



# Conflict Studies Quarterly

Issue 24, July 2018

## *Board*

Senior Editor: Christian-Radu CHEREJI

Associate Editors: Adrian POP, Ciprian SANDU

### Editorial Board:

Constantin-Adi GAVRILĂ, Craiova Mediation Center (Romania), ADR Center (Italy)

Bernadine Van GRAMBERG, Swinburne University of Technology

Ioan HOSU, Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca

Julian TEICHER, Monash University

Ciprian TRIPON, Babeş-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca

Aris TSANTIROPOULOS, University of Crete

Virgiliu ȚĂRĂU, Babeş-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca

Irena VANENKOVA, International Mediation Institute

ISSN 2285-7605

ISSN-L 2285-7605

Accent Publisher, 2018

# Contents

## **Romania:**

<b>The <i>Kris</i> Procedures. A Brief Incursion in the Roma Community-Based Dispute Management Mechanism .....</b>	<b>3</b>
---	----------

Christian-Radu CHEREJI

Ciprian SANDU

## **Philippines:**

<b>In Search for Self-Determination. The Political History and Armed Struggle of the Moro National Liberation Front in Mindanao.....</b>	<b>12</b>
--	-----------

Imma Concepcion F. GALERIANA

Primitivo III C. RAGANDANG

## **Nigeria:**

<b>Perceptions of Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Modelling. Challenges and Prospects for Peace in Niger Delta .....</b>	<b>26</b>
--	-----------

James OKOLIE-OSEMENE

## **Burundi and Gambia:**

<b>Regional Security and Rapid Deployment Capability. The Utility of the African Standby Force.....</b>	<b>44</b>
---	-----------

Enoch Ndem OKON

Dodeye Uduak WILLIAMS

## **Nigeria:**

<b>Rural Banditry and Community Resilience in the Nimbo Community.....</b>	<b>71</b>
--	-----------

Jasper C. UCHE

Chijioke K. IWUAMADI

# Romania: The *Kris* Procedures. A Brief Incursion in the Roma Community-Based Dispute Management Mechanism

Christian-Radu CHEREJI

Ciprian SANDU

**Abstract.** *Indigenous conflict management practices have seen a revival of scholarly interest in the last decades. Even if bias against them still exist in the academic and practitioners' environments, they have slowly conquered ground as mediation and other ADR methods gained track as viable alternatives to the modern justice system of courts, judges and lawyers. In this paper*

*we focus on discovering how Roma communities (probably one of the most misunderstood and stereotyped ethnic group in Europe) deal with conflict ranging from insult and theft all the way to kidnapping and murder. The Kris, as the traditional Roma court system is known, consists on a set of procedures that have strong similarities with both mediation and arbitration as known in the Western literature and practice, but with some notable particularities. The paper is based on interviews with krisinitori (peace judges in Romani language) and direct observation. It aims to unveil a system of practices based on rules and norms far away from the regular image of "uncivilized" and "lawless" the Roma hold in the mind of their European contemporaries.*

Christian-Radu CHEREJI

Director of Conflict Studies Center,  
College of Political, Administrative  
and Communication Sciences,  
Babes-Bolyai University,  
Cluj-Napoca, Romania  
E-mail: chereji@fspac.ro

Ciprian SANDU

Mediator, Transylvanian Institute of Mediation  
Researcher, Conflict Studies Center  
Cluj-Napoca, Romania  
E-mail: ciprian.sandu@fspac.ro

**Keywords:** *Roma, Romani, Romanipen, disputes, conflict management, conflict resolution, indigenous practices, mediation, arbitration, facilitation, litigation, modern courts system, Kris, krisnitori, traditional justice, retributive justice, restorative justice*

---

Conflict Studies Quarterly  
Issue 24, July 2018, pp. 3-11

DOI:10.24193/csq.24.1  
Published First Online: 05/07/2018

The study of indigenous community conflict management practices has seen a resurgence in interest over the last couple of decades. With the trend in the West of looking for alternatives to the courts system of retributive justice, caused by high costs, huge backlogs and ineffective resolution of disputes, scholars have started to focus their attention on conflict and conflict management patterns across non-Western cultures (Augsburger, 1992; Zartmann, 2000; Chase, 2005, Weyrauch, 2001, to name but a few). Naturally, they draw on the vast anthropological research of previous eras which investigated the relationship between law, crime, customs and cultural norms (Leach, 1954; Malinowski, 1926; Evans-Pritchard 1940a and 1940b; and many, many others). Some advocates of mediation, facilitation and arbitration realized that these methods, of rather young interest and practice in the West, have remained mainstream in other parts of the world, surviving the onslaught of colonialism, failed or partial modernization and the last wave of globalization. Communities across Africa, Asia, Australia and Oceania, Americas and, indeed, Europe (Tsantiropoulos, 2008, 2013; Chereji, 2018), have conserved their traditional ways of dealing with conflict between their members and those methods have been proved time and cost effective. Not to mention their restorative/integrative approach, so different from the retributive philosophy of Western justice.

Nonetheless, however refreshed the interest for studying conflict patterns and conflict management practices across cultures, there is still an immense work to do, vast areas of the world where indigenous mechanisms of conflict management are little investigated and even less understood. Of no little consequence is here the still largely held belief that “modern” mediation (i.e., mediation as practiced in the West, especially in the English language countries) is superior to those forms practiced in other parts of the world, the same as, some time ago, the Western justice system of courts, judges and lawyers was seen superior to justice systems existing in Africa, Asia or elsewhere, which were dismissed as “backward”, “obsolete” and “based on superstitions”. A belief that persists today, betrayed by expressions like “formal justice system” (when referring to the Western model of court litigation) as opposed to “informal practices” (when talking about indigenous community-based conflict management systems), expressions that pervade scholarly articles, field reports or research project proposals. Clearly the persistence of such a distorted view does not pave the ground for extended funding of projects dedicated to investigating and understanding how communities across the world deal and have dealt over time with dispute and crime.

There is not more evident an example of this bias than the case of Roma communities. Marginalized in most European countries where they live (and have lived for the last thousand years in some situations) because of their stubborn adherence to cultural norms distinct from the mainstream European ones, they are labelled “nomads”, “dirty”, “thieves”, “kidnappers”, “beggars” and so on. As usual, labelling tends to hide a far more complex reality.

We are not going to deal with all the intricacies of Roma society, as our focus remains circumscribed to mechanisms of dispute management. It is enough to say that the political, social and economic changes of the last centuries have greatly altered the traditional Roma society. However, even switching from a transhumant to a sedentary way of life, there are communities that still respect the tradition and moral codes of conduct just as in the old times. Being marginalized and subjected to oppression for centuries, subjects of forced assimilation and discrimination, the Roma have developed their own survival strategies, strategies that make them different from other ethnicities.

The media often portray them as people without respect for the law or the values of modern European society. In Romania and elsewhere, tendentious reports in the media, generally qualifying the Roma as “criminals” and “uncivilized”, allowed a significant part of the population to project all their grievances upon the Roma.

We decided to go beyond what is apparent and get deeper into the Roma world, to understand its ways and, most of all, to get a grasp of how these communities spread across many countries and cultures still keep to their ways of dealing with conflict among themselves. After a prolonged interaction with the traditional Roma we can say, despite the number of negative titles in the press, that the Roma are far from living beyond or outside the Law. Whether it is true that sometimes they don't abide by the laws of the countries they live (which can be safely said about many of the nationals of those countries anyway), they solidly observe the norms and customs inscribed in their own code, the *Romanipen*. Moreover, the evidence shows that Roma have their own justice system which works differently, but more effectively than the courts systems of their countries of residence.

Failure to comply with Roma customary values inevitably leads to the emergence of conflicts. Conflicts are solved internally, through the supreme court of the Roma, the *Kris* (translated as peace judgment), which has the role to reconcile parties and to solve conflicts arising from non-compliance with the Roma code of conduct. A note for fellow Romanian readers: in Romania we use a lot the word *Stabor* for the *Kris*, but this is an error. The word was invented during Ceausescu's period and does not exist in the vocabulary of the Romani language.

Returning to the *Kris*, the conflicts that are solved here range from disregarding the given word and the oath made, theft committed within the community or the bringing of a serious offense, disrespect for the pure-impure rules, stealing a girl, disrespect shown to an older person, adultery, insisting to look at a woman, uncovering the head by a woman, all the way to true blood feuds between families or rival clans and the extreme cases of murder. Under this system, the whole community is involved in the decision-making and conflict resolution processes, because the responsibility of carrying out any sanctions belongs to the whole group. We must not forget that each Roma community is

formed by four to five clans or extended families, so it is somehow natural for the whole community to be involved due to the family ties with the parties involved in the conflict.

In short, the Kris means a gathering (in a circle around the judges who sit at a table) where facts are told by the parties, witnesses are listen and justice is decided through a verdict. As clearly expressed by our sources, the main goal is to reconcile and improve the situation (peace), rather than establishing who is right and who is guilty (justice). The Kris, from the point of view of conflict resolution literature, works mostly like a med-arb process with the particular color and flavor of Roma tradition influences.

The Kris is presided by highly experienced and respected neutrals known as *krisinitori* or *peace judges*. They have a role of more akin to a facilitator despite their appellation as “judges” – they act in a manner more similar to a mediator combined with an arbiter than a judge. The number of the judged must be impar (usually three or five) so that there is no chance for a tied verdict.

The *krisinitor* must be a person who knows the Roma’s customs, practices and traditions very well, he must be impartial, a wise person, with a rich life experience, wealthy and who, most importantly, enjoys the respect of the community. The last condition (but not exclusively) has its roots in the hierarchy that defines the Roma collectivity. First of all, the Roma community is a patriarchal one. Secondly, there is a clear stratification of roles inside the Roma families which, in turn, influence the stratification of the Roma community. The head of the family is the male and he is the one who supports financially his family and the one who brings the luck for his family. As a short parenthesis, the oldest member of the family is so respected by the others that, even if his is very old or sick, the family will not leave him in a hospital or asylum because it would mean a great shame for them. Secondly, the Roma community has traditional leaders who were selected due to their good reputation. The entire Roma’s conception about life is based around the notion of shame and respect. As one member of a Roma community told us “Without respect, you are nothing...respect is the characteristic of a true Roma” (personal communication, 2017, June). Due to this reasons, the patriarchate, the hierarchical stratification inside the Roma family and the Roma community, a top representative of the clan can’t be held accountable for his actions by his inferiors on the social scale. This is why the judges (*krisinitori*) are top members of the community, both in terms of richness, respect and personal life. Meeting all these characteristics, the Roma judges can impose their verdicts to any member of the community.

As mentioned before, what happens during the Kris is consistent with the characteristics of the med-arb process. It begins with the opening statement of the judges who initiate the “trial” using a standard formula, the custom requiring a gradual, indirect introduction to the subject, discussions focusing at the beginning on general issues (weather, crops, etc.). Only slowly, deliberately, once the introduction has been exhausted, one of

the judges presents to the assistance the motivation of the meeting, not before a last attempt to reconcile the parties amiably is made.

The meeting then continues with the judges hearing each side's story. The parties are encouraged to express their side of the story with a high level of details, facts and profs. This stage of the *Kris* is the same as in the case of mediation and arbitration where the parties take their time to tell their story. Also resembling these two procedures, the judges facilitate the story telling process by establishing and imposing of ground rules. The judges require the observance of conduit rules so that the parties can have a fluent exposition, without interruptions or a bad language. Also, acting as facilitators, the judges ask questions in order to help the parties tell the whole story and for both of them to understand the facts, the reasons and the interests. If there is the case, after the statements of the parties, the judges talk with witnesses for a better understanding of the situation.

The joint meeting format is used when the situation is not emotionally difficult. In the case where the conflict has been a violent one and there is wisdom in keeping the conflicting parties separated, the judges go to each party house and talk with them (the same as the caucus in mediation).

To preserve the fairness of the hearings and not to escalate the conflict even further, the judges are accompanied by each side's (trusted and not directly involved) family members so that they are witnesses for the correctness of each party statements and for the fair conduct of the judges. In this way, the parties are sure that the judges have not been corrupted by bribery by the opposite party. Here there can be perceived the great lengths by which judges go to be accountable and transparent. This is consistent with our research of other community-based dispute management mechanisms (Chereji & Wratto, 2013, 2015) showing that they put much more emphasis on transparency and accountability than confidentiality, departing from the Western mantra of absolute confidentiality as a key feature of mediation and other ADR methods.

After the parties and the witnesses are heard, the judges ask the gathering if there is anyone who wants to say something regarding the conflict. If the answer is yes, they listen to them, if not, the judges retire in order to deliberate and establish the verdict. The verdict is issued based on the analysis of the facts and depositions in accordance to the *Romanipen*, customs and precedent. The verdict always includes a punishment, either moral or financial. The financial one is mostly in the form of fines. The moral ones are less used in our days and refers to the ostracization of the guilty party, temporary or permanently, from the community.

Due to the main goal of the process, peace and not necessarily justice, the verdict takes into account the social and economical status of the parties, the circumstances and the context of the deeds done, the prior behavior of the parties, their character and status.

In the words of one *krisinitor*, “only God judges everyone, we try to bring you the peace” (personal communication, Roma *krisinitor*, December 6, 2017). When they announce the verdict, the judges appeal to all the oratorical art they have in order to convince the audience of the logic of reasoning, the motivation of the positive or negative approach of the accusations or the verdict<sup>1</sup>, in accordance with the principles of the Gypsy justice. The *krisinitori* strive to issue valuable judgments, showing the gathering that they have the ability to express themselves, their deductive perspicacity, experience, and, therefore, that they deserved the trust they have been invested. Being a society that promotes unconditionally respect to superiors on the hierarchical scale, the audience values the crafted words so that the oratory talent is a way, not at all insignificant, to gain respect, “*to be respected, you must know how to talk to the Gypsies*” (personal communication, Roma *krisinitor*, December 6, 2017).

The resemblance with the med-arb procedure is more visible regarding the final arrangements and closure of the *Kris*. The judges leave the parties time to negotiate their agreement, both before and after the verdict. If the parties reach their own agreement, they must bring it in front of the judges, because they are the only one who can impose it. If the parties don't have the ability or desire to reach their own solution, the verdict is issued by the judges, who turn arbiters at this time. What puts a lot of pressure on the judges to come up with a sound and wise verdict is the fact that the parties, if they consider it unfair or unwise (and are supported by the audience, hence the importance of logical and oratorical skills of the judges when presenting the verdict), can call for another *Kris* to be held. If the new *Kris* contradicts the previous verdict, that is a huge failure for the former judges and their reputation badly damaged.

One last thing regarding the outcome of the *Kris* relates to *Romanipen*, the moral code of the Roma people. *Romanipen* is the set of values or codes that Roma have to follow to be a true Roma, as they called themselves. These values are based on four principles (or elements): honor, good fortune, family (actually understood as belonging to the whole community) and cleanliness/purity. Failure to comply with these four principles will lead to a great shame and a bad reputation inside the Roma community. *Romanipen*

---

1 The Roma judges explain their verdict to both parties, telling them why one of them is going to receive apologies or an amount of money (the victim, for example) but also why they punish the other one with a fine or compensation. The reason for this is to show the parties that the judges listened their depositions and issued a fair verdict for both of them. Also, in some cases, the Roma judges will issue a verdict which is not fully fair for the parties but is efficient in ending the conflict. For example, one reputable Roma judge told us that sometimes he admits to a victim that she is entitled to a specific compensation but, due to the financial state of the other party, he must lower the demands. As he explained, in theory, the victim is losing some money he deserved; in practice, the conflict is ended and the guilty party will pay the compensation (even a smaller one) without the possibility for a new conflict to arise between them.

is based around the notion of shame, same as the verdict of the judges (literally, some *krisinitori* told us that when they announce the verdict, basically, they came *with the shame*, meaning their verdict will shame the guilty side for his actions). The parties must respect the outcome of the *Kris* mostly due to the shame that would come up on them and their entire family if they will not comply with the decision of the judges. Moreover, failing to comply with the verdict means a greater conflict and a bigger punishment than the one issued before.

Central to the procedures of *Kris*, from initiation to closure, is the oath the parties and the witnesses must take before, during and at the end of *Kris*. Performed in front of the audience, it has a sacred, infallible character and, as a result, "the Gypsy who sworn must always tell the truth" (personal communication, Roma community member, May 21, 2016), otherwise it will turn into an extremely dangerous curse for the whole family of the one who swears shamefully. In a hypothetical situation in which a Gypsy stains the Gypsy oath in a lie, the community will later penalize him by marginalizing and abolishing his social status, both because of the lie, which is not forgotten and forgiven, as well as the curse that lies on the liar and his family.

The oath of the Gypsy is carried out according to predetermined rules which imply the use of ritual elements meant to strengthen the truth and attract the forces of evil in the case of a lie. This is equivalent to a certificate guaranteeing the sincerity of the active participants in the process. The majority of oaths center on the family. As mentioned above, one of the four pillars of *Romanipen* is family. Having so much importance for the Roma, this kind of oath is a strong guarantee that the one who take the oath is telling the truth because "on the family you can't lie". Lying about something when your oath was on a member of the family is a sign of a bad omen and for the Roma, who are a very superstitious community, this function like a deterrent. A special type of oath is centered on the children and it is considered the ultimate guarantee for telling the truth ("I swear on my child's eyes", May my children to die if I lie").

