalize service doctrine that provide guidance and principles for the employment of the armed forces based upon Nigerian needs, national objectives, and democratic principle.⁴⁷

Resource Management

Resource management intends to improve defence resource planning and management system. The key elements are validation of defence planning system, defence resource planning and management system which entails good planning, programming, budgeting, accounting and auditing.⁴⁸ This system is to be universally applied across MOD, Defence Headquarter, and the Services Headquarters based on information technology.⁴⁹

Armed Forces Simulation Centre

The aim of this centre is to provide a cost-effective approach to training of commanders and staffs from tactical to strategic levels on organizational operational war fighting skills to improve the proficiency and readiness of the force. War-gaming simulation can replicate the stress and demands of modern fast-paced operations without incurring the exorbitant costs of involving entire formations.⁵⁰ The cost of the programme is fully funded by the US with Nigeria paying only for the local cadre and facilities for the first three years during the implementation of the security sector reform start in 2001.⁵¹ The simulation centre is located at the Armed Forces Command and Staff College (AFCSC), which today is known as Peace Keeping Centre located in Jaji.

All planned exercises in the armed forces are first simulated in the centre before going to the field to be put into practice. There is hope that this will enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the Nigerian Armed Forces based on the training and exercises they required during the period.

The Operation Focus Relief

Operation Focus Relief was a capacity building measure for Nigerian troops participating in sub regional peace support operations. The USA used the operation to retrain and equip Nigerian troops participating in international peacekeeping operations. For instance, about many battalions of the Nigerian Army were trained in line with current trend and rules for such operation and fully equipped for peacekeeping operations.⁵² It

is worthy to note that these were the troops used in the 2003, Liberian intervention which earned a lot of praise for the Nigerian Armed Forces. In the Nigerian Army is properly equipped as resulted to the Operation Focus Relief training.⁵³ The Armed Forces is properly equipped it is in a better position to carry out its tasks effectively and efficiently, which happens during Yar'adua administrations.

The British Defence Advisory Team

The British Defence Advisory Team (BDAT), which has been in the country for about three years. BDAT has made reasonable effort towards the success of SSR in Nigeria through various training assistance and materials support to the Armed Forces. The team made various advisory visits to armed forces formations and units and, organized courses for the armed forces at various training schools. It provided £300.000 the actual cost of infrastructure at the newly established peacekeeping wing in Infantry Centre, Jaji.⁵⁴ This is aimed at enhancing Nigeria's capacity in peacekeeping Operations, they also sponsored numerous courses for various training institutions of the Nigerian Armed and evaluated training syllabi of numerous military institutions and identified possibilities for future British Army assistance with course management and trade training.⁵⁵ The team also assisted in the development of the Nigerian Army training centre at Kontongora.

Oversight Functions

The Obasanjo administration has tried to consolidate its administration by ensuring that the Armed Forces are subjected to legislative oversight. The Defence committees of the National Assembly have been established. This is so because the legislators and the committee members required a better understanding of their functions. For successful oversight functions effort should be made to restrict membership mainly to those who have some knowledge of the military or are interested in military affairs. This should be followed with the creation of a permanent professional staff in the National Assembly that can build on expertise over the years and keep members fully informed on key military and security matters.

While external assistance is required towards a successful SSR there is also the need for internal participation. All that is required is the participation of Nigerian professionals in the re-orientation and re-education programmes of the security sector. There may have been some level of reluctance by some Nigerians to acknowledge the role of MPRI because they perceived such assistance as foreign interference. This reluctance corroborates Malcolm Chalmers contention that the security sector, especially the military and paramilitary forces is central to political power, and external aid to national armed force has often in the past been associated with a desire to influence the political direction of the recipient states.⁵⁶

Issues of Security Sector Reform in Nigeria

One of the major challenges confronted by the civilian regime is on how to establish a new relationship between a military order which will be subordinate to civil rule and a new civil rulership that will not receive its mandate from the military. The regime embarked on reforming the military through the services of the MPRI and the establishment of various defence related committees in the National Assembly. However, the project encountered some challenges but there are still prospects for success of the reforms, the following are some of the challenges:

Attitudinal Change

Generally, the acceptance of change in any society is usually a very difficult task, one of the greatest challenges facing SSR in Nigeria is how to get people to have a change of attitude to reforms.⁵⁷ Reforms involve changing ways of doing things, how then do we get our security sector especially the military to change their ways of doing things. General Abdulsalami lamented on this in the graduation lecture he delivered at NIPSS, in November 2004. He stated that life is simply becoming more brutish because many of the security agencies have not changed their ways of doing things.⁵⁸ Therefore, there must be a change of attitude on the ways of carrying out tasks by the security agencies as a way forward. There should be no intimidation and brutalization of the civilians whom the security agencies are

paid to protect and the military should subject itself to civil control.

Acceptance of Standard Ways of Doing Things

In the military, the standard ways of doing things are stipulated in the Standard Operational Procedure (SOP). One of the focuses of the SSR is to make the military accept the SOP. Making the military accept this standard way of doing things is another challenge facing SSR in Nigeria. In the 1960s the military organization in Nigeria was a near perfect one. There was maintenance culture, esprit-de-corps and maintenance of hierarchical order,⁵⁹ the military begins to redevelop these cherished traditions over time and today they were along of improvement from the government and security agencies.

Ability to Convince the Executive and the Legislature

The legislature has oversight functions over the military, and it over sees issues such as weapons procurement, equipment procurement and preparedness of military units. It has not always been easy to convince the legislature on the need to appropriate enough fund for the military to procure most of the items required for effective training and operation. Even when such fund is appropriated, the executive finds it difficult to release such funds. It is the duty of the executive to propose a budget for the military while the legislature approves. However, the executive never sends most of the military requirements to legislature for approval. In most case the services are given the limit not to be exceeded in their proposals. The national

assembly defence committees should visited the military formations and units before the budget debate in the national assembly, this is put the members in a better position to contribute during the debate on defence budget.⁶⁰

Acceptance and Credibility of the Security Forces

Following the long period of military rule and subsequent harassments and occasional brutalisation of civilians, it is often difficult for them to accept the credibility of the military and other security agents. No matter how transparent the military reforms and intentions are, the problem of acceptability often persists. It is even worse with the police as a result of bribe. When public perception is low, the level of acceptance is also bound to be so. This is a great impediment that must be tackled with dexterity. Public enlightenment and winning hearts and minds of the civilians should therefore be embarked on by the military so as to regain credibility and acceptance.

Capacity Building of National Assembly Committees

The capacity of the civilian oversight bodies such as the various defence committees may not have been adequate for the tasks before them. They have limited understanding of security issue and as such could not make the required contribution to current SSR or policy process. It was alleged that it was from the national assembly that a call was made for the relocation of the military from Abuja to the border towns. This was made on the premise that there was no need for the military in Abuja

probably for fears of a possible coup. If the parliamentarian who allegedly made the call had a fair understanding of the military he would not have made such a call. Capacity building for these bodies is very essential to add value to what otherwise would be vague criticism and no substantive contribution. One central concern of SSR is how to assure democratic control of the military and security institutions. Control is not a simple concept and it requires democratic institutions to be in place as well as the basic acceptance of democratic politics by political leadership

Nigeria's Security Environment

Nigeria's Security environment is another major challenge to her SSR pursuit. Various types of threats characterize Nigeria's security environment and these are mostly non-military in nature and may mainly require military operations other than war to contain. Social unrest caused by poor economic performance, ethnic hostilities and insecure borders encourages illegal migration and smuggling. Others are organized crime, HIV/AIDS and corruption, which are in the most serious threat to the survival of democracy and development. The government should therefore, put measures in place to contain such threats.

The Need for Concrete Programme

There is the need to come up with a policy based on a mapped-out programme for SSR in Nigeria. The programme should be specific on what is to be done in the security sector

and when it should be done. The programme should stipulate who should do what and originate from within. If the programme is dictated by outsiders such as MPRI they would want to dictate the pace, content and course of the reforms. For instance the MPRI would not want to see the army involved in internal security operations in the country because in the USA it is the duty of the National Guard to do that, whereas in Nigeria, the civil police find it difficult suppressing such uprising. Examples of these crises are Maitasine riot, OPC and Plateau States and Kano crises among others.

