

Addressing Nigeria National Security Issues through Advance Technology

Dr. Offor, Anthony Onwuzor

*Department of History and Diplomatic Studies, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education,
Rumuolumeni, P.M.B. 5047, Port Harcourt*

Abstract: This paper addresses the need for the adaption of advance technologies in the Nigeria national security. It considers current realities of the Nigerian national security system and practices, in contrast to what it can become and should be, if the proper advance technological tools and knowledge are so adapted. The work also queries the current paradigm of Nigerian internal and external security practices and processes, with its continuous default in yielding the needed result. These current practices of national security in Nigeria has proven to be less effective than required, this is because Nigerian national security system cannot continue in the same pattern and expect a different result. For the most part, the Nigerian external and internal security forces adopt an analogue system of practice and processes, which jeopardizes its chances of winning the war against national security threats and puts very serious strain on servicemen. The Nigerian security processes must now begin to wheel in the direction of the implementation of advance technologies in its fight against national security threats to at least 60% to 75% ratio. This will increase the nations chances of reigning over national security threats both internally and externally for the survival of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Nigerian State, while ensuring the security of lives, properties and peaceful coexistence within its borders.

Keywords: Nigeria, National Security, Advance Technology and Security Threat.

Introduction

Globally, security is the primary concern of both the government, and citizens of any country. In the case of Nigeria, issues of security have been a major area of discussion hence the threats to national security despite the efforts of security agencies in checking the prevalence of insecurity in Nigeria territorial environment.

Nigeria, a major country in the continent of Africa which consists of several ethnic groups blessed with mineral resources hitherto concentrated on the development of their resources, rather than being recognized as a poor or an armed region capable of destroying the nation with her militia groups. This assertion is predicated on the activities of Boko Haram, IPOB, Herdsmen, Bandits and Kidnappers which executes various forms of crime against the security stability of Nigeria.

In view of this scenario, which affects the country's economic, political, social stability and as well the national integrity, there is a need for a scholarly contribution on measures to strengthen our national security to guarantee peace and safe environment for all persons in Nigeria. It is worthy to state that in Nigeria and the world at large, national security is an integral area of concern to both government and individuals alike, hence issues of national security not only affect citizens of a nation, but also persons who are neither citizens, migrants nor visitors touring

to observe a nation. National security further affects nearly if not all sectors of a nation's sectors and determines the failure and survival thereof. Although the concept of security may seem to be an independent issue of a nation, it is worthy to stress that security runs even deeper than it is said to, and should therefore be a subject of continuous improvement and adaptation.

Conceptualizing Security and National Security

As crucial to the existence of man and national development, many scholars have succinctly define security in relation to a country's development. Fischer (1998), in Agwanwo (2015. p.124) assert that security means a stable, relatively and predictable environment where an individual or group may pursue its ends without disruption or harm and without fear of disturbance or injury.

Similarly, Kalu (2020, p.170) in addition to the perception that security is a precondition for development, explains that security is the relative freedom from harmful threats. In this regard, security in a real sense measures the absence of threat to acquired value in a subjective sense, the absence of fear, that such will be attacked. It is on this premise that a nation is said to be secured only when it is not in danger to sacrifice core values if such a country wishes to avoid war and is able, if challenged, to maintain them by victory in such a war.

Again, Osinoivo (2020, p.132) in agreement with Kalu explicitly asserts that “the underlying truth is that security is the state of being free from danger or threat”. It is also the degree of protection to safeguard a nation against danger, damage, crime and loss, and includes the safety of a state from criminal activities. From the scholarly views on the concept of security, it is concluded that security is associated with the safety and survival of the state and its citizens from any form of destruction or dangerous threat.

As regards to national security, it has been defined as the totality or aggregate of the security interest of all individuals, communities, ethnic groups, political entities and institutions within the territory of Nigeria (Denbazau, 2007). He further asserts that national security from any perspective is about safeguarding the interest of the citizenry and providing the type of atmosphere that is free of threats that could inhibit the pursuit of all citizens. It is about the processes and measures required to preserve law and order.

Somiani (2020) in his view opines that national security is the requirement to maintain the security of a nation. Such requirements include measures put in place by the government to guard against political, economic, energy, food, environmental, health, communication, transportation and loss of territorial integrity. Nevertheless, in Nigeria, the fastest growing and most dangerous threat to national security in contemporary times are digital, cyber and internet based crimes which to an extent has become very sophisticated and capable of attacking computers even in well secured environments.

Advance Technology according to the Cornell University Legal Information Institute defines the term thus; advance-technology “includes advance technical activities such as the modernization, miniaturization, integration, and computerization of electronic, hydraulic, pneumatic, laser, nuclear, chemical, telecommunication, fiber optic, robotic, and other technological applications to enhance productivity improvements in manufacturing, communication, transportation, commercial, and similar economic and national security activities”, aimed at achieving a safe environment free from any form of security threats.