A few words in the end about the role of women in the *Kris*. In the old ages, due to the fact that the Roma society has ever been solidly patriarchal, the women were not allowed to participate to the *Kris*, even if they were the victims. If a woman was the victim of a theft, rape or another situation, her husband was the one who brought the case in front of the judges. His wife had only a secondary role in the procedure, mostly assisting her husband during the deposition phase. In the case of widows or orphans, their uncle was responsible for bringing the case in front of the judges. If the uncle was also missing, the woman could be helped by any other male relative or, in the unfortunate case when she was all alone, any male member of the community.

Nowadays, women have a bigger role in the *Kris*, they can participate more actively and, even if there is a lot of controversy and opposition regarding this issue, some of them even became *krisinitori*.

Women have an important role in facilitating the agreement. It is well known that the “Gypsy women are like fire” (even if this is more a stereotype than a certain fact) and can influence their husbands to accept the verdict of the *Kris* or the offer of the other party. For this reason, in many situations, judges rely on wives of the disputing parties to facilitate an agreement or make sure they accept and observe the verdict.

### **Instead of conclusions**

Our study is just a brief incursion into the complex world of Roma communities and their own mechanisms designed to deal with conflicts. Far from being the “lawless” society their co-nationals assume, the Roma show a consistent adherence to a strict code of conduct based on their customs and cultural norms. This is *Romanipen*, the way to be a true Roma. Based on four major pillars, *Romanipen* is centered around the notion of shame and community as a means to preserve the Roma identity. The principles of *Romanipen* are also used in order to deliver justice in the community. This consistency is shown in the fact that, even if a Roma person is convicted for crime or misbehavior by a “formal” court of justice, she or he still has to undergo through a *Kris* to settle the conflict with the aggrieved party, no matter how severe is the verdict of the “formal” court. If the perpetrator fails to go through the *Kris*, the conflict persists and can lead to retaliation even after she/he has spent a long time in jail. Only the *Kris* can definitively put an end to a conflict. More importantly, for the majority of the Roma people, the *Kris* is the only court they recognize. Being conducted with respect to the principles of the *Romanipen*, the *Kris* is performed in front of the community by peace judges (*krisinitori*) who are highly respected members of the Roma community and who have the responsibility to settle a conflict situation. Accordingly to their name (in the Romani language, *krisinitor* means the one who brings the peace), these judges are focused on the notion of peace and not specifically on the notion of fairness. For this, the Roma judges will adjust their role and technique depending on each conflict. Sometimes, they will act as facilitators of the negotiation between the parties, being the ones who will communicate offers and intermediate the final agreement. In other cases, they will act as arbitrators, listening to the parties and coming up with a decision. Sometimes, they will use the med-arb conflict resolution hybrid, assisting the parties and facilitating their agreement but giving a solution if the parties don't have the ability to reach their own.

Also, contrary to the opinion of the majority of their co-nationals, Roma communities do not abide and hide crime like theft, rape or murder (as it has been largely speculated in the press). The fact that they prefer to deal with these crimes inside their own communities and refrain from reporting them to official law enforcement organizations does not imply the Roma society takes crime lightly, but rather the fact that they consider their own norms and procedures far more fair and effective than those used by police and courts of justice. Given the bias against them held by many members of these in-

stitutions, as by the majority of their co-nationals which inform official institutional cultures across Europe and elsewhere, they might as well be right.

## References

1. Augsburg, D. W. (1992). *Conflict Mediation Across Cultures: Pathways and Patterns*. Westminster: John Knox Press.
2. Chase, O. G. (2005). *Law, Culture, and Ritual: Disputing Systems in Cross-Cultural Context*. New York: New York University Press.
3. Chereji, C. R., & Wratto, C. (2013). West Africa. A Comparative Study of Traditional Conflict Resolution Methods in Liberia and Ghana. *Conflict Studies Quarterly*, 5, 3-18.
4. Chereji, C. R., & Wratto, C. (2015). Aspects of Traditional Conflict Management Practices among the Ogoni of Nigeria. *Conflict Studies Quarterly*, 10, 56-68.
5. Chereji, C. R. (2018, January). Mediating Blood Feuds in Cretan Mountains. *Mediate.com*. Retrieved from <https://www.mediate.com/articles/raduc1feud.cfm>.
6. Evans-Pritchard, E. E. (1940a). *The Nuer: A Description of the Modes of Livelihood and Political Institutions of a Nilotic People*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
7. Evans-Pritchard, E. E. (1940b). The Nuer of the Southern Sudan. In M. Fortes and E. E. Evans-Pritchard (Eds.), *African Political Systems* (pp. 272-296). London: Oxford University Press.
8. Leach, E. R. (1954) *Political Systems of Highland Burma: A Study of Kachin Social Structure*. London: Bell and Sons.
9. Malinowski, B. (1926). *Crime and custom in savage society*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co.
10. Tsantiroopoulos, A. (2008). Collective Memory and Blood Feud: The Case of Mountainous Crete. *Crimes and Misdemeanours: Deviance and the Law in Historical Perspective*, 2(1), 60-80.
11. Tsantiroopoulos, A. (2013). Crime and Culpability in the Community, the Newspapers and the Courts. In J. Rowbotham, M. Muravyeva and D. Nash (Eds.), *Shame, Blame and Culpability. Crime and Violence in the Modern State* (pp. 199-214). New York: Routledge.
12. Weyrauch, W. O. (2001) *Gypsy Law: Romani Legal Traditions and Culture*. London: University of California Press.
13. Zartman, I. W. (2000). *Traditional Cures for Modern Conflicts: African Conflict 'Medicine'*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.

# Philippines: In Search for Self-Determination. The Political History and Armed Struggle of the Moro National Liberation Front in Mindanao

Imma Concepcion F. GALERIANA

Primitivo III C. RAGANDANG

**Abstract.** *The myriad of Moro insurgent movements in the Philippines could be traced back to the abhorrent memoirs of Spanish occupation. The contemporary armed conflict between the government in Manila and the Moros was highly triggered by the Jabidah massacre in March 1968. The globally-known day of infamy inspired the historical birth of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) to start launching the freedom struggle of the oppressed Bangsamoro people of Mindanao against Philippine colonialism under the regime of Dictator Ferdinand E. Marcos. The MNLF was formally organized into two parallel structures: one political, the other military. The political wing was composed of a central committee, various bureaus and a system of provincial and village committees. The military wing - the Bangsa Moro Army - had an overall field marshal, provincial field marshals and zone commanders at the municipality level. Several attempts were done in order to halt the skirmishes led by the MNLF. Regardless of the countless skirmishes, assaults and uprisings, the MNLF sees this peaceful way now as a highly possible solution to end the Bangsamoro identity struggle against marginalization, oppression and fight for self-determination.*

**Keywords:** *insurgent, MNLF, Bangsamoro, Tripoli, Jeddah Accord, Bangsamoro Basic Law*

## Introduction

The myriad of Moro insurgent movements in the Philippines could be traced back to the abhorrent memoirs of Spanish occupation. Resistance to colonization was espe-

Imma Concepcion F. GALERIANA  
Political Science Department, Mindanao  
State University-Iligan Institute of Technology  
Iligan City, Lanao del Norte, Philippines

Primitivo III C. RAGANDANG  
Political Science Department, Mindanao  
State University-Iligan Institute of Technology  
Iligan City, Lanao del Norte, Philippines  
E-mail: prime.tivo@gmail.com

---

Conflict Studies Quarterly  
Issue 24, July 2018, pp. 12-25

DOI:10.24193/csqr.24.2  
Published First Online: 05/07/2018

cially strong among the Moro population of Southwestern Mindanao. Consequently, several secessionist groups and movements were formed.

When the Republic of the Philippines formally achieved its independence from the U.S. on July 4, 1946, a series of land resettlement programs in Mindanao took place (in the 1950s and 1960s) to ease the social unrest spawned by the Communist-led Huk rebellion in the islands of Luzon and the Visayas and, supposedly, to further develop Mindanao by exploiting its vast natural resources. The Moros became exceedingly distressed by the influx of Christians from the North who did not only threaten their economic and political survival, but also compromised their culture and identity, since they were making Moros a minority as well. Unavoidably, these created grievances and dissatisfaction which, at a point in time, fuelled the neo-Moro rebellion.

The contemporary armed conflict between the government in Manila and the Moros was highly triggered by the Jabidah massacre in March 1968, under the Marcos administration. This led to the establishment of the first Moro separatist groups initially with the founding of the Moro Independence Movement (MIM) and eventually the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) led by University of the Philippines Professor Nurullaji "Nur" Misuari, who became its chairman. Thus, began an organized and sustained Moro insurgency.

The MNLF eventually gained support from Muslim countries, Libya and Malaysia, with its struggle for an independent Moro nation. But on the year 1976, an intervention by the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) ensued, which made the MNLF sign the Tripoli agreement with the Marcos administration to end hostilities in exchange for the government working to grant greater autonomy in Muslim-populated areas.

However, Misuari's deputy, Salamat Hashim, leads a group of key commanders in splitting from the MNLF. They were disappointed with Misuari's compromise and vowed to continue fighting by stressing not only a nationalist but also an Islamic agenda. Hashim formally broke away from the MNLF and created the MILF on 30<sup>th</sup> of December 1977.

### **Research Objectives**

To recollect and assess the political history of the Moro National Liberation Front in Southern Philippines.

### **Discussions and Analysis**

As opposed to today's dreadful experiences of the Bangsamoro fighting for the right to self-determination and for the passage of the Bangsamoro Basic Law, before the Spanish colonization, the Moros have already settled in the lands of what we now politically address as Mindanao and Sabah. Despite the ability of the Muslims to thwart successive attempts of the Spanish colonial forces to subjugate them, it provides such

utter wonder how they lost their lands even during the succeeding colonization of the Americans up until the Philippine independence. They were continuously discriminated and separated from the Northern inhabitants of the Philippine archipelago, most of whom were conquered and became Christian converts. This has caused profound cynicism as the colonizers were successful in cultivating a culture of suspicion and terror among converted Christians against their Muslim brothers, in order to keep a hold of control over the Mindanao land and its people.

During President Diosdado Macapagal's administration, he formally put forth the Sabah Claim in 1962, based on the sovereignty once exercised by the Sulu sultanate over the northern Borneo territory. By all indications, however, President Macapagal used a nonviolent, diplomatic approach to win Sabah. But when the late Ferdinand Marcos defeated President Diosdado Macapagal on his attempt during the 1965 presidential elections, Marcos did pursue Sabah but contrary to the diplomatic attempts Macapagal conducted. By the time Malaysia had reclaimed independence from the British rulers, they were able to colonize Sabah by rental and eventually annexed it in the 1960s. Malaysia seemed an easy and vulnerable target at that time. The Federation was still new and fragile, having come into being only in 1963. Ferdinand Marcos cast his avaricious eyes on a country that was still on its way to political cohesion their fragility as a newly independent state was seen by Marcos and the Philippine military associated with him as a weakness. They, therefore, apprehended a plot in 1967 called the "Operation Merdeka" as a force of troops to weaken Sabah.

Operation Merdeka was led by Maj. Eduardo Abdul Latif Martelino as operations officer. In order for the infiltration of Sabah to be a success, the plan involved the employing of nearly 200 Tausug and Sama Muslims aged 18 to 30 from Sulu and Tawi-Tawi. They were to be trained in the island-town of Simunul. What enticed these young men to join the training was not only because they were promised of a monthly allowance but also over the vision of eventually becoming a member of an elite unit in the Philippine Armed Forces. The name of the commando unit was Jabidah.

## **The Triggers**

### ***Jabidah Massacre***

The Jabidah massacre was considered by many as the founding moment of Muslim separatism in Mindanao, which took place on the rocky island of Corregidor that involved the killing of 64 Moro trainees who were planning to leave the training due to several reasons. The trainees complained and secretly wrote a petition addressed to President Marcos, signed by about 62 trainees. Others placed their thumb marks. They wanted their pay plus an improvement in their living conditions. Martelino visited the trainees and assured them of their pay. He later met with the 4 leaders of the petitioning group. These reasons were revealed by the only survivor of the cold-blooded massacre, named

Jibin Arula. When they eventually discovered that the training's purpose was to intrude and attack the Malaysians, they refused to continue the training. As Jibin expressed, "How could we attack the Malaysians when they are our brothers and we do not have any quarrel with them?". The recruits then necessitated to be returned home. For the military planners, it seemed that there was only one choice.

The horrible bloodshed was revealed by the late Senator Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino, Jr. in his privileged speech in the Senate floor. He was accused of an act of treason on since he put the national security of the country at risk, at that time. This revelation, however, did not only anger the Malaysians including Sabah Chief Minister Datu Tun Mustapha Haron, but shook the Moros and their leaders, particularly Cotabato Gov. Datu Udtog Matalam. Hardly two months after the incident, Datu Udtog Matalam headed the move to create an Islamic Republic of Mindanao in answer to the alleged systematic policy of genocide, discrimination, and dispossession of lands pursued forcefully by the government. On May 1, 1968, he organized the Muslim (and later Mindanao) Independence Movement (MIM), which sought to form a state comprising of the contiguous southern portion of the Philippine Archipelago.

### ***The Birth***

The globally-known day of infamy inspired the historical birth of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) to start launching the freedom struggle of the oppressed Bangsamoro people of Mindanao against Philippine colonialism under the murderous regime of Dictator Ferdinand E. Marcos. The MNLF was conceptualized and organized by Abul Khayr Alonto and Jallaludin Santos who were at that time active with the BangsaMoro Movement. With Muslim congressmen and leaders as advisers, they recruited young Muslims from different tribes. Jallaludin Santos suggested to Abul Khayr that they could benefit from the vibrancy of Nur Misuari, professor at University of Philippines, who was with the leftist movement Kabataang Makabayan. Abul Khayr persuaded Nur to join the movement. Advisers and members wanted Abul Khayr to chair the MNLF, but he declined and indicated that Misuari could have the position. As he saw it, the work of the Chairman would be to solicit help from Muslim countries and negotiate their involvement in creating a solid solution for the BangsaMoro problem. Abul Khayr on the other hand, out of loyalty to his men could not bear to travel and leave his brothers in battle. Accordingly, Misuari became the Chairman though not the founder or leader.

Later in March 1968, the Moro students in Manila held a week-long protest in front of the presidential palace. Believing that several dozens of Moro army recruits had been murdered, the students displayed an empty coffin which symbolized oppression and the government's low regard for its Muslim citizenry. They interpreted the tragedy as incontrovertible proof that the problems in Mindanao could no longer be solved within

the ambit of the Republic of the Philippines, and that a new nation-state had to be born. As Misuari himself recalled, it was during those nightly vigils that his political career, coinciding closely with the secessionist aspirations of the Moro Nationalist Liberation Front (MNLF), germinated (George, 1980). In one interview with Misuari, he reminisced about how the Jabidah Massacre stood at the crest of centuries of Muslim struggle for self-determination and justice which justified the creation of the MNLF. For the Jabidah Massacre could only be remembered within the frame of conflict between Muslims and non-Muslims that has persisted for many generations.

By the end of 1972, the emerging Muslim revolution began to coalesce under the MNLF's banner. The MNLF never controlled all the insurgents fighting the government and was, in fact, a loosely knit group, with the borders between those fighters who were members of, aligned with, or exterior to the MNLF never very clear. Nevertheless, the MNLF was the principal, and by far the most important, armed separatist organization, largely because it became the major supplier of arms and ideological support for the insurgency. One of the reasons for the loosely knit character of the MNLF was the fact that virtually its entire core leadership was, by 1973, operating from outside the country, far from local commanders. Nur Misuari, with a large reward offered for his capture, escaped from Manila to the South after martial law was declared, from there to Sabah, then on to Libya (George, 1980).

The MNLF was formally organized into two parallel structures: one political, the other military. The political wing was composed of a central committee, various bureaus, and a system of provincial and village committees. The military wing - the Bangsa Moro Army - had an overall field marshal, provincial field marshals and zone commanders at the municipality level. The chairman of the central committee, almost all of whose members were in Tripoli by 1974, was Nur Misuari (Dacanay, 2013). The vice-chairman, by 1974, was Hashim Salamat. In his 1977 interview, Salamat states that he and his cohorts were forced underground when, immediately after martial law, Datu Udtug signed an "affidavit" against them and turned it over to the Philippine. A short while later, his group joined forces with Nur Misuari and Salamat then made his way to Tripoli. Abulkhayr Alonto, member of a prominent Maranao family, was overall field commander of the Bangsa Moro Army and one of the few top leaders to remain in the Philippines. Although all estimates remain only rough guesses, the MNLF probably came to have between ten thousand and thirty thousand men in its military branch. The authority over rebel fighters enjoyed by the MNLF derived at least partly from its access to critical resources, particularly weapons, from outside the Philippines. Before the removal from power of Tun Mustapha in late 1975, the primary conduit of weapons was by boat from Sabah. The weapons arrived in Sabah from Libya and other Muslim nations. The MNLF also controlled political and military training, propaganda, and diplomatic contacts with Muslim, primarily Arab, states.

## **The Conflict Phases and Peace Agreements**

### **1<sup>st</sup> Conflict Phase**

(October 24, 1972-December 24, 1976)

On October 24, 1972, the MNLF began its rebellion against the government and consulted such matters to the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC). On December of 1972, Datu Udtog Matalam surrendered to government troops and on March 21, 1973 it resulted to the deaths of some 20 rebels. OIC foreign ministers appealed to the government to end its repression of Muslims in the southern provinces of the Philippines and established a five-member conciliation commission (Afghanistan, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Somalia) on March 27, 1973. But the skirmishes went on as the government troops and MNLF rebels clashed in the Zamboanga peninsula on July 14-21, 1973, resulting in the deaths of some 350 rebels and 25 government soldiers. The OIC conciliation commission issued a report at the OIC summit meeting in Lahore, Pakistan in February 1974.

