



**AFRICA CENTER  
FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES**

# **NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT**

## **Nigeria Case Study**

**Working Paper  
(Preliminary Draft)**

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## **Introduction**

With an estimated 180 million people, Nigeria is the most populated country in Africa. It is also its largest oil producer, and one of the continent's major economic and military powers. There are more than 250 ethnic groups throughout the country, with a Muslim-dominated North and a broadly Christian South. Formerly a British protectorate, Nigeria earned its independence in 1960. Buoyed by regional and ethnic rivalries, however, a series of military coups and countercoups roiled the country over the next four decades. Elections in 1999 ushered in a modern era of democratically elected civilian administration, and Nigeria has since held four elections.

While democratic norms are taking root, Nigeria's security outlook remains precarious. The country continues to face down an oil-fueled militancy in the Niger Delta. In the Middle Belt, waves of reprisal violence ricochet between Christian farmers and Muslim pastoralists. Since 2009, *Jama'atu Ahlus-Sunna Lidawati Wal jihad*, or Boko Haram, has waged a bloody insurgency in the northeast. It represents the most acute threat to the state since the Biafran war in 1967. In 2014, former President Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan stated that Boko Haram remains the greatest threat to Nigeria collective security<sup>1</sup>.

It is against this backdrop that Nigeria developed its 2014 National Security Strategy. Its stated purpose is to guide, organize, and harmonize national security policies and efforts.<sup>2</sup> This follows President Olusegun Obasanjo's 2000 Grand Strategy for National Security, issued in response to the Niger-Delta crisis. This study presents an overview of Nigeria's national security strategy process and security architecture by examining the following:

- Nigeria National Security Policy and Strategy;
- Sectorial security strategies;
- National Security Architecture of Nigeria;
- Implementing instruments of National Security in Nigeria;
- Monitoring and oversight mechanisms.

### **1. National Security Policy and Strategy**

#### **The Grand Strategy for National Security**

The Grand Strategy is the major security policy document developed in 2000 by President Obasanjo. It defines National Security as "the aggregation of the security

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, Former President of the Republic of Nigeria foreword address in the National Security Strategy document, 2014

<sup>2</sup> National security Strategy of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2014

interest of all individuals, communities, ethnic groups, political entities and institutions in the territory of Nigeria<sup>3</sup>". These components are aggregated into elements of state power, including economic and social development, defense, foreign policy, law and order and information management.

#### The National Security Strategy of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

Developed and published by the Office of the National Security Adviser in 2014, the Nigeria National Security Strategy guides the formulation of policies and conduct of operations. Nigeria's over-arching strategic vision is to create a peaceful, self-reliant, prosperous, strong nation"<sup>4</sup>. The underlying objective is to "apply all elements of national power to ensure physical security, build individual and collective prosperity, cause national development and promote Nigeria influence in regional, continental and global affairs"<sup>5</sup>. The National Security Strategy 2014 addresses two critical threat areas:

- a. National Security Interests: The *core* national interests as defined in Nigeria's National Security Strategy are the security and welfare of its people; sovereignty and defense of its territorial integrity; peace; democracy; economic growth; and social justice. Sub-regional security and economic cooperation are classified as *strategic* interests. Promotion of peace, security, development, democracy and international cooperation in Africa and the world are peripheral to Nigeria national interests.
- b. Threats to National Security: The most potent threats to Nigerian national security include global challenges; terrorism; transnational organized crimes; crude oil theft or illegal bunkering; Nigeria's borders; climate change; communal and ethno-religious conflicts; pastoralists and farmers conflicts; politics and federalism in Nigeria; governance; poverty; kidnaping, proliferations of small arms and light weapons; proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; illegal migration; economic challenges; financial crimes; information technology and cyber security; natural, man-made and medical related threats; environmental security. The threats enumerated above are by no means the only threats to Nigeria national security<sup>6</sup>. They are nevertheless the most potent and are adjudged potential sources of disaffection, discontent and instability that could adversely affect the country quest for national stability, unity and development.

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<sup>3</sup>Obasanjo Olusegun, Grand Strategy on National Security, 2000

<sup>4</sup> National Security Strategy of Nigeria, Op Cit

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

**2. Sectorial Strategies:** Nigeria's National Strategy relies on sectorial strategies. Sectorial documents are derived from the Grand Strategy and the National Security Strategy. They are developed as responses to the identified threats to Nigeria's national interests. Some of these strategies are fully realized, including the National Defense Policy, the National Counter Terrorism Strategy, and the National Policy on Public Safety and Security.

a. National Defense Policy: The National Defense Policy of Nigeria emanates from the National Security Strategy, which focuses on the preservation of the safety of Nigerian at home and abroad and the protection of the sovereignty of the country and the integrity of the assets<sup>7</sup>. A constitutional provision is made for the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to defend the country from external aggression, to maintain the territorial integrity and secure the borders from violation on land, sea and air as well as to suppress insurrection and act in aid of civil authorities to restore order when called upon to do so by the president<sup>8</sup>.