Issues of Insecurity in Nigeria

Nigeria has struggled for several years to take control of the wheels of its national security, as it has continuously battled with national insecurities, with success in some and struggling with some to date. The era of using the traditional weaponry and the application of conventional warfare tools, weapons and strategies in the Nigerian army must be abandoned (Abba, 2020).

Cross-Border Security Issues

Cross-border crimes represent a number of illegal and notorious activities carried out by individuals and groups across national and international borders, either for financial or economic

benefits, and as well socio-political cum religious considerations. These are criminal activities whose perpetration extends beyond borders, and threatens the territorial integrity of a nation (Joseph & Bassey, 2019). Examples of such border crimes which threatens national security are car theft, human and child trafficking, drug peddling and cattle rustling

Paradigm of State Response to National Security Issues

The current state of insecurity in Nigeria is arguably a result of the paradigm of national security that the Nigerian state has adopted. The paradigm of national security refers to the pattern adopted or followed in the provision of security and the continuous processes and practices thereof. The paradigm of national security adopted in Nigeria, is arguably one of the cardinal reasons for the low success rates in its fight against internal and external security threats. A security paradigm, in which very little of advance technology is deployed is likely to bring close to no success and remains riddled by the level of sophistication in the nature of crimes committed in today's world. As security remains a priority, in the last forty years of Nigeria's national history, defense and security sector has gotten a larger percentage of our nation budget (Wahab et al., 2020). However, the fruitfulness of these efforts in funding the Nigeria security appears to be yielding poorly because for the purpose of achieving the desired and necessary security successes, changes must begin with the entire architecture of the Nigerian security system.

Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons

In the contemporary nation state of Nigeria, there has been a significant rise in the proliferation of small arms and ammunition, an action that is highly prohibited by law and which encourages the commission of violent crimes in Nigeria. The widespread availability of light weapons in the Niger Delta of Nigeria is a particular challenge that threatens national stability. The criminalization and political economy of conflicts in the region are establishing a basis for escalated, protracted and entrenched violence. Factors that contribute to the destabilization of the region include illegal oil bunkering, ready availability of weapons, endemic corruption, high youth unemployment and social disintegration, these factors contribute to the availability of resources, weapons and foot soldiers for continued conflict (Olayiwola, 2017). The story isn't any different in the North, with the incidences of insurgent attacks, causing several death, fear and increase in poverty among the northern masses. The Boko Haram group takes a queue from others in Nigeria as MEND, MOSSOB, and OPC even snip killings were being carried out. For instance, on January 28, 2008, Fannami Gubio, Goni Sheriff, others were killed by Boko Haram members just three months after the party Chairman, Awana of ANPP was killed. Its focus in the most recent time appears confusing as it kills innocent Nigerians instead of attacking the corrupt officials in government, which allegedly was its purpose of attack (Olayiwola, 2017). One major catalyst for the rise in proliferation of light weapons in Nigeria is political domination. In 2003 it became evident that the perpetration of political violence were shifting from traditional instruments, machetes, clubs and knives to small arms, such as locally fabricated and imported pistols and a range of assault rifles. Among gangs composed of unemployed youth are used by politicians for offensive and defensive purposes during elections.

Poor Ethics within Security Corps/Forces

Olonisakin (2008) states that, the security forces and the police have been used to repress the very people they are meant to protect. The core duty of every security force/corp is protection of lives and properties, however several security forces in Nigeria, especially the Nigeria Police have not lived up to expectation, and has not shown that it is capable of fully fulfilling this obligations. There appears to be more failures than successes in the Nigerian Police force, with several allegations, while some with evidence of extra-judicial killings by the police and various incidences of Police brutality, which resulted in the 2020 “#endsars #endpolicebrutality” protest, one of the greatest protests in Nigeria, nearly five years later, the story appear to remain the same, as these gross acts of misconducts by the Nigeria Police doesn't seem to have any end in sight. There have also been alleged incidences of civilian brutalization by men of the Nigerian

army, over various minor offences or even perceived “disrespect” on several occasions, it has been alleged that military men meddle into matters of internal security, and some between individuals. Various other corps have been variously accused of several acts of extortion and human rights abuses.

Surveillance

Surveillance is an essential part of internal and external security practices, as it allows security forces to properly monitor and gather data for the purpose of providing security. In Nigeria, the surveillance systems provided are not enough to serve the entire nation. This lack of adequate data gathering has led to the accusation and detention of several innocent persons, and leaves the police with close to no facts but mostly speculations to work with, leaving the courts riddled and less likely to make the most informed decisions on criminal matters. Surveillance and crime are intimately connected, therefore the proper knowledge of a crime is impossible without surveillance (Zems, 2013).