On June 25, 1974, OIC foreign ministers appealed once again to the government to end military operations against the MNLF and to negotiate with MNLF representatives. But there was no progress in this as the government troops captured UPI from MNLF rebels on August 1, 1974, resulting in the deaths of some 20 rebels. Another clash happened on Sacol island on 1<sup>st</sup> of September 1974, resulting in the deaths of some 40 rebels. OIC Secretary-General Hassan Tohamy attempted to mediate negotiations between government and MNLF representatives from December 1974 to June 1975. Muslim rebels killed 41 government soldiers on Jolo island on January 15, 1975.

The OIC facilitated negotiations between government and MNLF representatives in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia beginning on January 28, 1975 but the government broke off negotiations with the MNLF on February 3, 1975. President Marcos ordered a ceasefire in the southern provinces of the Philippines on February 10, 1975 but still the Muslim rebels killed 32 civilians in Lanao del Sur province on August 8, 1975 and another clash aroused on August 9, 1975, resulting in the deaths of 69 rebels and six government troops. President Marcos proposed, once again, a peace plan on August 14, 1975, but the MNLF rejected the proposal on September 11, 1975. Though the OIC foreign ministers appealed for a ceasefire and peaceful negotiations between the government and the MNLF on May 15, 1976, the Muslim rebels attacked a school on Mindanao island on the following month, resulting in the deaths of seven children.

On December 15-23, 1976, an OIC conciliation commission mediated negotiations between government and MNLF representatives in Tripoli, Libya. The parties then agreed to a cessation of military hostilities, and the ceasefire went into effect on December 24, 1976. The agreement also provided for autonomy for 13 provinces and nine cities in

Mindanao and Sulu (this part of the agreement was never implemented). Some 50,000 individuals were killed during the conflict and some 500,000 individuals were displaced during the conflict.

### ***The Tripoli Agreement***

The first phase of the Government and MNLF conflict ended when representatives from both parties negotiated in Tripoli from February 7 to March 3, 1977, and the government agreed to grant autonomy to the southern provinces on March 20, 1977. On March 25, 1977, President Marcos issued a proclamation establishing an autonomous region in the southern Philippines. The government conducted a referendum concerning autonomy for the southern provinces on April 17, 1977, but the referendum was boycotted by the MNLF. Some 98 percent of the voters rejected autonomy for the southern provinces in the referendum.

OIC Secretary-General Ahmadu karim Gaye and Foreign Minister Ali Abdusalam Trieki of Libya mediated negotiations between government and MNLF representatives in Manila on April 20-21, 1977. The OIC foreign ministers expressed support for the MNLF (by extending the MNLF observer status in the OIC) on May 22, 1977.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Conflict Phase**

(September 17, 1977-September 5, 1986)

Government troops and Muslim rebels clashed on Basilan and Jolo islands on September 17-21, 1977, resulting in the deaths of 86 individuals. Government troops and Muslim rebels clashed on Basilan island on October 2-8, 1977, resulting in the deaths of 53 individuals. Government troops and Muslim rebels clashed in the town of Danag on Jolo island on October 10, 1977, resulting in the deaths of 33 government soldiers. Government troops and Muslim rebels clashed on Mindanao, Jolo and Basilan islands on October 12-26, 1977, resulting in the deaths of some 50 government soldiers. Government troops and Muslim rebels clashed on Basilan island on April 30, 1978, resulting in the deaths of some 80 rebels and 11 government soldiers.

Elections for representatives to two legislative assemblies were held in April and May 1979. President Marcos lifted martial law on January 17, 1981. Government troops and Muslim rebels clashed in Lanao del Sur province on March 11, 1982, resulting in the deaths of 25 individuals.

Some 200,000 Muslims fled as refugees to Sabah, Malaysia between 1968 and 1983. Government and MNLF representatives resumed negotiations in Manila on March 13, 1986. President Corazon Aquino and MNLF representatives signed a ceasefire agreement on September 5, 1986. Some 35,000 individuals were killed, and some 900,000 individuals were displaced during the conflict.

### **The Jeddah Accord**

Corazon Aquino succeeded Marcos from 1986-1992 and resumed talks with the MNLF, producing the Jeddah Accord in 1987, in attempt to further discussions on a democratic process for Mindanao. The two panels met in the evening of January 3, 1987 at the Headquarters of the Organization of Islamic Conference in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and agreed to:

1. Create a Joint Commission which will discuss and draft the mechanism and details of the proposal for the grant of full autonomy to Mindanao, Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi and Palawan subject to democratic processes. The Joint Commission shall be composed of three members from each panel and shall initially meet in Manila on February 9, 1987. It shall endeavour to complete its work within 90 days from said date;
2. Create provincial committees to monitor and implement the observance of the agreement on the cessation of hostilities between the Philippine government and the MNLF;
3. Propose the immediate formulation and implementation of a comprehensive economic and social development program in priority areas mutually agreed upon.

This was then ultimately restricted by the 1987 Constitution that was passed as part of the democratic reconfiguring of the Philippines post-Marcos. Article X, Sections 15-21 of the 1987 Constitution established regional restrictions, furthered by RA 6734, in August, 1989, providing an Organic Act for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) following a plebiscite (Abubakar, 2004). The MNLF rejected the Organic Act, as well as the plebiscite-formulated ARMM, and negotiations were halted until 1992 (Mackerras, 2003).

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Conflict Phase**

(February 1, 1988-November 7, 1993)<sup>5</sup>

The MNLF resumed its rebellion against the government on February 1, 1988. A referendum was held on Mindanao and Sulu islands on November 19, 1989, resulting in the approval of a plan providing for regional autonomy of the Moro provinces. The MNLF called upon Muslims to boycott the referendum. A six-member OIC conciliation commission (Indonesia, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Bangladesh, Senegal, and Somalia) chaired by Ali Alatas, Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs, mediated negotiations between government and MNLF representatives from October 25, 1993 and August 29, 1996. Government and MNLF representatives signed a cease fire agreement in Jakarta, Indonesia on November 7, 1993.

### **Final Peace Agreement of 1996<sup>6</sup>**

In 1992, the new presidency led to a change in administration priorities and the Ramos Period resumed peace negotiations (Abubakar, 2004). After four years of an interim

ceasefire and exploratory talks, in 1996, the Final Agreement on the Implementation of the 1976 Tripoli Agreement was signed between the Philippine Government and the MNLF (MILF Peace Panel/Asia Foundation, 2010). The 1996 Agreement was intended as a two-stage process, with Phase I composing a 3-year transition period to join MNLF elements with the Armed Forces of the Philippine (AFP) and to undergo intensive socio-economic rehabilitation in the region, and Phase II consisting of the devolution of powers and the repeal of the Organic Act (RA 6734). While this was satisfactory for the MNLF, the MILF continued armed resistance, reaffirming their commitment to the establishment of a self-determining Bangsamoro territory (Mackerras, 2003).

Government and MNLF representatives signed an agreement in Manila on September 2, 1996, which provided for the establishment of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). Nur Misuari was appointed as governor of the ARMM. The OIC established the OIC Monitoring Team (OIC-MT) to monitor the peace agreement beginning on September 2, 1996. The OIC sent a fact-finding mission to southern Philippines on October 16-23, 2000. The World Bank (WB) and Japan provided reconstruction assistance in the ARMM beginning in 2002. The OIC-MT disbanded on April 2, 2002. The OIC sent a fact-finding mission to southern Philippines on May 18-21, 2006.

The OIC established the eleven-member Peace Committee for Southern Philippines (PCSP) consisting of representatives from Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, Libya, Somalia, Senegal, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Brunei, Egypt, Turkey, and Pakistan. The 1st session of the tripartite meeting of representatives of the Philippines government, MNLF, and OIC/PCSP met in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia on November 10-12, 2007.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> session of the tripartite meeting of representatives of the Philippines government, MNLF, and OIC/PCSP met in Istanbul, Turkey on February 14-16, 2008. The 3rd session of the tripartite meeting of representatives of the Philippines government, MNLF and OIC/PCSP met in Pasay City, Philippines on March 11-13, 2009. The 4th session of the tripartite meeting of representatives of the Philippines government, MNLF, and OIC/PCSP met in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia on February 22-23, 2011. The 5th session of the tripartite meeting of representatives of the Philippines government, MNLF, and OIC/PCSP convened in Bandung, Indonesia on March 1, 2012, but the MNLF unilaterally suspended its participation in peace negotiations with the Philippines government on March 2, 2012. The two sides disagreed over the issue of revenue-sharing from mineral extraction in the ARMM area. On February 7, 2013, the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) appealed to the Philippines government and MNLF to negotiate a resolution of the remaining issues.

### **The Revolutionary Founder**

The drive and aspiration of revolutionaries is their vision. In the case of Chairman Nur Misuari of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), he seeks for Mindanao's liber-

ation. Chairman Nur is a Tausug, the Mindanao tribe that rules the provinces of Sulu, Tawi-Tawi and Basilan - all island-provinces in Southern Mindanao. He was a Political Science professor at the University of Philippines when he became a revolutionary and he was at the age of 27 when he established the Mindanao Independence Movement, which eventually became the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) in Malaysia in of year 1969. 'Without justice, there can never be an end to the war in Mindanao' – Nur Misuari.

In the early 60s, the heirs of a Sultan from Sulu who owned Sabah transferred the right to claim the territory to the Philippine government. The Sultan of Brunei ceded North Borneo (Sabah) to the Sultan of Sulu who helped quell a rebellion there in the early 17th century. Because of the MNLF, the Philippine government did not actively claim Sabah.

Misuari was 34 when he forged a pro-autonomy peace settlement with the Philippine government in Libya in 1976. In 1996, he led the MNLF in signing a pro-autonomy peace settlement with the Philippine government. He became governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) which was established through a referendum for autonomy in 1989. The agreement resulted in another referendum for autonomy in 2001. From 1996 to 2001, he was accused of mismanagement as ARMM governor, and his allies ousted him as MNLF head, resulting in a three-faction group, a division which holds up to now. In 2001, he resorted to an armed struggle because he could not get the support of former president Gloria Arroyo for his second bid to head the ARMM. He fled to Malaysia where he was arrested and brought back to Manila. He served time at a police headquarters in southern Luzon until 2008. Charges of sedition and rebellion against him were withdrawn.

Although Misuari was deposed in 2000 by his senior officials headed by his Foreign Affairs chief Parouk Hussin – who along with veteran rebel leaders headed by Muslimen Sema, the front's secretary general – who made up the so-called Council of 15. Hussin, who eventually became governor of the Muslim autonomous region, was also deposed several years later after the Council of 15, disgruntled at his leadership, put back Misuari as head of the MNLF in 2007. But Sema and majority of the MNLF leaders ousted Misuari again in 2008 for lack of trust and confidence. Sema's group previously appointed Misuari as chairman emeritus, but he rejected the position and insisted he is the sole chairman of the MNLF. Sema has not issued any public statement about Alonto's declaration. In November 2001, on the eve of the elections in the Muslim autonomous region, Misuari accused the government of renegeing on the peace agreement, and launched a new rebellion in Sulu and Zamboanga City, where more than 100 people were killed.

Misuari then escaped by boat to Malaysia, where he had been arrested and deported to the Philippines where he was jailed and eventually released by then President Gloria Arroyo in exchange for his support to her election bid and her allies in the Senate and Congress in 2004. But Misuari's fall had severely affected the MNLF which is now

heavily divided and rift among its leaders is becoming more apparent. Misuari also ran thrice for governor in Sulu province even while under detention but lost. On September 2013, Misuari's group again launched deadly attacks in Zamboanga City that sparked three weeks of deadly street battles that killed and wounded over 400 people, and left over 130,000 without homes following the burning of several Muslim villages. Misuari remains in hiding following the attacks.

### **On the Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL)**

The Bangsamoro, according to the proposed draft of the Bangsamoro Basic Law, are those who at the time of conquest and colonization were considered natives or original inhabitants of Mindanao and the Sulu archipelago and its adjacent islands including Palawan, and their descendants, whether of mixed or of full blood, shall have the right to identify themselves as Bangsamoro by ascription or self-ascription. Spouses and their descendants are classified as Bangsamoro. The purpose of this Basic Law is to establish a political entity, provide for its basic structure of government in recognition of the justness and legitimacy of the cause of the Bangsamoro people and their aspiration to chart their political future through a democratic process that will secure their identity and posterity and allow for meaningful self-governance.

There were several allegations that the MNLF is not supportive of the BBL; since it was based on the peace agreement signed by the government with another Moro group, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), which broke away from the MNLF in the late 1970s. But weeks after Abul Kayr Alonto declared himself new chieftain of the Moro National Liberation Front in 2014, he has publicly thrown his support to the peace process between Manila and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, which has been fighting for decades for self-determination in the restive southern region of the Philippines. Alonto, who was among the original founding members of the MNLF, also urged Muslims to support the Bangsamoro agreement between the Aquino government and the MILF, the country's largest Muslim rebel group. "The Moro people want to set their house in order but how can they set their house in order when the very key to their own hands is not in their own hands. And the sad part is that the people who want to govern them do not even speak the language that the people to be governed speak. *Ito na po* ang key and I believe the taught by my grandfather was saying that the key is not in their hands, the key now is the framework basic law that we look forward to that will be approved by Congress or through Constitutional amendment, please do so, let's do it so that we can unite and spare the future generation of a war of aggression", Alonto said.

Randolph Parcasio's 40-minute talk during the Regional Forum on Peace and Security held in Zamboanga last September 2013, disclosed that the MNLF maintains its position. It will allow Congress to decide on the proposal to create a new Bangsamoro political and geographic entity that will replace the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao

(ARMM). “The MNLF is not opposed to the BBL, because the official position of the MNLF is let the legislature take its natural course”, Mr. Parcasio reiterated. He also disclosed the status and efforts of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in reuniting the MNLF and MILF since their unification is a critical to the success of the BBL. The MILF broke away from the MNLF after disagreements over ideological issues following the Tripoli Agreement, which the OIC brokered in 1976.

Then and now, the MNLF under Mr. Misuari wants to establish a secularist “Bangsamoro Republik” while the MILF was aiming for an Islamic state, according to MNLF commander Amilpasa Bandaring. In a statement issued by the OIC, “We urge the leaders of both the MNLF and the MILF to consolidate their coordination and cooperation through the Bangsamoro Coordination Forum (BCF) and to engage other stakeholders in order to close ranks and strengthen and consolidate their cooperation and unity and maintain their peaceful struggle for the common cause”.

On year 2015, the two disputing Muslim rebel groups — the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and a bloc of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) — declared their unity as they hard-pressed for the passage of the proposed Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL). “For the sake of a just and dignified peace and of the general welfare of the people, we, the MILF and MNLF, firmly and solemnly declare a diluted Bangsamoro Basic Law, which is inimical to the full and faithful implementation of both the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro and the 1996 Final Peace Agreement, is unacceptable to us and the Bangsamoro people”, MILF chair Murad Ebrahim and Muslimin Sema, chair of the MNLF Council of 15, said in a joint statement following a meeting at Camp Darapanan in Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao. Murad said the union was the product of the Bangsamoro Coordination Forum in Kuwait, which was called by the Organization of the Islamic Conference in May 2015.

## **Conclusion**

The beginnings of the Moro struggle could be dated back as far as the Spanish Colonization of the Philippines during the 1950s.

Despite countless successful attempts of blocking foreigners from entering their turf, the Moros were grabbed of their own lands to give room to those “settlers” coming from the North. On one hand, what other grievances the Moros experienced were being highly minoritized, discriminated and oppressed in their own soil. The settlers, on the other hand, continuously felt indifferent, scared and apprehensive towards the Moros.

The Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) was officially formed in 1969 to resist intensifying discrimination and marginalization, and in 1972 began an armed resistance in order to establish a self-determining Moro identity in Bangsamoro (Indonesian for ‘Muslim Nation’) which would be established within the territorial provinces and pen-

insular regions of Mindanao, Sulu and Palawan. Its creation was greatly pushed when the Jabidah Massacre hit the headlines. This globally-known day of notoriety intensified the already existing protests of the Moros and stirred them enough to finally launch a formal struggle against the Government of the Republic of the Philippines. The Moros saw the tragedy as an irrefutable proof that the problems in Mindanao could no longer be solved within the ambit of the GRP, and that a new nation-state had to be born. For Nur Misuari, the once University of the Philippines professor who chaired the MNLF since its creation, "Without justice, there can never be an end to the war in Mindanao."

There were three (3) major conflict phases of the MNLF struggle. By the time each phase has concluded, a peace agreement was born. Hence, the Tripoli Agreement, Jeddah Accord and the 1996 Final Peace Agreement were ensued. There was one major intervenor, the Organization for Islamic Conference, who countless time appealed to the GRP for mediations, for ceasefire and for negotiations for the crafting of peace agreements.

The creation of the Bangsamoro Basic Law was a necessity for the MNLF, since it will be the legitimizing factor of the 1996 Final Peace Agreement. As what the new chairman of the MNLF said, "the key (to peace) now is the framework (of the) basic law that we look forward to that will be approved by Congress or through Constitutional amendment, please do so, let's do it so that we can unite and spare the future generation of a war of aggression." Regardless of the countless skirmishes, assaults and uprisings, the MNLF sees this peaceful way now as a highly possible solution to end the Bangsamoro identity struggle against marginalization, oppression and fight for self-determination.