Non-Involvement of Civil Society Organizations

There has not been much debate on SSR in Nigeria since 1999. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) like the League of Human Right Lawyers, Civil Liberty Organization etc are the watchdogs, agents of change and sources of technical input in the SSR process. Programmes, which would be subjected to public debate prior to implementation, should be laid out. There was not much publicity on MPRI presence in Nigeria and this bred suspicion on their intentions in the country. The beneficiaries of good security sector governance should be given the opportunity to contribute to SSR debate. The main obstacle against Chief Security Officer Participation is that SSR remains a rather specialized subject. There should therefore, be an open and informed national debate, preceding decisions on national security and military matters.

Promotion of Professionalism

Promotion of professionalism in the security sector is a must for successful SSR. In the past little attention was paid to the promotion of professionalism in the military. This was obviously as a result of the involvement of the military in politics in Nigeria. Once steps are taken to promote professionalism and conditions accepting civilian oversight of the armed forces the objectives of SSR would be easily realised. The armed forces should be re-professionalized and diverted to those duties they are specially equipped to perform. This could be realized through training and re-training. The specific methodology may include integrating democratic and oversight principles and practices in the training curricula of Nigerian Armed Forces and other security agencies. These should focus on NDA, AFCSC, NDC, Police Command College and other military and security agencies institutions in Nigeria.

Prospects for Security Sector Reform in Nigeria

Reform of the military is vital to the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria despite challenges facing the reform programmes. However there are still prospects for successful SSR execution. The Obasanjo administration appears to have made good stride in reforming the military based on the measures taken so far since he became the president. It is believed that Obasanjo's position as a former military officer assisted in this regard. SSR is being considered in line with the general reforms, which this administration is currently carrying out in the public service. The general reforms are meant to

continue a process of confidence building in all strata of the society. It is also geared towards upholding the stability of Nigeria.

In the military the standard procedures of doing things is gradually being observed. For instance, in the recent past Nigerian troops on peacekeeping missions spent up to two years in mission area against the UN standard, but now troops spend only six months as specified by the UN programme for peacekeeping.

More attention is now being paid to the security sector in terms of the provision of equipment, training and general welfare of the troops. Numerous unserviceable platforms in the military are being rehabilitated or new ones are being procured. This will motivate the military to carry out their assigned tasks and responsibility without inhibitions. The efforts of various oversight bodies may have contributed to this general improvement. The military budgets now undergo the normal process in the National Assembly before approval as against a situation where a Service Chief could walk to the Head of State to present his requirements and get it approved.⁶² The fact that the present democratic system in Nigeria will completed its 18 years in office and had a peacefully conduct election with the assistances of the security agencies playing a important roles since 2003 elections, without interference from the military which is a sign that there are excellent prospects for successful SSR in Nigeria.⁶³

Conclusion

This paper looked at what constitutes security sector reform and went ahead to draw lessons from SSR in other parts of African especially South Africa and Sierra Leone. The study established that the security sector means those organisations that have authority to use or order the use of force or the threat of force, to protect the states and its citizen, as well as those civil structures that are responsible for their management and oversight. It also established that SSR is essentially aimed at the efficient and effective provision of state and human security within the framework of democratic governance.

In assessing the SSR in Nigeria since 1999 it was established that it has not been all involving and was mostly externally driven. The challenges lie in the ability to make the security sector to have attitudinal change, accept the standard ways of doing things and the ability to convince the executive and the legislature on the need for SSR in Nigeria. Above all, there should be the ability to convince Nigerians to accept the credibility of the security forces amongst others. Further, there is the need for capacity building for oversight bodies and promotion of professionalism in the military. Despite these challenges there are still prospects for successful SSR in Nigeria, given the attitudes of both the military and the civil authority. Finally that SSR is necessary for the survival of democracy in Nigeria. Therefore, the SSR programmes embarked on by President Obasanjo, if pursued with dexterity will yield the required results

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