Forensic/Investigation

Limited forensic infrastructure, coupled with the need for standardized protocols, presents hurdles that impede the effectiveness of forensic investigations in Nigeria (CIFCFIN, 2024). The expertise of forensic scientists is instrumental in providing critical evidence that often determines the course of justice. From unraveling complex crime scenes to offering expert testimony in courtrooms, their role is pivotal, yet often met with a myriad of challenges in the Nigerian context. Criminal investigation brings about very significant responsibilities, hence the emphasis that ethics must first be upheld in every criminal investigation (Weston & Lushbaugh, 2003). Investigators must resist the urge to use dubious means to attain an end in investigation regardless of how good it may be (Zems, 2013). There have been several allegations of suspects being tortured to make confessions, these purported confessions are recorded and in some cases published to the public and these suspects somehow disappear and never make it to the courtroom. Most of this information would have been gotten and easily so, through thorough investigation, without the need to torture accused persons, sometimes even to death, as such accused persons may in such cases make false confessions in order to put themselves out of such torture.

The Use of Advance Technology in National Security in Nigeria

The recent development of complex and better functional technical tools has caused a remarkable advancement in technology driven security. These advance technologies have over the years been utilized in addressing various issues both at a collective and individual levels. These advance technological tools and practices have been deployed in various states of the nation to manage crime and promote national security. Advance technologies like artificial intelligence (AI), the Internet of Things (IoT), and information technology (IT) are transforming national security. Guilmartin and Faylor asserted that the technologies used for military operations, intelligence gathering, and in addressing security issues include;

Precision Weapons: Long-range, all-weather weapons with unprecedented mobility, when applied will be used on various platforms to address security challenges. The combination of precision weapons and effective sensors, command-and-control systems, surveillance, intelligence, target tracking, and target acquisition systems will change the nature of military operations and tactics (National Research Council, 1999).

Unmanned Vehicles: Space-based platforms and drones that enhance information systems and communications, which include unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), unmanned ground vehicles (UGVs), and unmanned helicopters are vital tools in crime control. These machines are guided autonomously by remote control, or by both means. They are usually used for intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition, reconnaissance and carries aircraft ordnance such as missiles and anti-tank guided missiles (ATGMs) (Guilmartin & Taylor, 2024). Through the use of technology tools such as drones in addressing security challenges, security personnel could picture a target

area before actually making an attack based of proper information, to avoiding issues like bombing wrong locations, thereby occasioning unprecedented civilian casualties.

Command-and-Control Systems: This improves the gathering, processing, and sharing of information. A typical command and control system includes combat management systems (CMS), radar and electro-optical sensors, data fusion solutions, and communication systems. CMS integrates data from various sensors and provides a unified operational picture for naval commanders.

Intrusion Detection Systems: AI-powered intrusion detection systems can monitor network traffic for suspicious activities, unauthorised access attempts, and other indicators of potential security breaches (Ademola, 2024). Units armed with lighter and more lethal equipment will be able to deploy faster than today's units and will require a smaller logistics footprint in the theater of operations. Highly mobile combat units will be dispersed over the battlefield, increasing both their survivability and their reliance on precision fire to engage the enemy at long ranges (National Research Council, 1999).

Chemical and Biological Sensors: Used for early warning and preventive action. Sensors for measuring and detecting chemical and biological substances are pervasively employed yet are, for the most part, unobtrusive. Frader (2016) explain that chemical and biological sensors are useful to run cars more efficiently as well as to track down criminals and help in the early detection and deployment of proactive interventions to bio or chemical attacks.

Automated Threat Detection: Advance Technologies, especially those which utilize the AI algorithms can be used to automatically detect and respond to security threats in real time, reducing response time and increasing the effectiveness of threat mitigation efforts (Ademola, 2024). The deployment of these kind of technologies in the Nigerian security system would help in the improvement of preventive security practices in Nigeria, as early detection of threats is essential in the protection of lives and properties of any nation, as it helps in the mitigation of attacks to a very large extent before damages are done or to reduce same.

Predictive Analytics: Advance Technology tools can be used for predictive modelling to anticipate and prevent security threats based on historical data and patterns (Ademola, 2024). These technologies are used for gathering, analysing and providing information to allow security personnel and systems to form opinions and take steps towards obstructing any security threats or attacks which are carried out in a particular manner such as to have formed a pattern. A typical example is the incidences of pipeline bombing which had occurred in the Niger Delta of Nigeria, using a system such as this will help security personnel arrive at conclusions on the presence of a criminal pattern and to take step in avoiding or managing a reoccurrence.

Encryption Technologies: These technologies are used in securing sensitive information and communications. Advanced encryption technologies can help secure sensitive information and communications, thereby making it more difficult for malicious actors to access or intercept critical data, especially where the owners of such data or information keep a continuous and multiple firewalls to prevent hacks.