### **Recommendations**

The study on the political history of the MNLF could be more deepened if the following will be considered:

1. Future researchers are encouraged to delve more into the personal life of Nur Misuari. A good reading could be the book by Dr. Tom Stern entitled "Nur Misuari: An Authorized Biography".
2. A conduct of interview and FGD with the MNLF past and present members should be necessitated to further validate the past researches conducted.
3. A personal interview with the founding members and Nur Misuari himself would be an asset to a study about the MNLF.
4. The three major conflict phases should have three separate researches so important details in between would not be missed out.
5. A perception study should be conducted for the Bangsamoro on how they appreciate, view and perceive the MNLF as a group.

## References

1. Abubakar, C. A. (2004). Review of the Mindanao peace processes. *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, 5(3), 450-464. DOI: 10.1080/1464937042000288732.
2. Dacanay, B. (2013, September 15). The rise and fall of Nur Misuari. An Article. *Gulf News Philippines*. Retrieved from <https://gulfnews.com/news/asia/philippines/the-rise-and-fall-of-nur-misuari-1.1231406>.
3. George, T. (1980). *Revolt in Mindanao: the rise of Islam in Philippine politics*. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press.
4. Mackerras, C. (2003). *Ethnicity in Asia*. New York: Routledge.
5. MILF Peace Panel/Asia Foundation. (2010). *GRP-MILF peace process: compilation of signed agreements & other related documents (1997-2010)*. Mindanao and San Francisco: MILF Peace Panel/Asia Foundation.

# Nigeria: Perceptions of Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Modelling. Challenges and Prospects for Peace in Niger Delta

James OKOLIE-OSEMENE

**Abstract.** *Disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) is a mechanism that mitigates the outbreak of violence. It has three components critical for peace, reconstruction and stability in every post-conflict society. The DDR programme commenced in 2009, when restive youths agitating for resource control accepted the amnesty proclaimed by President Umaru Yar'Adua. With primary and secondary data, the study investigated the perceptions communities have of the DDR for ex-militants, as well as the challenges and prospects for peace in the Niger Delta. The study showed that most of the respondents established a link between militancy and unemployment. The ex-militants were at peace with their various communities. The majority (76.5%) of the respondents believed that such ex-militants pose no threat to their communities after their being re-integrated. A major hindrance to the DDR is the unwillingness of some groups to totally disarm, while excluded groups agitate over exclusion in the programme. This contributed to the resurgence of youth violence against oil companies and security operatives in the Niger Delta. Therefore, preventing the resurgence of youth restiveness demands timely management of the conflicts that are motivated by grievances and lack of equity in the distribution of resources.*

**Keywords:** *Amnesty, DDR, Federal Government, militancy, perceptions, Niger Delta.*

## Introduction

Most parts of the world have become enclaves of armed conflicts and insecurity, which are usually caused by new security threats or rapid increase in criminality (Ashkenazi, 2013; Hove, Ngwerume, & Muchemwa, 2013; Donais, 2017; Nwobueze & Okolie-Osemene, 2017; Okolie-Osemene & Okolie-Osemene, 2017; Danjibo & Okolie-Osemene, 2018). This emerging trend has

James OKOLIE-OSEMENE  
Department of International Relations  
Wellspring University, Nigeria  
E-mail: okolieosemenej@gmail.com

---

Conflict Studies Quarterly  
Issue 24, July 2018, pp. 26-43

DOI:10.24193/csqr.24.3  
Published First Online: 05/07/2018

implications for the position of states on the Global Peace Index (GPI), which maps the most peaceful and most dangerous places in the world. Security provision in many cities across the developing world is fluid, involving complex and hybrid arrangements by numerous state and non-state actors (Gupte, 2017). Disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) are the responsibilities of state security providers that aim to offer outlaw security providers the opportunity to shun violence. It is crucial that state security providers address the problem of militancy because armed groups have a propensity to fuel the activities of insurgency (Guéret, 2017).

For over a decade, the Niger Delta militants represented the biggest security threat to the government and people in the region. Different militant groups, such as Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), the Supreme Egbesu Assembly (SEA), and the Reformed Niger Delta Peoples Volunteer Force (NDPVF), with various degrees of alliance, were able to initiate attacks and strike targets in the region. Most of the attacks directly or indirectly affected oil exploration. The conflict escalated to a level that made it attract the attention of the international community and threaten the multinational oil companies operating in the area.

Militancy in the Niger Delta is traceable to the emergence of oil industry, oil prospecting, exploration and exploitation and, later, oil boom, which some people in oil-bearing communities believe has not transformed the region in terms of economic and infrastructural development. The scope of this study covers the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programme in the Niger Delta region from 2009, when amnesty was proclaimed, to 2018. The study puts in proper historical context the activities of armed gangs.

Apart from environmental degradation, other factors that motivate people to protest are lack of access to basic necessities of life, such as water, shelter, health facilities, food and clothing, as well as rising unemployment, which led to sudden proliferation of militant groups. Apart from the inability of the oil companies to address most compensation problems and the needs of the communities in accordance with corporate social responsibility (Odera, Scott, & Gow, 2018), the people felt betrayed by successive governments through neglect of their well-being and security. This made them resort to violence to seek redress.

Musari (2012, p. 3) asserts that:

In the wake of the creation of the Niger Delta Ministry, hopes were high; there were high expectations from a people who were grateful for government's attention. They were sure that in few years, the Niger Delta region would be transformed with the various projects that would make life easy for the old and as well, ensure that youths were gainfully engaged and their future secured. Sadly, these hopes and expectations are far from reality three years after and

with the situation on ground, the region is far from seeing its expectations transform into real development.

It is often believed that the establishment of both the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) and the Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs did not contain youth restiveness in the Niger Delta especially militancy and oil theft. January 2009 was described as the peak of youth restiveness or militancy in the Niger Delta. Nwafor (2011,p.189) explains that “the government led by late President Yar’Adua believed that the benefits of negotiating with militants in the Niger Delta far outweighed the chances of winning the conflict by force of arms. If for nothing else, the President was so articulate to realise the risk of making Niger Delta a theatre of war.” From this, we can say that the government realised that short-term peace through Joint Military Task Force (negative peace) in the Niger Delta would not provide the needed sustainable peace, as it would not address the lingering agitations and festering crisis.

This article set out to:

- investigate the perceptions of people in Niger Delta communities of the reintegration of ex-militants in their communities;
- examine the key challenges facing successful reintegration of ex-militants;
- discuss the prospects of the DDR programme in oil producing communities.

### **Significance of the Study**

Most studies on amnesty programme have not established a link between perceptions and the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programme, especially in the context of the national amnesty programme which paved the way for the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of the ex-militants in the Niger Delta region. The study makes meaningful and timely contribution to local debates on the future of the Niger Delta after the amnesty programme, which ended officially in 2015. It offers insight to questions on post-amnesty Niger Delta raised by scholars and policy makers. Findings from the study will give students and scholars insight into perceptions communities have of ex-militants and Nigeria’s DDR modelling. The way communities welcome people who were actively involved in armed conflict with the state is an addition to knowledge in the field of peace and conflict studies, international relations and strategic studies. This relates to the fact that acceptance of ex-militants by their communities is critical to the reintegration phase, which often lasts longer than the disarmament and demobilisation components.

### **Methodology**

#### *Data collection:*

The study is both qualitative and quantitative. It used synthesised primary and secondary data. It involved comprehensive library research for the accumulation of all

relevant information. The study also used a semi-structured questionnaire and in-depth interviews in selected communities in Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Delta and Rivers States to adequately give answers to the research questions already raised.

*Instrumentation:* The main focus of the instrument used in this study was on perception of people in the Niger Delta of the reintegration of ex-militants, the challenges and the prospects.

*Interpretation of data:* The data collected were analysed using Standard Package for Social Science (SPSS) 17. The study adopted a descriptive analytical approach in discussing perceptions people have of reintegration of ex-militants and the DDR modelling in Niger Delta, with the use of simple percentages. A notable methodological challenge was that some of the respondents were scared of having anything to do with the study until the author tried convincing them on their anonymity.

### **Rationale for Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Modelling**

In terms of the context of disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR), Ibaba (2011, p. 243) avers that the Niger Delta conflict was triggered by several factors that are linked to the inhibition of goal attainment, centralised federalism and inequity in the distribution of oil arising from ethnicity-based political domination and neglect of the region's development; oil induced environmental degradation and the resultant occupational displacement; loss of income and increased poverty; corruption in governance and poor service delivery; and the neglect of corporate social responsibility by multinational oil companies and their refusal to pay or payment of inadequate compensation for damage to property caused by oil production activities. The frustrations arising from these triggered the armed conflict.

The United States Institute of Peace (USIP) promotes the universal view that disarming and demobilising ex-combatants is a highly visible process that can increase public confidence in the peace process. In the words of Hembruff (2010), the disarmament, demobilisation, and reintegration (DDR) process has been a staple of post-conflict projects implemented over the last decade, with over 60 DDR initiatives taking place since the early 1990s. Disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programmes are designed to address some security challenges confronting a nation due to availability of small arms and light weapons in the wrong hands.

According to Muggah (2010), DDR operation has features, unique characteristics and particularities. In essence, disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programmes are designed to create a society that is free of weapons of warfare, including small arms and light weapons, rocket propelled grenade and nuclear weapons. This will guarantee peace and stability in troubled states and make the world a safer place. Kemedi and Oko (2005, p.88) also posit that armed gangs or militias pose threat to the continued

existence of society. This problem is one of the reasons why DDR programmes should be designed with the aim of enhancing public safety and addressing insecurity. In the words of Knight (2008), the DDR process is multidimensional and exceedingly complex, with political, military, security, humanitarian, and socioeconomic dimensions. Its primary goal is to address the post-conflict security challenge that stems from ex-combatants being left without livelihoods or support networks once wars come to an end and during the critical transition period from conflict to peace. DDR programmes seek to support ex-combatants' economic and social reintegration, so they can become stakeholders in peace and productive members of their communities. In this context, Nigeria's DDR was aimed at convincing militants (armed groups) to decommission illegally held weapons for stability to return.

Reintegration is a longer-term social and economic process with an open time frame designed to facilitate the assimilation of ex-militias (ex-combatants) in a way that allows them, and their families, to adapt to civilian life in communities that may not necessarily be ready to accept them. As noted by Ball and de Goor (2006), in most cases, this process involves the provision of cash or some form of compensation package in exchange for the commitment of ex-combatants not to return to conflict, providing ex-combatants with longer-term job or career training, initiating sustainable income-generation projects, repatriating refugees and displaced persons, and establishing a forum and process for truth and reconciliation. This stage of the DDR process is usually accompanied by efforts at rehabilitation of war-affected individuals and reconstruction of national infrastructure that was damaged as a result of the violence.

The Nigeria's DDR exercise has been described as the most generous, most comprehensive, as well as the most expensive amnesty or post-amnesty programme in the world. It is argued that the key issues that brought about the militancy have not been addressed (Amaize, 2012). The ex-militants who passed through the rehabilitation training at various camps in the Niger Delta were given some allowances and other forms of compensation package in exchange for their commitment not to return to conflict. What needs to be done is to investigate whether the situation in the Niger Delta has been transformed through the DDR programme or not, especially after rehabilitation training of most of the ex-militants has been carried out.

On the reintegration phase of the DDR programme, Nolasco and Munene (2012) contend that:

experience notes that the design of reintegration programmes should as matter of priority, include a clear understanding of the social, cultural, economic and political dynamics of both ex-combatants and the recipient communities. An understanding of these aspects should inform the planning of reintegration program and its sustainability (p. 9).

This gives the impression that the sustainability of every DDR programme lies on the ability of stakeholders to capture the needs of ex-militias. Achievement of a safe and secure environment is critical in the DDR programme which would enable stakeholders to manage the activities of spoilers. However, Muggah, Maughan and Bugnion (2003) argue that reintegration does not always take place after demobilisation, while Nolasco and Munene (2012) advocate the paradigm of reintegration, demobilisation and disarmament (RDD) model that is more humane, peaceful and geared towards addressing security concerns instead of the usual disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR), stating that the whole programme design works backwards from the reintegration process because the effectiveness of the community reintegration process influences ex-combatants to want to disarm, as well as secures their long-term demobilisation, thereby creating sustainable social networks. Whichever approach adopted, the most important thing is that arms are removed from the wrong hands without the use of force because actualisation of positive peace remains the core objective of DDR programmes. Long-term peace would make the DDR to be described as successful.

Through the amnesty programme, the government successfully negotiated peace, with the agreement to implement the Niger Delta Regional Development Master Plan. Amnesty is from the Greek word *amnestia*, which means oblivion, complete obliteration or forgetting completely. According to Alabo-George (2012), the success of the national amnesty programme has translated to prosperity for the nation because Nigeria's crude oil production and export have climbed to a two-year high volume of about 2.6 million barrels per day. He sees the amnesty programme as a therapy that is rapidly healing the economy of the nation, while the region and its people only barely recover from the decades of environmental devastation. But one undisputable fact is that amnesty is necessary to help bring calm in any troubled region and resolve issues that have lingered for years.

Much literature has explored the nexus between DDR and peace agreement as regards confidence building, but with little emphasis on the ethical and security implications of failure to implement agreements signed by the parties involved in armed conflicts. Peace agreements are designed to convince militias to announce abandonment of armed struggle and dedicate themselves to promoting dialogue, negotiation and a peaceful solution of whatever conflict as well as to enhance confidence building. Griffiths and Barnes (2008, p.12) note that "political guarantees are often an integral aspect of peace agreements and involve political and practical support to assist implementation and assurances that external parties will use their influence to foster parties compliance with the terms agreed."

Undoubtedly, without the national amnesty programme, it would have been more difficult to even bring the militant groups out from the creeks or even realise the fact that their demands would not be met by resorting to armed struggle or violence. Successful

DDR in the case of the Niger Delta would promote good business relationships, especially between host communities and multi-national oil companies. A proper rehabilitation programme is critical to successful reintegration to enable ex-militias to get used to civilian life because it differs from combatants' ways of life or life in the creeks.

Nolasco and Munene (2012) assert that successful cooperation and coordination among all actors guarantee successful disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration, albeit with proper planning. Effective use of resources and coherence on the ground in implementing the disarmament exercise has the potential of ensuring a successful DDR programme when stakeholders are committed to and focused on ensuring the successful completion of the security-oriented exercise. Mental demobilisation is an aspect of DDR that needs proper consideration by stakeholders to ensure that the achievements recorded through DDR programmes are sustained without being undermined by return to armed conflict. This is obvious because the minds of former fighters or militants remain critical to crime prevention, as disregarding them can motivate their involvement in threatening state security providers' law enforcement roles. According to Cunny (1991), "inability of governments to demobilise youths mentally is one of the precipitants of soaring crime rates and enduring political instability in former conflict theatres" (cited in Faleti 2005, p. 382). Proper consideration of psychological needs of former armed gangs or militias is a factor of stability in post-conflict societies considering the effects of an improper confidence-building process during DDR programme.

Nigeria is currently producing 2.68 mm bpd, short of a capacity of 3.7 mm barrels, according to the NNPC. Nigeria depends on oil exports for more than 95 % of export income and 80% of all government revenue. Federal Government's control of oil revenue is resented by communities in the region and this has spawned unrest, including armed attacks on oil facilities and theft from pipelines (Bala-Gbogbo, 2012).

Some ex-militants were, however, disarmed and demobilised. For the demobilisation exercise, the Federal Government involved over 55 rehabilitation training partners and Non-governmental organisations in the country as well as experts from Nigeria, South Africa and the United States. The transformational or reorientation activities in the ex-militants' camps are tailored to extinguishing the perception of the ex-militants of violence or hostility and providing them a more powerful alternative of nonviolence (Africa Terrorism, 2012). Training partners were also contracted to provide training in 21 countries, including Ghana, Costa Rica, Malaysia, and South Africa.

### **The Role of Perception in Reintegration: Theoretical Implication**

Perception refers to the way people regard or see things. Cataldi (2011) observes that perceptions frame the way we view the world and respond to it, particularly in situations of conflict. Perception, according to Berelson and Gary (1964), is a process by which information is selected, organised and interpreted by individuals. Devine, Hamilton and

Ostrom (1995) see the perception of people and their actions by other people (social perception) as much more complex than psychological perception (the perception of objects). In social perception, people's actions are perceived in terms of some underlying motives, purpose, or desire.

The perception of cash for weapons is one of the challenges of DDR in the Niger Delta. Some ex-militants assume that surrendering their arms without financial benefits is not in their interest, as they are likely to be neglected after the DDR and end up not achieving their goal. The issue of perception is also applicable in the aspect of expecting that it is government's responsibility to pay them bimonthly allowances for disarming them. Perception has also been significant even as ex-militants try to reintegrate into their communities. Davidheiser and Nyiayaana (2011) contend that the disarmament was only partial, because the militants had held some arms back, highlighting their continued mistrust of the government and lack of confidence in its commitment to the peace-building agenda.

An important area that needs to be studied is the position and views of communities concerning reintegration of ex-militants and the DDR programme which has grave implications and prospects for peace in the region. Although Davidheiser and Nyiayaana (2011) note that the refusal of the Federal Government to further negotiate with the Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND) and frequent delays in the payment of bimonthly allowance of ₦65,000 to the ex-militants reinforce and deepen perceptions of insecurity and distrust of the state by people in the region.

Hostility perception theory aptly explains what was observed when some former ex-militants who participated in the rehabilitation training threatened excluded ex-militants who agitated over their exclusion not to disrupt the programme. According to d'Estrée (2008), negative feelings and beliefs about the other party lead to negative interpretations of the other party's behaviour, reduce contact, make retaliation more acceptable, and result in reduced empathy for the other party (cited in Cataldi, 2011). Hostility perception theory states that the perception of the other as hostile to one or one's own group, identity, or culture tends to exacerbate conflict and conflict behaviour. Some of the ways this occurs include framing the lens through which actions by the other are viewed, perpetuating self-fulfilling cycles of negative and escalatory behaviour, and creating significant obstacles to problem-solving, relationship-building, and reconciliation (Cataldi, 2011). The Federal Government sees some groups as potential threat to the future of Nigeria's DDR programme, which was scheduled to end in 2015.