b. The National Counter Terrorism Strategy (NACTEST): Developed by the Counter Terrorism Department in the Office of the National Security Adviser, The National Counter Terrorism Strategy of 2016 (Revised). The current strategy is a review of the initial 2013 document, which seeks to confront terrorism and counter violent extremism in Nigeria<sup>9</sup>. The overall objective of the strategy is to ensure public safety resolving around five main work streams: Forestall, Secure, Identify, Prepare and Implement (FSIPI). Roles and responsibilities of ministries, departments, and agencies are clearly defined in the document.

c. National Policy on Public Safety and Security: The National Policy on Public Safety and Security is an inter-ministerial and inter-disciplinary initiative under the leadership of the federal Ministry of Interior. The principal goal is reduction and eventual elimination of threats to safety and security. It also addresses the socio-economic and mental well-being of Nigerian citizens, including property rights and environmental issues<sup>10</sup>.

d. National Cyber Security Strategy. In its entirety, cyber security policy and strategies provide a framework of guiding principles and action plans aimed at addressing cyber security and its related incidents. The strategy is

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<sup>7</sup> National Defense College Lecture Series

<sup>8</sup> Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, **1999**

<sup>9</sup> The National Counter Terrorism Strategy, Office of the National Security Advisor, 2016

<sup>10</sup> National Policy on Public Safety and Security, Federal Ministry of Interior, 2016

tackles cybercrimes, cyber terrorism, cyber espionage, and online child abuse and exploitation.<sup>11</sup>

### **3. National Security Architecture of Nigeria**

It comprises the following:

a. The National Security Council: The Constitution mandates the creation of a National Security Council that “has the power to advise the President on matters relating to public security including matters relating to any organization or agency established by law for the purpose of ensuring the security of the federation”<sup>12</sup>. It meets as occasion demands, and is composed of the following:

- The President who is the Chairman;
- The Vice President, Deputy Chairman;
- The Chief of Defense Staff;
- The Minister in charge of internal Affairs;
- The Minister in charge of Foreign Affairs;
- The National Security Advisor;
- The Inspector General of Police and such persons as the President may in his/her discretion appoint.

b. Coordination of the National Security in Nigeria: The Office of the National Security Advisor (ONSA) is the central body for coordination, control and supervision of national security in Nigeria. ONSA manages national security on behalf of the President of the Federal Republic through the National Security Council (NSC), the Joint Intelligence Board (JIB) and the Intelligence Community Committee (ICC). The National Security Advisor is the principal officer of the National Security Council and advises the President on national security issues.

### **4. Implementing Instruments of National Security Strategy in Nigeria**

Instruments for implementing national security in Nigeria are comprised of:

a. Joint Intelligence Board (JIB): The Joint Intelligence Board has both advisory and executive functions. These include providing the President with advice reports and current assessments of all matters affecting the security of Nigeria; formulating general security policies and procedures; reviewing current issues of national security; and acting promptly to deal with

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<sup>11</sup> Osho & Onoja - National Cyber Security Policy and Strategy of Nigeria: A Qualitative Analysis, National Cyber Security Policy and Strategy of Nigeria: A Qualitative Analysis, 2015

<sup>12</sup> Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Op

subversion and unrest, after due consultation with the President <sup>13</sup>. The National Security Advisor is the chairperson of the board. The board meets monthly while its subcommittees meet more frequently as situation warrants.

b. Specialized agencies: State Services Security (SSS), Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) and National Intelligence Agency (NIA) are specialized agencies for the collection of intelligence and the provision of security services. Notably, SSS provides internal security, The NIA provides external intelligence and DIA provides defense intelligence and security.

c. Armed Forces, the Police and Paramilitary Organizations: They have responsibility for specific aspects of national security and are tasked through relevant ministries, service councils and established chains of authorities.

## **5. Monitoring and Oversight Mechanisms**

The National Assembly. The entrenchment of Nigerian democracy has empowered the legislature and civil society in their monitoring and oversight roles, though much has to be done to make them more effective. The Nigerian legislative arm is a bi-cameral institution known as the National Assembly (NASS), made of the Senate and the House of Representatives. The NASS influences the national security process in terms of decision making and the implementation. The Constitution provides a statutory authority through appropriation instruments, where the NASS can enhance or frustrate the implementation process. When necessary, the NASS is apprised of key national security developments. National security policymakers work with key officers and appropriate committees of both chambers, especially in cases where secrecy is necessary. However, much remains to be done to strengthen transparency and accountability mechanisms.

Civil Society. Nigeria is home to a broad and vibrant civil society. Nevertheless, its relationship with the defense establishment remains fractious.

## **6. Conclusion**

The Nigerian security theater is complex. Faced with these exigencies, it has developed a comprehensive National Security Strategy to safeguard its national interests. Sectorial strategies integrate responses to complex challenges both at home and abroad. The Nigeria National Security Strategy underscores the need for collaboration and coordination across all spheres. Parliament and civil society must

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<sup>13</sup> National defense College lecture series, Op Cit

also factor into the process and implementation phases. Nigeria's national security architecture is well designed and articulated. The country is continuously refining mechanisms in the implementation phase so that strategies can achieve their desired objectives.