Collaborative Platforms: These kinds of technologies allow various government and security agencies to share information between and among themselves. A collaborative effort and success is essential if any nation seeks to succeed in the fight against crime within its territory.

Challenges to the Use of Advance Technology in Nigeria National Security

Cyber-attacks, infrastructure issues, lack of cyber-security protocols. Corruption and political factors are typical examples of the factors that threaten the successful integration of advanced technology in the Nigeria security system and processes.

Illiteracy

Digital literacy should be a component of literacy in Nigeria. However, this aspect of literacy has not received much attention. For the country to catch up with the rest of the world, there must be

a serious effort by the Federal and state governments, and as well other stakeholders in the educational sector to address it adequately (Ogu, 2019). However, in Nigeria, the application of the computer and other allied technological devices in teaching and learning is very far behind. Technological literacy should be made mandatory in the training curriculum for all security personnel in Nigeria. The technical training referred to isn't just the knowledge of how to type, print and operate handheld transceivers, but should be a holistic and continuous education on the use of more complex technologies such as cyber-attack management, digital precision, database management. At present, the training curriculum of security personnel in Nigeria appears to be largely focused on physical training with only little to no technology based training.

Socio-Economic Factors

In Nigeria, a lack of robust and reliable infrastructure, particularly in areas like electricity and internet connectivity, significantly hinders the adoption of advanced technologies in the security sector, thereby limiting the effectiveness of security measures. Similarly, the area of technological advancements in various sectors, especially in the security sector in Nigeria has suffered from inadequate technological infrastructures. It has been variously argued that hence the Nigerian economy cannot cater for the procurement and maintenance of these advance technology security tools, it must be stated that this has left Nigeria in a “No Growth” state in terms of its integration of advanced technologies in its security protocols.

Lack of Cyber-security Protocols

The Nigerian system does not provide adequate frameworks to regulate the adoption and deployment of these advanced technologies, to adequately spell out the rights, liabilities, privileges and obligations of individuals in the course of the use of these technologies. In Nigeria there have been several incidents of alleged wrongful strikes by men of the Nigerian Army, wherein some locations were wrongly believed to be terrorist bases, thereby leading to several civilian casualties. The lack of sufficient laws for the regulations of the use of these complex and in some cases deadly technologies by security personnel.

Recommendations

The use of advanced technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Cybersecurity, and other Information Technology tools has become increasingly crucial for enhancing intelligence gathering and deployment in national security frameworks. There is therefore the need for the education of all security personnel in the use of advanced technologies in security practices. The procurement of advanced technologies for use in addressing National Security in Nigeria should be guided by laws to cater for issues that may arise in use of these complex technologies.

Finally, the Nigerian government should collaborate with tele-communication companies, such as MTN, Globalcom etc and security agencies to install Circuit Camera Televisions (CCTV)

Conclusion

From the foregoing, it is glaring that the adoption of advanced technology holds immense promise for comprehensively addressing Nigeria's security challenges. Without doubt, embracing innovation and leveraging technological advancements, alongside consistent capacity building for security personnel, and a commitment to upholding civil liberties, will strengthen the nation's security infrastructure.

References

1. Anthony E.O. (2016). Critical and digital literacy for national development and security. *International Journal of English Language Teaching*, 7(3), 52-66.
2. Chartered Institute of Forensic and Certified Fraud Investigators of Nigeria 'Role of forensic experts in Nigeria's legal system: Impact and challenges'. <<https://cificfn.org/post>>.
3. Fraden, J. (2016). Chemical and biological sensors. In: *Handbook of modern sensors*. Springer International Publishing.

4. Guilmartin, J.F. & Taylor, J.W. (2024). Military aircraft. Encyclopedia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/technology/military-aircraft>
5. Joseph K. U. & Bassey E. A. (2019). Cross-border crimes and security challenges in Nigeria. *International Journal of Scientific Research in Humanities, Legal Studies & International Relations*, 4.
6. Legal Information Institute <<https://www.law.cornell.edu/definitions/uscode>>
7. National Research Council (1999). *Technology-based pilot programs: Improving future U.S. military reserve forces*. The National Academies Press.
8. Oladipupo D. (2024). Harnessing advanced technology to combat Nigeria's security challenges. *Business Day*.
9. Olayemi D. A., Etaoghenevwegba, G. & Erunke C. E. (2023). Understanding Issues and Challenges of National Security in Nigeria. *Journal of Political Discourse*, 1, 1 & 2.
10. Oxford Dictionary of English (Thesaurus), Oxford University Press London.
11. Soetan S.O. (2017). Proliferation of arms and security challenges in Nigeria. *International Journal of History and Cultural Studies (IJHCS)*, 3.