One of the ways of preventing the oil-related conflict occasioned by hostility perception of the other is giving adequate attention to people-centred development. Iruonagbe (2008) claims that, when people are given the opportunity to participate in decision-making and planning over issues that concern their livelihood, they are able to actualise their human potential, build self-confidence and lead lives of dignity and fulfilment.

This self-actualisation will engage them in positive endeavours. People-centred development transforms and channels social conflict to prevent the undesired effects of conflict from reaching a critical point of tension that destabilises society and affects people (Nwobueze, 2015).

**Polls organised during the study**

Perceptions of the focus of the Niger Delta Amnesty Programme

Economic Empowerment:	945=50.1%
New Jobs:	592=31.4%
Infrastructure:	235=12.5%
Security:	115=6.1%
Number of Voters:	1887
First Vote:	Monday, 24 May 2010, 08:46
Last Vote:	Sunday, 18 November 2012, 06:09

*Source:* Niger Delta Presidential Amnesty Office, Abuja

The essence of the polls was mainly to examine what the majority suggest should be the focus of government and implementing agencies. It was discovered that economic empowerment still remains the greatest need of the people, having 945 votes and over 50.1% out of 1887 votes as at 18 November, 2012. It is believed that when economic empowered is holistically carried out, new jobs, security and infrastructure would be achieved or the problems associated with security would abate.

**Field Results**

**Table 1:** Demographic characteristics of the respondents

	Age	Frequency	Per cent
Age	19-29	96	62.8
	30-39	33	21.6
	40-49	10	6.5
	50 years and above	14	9.2
Occupation	Student	72	47.1
	Farmer	32	20.9
	public servant	13	8.5
	civil servant	11	7.2
	Business	25	16.3
	Total	153	100.0

The demographic profile of the 153 respondents interviewed in four states is shown in Table 1. The respondents' age ranged from 19 to 100 years and had an average mean of 31.67. The majority (62.8%) of them belonged to 19-29 years; 21.6% were within

the age of 30-39; and 9.2% were within 50 years and above; while those 40-49 years had the lowest percentage of 6.5. Overall 7.2% and 8.5% of the sampled population reported that they were civil and public servants, respectively; 20.9% were farmers, 16.3% were into business; and 47.1% were students.

**Table 2:** Perceptions of people in the Niger Delta communities of the reintegration of ex-militants in their communities

People's perception	Yes	No
Link between militancy and unemployment/poverty	148 (96.7)	5 (3.3)
Presence of ex-militants in the community as a problem	31 (20.3)	122 (79.7)
Militants overseas vocational training as the best reintegration strategy in managing militancy	120 (78.4)	33 (21.6)
Federal Government did the right thing by giving ex-militants that passed through the non-violence/rehabilitation training some allowances /compensation package in exchange for their commitment not to return to conflict was right.	141 (92.2)	12 (7.8)
Ex-militants are still security risks to their communities.	36 (23.5)	117 (76.5)
Belief in the sustainability of peace in the Niger Delta	137 (89.5)	16 (10.5)

There have been different perceptions of the reintegration of ex-militants into their communities. Table 2 shows that the majority (96.7%) of the sampled population believed there is a strong relationship between militancy and unemployment/poverty; while 3.3% had a contrary opinion. This finding corresponds with United Nations General Assembly (2007), which maintains that young people with limited education and few employment opportunities often provide fertile recruiting ground for parties to a conflict. Also, 79.7% of the respondents reported that having ex-militants in their communities poses no danger, as against the 20.3% who believed that the integration of ex-militants into their communities is a problem.

Evaluating the amnesty programmes organised for the ex-militants, 78.4% of the respondents were convinced that sending some repentant militants abroad for vocational training was the best reintegration strategy in managing militancy. However, this opinion was not shared by 21.6% of the respondents, who preferred other re-integration strategies.

There was a significant difference in the number of respondents who agreed that the Federal Government did the right thing by giving the ex-militants that passed through the non-violence/rehabilitation training some allowances /compensation package in exchange for their commitment not to return to conflict was right (92.2%) and those who felt the Federal Government's engagement of the ex-militants in rehabilitation process was a misplaced priority (7.8%).

With regard to the opinions of the respondents on the security risk involved in having ex-militants in communities, 76.5% of the respondents argued that such ex-militants

pose no threat to their communities on the event of their being re-integrated. On the contrary, about 23.5% argued that the presence of ex-militants in their communities is a security threat.

**Table 3:** Prospects of the DDR programme in oil-producing communities

Rating	Frequency	Per cent
Excellent	2	1.3
Very good	17	11.1
Good	67	43.8
Fair	63	41.2
Poor	4	2.6
Total	153	100.0

There have been mixed feeling on the prospect of the DDR programmes in oil-producing communities in the Niger Delta. Table 3 the rating of 1.3% (excellent), 11.1% (very good), 43.8% (good), 41.2% (fair) and 2.6% (poor) indicates that the DDR programmes in the oil-producing communities in the Niger Delta have been successful. This finding is based on the success of the disarmament phase of the DDR programme. The ex-militants were reintegrated into their various communities through vocational skills training, formal education or entrepreneurship skills acquisition either in Nigeria or abroad after their rehabilitation programme.

Despite the successes recorded during the DDR programme, few respondents still doubt its sustainability. Some ex-militants find it difficult to adjust to communal life, they constitute nuisance and tend to be aggressive and engage in deviant activities. An interview with Mr. EV confirmed that the ex-militants are already involved in criminal cases owing to their negative attitude. Inadequate attention, love and care become stressors that can make ex-militants take to deviant risk behaviours which, most times, disrupt communal life. Unless there is proper programme coordination, proper remuneration of ex-militants, adequate funding of reintegration programmes and complete de-traumatisation of ex-militants, the success cases may be temporal.

The DDR programme was designed in such a way that will aid capacity development and expose the ex-militants to self-sufficiency, vocation and skill acquisition and formal education. However, the DDR programme has not been without serious challenges that have tried to disrupt the execution of the programme.

The challenges faced by the ex-militants and the organisers of the re-integration programme are presented in Table 4. The majority (49%) of the respondents reported that non-payment of ex-militants compensations and allowances was a major challenge. The allowances included housing allowances, feeding allowances and transportation allowances, and start-off fund for the establishment of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to facilitate the re-integration process.

**Table 4:** Challenges facing successful reintegration of ex-militants

		Challenges	Frequency	Percentage
Challenges faced by the ex-militants		Stigmatization	27	17.6
		non-payment of compensations and allowances	75	49.0
		inadequate training facilities and funding	45	29.4
		lack of trust and non-compliance	6	3.9
		Total	153	100.0
Challenges faced by the organisers of the re-integration programme		limited funding	19	12.4
		Politicisation	54	35.3
		lack of qualified personnel	33	21.6
		unwillingness of the ex-militants to undergo re-integration	47	30.7
		Total	153	100.0

About 29.4% of the respondents noted that inadequate training facilities and funding were challenges during the re-integration programme, in addition to stigmatisation (17.6%) and lack of trust (3.9%). This is in tandem with various reports that infrastructural facilities were not adequate during re-integration, resulting in most ex-militants leaving their camps in Benin, Yenagoa and Aluu in Port Harcourt. On the part of the organisers of the re-integration programme, 35.3% agreed that the re-integration programme was hijacked by top politicians who had vested interest in the programme. That affected the way and manner the programme was executed. About 30.7% of the respondents agreed that unwillingness of the ex-militants to undergo re-integration was a challenge encountered during the re-integration process; 21.6% reported that lack of personnel was a challenge; and 12.4% submitted that limited funding hampered the re-integration programme.

So far, the DDR programme has recorded some level of success three years into the programme. However, the concern among oil companies is that there is a risk of a slide back to violence if stakeholders do not seize the opportunity presented by the current relative calm to begin to build a better and fairer future for the Niger delta. Oil production is currently below the pre-militancy levels, which seems to be worsened by the massive organised oil theft business and the criminality and corruption that are attached to it. At least, 150,000 bpd of oil is lost to theft, resulting in increased production costs, reduced revenue and major environmental impacts. Increasing crude theft along Shell's Nembe Creek trunkline threatens daily exports of 140,000 barrels; and the company has recorded over 250 incidents of theft and sabotage in its onshore operations since January 2010 (Bala-Gbogbo, 2012).

Mitee (2012) attributes the current challenges of Niger DDR to government's failure to properly evaluate and positively respond to the challenges facing the Niger Delta, which has resulted in an overwhelming community feeling of anger and frustration

that the irreplaceable revenue from the resources of their land is exploited and used for the development of other areas whilst they live in pristine conditions, with a pervasive regime of poverty, an increasing army of unemployed youths creating a ready pool of recruitable youths for politics.

The DDR programme was so challenging that most of the officers that coordinated the disarmament phase had to embark on medical check-up abroad at their own expense at the end of the exercise. It was also described as frustrating owing to insufficient resources and funds and things being done at cross-purposes. Plans for the amnesty programme were inadequate and ex-militants getting jobs even after going for training is problematic (Amaize, 2012). It was discovered that about 45% of the ex-agitators currently enrolled on the Amnesty Programme cannot read or write, while provisions are now made for them to participate in remedial education before their placement in skills acquisition centres within and outside Nigeria (Africa Terrorism, 2012).

The leadership of Niger Liberation Force (NDLF), an unrepentant militant group in the Niger Delta, demanded ₦1billion naira from the Federal Government as compensation for the alleged extra-judicial murder of its leader, General John Togo, aerial bombing and killing of innocent citizens of Ayakoromor community by soldiers of the Joint Task Force. The demand was due to the alleged Federal Government's payment of ₦100m compensation to the family of the slain leader of the Islamist group, Boko Haram, Mohammed Yusuf, who was reportedly killed by the police in custody. The group noted thus:

We, therefore, consider this as a slap on our face and urge the Federal Government to make immediate compensation through our legal team before or not later than 21 June, 2012, or else, NDLF will be forced to go back to the creeks for action. The leadership has directed all NDLF soldiers and intending recruits to get ready for action, if the government ignores our demand (Oyadongha & Ahon, 2012, p. 1).

What such demand means is that agitations are not yet over in the Niger Delta, as more groups either agitate over exclusion from the DDR programme or for payment of the ₦65,000 allowance as beneficiaries.

Findings from this study also showed that the Federal Government's intervention policies and structures towards tackling the problems of unemployment and poverty among youths are inadequate, poorly-packaged and are more of palliatives. In the case of Delta State, the agitations by the Urhobo and Itsekiri ethnic nationalities revealed that there were serious lapses at the planning stage of the DDR which would have been designed in such a way that that the programme would accommodate those that were actively involved in militancy and surrendered their arms to the Presidential Amnesty Committee before the deadline of October 2009. This greatly eroded the confidence people had in government.

In terms of carrying out reintegration with less emphasis on development, it must be emphasised that development transcends training a few troublesome youths and paying them allowances. Most people always believe that government is not always straightforward in handling issues of development, especially in developing the oil-rich region. There is no gainsaying the fact that, in spite of the efforts made in the past to develop the Niger Delta, the region is still bedevilled by massive environmental degradation and huge infrastructure deficit. A major contributory factor to this state of affairs is lack of coordination and synergy among the stakeholders that are saddled with the responsibility of developing the region (Soriwei, 2012). This also explains why the East West Road, which links Delta, Bayelsa, Rivers and Akwa Ibom States, still remains in a bad condition. Such development challenges are counterproductive to the ongoing DDR programme which was scheduled to end in 2015. However, the government is still addressing the unfinished issues arising from the reintegration phase of the DDR.

One of the challenging aspects of Nigeria's DDR programme is the exclusion of some eligible ex-militants who actively participated in the armed struggle but were not included in the rehabilitation training organised by Federal Government's Amnesty Office. Mr. Kingsley Kuku (former Presidential Adviser on the Niger Delta) accepted the fact that they were excluded due to documentation problems. This would make some communities and affected ex-militants to see the government as not being sincere in implementing the components of the amnesty even after disarming them by convincing them to surrender their arms unconditionally. The implication is the possibility of resurgence of agitations and counter-agitations by such groups so as to be included; government's failure to do that would portend grave threat for peace and human security in the oil-rich region.

### **Concluding Thoughts**

This study has examined the perceptions of Nigeria's DDR programme which commenced in 2009. So far, the programme has been helpful in addressing the problem of instability occasioned by the activities of oil companies and underdevelopment of the region. According to the Amnesty Office, in May 2011, a closure was achieved in the disarmament phase of the Amnesty Programme when the Amnesty Office, in collaboration with the 82 Division of the Nigerian Army, publicly destroyed the arms and ammunition submitted to the Federal Government by the Niger Delta ex-agitators who accepted the offer of amnesty in 2009. This exercise took place in Lokpanta, a boundary town in Enugu State. The Amnesty Office gave the total number of people enlisted in the Presidential Amnesty Programme as 26,358. Contrary to Mr Kingsley Kuku's assertion that some ex-agitators were not able to return to their communities to lead a normal civil life because of perceived fear of stigmatisation and exclusion, it was observed that the communities did not have much problem living with ex-militants.

It is obvious from this study that most of the communities did not actually have problems with ex-militants but were mainly interested in development of their communities. From the foregoing, just like most people in the Niger Delta, the pioneer coordinator of the Presidential Amnesty Programme for Niger-Delta ex-militants and the Ovie (King) of Umiaghwa- Abraka Kingdom in Delta State, Air Vice Marshall Ararile (rtd.), argued that creating jobs for the unemployed youths is the most reliable way to mitigate youth restiveness (Amaize, 2012). Robust infrastructural transformation and human resource development would offer timely solution to the question of what should be the next action after the DDR programme in the Niger Delta. The resurgence of militant groups since 2015 is a pointer to the fact that urgent steps must be taken to prioritise youth and people-centred development and conflict transformation.

The DDR programme should be all-inclusive rather than implementing a selective approach that would end up being counterproductive. Sincerity of government agencies and acceptance of ex-militants by their communities would improve their confidence and deter them from returning to the creeks. The role of the Federal Government is to peacefully discourage any form of rearmament. It must, however, be emphasised that the Niger Delta peace is not a product of any form of dialogue or peace agreement, as earlier stated by , Mr. Kingsley Kuku, though he was right in asserting that it was a product of patriotism and tenacity. There was no formal peace agreement signed before the commencement of the DDR as seen in most countries where DDR is carried out, but it remains to be seen from the Niger Delta experience whether proclamation of amnesty works better than peace agreements in post-conflict societies.

Although the perception of communities about reintegration of ex-militants is generally positive, the fact is that all they want is government's sincerity as far as people-centred development in concerned. This approach has conflict management value which would translate to sustainable development. Discouraging the resurgence of youth restiveness demands timely management of the conflicts that are motivated by grievances and lack of equity in the distribution of resources in the Niger Delta region.

## **References**

1. Africa Terrorism. (2012, October 5-7). The Presidential Amnesty Programme in Nigeria, Maiden Edition.
2. Alabo-George, R. (2012). Thirteenth Year of the 13 per cent: Amnesty and amnestia. *The Punch*, p. 16.
3. Amaize, E. (2012). How some forces tried to scuttle amnesty for ex-militants – Ararile, Delta monarch. *Vanguard*. Retrieved from <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2012/08/how-some-forces-tried-to-scuttle-amnesty-for-ex-militants-ararile-delta-monarch/>.
4. Ashkenazi, M. (2013). Forces of Order and Disorder: Security Providers and Conflict Management. In V. C. Franke and R. H. Dorff (Eds), *Conflict Management and Peacebuild-*

- ing: *Pillars of a New American Grand Strategy* (pp. 271-294). PA: United States Army War College Press.
5. Bala-Gbogbo, E. (2012, March 5). Nigerian Delta unrest cuts oil output;. *Gas and Oil News*. Retrieved from <http://www.gasandoil.com/news/africa/7e57abc3dec4b42186945b211a8baf7e>.
  6. Ball, N., & de Goor, L. V. (2006). *Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration: Mapping Issues, Dilemmas and Guiding Principles*. Hague: The Netherlands Institute of International Relations.
  7. Berelson, B. & Gary, A. S. (1964). *Human Behaviour: An Inventory of Scientific Finding*. New York: Harcourt Brace.
  8. Cataldi, R. (2011). Clash of Perceptions: Hostility Perception and the US-Muslim World Relationship. *Journal of Peace, Conflict & Development*, 18, 27-46.
  9. Danjibo, N. D., & Okolie-Osemene, J. (2018). Religious Movements and Lethal Violence in Nigeria: Patterns and Evolution. *Africology: The Journal of Pan African Studies*, 11(4), 177-185.
  10. Davidheiser, M., & Nyiayaana, K. (2011). Demobilisation or Remobilisation? The Amnesty Program and the Search for Peace in the Niger Delta. *African Security* 4(1), 44-64.
  11. d'Estrée, P. (2008). Dynamics. In S. Cheldelin, D. Druckman and L. Fast (Eds.), *Conflict (2<sup>nd</sup> edition)* (pp. 71-92). London: Continuum.
  12. Devine, P., Hamilton, D. L., & Ostrome, T. M. (1995). *Social Cognition: Impact of Social Psychology*. New York: Academic Press.
  13. Donais, T. (2017). Engaging Non-state Security Providers: Whither the Rule of Law?. *Stability: International Journal of Security & Development*, 6(1), 1-13.
  14. Faleti, S. A. (2005). Termination of Protracted Social Conflicts in Africa. In I. O. Albert (Ed.), *Perspectives on Peace and Conflict in Africa* (pp. 370-390). Ibadan: John Archers (Publishers).
  15. Griffiths, A. & Barnes, C. (2008). Incentives, Sanctions and Conditionality in Peacemaking. In A. Griffiths and C. Barnes (Eds.), *Powers of Persuasion* (pp. 4-23). London: Conciliation Resources.
  16. Guéret, T. (2017, April 13). Niger and the Fight Against Violent Extremism in the Sahel. *RUSI*. Retrieved from <https://rusi.org/commentary/niger-and-fight-against-violent-extremism-sahel>.
  17. Gupte, J. (2017). These Streets are Ours: Mumbai's Urban form and Security in the Vernacular. *Peacebuilding*, 5(2), 203-217. DOI: 10.1080/21647259.2016.1277022.
  18. Hembruff, J. (2010). Innovations in Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration Policy and Research. Waterloo: Centre for International Governance Innovation.
  19. Hove, M., Ngwerume, E. T. & Muchemwa, C. (2013). The Urban Crisis in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Stability*, 2(1), 1-14. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5334/sta.ap>.
  20. Ibaba, S. I. (2011). Amnesty and Peace-Building in the Niger Delta: Addressing the Frustration-Aggression Trap. *Africana: The Niger Delta*, 5(1), 238-271.

21. Iruonagbe, T. C. (2008). The Niger Delta Crisis: Challenges and Prospects for Peace and Stability. *International Conference on the Nigerian State Oil Industry and the Niger Delta, Conference Proceedings* (pp. 633-642). Port-Harcourt: Havey Publications Company.
22. Kemedi, V. D., & Oko, M. (2005). Urban Youth. In Academic Associates Peaceworks (Ed.), *Niger Delta Peace and Security Strategy Working Papers* (pp. 88-100). Port Harcourt: International Centre for Reconciliation.
23. Knight, A. W. (2008). Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration and Post-Conflict Peacebuilding in Africa: An Overview. *African Security, 1*(1), 24-52.
24. Mitee, L. (2012, July 9). Issues and Challenges of the Niger Delta Amnesty Programme: An Insider Perspective. A Paper Presented as Occasional Guest Lecturer at the Society for Peace Studies and Practice, Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, Nigeria.
25. Muggah, R., Maughan, P., & Bugnion, C. (2013). The Long Shadow of War: Prospects for Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration in the Republic of Congo. Brussels, New York and Washington: A Joint Evaluation for the European Commission, UNDP and MDRP Secretariat.
26. Muggah, R. (2010). *Innovations in Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Policy and Research: Reflections on the Last Decade*. NUPI Working Paper 774. Oslo: Norwegian Institute of International Affairs.
27. Musari, A. (2012, March 27). Imperatives of tackling human capital, infrastructure deficit in Niger Delta. *The Guardian*, p. 3.
28. Nolasco, L. K. & Munene, M. (2012). Armed Pastoralists in North Rift Valley – a shift towards reintegration, demobilisation and disarmament. *Horn of Africa Bulletin, 1*, 5-9.
29. Nwafor, W. E. (2011). *Development Administration and Political Economy in Nigeria*. Aba: Cheedal Global Prints Ltd.
30. Nwobueze, C. C. (2015). Youth-focused Human Development and Conflict Transformation in the Niger Delta, Nigeria. Ph.D Thesis presented at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, Nigeria.
31. Nwobueze, C. C., & Okolie-Osemene, J. (2017). Outlaw Security Providers and Arms Proliferation in Rivers State: The Security Collaboration Conundrum. *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa, 19*(3), 117-131.
32. Odera, O., Scott, A., & Gow, J. (2018). Community Perceptions of Nigerian Oil Companies Commitment to Social and Environmental Concerns. *Journal of Global Responsibility, 9*(1), 73-95.
33. Okolie-Osemene J., & Okolie-Osemene, R. I. (2017). The Challenges and Prospects of Security Sector Manoeuvrability over Terrorism in Somalia. In S. Romaniuk, F. Grice, D. Irrera and S. Webb (Eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Global Counterterrorism Policy* (pp. 925-943). London: Palgrave Macmillan.
34. Oyadongha, S., & Ahon, F. (2012, June 10). Militants demand N1bn reparation, give Jonathan June 21 deadline. *Vanguard*. Retrieved from <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2012/06/militants-demand-n1bn-reparation-give-jonathan-june-21-deadline/>.

35. Soriwei, F. (2012, November 3). Niger Delta Ministry: Postponing real Development. *The Punch*, p. 45.
36. UN. (2007). *Final Report on the Second International Conference on DDR and Stability in Africa, Peace, Stability and Development*. New York: United Nations.

# Burundi and Gambia: Regional Security and Rapid Deployment Capability. The Utility of the African Standby Force

Enoch Ndem OKON  
Dodeye Uduak WILLIAMS

**Abstract.** *The paper evaluates the Rapid Deployment Capability (RDC) of the African Standby Force (ASF) in post – Road Map III after 2015, viz-a-viz its' mandate as the mechanism for regional Peace Support Operations (PSOs). The ASF failed to respond timeously to Malian and Central African Republic (CAR) conflicts in 2013 and this led to the formation of African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises (ACIRC) as an interim RDC mechanism till 2015. The study is grounded on the theory of Collective Security. It adopts Case Study Research Design. Data are generated from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data are generated from Open-end interview, using purpose sampling method and secondary data involve the review of extant literature. Data are presented qualitatively on tables and analysed , using Content Analysis techniques. The study discusses the uniformity and differences in the generation of the ASF's RDC in the management of Burundian and Gambian conflicts of 2015 and 2017 respectively. It reveals the factors which led to these differences in outcome, specifically the role of 'democratic density' and 'competitive democratic security community' and their impacts on conflict resolution in Africa. The study concludes that the RDC of the ASF is needed for robust regional security in Africa and recommends pragmatic and sustainable funding of the mechanism, as well as the creation of 'security communities' through shared democratic values across the continent.*

**Keywords:** *Regional Security, African Standby Force, Rapid Deployment Capability, Burundi, The Gambia.*

Enoch Ndem OKON

Department of Political Science  
University of Calabar, Nigeria  
E-mail: enochokon@gmail.com

Dodeye Uduak WILLIAMS

Department of Political Science  
University of Calabar, Nigeria  
E-mail: williamsdodeye@yahoo.com

---

Conflict Studies Quarterly  
Issue 24, July 2018, pp. 44-70

## Introduction

The last few decades have shown major changes in the approach to regional secu-

DOI:10.24193/csqr.24.4  
Published First Online: 05/07/2018

city which favor the formation and deployment of regional mechanisms with Rapid Deployment Capability (RDC) for Peace Support Operations (PSOs) across the world. This is illustrated by the establishment of numerous regional RDC mechanisms such as Nordic Coordinated Arrangement for Military Peace Support (NORDICAPS) in 1997, South East Europe Multinational Brigade (SEEBRIG) in 2002, NATO Response Force (NRF) in 2002, European Union Battlegroup (EUBG) in 2003, the African Standby Force (ASF) in 2003, the Combined Joint Expeditionary Force (CJEF) in 2010, and Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) in 2014 among others (Hendriks, 2014; Kaitera & Ben-Ari, 2008; Kasumba & Debrah, 2010; Saxi, 2011; Tagarev, 2003). This is remarkable given these regional organizations' willingness to intervene in order to prevent or contain civil wars and the inherent harmful spillover (Tavares, 2010). Specifically, between 1990 and 2016, Africa has witnessed several coalitions, ranging from ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) to SADC African Brigade (SADCBRIG) which has delivered some level of stability in their various sub-regions (Essuman-Johnson, 2009). This development can be traced to the unwillingness of the United Nations (UN) and Western countries to intervene in theatres of conflict in post-Cold War Africa. For instance, the United States refused to intervene in the Liberia and Britain in Sierra Leone Crises, respectively, despite their historic and cultural affinities.

In these scenarios, Nigeria led sub-regional Rapid Deployment Capacity (RDC) mechanism - ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) salvaged the humanitarian disasters which were unfolding (Okoro, 2002; Ali, 2012). In similar scenarios in the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes regions where there was no such RDC mechanism as in West Africa, the humanitarian disaster, such as mass killing, massive refugee flow and genocide, were obvious (Checha, 2004; Kalyvas, 2001; Mengisteab, 2011; Williams, 2011; Reid, 2014). Evidently, the absence of sub-regional RDC mechanisms contributed to the Rwandan genocide and left Somalia as a failed state after the fall of General Said Barre from 1991 (Fearon & Laitin, 2003; Prunier, 1995). Similarly, DR Congo and the surrounding the Great Lakes are still engaged in conflict even two decades after the exit of late President Mobutu Sese Seko (Cleaver & Massey, 2001). Besides, Sudan witnessed ethnic cleansing under President Al Bashir in Darfur, which was checked by the AU intervention (Franke, 2006). Instructively, these internal conflicts were rooted in democratic deficits, ethno-regional diversity, political identity, income inequality, internal colonialism and state failure, among other factors which are within the purview of the states (Kaldor, 2007; Koops, 2009; Newman, 2004; Tatschl, 2009). However, the domino effects of these conflicts were felt by neighboring countries and, therefore, revealed the 'regional security complexes', since 'failed states' do not only dislocate and destroy their own citizens, but also threaten their neighbors through refugee flow, political instability and random warfare (Buzan, 1991; Helman & Ratner, 1993).

These experiences further stimulate the desire of African regional organizations to strengthen their organizational structures and processes and, indeed, their RDC mecha-

nisms in order to respond to these violent conflicts in line with the provision of Articles 43 and 13 of the UN Charter and AU Peace and Security Protocol respectively (African Union, 2002; Bah, Choge-Nyangoro, Dersso, Mofya, & Murithi, 2014; Knight, 1996; Greenhill, 2001). In spite of these efforts, some scholars question the desirability of regional RDC in Africa and therefore call for its disbandment (Dorn, 1998; Cocodia, 2016). This paper, therefore, focuses on the utility of regional RDC in the management of conflicts in Burundi and The Gambia between 2015 and 2017 and sets to answer two inter related questions, namely:

1. Was regional RDC needed for intervention in the Burundian and Gambian conflicts of 2015 and 2017?
2. What was responsible for disparity in generating regional RDC in the Burundian and Gambian conflicts?

The paper is divided into six parts, including the introduction. Part two review extant literature, part three highlight the theoretical framework used in the analysis, part four outlines the methodology used in the study while part five analyses the utility of regional RDC in the Burundian and Gambia conflicts. Part six concludes the study.

### **Literature review**

The literature is reviewed on two major themes, namely regional security and rapid deployment capability and their linkages to Africa and the ASF.

Region is derived from the Latin word 'regio' which can be used both geographically and politically (Travers, 2004; Söderbaum & Shaw, 2003) Geographically, Russett (1967) sees region as the geographical proximity, with social and cultural homogeneity, shared political attitude and institution, and economic interdependence. Similarly, Thompson (1973) refers to regions as states linked together geographically, with extensive interaction and shared perception of various phenomena. Whereas, to other scholars 'regions are politically made' and are social constructs promoted by the perception of shared communal identities of states within a location (Katzenstein, 1997, 2005). These divergent perception of the concept is rooted in its ontological disagreement. However, irrespective of the usage, region as a concept convey an idea of linkages and shared similarities between distinct locations and people within the international system which requires differentiation. Hence, effort to harmonize these differences led Travers (2004) to identify four dimensions of region, namely *geography, the regularity and intensity of interaction, shared identity/ perception and agency*. The first dimension leans towards geographical definition, the second captures the political essence, while the third reflects the constructivist leaning of the concept which is instrumental to the formation of the fourth as a framework of common identity.

In the realm of security, regions of security are natural consequence of proximity as threats travel more easily over a short distance than longer ones (Tavares, 2010).

However, instruments of regional security include alliances and institutions that are not restricted to membership of a restricted geographical space but also link extra regional major powers to actors within the region (Mansfield & Solingen, 2010). This explains the emergence of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the Warsaw Pact during the Cold War era, as well as the US membership of Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) which do not share common geographical location but belong to the same regional security mechanism.

Regional security, therefore, refers to collective measures sanctioned by a group of states locked up in a 'security complex' in the same geographical location or with similar socio-cultural and political affinity to counter perceived common threats to human lives and national interests in the international system. It includes various forms of collective security mechanism, security regimes, zones of relative peace, cooperative security dialogues and zones free of weapons of mass destructions (Mansfield & Solingen, 2010). The institutionalization of these mechanisms could arise from economic interdependence or shared democratic culture, as illustrated by the EU Battlegroup and South East Europe Brigade (SEEBRIG) (Adreani, Bertran, & Charles, 2001; Gleditsch, 2002; Mawdsley & Quille, 2003; Simon, 2010; Tagarev, 2003; Viros, 2002). Similar mechanisms may also arise from shared interest in political and strategic realms, which justifies the formation of ECOMOG (now, ESF) and Nordic Coordinated Arrangement for Peace Support (NORDICAPS) (Essuman-Johnson, 2009; Olawale, 2015; Jeppsson, 2009; Solingen, 1998; Viros, 2002; Tagarev, 2003). Beside economic interdependence and shared democratic culture, the imperatives of transnational security communities through common understanding and perception of common threat(s) could be the foundation of the mechanisms, as illustrated by formation of the NATO Response Force (NRF) and Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) (Adler & Barnett, 1998; Checkel, 2005; Deutsch, Burrell, Kann, Lee, & Lichterman, 1957; Hendriks, 2014; Molling, 2007).

In most cases, the underlying factors for the creation of regional security apparatus are reflected in the forms of cooperation and structural design, as well as the features and characteristics of the regional institutions (Solingen, 2005, 2008). However, an emergence of a regional security organization reflects the preferences and capabilities of relevance 'lead nations' (Haggard, 1997). Indeed, the formation of ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF) and SADC Standby Force (SSF) can be attributed to the preferences and capabilities of Nigeria and South Africa, while NATO Response Force (NRF) and Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) reflect the preferences and capabilities of the US, France, and United Kingdom respectively (Essuman-Johnson, 2009; Hendriks, 2014). Thus, the preferences, capabilities and composition of dominant actors within the component states is central to the understanding of states interest in regional security arrangement as part of national security (Moravesick, 1998; Solingen, 2008). But of utmost importance is the understanding of the role of 'regional security complexes' in the formation

of regional security mechanisms, as illustrated by the ubiquitousness of international organizations with the objective of maintaining regional peace and security, such as ANZAC Battle Group, NORDICAPS, SEEBRIG and CJEF (Buzan, 1991; Hendriks, 2014; Saxi, 2011; Tavares, 2010).

Rapid Deployment Capability (RDC), according to NATO, consist of a 'technologically advance, flexible, deployable, interoperable and sustainable force, including land, sea and air elements ready to move quickly to wherever is needed, as decided by the council' (Bialos & Koehl, 2005, p. 1). It refers to the 'availability of national and or multinational assets (organized people/ formations, equipment and infrastructure for command and control in emergency crisis management' (Tagarev, 2003, p. 75). It involves the adaptation to warfare scenarios and the provision of immediate responses to varying battlefield contingencies. These require adequate and comprehensive preparation for unseen contingencies and possible military crisis scenarios (Yang & Liao, 1999). In other words, it refers to the availability of a robust force with the capability for immediate deployment, mobility, flexibility and effectiveness (Langille, 2004).

According to Yang and Liao (1999), the key elements of RDC are training, speed, strength and effectiveness. Similarly, Rivlin (1983) noted that timing is critical element in the effectiveness of RDC mechanism and mobility of assets, such as airlift, sealift and prepositioning logistics and other supporting materials close to the theatre of operations which are the major determinants of effective timing. Therefore, RDC is complex and tasking even for the wealthiest and best prepared state or organization in the international system; since, prior and extensive planning is imperative. Other prerequisites include immediate availability of highly trained, well equipped personnel, and dependable transport with secure supply chain (Langille, 2014). Such force must also posses the facilities needed to sustain it operations in the conflict zone as the need arises.

The value of RDC lies on its rapidity, deploy ability, sustainability and interoperability, which distinguishes it from other conventional methods of conflict prevention (St. Pierre, 2006). It is a veritable instrument in deterring genocide or mass violence at early stage, as demonstrated by NATO intervention in Bosnia in the mid 1990s and SHIRBRIG intervention in Ethiopia and Eritrea conflict in 2001 (International Peace Academy [IPA], 2002; Zenko, 2004).

RDC within the United Nations system is subjected to internal process, as dictated by the DPKO and UNSC and externally control by the provision of national assets by member states, since the UN as an institution does not own personnel or equipments required for military operations and therefore relies on the contribution of these assets from member states. Thus, the UN has no RDC on its own but it activates such mechanism as the need arises, specifically, during crises in the international system which depends on the cooperative inter/intra organizational matrix between the DPKO, UNSC, other

departments and member states. Consequently, the UN RDC depends on inter linkages of five levels of authority and efforts, namely: political, financial, strategic, operational and tactical. Hence, problem(s) at any level has reverberation on others and indeed the entire RDC system, and harmonious linkages of these levels and efforts lead to timely intervention in the conflict zone (Langille, 2014).

The central role of time in RDC cannot be over emphasized, as Readiness Notice (RN) is a factor which must be considered in the building of a RDC. While SHIRBRIG RN is 15-30 days (Koops & Varwick, 2008), NRF contingent could hit RN in 5 days and Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) with 48 hours (Hendriks, 2014); ASF has 14 days RN for war crime, genocide and crime against humanity (Kasumba & Debrah, 2010); EU Battlegroup 10 days RN of Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) approval of the mission (Simon, 2010); UN RN, as contained in Brahimi Report, stipulates 30 days for conventional peacekeeping operations and 90 days for multidimensional model.

Indeed, the UN has the slowest RDC among the mechanisms outlined above; still, these requirements are hardly met by the Secretariat due to the reluctance of member states to commit their national assets to the UN for supranational operations. This is exacerbated by the clumsiness of the UNSC decision making in the authorization of peace support operations (Boulden & Knight, 1995).

The import of these realities is that the UN structure and process as presently constituted suffers from insufficient political will, limited cooperation, and inadequate funding amongst others which are basic ingredients for fabrication and sustenance of RDC required for the management of complex emergencies in armed conflicts across the world (Langille, 2014).

In relations to Africa, the ASF was established with the goal of leveraging on the intelligence gathered from both continental and regional early warning systems to get its contingents ready for deployment to anywhere in the continent within 14 days (Kasumba & Debrah, 2010). Problematique to RDC within the AU includes the issue of troops and other assets' ownership. Like the UN, the AU does not own troops and equipments; and therefore depends on the member states and Regional Mechanisms (RMs) for these assets, hence the RMs in each of the five designated regions serve as a general institutional pillars for the operationalization of the ASF Brigades (Warner, 2015). Achievement of Full Operational Capability (FOC) has been challenging. Relevant here, include poor logistic base, the challenge of interoperability between multinational and multidimensional components, dearth of political will, inadequate training, poor funding and lack of willingness by the AU member states to commit their troops to the ASF amongst others (Bachmann, 2011; Beza, 2015). Besides, the RDC of the ASF suffers from the deficits of buying-in from some regions; while ECOBRIG and SADCBRIG are the most prepared Brigades, FOMAC/ECCASBRIG and NARCBRIG are still struggling at infancy

and EASBRIG falls within the two extremes, thus, the North and Central Africa's mechanisms remain the missing pillars of ASF RDC and Nigeria and South Africa serve as the hegemonic anchors for their respective regional mechanisms (Adebajo & Landsberg 2003; Desmidt & Volker, 2017).

The Malian crises of 2012 exposed the RDC status of the ASF, as highly deficient in spite of the political commitment the AU. Consequently, the French intervention reminded the continent of an ideal RDC required for such scenario. The development necessitated the fabrication of Africa Capacity for Immediate Response to Crisis (ACIRC) (Lotze, 2015). It was proposed as 'a transitional formula' and interim RDC mechanism to provide a 'military capacity with high reactivity to respond swiftly to emergency situations' pending the readiness of the ASF (AU, 2013; Cocodia, 2016). It is voluntary in principle and constitutes a 'coalition of the willing' states that are committed to rapid mobilization of troops and equipments for intervention in conflicts zones within the continent (DeConing, 2014). Hence, ACIRC is a 'flexible robust force made available directly by member states, on a voluntary basis to be deployed rapidly to response more effectively to emergency situations (Lotze, 2015). In terms of numerical strength, ACIRC is a brigade size mechanism, with 1500 multinational troops ready for deployment within 10 days of mandate; and capable of sustaining itself for initial 30 days (Warner, 2015).

Lotze, (2015, p. 3) identifies the major differences between the ASF and ACIRC as follows:

1. Whereas, the ASF relies on member states pledging capabilities to regions, ACIRC relies on member states pledging capabilities to the AU directly, by passing regions;
2. While ASF is a multidimensional capability which can be deployed across a range of scenarios, the ACIRC is relatively smaller military force, intended to be deployed in an intervention context only; and
3. Whereas, ASF operational funding comes from non African partners, the ACIRC funding and support arrangements are largely provided by AU member states and Troops Contributing Countries.

Scholars have discussed the rationale behind the invention of ACIRC, alongside, ASF. Critics fear that ACIRC may draw attention away and undermine the investment already done in the construction of ASF (Cilliers, 2008), others observed the similarities between the two mechanisms (Cocodia, 2016), Yet, a complete dedication to the nurturing of the ASF RDC to full operational levels would be more prudent than the duplicating of efforts as seen in the ACIRC project (Fabricious, 2013; Roux, 2013). However, the difference in the composition of these mechanisms and the objectives demonstrates the complementariness expected of these arrangements. Specifically, ACIRC is mandated to mobilize only the military component and dedicated solely to military and security issues (Warner, 2015); in order to fill the yearning gap of the ASF 'Scenario Six' with

an immediate combat, intervention based on humanitarian imperative to save lives by stopping or preventing emerging genocide, crimes against humanity, atrocities or war crimes by armed rebel force (AU, 2013; Aneme, 2008).

The real challenge of RDC in Africa is within the AU and external control, not the mechanism themselves. The continental RDC is subject to internal restraint, such as the dearth of political will and consensus by member states which slows the decision making process and indeed reaction to emergencies (Beza, 2015). Besides, the reluctance of member states to commit national assets to AU mission makes it difficult for RDC to be achieved irrespective of the mechanism which makes it akin to UNSC (Cocodia, 2016). External control centers on the inadequacy of AU PSC in terms of absolute 'legitimate mandating authority' which necessitate the continuous reference of continental issues to the UNSC authorization, or ratification of decisions in peace enforcement operations (Koops, 2009, 2012). The implication of this include bureaucratic bottleneck associated with decision making process in the Council which prolongs the deployment of the AU's RDC. Besides, the continued reliance on the EU APF for mission funding comes with additional delay, given that the EU Political and Security Committee deliberates and ascertain which mission worth funding in terms of the gravity of the threat. Thus, dearth of political will and commitment of national assets within Africa, as well as seeking of legitimacy and funding from the international system reduce the RDC within the continent.

More so, the logistic capability of African mechanism is comparatively low and this forces the AU to depend on NATO and UN for airlift of personnel and equipments, as well as supporting items to conflict zones. The deficit in heavy airlift capability and landing facilities for such carriers remains a major hindrance for speedy deployment of troops and vehicles to mission area (Kliengebiel, 2005). Also, worthy of noted is the level of professionalism in African Armed Forces, which are largely poorly trained, undisciplined and corrupt, as a result of clientelism endemic in the socio-political system in their respective countries. Again, the challenge of integration of multinational force with divergent language and culture, as well as the civilian and police components in peacekeeping generates communication difficulties and promotes division within the intervening mechanisms. This reduces the cohesiveness of the RDC, as well as the interoperability necessary for effectiveness of such intervention (Langille, 2014; Kasumba & Debrah, 2010). Furthermore, the interface and command between the AU PSD and RMs is poorly synergized, which feeds into the delay factor and reduces the timeliness of response during emergency (Williams, 2011).

It was the need to improve the RDC of the ASF that warranted the conception of Amani Africa as a training exercise cycle, with the objective of testing and sharpening the readiness of the outfit for rapid deployment as envisioned by the AU to evaluate the

capabilities and procedures for the engagement of the ASF in a multidimensional peace operation (Engel & Porto, 2009). It was launched in Addis Ababa Ethiopia in 2008, where the Amani Africa I – the Command Post Exercise (CPX) took place in 2010 to ‘test the planning, command, control, and communication capability of AU and REC staff and the AU’s decision-making process at the politico-strategic level’ (Bachmann, 2011, p. 27). The second cycle: the Amani Africa II – the Field Training Exercise (FTX) took place in Lothala, South Africa in 2015 to ascertain the state of readiness of the ASF RDC with the integration of ACIRC and its Full Operational Capability (FOC) (AU, 2015; Desmidt & Volker, 2017). In similar attempt to improve it RDC based on the lessons learnt from the deployment of the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA), ECOWAS announced the establishment of a Special Standby Two-Battalion rapid response Force, ready to intervene within thirty days in any complex emergency within its region (AU, 2017).

In spite of efforts to improve RDC both regional and globally, critics of the use of force in conflict resolution are reserved over the deployment of mechanism with RDC for humanitarian intervention, since it involves the deployment of coercive apparatus with the inherent tendency to undermine credibility, neutrality and impartiality of the intervening mechanism (Pugh, 2004). This may be true, but the essence of such intervention must not be lost to ‘just war debate’ (Kamm, 2004), rather the rationality of the UN principle of Responsibility to Protect (R2P), must supersede every moral and ideological barriers, which may not save the impending human catastrophe, such as ‘where a population is suffering from serious harm as a result of internal war, insurgency, repression or state failure, and the state in question is unwilling, or unable to halt or avert it’ (ICISS, 2001). Such extreme situations of human right violation on large scale lead to genocide, or ethnic cleansing, as experienced in Rwanda or mass killing, forced migration or systemic rape were obvious in Darfur (Hintjens, 1999; Prunier, 2005). Conflicts with such humanitarian crises cannot be resolved through impartial, creditable and neutral pacifist method, without the restoration order and stability. Such situations, therefore, require coercive intervention for the protection of non combatants, women and children, before effective conflict resolution can take place. Conventionally, RDC mechanisms are reactive coercive instrument for the containment of military crises; it is a short term measure to manage unfolding violent conflicts or ‘new war’ by reducing tension and violence, or possibly stop the conflict (Kaldor, 2007; United Nations, 2000). This was demonstrated by the successful deployment of ECOWAS Mission to The Gambia (ECOMIG) in January 2017 which contained the emerging conflict; and the failure of the AU to do same has led to the lingering conflict in Burundi since 2015 (Arieff, 2015; Crisis Group, 2016; Hartman, 2017; Odigie, 2017; Sanyang & Camara, 2017; Siegle, 2015).

## **Theoretical Framework**

The preferred framework of analysis for this study is Collective Security. It is built on the assumption that international peace and security is the collective objective and responsibility of every nation, and all nations must work for its achievement. The idea can be traced to Immanuel Kant's Pamphlet 'Perpetual Peace', published in Koenigsberg in 1795, which he suggested that the law of nations could be based on one federation of free states who denounce any form of offensive war against one another, but can undertake defensive wars by voluntary national army. He advocated for the 'definitive' articles of peace which include: the centrality of republican constitution for all the states; the fabrication of constitution of a Union of Nations and the construction of universal law which every individual would be considered to be a global citizen (Kleingeld, 2004). The failure of the Balance of power and subsequent the outbreak of World War I, as well as the active participation of the United States in international politics, led to the need for inventing alternative framework for international peace and security, hence President Woodrow Wilson while condemning secret diplomacy and treaty maintained that:

Mere agreements may not make peace and security; it will be absolutely necessary that force be created as a guarantor of the permanence settlement so much greater than force of any nation now engaged, or any alliance hitherto formed or projected that no nation, no probable combination of nations could face or withstand (Aberg, 197, p. 183).

Collective Security is based on the assumption that states 'form a society, membership in which confers both rights and duties, the principal right each state enjoys is the ability to maintain political independence and territorial integrity against external aggression; its principal duty is not only to refrain from aggression, but also to aid the victims of aggression (Hendrickson, 1993, p. 3). In other words, states 'agree to abide by certain norms and rules to maintain stability, and when necessary band together to stop aggression' (Kupchan & Kupchan, 1995, p. 52). It is a framework that sees war as either an illegal act that violates the social order or an action of law enforcement that preserves the order (Hendrickson, 1993, p. 3).

It was the founding principle of the League of Nations which failed not as a result of the obsolete nature of the framework but due to the poor implementation of its provision and the withdrawal of the United States from its membership. However, the success of the United Nations in maintaining global peace and security for the past 72 years attests to the efficacy of this framework in the management of peace and security in the anarchical international system with high precision and lethal weapons unprecedented in human history. Central to its axiom is the 'unanimity of enemy' which is seen as 'a threat to regional or international peace and security'. If the system is global as the UN framework is, a threat can originate in any region, anywhere on the globe. An actor within the regional or international system that commits the aggression imperils the

peace, or grossly exceeds the bounds of civilized behavior, violates the norms of that collective security system and is subject to enforcement action (Aleksovski, Bakreski, & Avramovska, 2014). This provision makes it different from collective defense framework which is fabricated to counter the activities of a known, or identified potential enemy. Thus, any aggressor becomes an enemy within the collective security framework, which must be checked by the coalition of other states within the system. It is also based on two fundamental logic, namely (1) providing a balancing mechanism capable of preventing war and stopping aggression more effectively than the preceding 'balance of power', since it emphasizes deterrence and canvasses for the deployment of greater power against an aggressor and (2) the emphasis on 'one for all and all for one' (Morgenthau, 1967). These promote the creation and sustenance of peace and security through trust and cooperation, rather than competition, which has been the traditional notion of the international system (Kupchan & Kupchan, 1991; 1995). More so, the tripartite provision of Kants Article of Peace become relevance and central to the working of Collective Security with the ascendancy of liberal democracy and perception of 'security community' (Deutsch, et al, 1957); and invention of Responsibility to Protect (R2P) by the UN which has promoted global citizenship and the protection of fundamental human rights – the core values of the AU Peace Security Architecture.

### **Methodology**

The study adopts Case Study Research Design – which a particular instance or a few selected cases are studied intensively and analyses the interaction between the factors involve in the study (Idaka & Anagbogu, 2012; Gilbert, 2008). The utility of this design lies on its ability to explain the nexus between regional security and RDCs across Africa. The study focuses on Burundian and the Gambian crises of 2015 and 2016/2017 respectively as the area of study, but covers issues common to the deployment of RDCs across the continent. It combines data from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data were generated from responses to open ended questions on the interview guide designed for the study and administered to scholars and diplomats with sufficient knowledge of regional security and deployment of RDCs in both conflicts under focus. Secondary data are obtained from extant literature, such as textbooks, magazines and scholarly journals. The data were presented on tables to reflect the comparative approach of the study. Content Analysis technique was used in analyzing the findings inductively.

### **Presentation of Findings**

The overview of Burundian (2015) and The Gambian (2016/2017) Conflicts Analyses and the status of the ASF's RDC earmarked and deployed to manage the conflicts are summarized on Table 1 and Table 2 below:

**Table 1:** The summary of Burundian 2015 and The Gambian 2016/2017 Conflicts Analyses.

S/n	Conflict analysis	Burundi	The Gambia
1	Profile of the conflict	<p>The Burundian conflict centers on the legitimacy of the incumbent President Pierre Nkurunziza's to contest for the 2015 elections. It however, has Tutsi-Hutu ethnic coloration due to historical hatred between the two groups.</p>	<p>The Gambian political impasse hang on the unwilling of the incumbent President Yahya Jammeh's unwillingness to accept electoral defeat after initial acknowledgment of oppositions victory.</p>
2	Actors in the conflicts	<p>President Pierre Nkurunziza and his party CNDD - FDD were on one side of the conflict and were attacked by the coalition of CSOs, opposition political parties such as UNPRONA, FNL FRODEBU and MSD. Others include the pro-government militia-Imbonerakure, government security operatives and the Burundian Constitutional Court which upheld the legitimacy of Nkurunziza to contest the elections. External actors include: president Paul Kagame of Rwanda EAC, President Yoweri Museveni who was the EAC chief mediator, the African Union Chairperson Dlamini Zuma, the AU PSC, the EU, Belgian government and the United Nations. IDPs within Burundi and the 224,000 Burundian refugees spread across the Great Lakes were at the receiving end of the conflict.</p>	<p>President Yahya Jammeh's was the central actor in the Gambian crises. He deployed the media and security forces to his advantage; while opposition parties, specifically, United Democratic Party (UDP) and it officials. These officials include Adama Barrow- the president-elect Late Solo Sandeng, Ousaino Darboe. Gambian Independent Electoral Commission was also involve in the conduct and declaration of electoral outcome. External actors in the conflict include Gambians in diaspora who supported the opposition, Senegalese government and Ambassador to the United Nations, ECOWAS, Presidents Ellen Sirleaf, Muhammadu Buhari, John Mahama, Ernest Koroma of Liberia, Nigeria, Ghana and Sierra Leone. Other include Mohammed Ibn Chambas the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for West Africa and Sahel (UNOWAS) and Dr. Aisha Abdullahi-the AU Commissioner for Political Affairs. These eminent Africans and their institutions tried to persuade Yahya Jammeh to accept the outcome of the election and subsequently approved the use of coercive means to oust him from office. The Guinean president Alpha Conde convinced Yahya Jammeh to accept asylum, when it was obvious that ECOWAS invasion of Banjul was imminent.</p>

3	<p><b>Causes of the conflicts</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The announcement of President Nkurunziza's candidacy by the CNDD-FDD party on April 26, 2015, triggered off mass protest by CSOs and opposition political parties in Bujumbura.</li> <li>2) The government of Nkurunziza has very little tolerance for opposition and sees the civil society organizations as instruments of imperialism given the role of western countries in the dominance of minority Tutsi' in Burundian political scene for more than 42 years after independence in 1962. While the CSOs protest in the impunity of the government violent.</li> <li>3) The continuous clash between the protesters and security forces due to the flow of small arms and light weapons across the region and the attempted coup of May 13, 2015 escalated the conflict which led to high profile assassinations on both sides of the conflict. More so, armed attack by opposition militia on military bases in Bujumbura on December 11, 2015 raised the stake in the conflict and recorded the 87 casualty within a day.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Conflict dynamics</b></p> <p>The Burundian conflict has enormous implication for the regional security of the Great Lakes countries. The best case scenario would have been refused of president Nkurunziza to participate in the 2015 elections. This would have led to another beginning of new leadership. Alternatively, Nkurunziza had a choice of inaugurating a transition government of national unity for two years to chart a new direction for the country. Worst still, Nkurunziza may continue with the repression of opposition and work harder for constitutional amendment which would remove tenure limit of the president which is common in the sub-region. This would escalate the conflicts and possible lead to genocide and the invasion of Burundi by Rwanda as threatened by President Kagame. Howbeit, inter Burundian dialogue is important in moving the country to the era of peace and stability if the government respect the terms of Arusha 2000 Accord as well as the two term tenure of the president and other consociational arrangements.</p>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Jammeh's reneged on his decision to accept electoral defeat, and subsequent call for fresh poll which would extend his tenure beyond the constitutional mandate of his administration. This was rebuffed by other stakeholders.</li> <li>2) Yahya Jammeh was a despot who transmuted himself from a military head of state to a civilian president. He abhors every form of opposition to his totalitarian rule.</li> <li>3) The sealing of the electoral commission's office by troops loyal to Yahya Jammeh as well as the deployment of security operatives to key position across the country illustrated Jammeh determination to hold on to power and suppress any form of protest given his record of impunity.</li> </ol>	<p>The Gambia political impasse was attest for ECOWAS resilient to defend democracy as spell out in ECOWAS protocol for democracy and good governance 2001. The best scenario would have been for president Jammeh to accept the outcome of the election as he did initially and handed over power to Adama Barrow according to the constitution of the Gambia.</p> <p>On the other hand Jammeh had a choice of proposing a transitional government of national unity as done in Zimbabwe after the presidential election in 2000; if ECOWAS was not involve.</p> <p>Worst still, Jammeh would have continued to remain adamant and deploy the Gambian troops and Casamance militias against the ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF). The last option would have been disastrous for Jammeh himself and the troops due to the superior fire power of the ESF. Besides it would have created humanitarian crises across the region. Therefore, accepting asylum in Equatorial Guinea after the swearing in of Adama Barrow was the best option.</p>

Source: Compiled the authors

**Table 2:** The Summary of the ASF's RDC status earmarked and deployed for the Burundian (2015) and The Gambian (2016/2017) Political Conflicts.

S/n	Indexes of RDC	Burundi	The Gambia
1	Strategic headquarters, planning and coordination	The all activities leading to the announcement of ECOWAS headquarters, learning on its ECPF was effective MAPROBU were highly uncoordinated. The PSC did not in coordination of activities leading to the deployment of the have the approval of the 2/3 votes of the AU members for ECOMIG. The AU commissioner for Political Affairs, as well as operations, neither was the operations approved by the the UNOWAS representative was part of the mediation team in UNSC since it come under chapter VII of the UN charter. the conflict and approved the deployment of ECOMIG which was Moreso there was no planning concept of operations and approved by the UNSC Resolution 2337. The mission was planned troops commitment from TCC anywhere in the continent. and coordinated with the mandate of restoring democracy in The Gambia at a minimum cost.	
2	Political will for the mission	There was no political will to deploy MAPROBU across board. Firstly, democratic consolidation is not seen as a security threat within the EAC and Great Lakes Region. Besides, there was a general fear of setting a dangerous precedence of forceful intervention in line with the Article 4(h) of the constitutive Act which may boomerang someday.	The deployment of ECOMIG enjoyed enormous political will across board. Gambian's Senegal supported the operations and provides the forward operations base. ECOWAS initiated the operation in conjunction with AU, which facilitated the Un approval. This gives legitimacy to the deployment of the ECOMIG and promotes global support for the operations.
3	Availability of troops for the mission	There was no troop contribution commitment from members' states; neither did the EAC, the primary responder, by the principle of subsidiary willing to deploy their military assets.	The ESF was a task force component of two battalions capable of deployment of short notice. This is supported by special standby two-battalion rapid response force established in the aftermath of lessons learned from AFISMA in 2013 to respond timeously to emergency crisis as the need arises within the sub-region. Thus, Nigeria leading the Eastern Battalion with Togo and Senegal leading the Western Battalion with Mali execute the mandate of restoring democracy in The Gambia.

<p>4 Logistics and infrastructure for the deployment of the mission</p>	<p>There was neither logistics nor infrastructural facilities earmarked for MAPROBU. Since the operations was not planned and coordinated, or approved by any of the stakeholder institutions from regional to global level.</p> <p>The ESF had the required logistics and infrastructural facilities for the deployment of ECOMIG. The Nigerian Air Force and Navy provided the air and sea assets need to lift the contingent and effect both air and sea blockade. Besides, the Senegalese government provided the mission with the forward operations base; while the TCC provided the contingents with the required equipment according to the AU Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). Moreso, the composite Logistic Battalion of the ESFTF provided the back up of logistic support for the mission.</p>
<p>5 Funding of mission</p>	<p>The AUPSC did not have a ready funding for the operations. It only expected to solicit for funding from the EU and other traditional donor institutions.</p> <p>ECOWAS had established a Peace Fund since 2006. This takes care of PSOs embark on by ECOWAS. Hence the ECOWAS Peace Fund which depends heavily on Nigeria paid for the mission.</p>

Source: Compiled by the authors

## **Discussion of Findings**

There are elements of similarities and differences between the two conflicts under discussion. Both conflicts arose from the process of democratic consolidation. They also illustrate the culture of sit tight syndrome by African leaders and the tendency to deploy state coercive instruments against real and perceived oppositions, as well as the manipulation of state institutions for personal and regime interest. More so, in both cases, there were political repressions, abuse of the basic rights of the citizens as well as the disregard for the rule of law. Howbeit, President Nkurunziza was smarter in the exploitation of regional trend of totalitarian democracy. He manipulated institutions within the Burundi and effectively exploited the ambiguity in the constitution over his legitimacy to contest the 2015 Presidential Election. This was against the spirit of Arusha Accord of 2000 which ended the Civil War in 2005. Whereas, Yahyaammeh found himself in a precarious situation after he had decimated political opposition through death and imprisonment, as illustrated by the torture to death of Solo Sandeng and the imprisonment of Ousaino Darboe among others in the run up to the December, 2016 Presidential Elections. Jammeh unfortunately lost the election, but decided to annul it after initial acknowledgement of his defeat at the poll. Jammeh was more unfortunate since The Gambia is a signatory to the ECOWAS Conflict Preventive Framework (ECPF) which frowns at member states attempt to scuttle democratic processes. These contextual differences led to corresponding differences in the generation of the RDC needed to contain the humanitarian crises which arose from the two conflicts. With the benefit of hind sight: was regional RDC needed for intervention in Burundian and Gambian crises of 2015 and 2017?

The crisis in Burundi has enormous security impact across the countries in the Great Lakes in terms of ripples of refugee's flows, disrupted infrastructure, proliferation of weapons and exports of violence. The World Food Programme (2015) reported that about 224,000 Burundians were spread across East Africa sub-region. As at December 17, 2015, the distribution shows Tanzania bears the heaviest burden of hosting more than 118,000. This was closely followed by Rwanda with about 70,000. Democratic Republic of Congo was ranked third with 19,000 refugees, while Uganda hosted about 17,000 refugees. ECHO Factsheet (2015) observes the natural distribution of the refugees and reports that 60% of all refugees were children, with a high number of unaccompanied minors in the Refugee camps across the regions. Besides, some of the camps were overcrowded and as such overstretched the available facilities which led to insufficient water supply and hygiene as well as education and health facilities. The death of 35 Burundian refugees in Tanzania in June 2015 as a result of cholera outbreak reflects the general pressure on the facilities within the refugee camps in the region. Regrettably, out of about 314 million U.S. Dollars budgeted for the protection and assistance of these refugees, only 14% of the budget was funded as at July (World Food Programme, 2015).

Furthermore, the implication of the sudden surge in population in the host countries among others include the rising price of food and other consumable items, such pressure has the tendency to cause inflation, raise the cost of living in local communities where the refugees camps are located. More so, such influx of jobless population has the tendency to increase crime rates in the host countries with their attending cost on security management in the region.

Again, conflicts in the countries of the Great Lakes have the capacity to spill over to the neighboring countries, where colonial boundaries and policies resulted in the split of ethnic population across national boundaries. Thus, the Burundian crisis of 2015/2016 has similar signpost, the Hutus and Tutsis tension played out in the crises. Some observers feared that Rwanda's Tutsi led government could be drawn into a conflict with Burundi if one erupted (Arieff, 2015). This fear was confirmed when President Kagame threatened to intervene in Burundi, if there is an outbreak of or perceive of genocide in Burundi even without the authorization of the UN or AU (Respondent). Linked to this is the historical dynamics of conflict within the region as observes by Siegle (2015):

Africa's Great Lakes region has also been host to the most prolonged, vicious, and complicated conflicts in the continent over the past two decades. Further escalation against the population in Burundi could at any time precipitate a military intervention by neighbouring Rwanda, where memories of genocide remain fresh. This in turn, may spark a military response from other neighbours worried about Rwanda's influence in the region and recalling previous conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Likewise, there have already been reports of Rwandan Hutu rebel groups operating out of the DRC, notably the Interahamwe coming into Burundi in support of the government and aligned militias (p. 3).

Corroborating the historical dynamics of conflict in the region as experienced during the DRC conflict, Arieff (2015) noted that:

Internal conflict in DRC have long fueled regional instability and created safe heavens for Burundian combatants. Congolese territory reportedly hosts elements of the Burundian military, the Imbonerakure, and Burundian insurgent, including an FNL faction and a separate, unidentified group that reportedly entered northern Burundi in late 2014. A Rwandan origin insurgent group, the Democratic Force for the Liberation of Rwanda or FDLR which was founded by ethnic Hutus involved in the Rwanda genocide is also active in the eastern DRC. Rwandan officials allege that FDLR combatants are infiltrating Burundi amid the current crisis (p. 5).

Thus, Burundi stability is central to the regional security of the Great Lakes, as 'the conflict between Tutsi and Hutu in Burundi is at the heart of Central African regional

instability, producing massive refugee flows, insurgencies and cross border violence (Wolphe, 2011, p. 2). Therefore, the ongoing conflict in Burundi has a wide socio-economic and politico-security implications for the region.

Similarly, Given Jammeh's impunity, the crisis in The Gambia had the potential to flood the subregion with refugees and the attended socio economic and security challenges. Human Right Watch (2016) has compiled several abuses and extra judicial killing committed by Jammeh through the security services during the April 14 -16 peaceful protests. The abuses led to massive self-exile by participants in the protest and their family members. Therefore, unchecked, Jammeh has the capacity and political will to deploy all The Gambian state coercive apparatuses to remain in power. Such development would have created humanitarian crises across the region and endanger the socio economic stability of the West Africa sub region. It was indeed clear that humanitarian crisis was looming in The Gambia, as a result of the imminent crackdown on opposition and its strong holds as reflected by the election results.

More so, a crisis ridden Gambia would increase drugs and arms trafficking into and through the region. Gambia has been identified as a major route of South American drugs trafficking to Europe and Jammeh was a facilitator in the illicit deals (Sanyang & Camara, 2017). Besides, experiences have shown, as it was during the rumbling in the Manor River region how Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) were easily circulated. The impacts of those circulated SALW are still felt in the sub region. Besides, Jammeh has been part of gun running syndicate and smuggler of blood diamond during the era of Charles Taylor's war lordship in Liberia and Sierra Leone, he was also implicated in the international arms trafficking carried out by Victor Booth of Tajik Arms deal who was arrested in 2008 and extradited to the US in 2010 (Sanyang & Camara, 2017). More importantly, Jammeh has been a major source of arms supplier to the Casamance separatist movement in Southern Senegal; many believe that he has biological affiliation to the region and only migrated into The Gambia at school age. It was also alleged that he had mobilized and armed Casamance militias to support his suppressive operations in The Gambia and possibly resist any form of foreign intervention (Respondents). Alluding to Jammeh's arms trafficking, Sanyang and Camara (2017) recalled that:

In October 2010, 13 shipping containers carrying Iranian weapons and heading towards The Gambia were impounded by the Nigerian Port Authority in Lagos. The manifest showed that the shipment came from Iran, and was addressed to Kanilai family farm, the president personal enterprise. This was not the state purchasing weapons, and there was certainly no license from The Gambian government. In his testimony to the court in Lagos, an Iranian diplomat confessed that several other shipments had already been delivered in Banjul (p. 9).

The import of these evidences was that a desperate Jammeh was a threat to the regional security, since he had what it takes to destabilize the sub region learning from Charles Taylor's experience in Liberia.

More fundamentally, Jammeh' action was a test for the ECOWAS on the protection and preservation of democratic values and the commitment of the sub regional body to the values. As highlighted earlier on in the study the regional security complex in the sub region arises majorly from democratic deficit orchestrated by dictatorial tendency and 'sit tight leadership syndrome' which led to the rumbling in the manor region towards the close of last century. In order to check the recurrence of the crisis, the regional leadership revised the ECOWAS Treaty in 1993 and gave premium to preventive conflict resolution strategies and frown at any form of unconstitutional governance and change of government. This led to the ratification of the protocol on the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention (1999) and the Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance (2001) by member states in order to check the inherent security threat associated with the institutionalization of democracy through the ballot box. These two instruments constitute the ECOWAS Conflict Preventive Framework (ECPF) and reinforce each another (Atuobi, 2010; Ekiyor, 2008; Lewis, 2014). Hence, overlooking Jammeh recalcitrance would set a bad precedence and contradicts the wordings and spirits of the ECPF (Hartman, 2017; Odigie, 2017; Sanyang & Camara, 2017). Thus, both conflicts required regional RDC to contain these threats to security.

Given the utility of regional RDC to the conflicts: what was responsible for disparity in generating regional RDC in the Burundi and Gambia crises? Evidences from the studies of Burundi and The Gambia show that the AU was actively involved in the process of detection the threat and their analyses, but there was a gap in the Burundian case. While the AU defined the threat and proffer solution based on the personal assessment of the AU Chairperson, the EAC perceived the Burundian crisis as a political contest which could be resolved without resorting to the deployment of a RDC mechanism. This difference led to the stalemate on troop generation and deployment. In the case of The Gambia, ECOWAS and the AU had the same definition of the problem and conception of solution based on the same principle of subsidiary, complementary and comparative advantage, the AU allowed ECOWAS to take the lead as the primary responder. This led to effective collaboration and co-ordination between the organizations and ease the process of co-opting the UN to buy into the common solution reached by both the ECOWAS and the AU. This resulted in the successful planning, coordination and deployment of the ECOMIG. Unfortunately, for the AU PSC, the violence in Burundi had declined weeks after its ultimatum to the Burundi government which reduced the credibility of deploying RDC mechanism by the end of January 2016 when the AU summit took place (Crisis Group, 2016).

More so, the study reveals that most African Heads of State are rhetorically committed to the ideals of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and indeed the ASF. Most of them are afraid of giving blanket commitment to ASF intervention in crisis in the continent due to their personal and regime interest. The fear is reinforced by the nature of crises in the continent which are caused by democratic deficit. Hence, sitting presidents are reluctant to support the use of force by the ASF to resolve crisis arising for sit-tight leadership and demand for competitive elections. These were illustrated in the case studies in focus. The EAC was not committed to the use of the ASF to resolve the Burundian crisis in spite of heavy casualty and the evidence of looming humanitarian and security disaster caused by the refugee and arms flow. They were more interested in not setting a precedence that would boomerang given their poor democratic credentials. Besides, both Jammeh and Nkuranziza rejected ASF intervention for personal and regime interest in order to maintain their grip on power at the expense of commitment to the AU ideals of protecting and preserving the lives of Africans through the principle of 'indifference' to atrocities against its citizens.

Furthermore, the study reveals the importance of principles and values in mobilizing RDC for PSOs. The case studies again illustrate the centrality of common norms in generating consensus and political will in resolving conflict and deploying RDC mechanism in the continent. The ratification of the ECOWAS Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance which is part of the ECOWAS Conflict Preventive Framework (ECPF) by member states was instrumental to collective definition and perception of the threat of Jammeh's action. It also provided the legal platform to legitimized all the measures adopted by ECOWAS, including the deployment of the ESF. This confirms the role of democracy in building a 'security community' and the "democratic peace", hence ECOWAS can be seen as a democratic security community capable of generating the needed political will in resolution of conflict within its domain. Whereas, the paucity of common normative framework in other work part of the continent accounts for the poor political will given to the AU/PSC in resolving conflict relating to democracy by force as illustrated the Burundi case study.

## **Conclusion**

The study has affirmed the utility of collective security mechanism with a RDC in containing violence and potential violent conflicts as envisaged by the founding fathers of the UN and the AU. The successful resolution of The Gambian 2016/2017 impasse created by the recalcitrant former President Jammeh illustrates the usefulness of a RDC in Africa. Similarly, the lingering crisis in Burundi can be attributed to the failure of the AU and the EAC to intervene coercively even when the casualty figure was higher than in The Gambia and the regional security situation in the Great Lakes is more volatile than in West Africa. The resemblance of peace in Burundi should not be taken for granted

due to the inherent deficiency in democratic norms and values. This is exacerbated by ethnic suspicion between the Hutus and Tutsis. The post elections violence seems to have abated, but could erupt more tumultuously in 2019 when the preparation for 2020 Presidential Elections begins, since the incumbent may decide to tinker with the constitution and remove presidential term limit which is very common in East and Central Africa. Hence, the failure of African leaders to create a competitive democratic community is the greatest security threat in Africa; since a competitive democratic community in West Africa has provided a comprehensive mechanism for conflict prevention and resolution which could be adopted by other regional blocks in the continent, as it was effective in dealing with Gambia conflict. Although competitive democracy with two terms limit does not provide solution to all societal problems; it facilitates peaceful change of government and enhances the generation of political will in regional organizations for the deployment of a RDC mechanism in defense of democratic ideals. This is important since democratic deficit is at the root of most conflicts in the continent. It is therefore recommended that the moribund African Governance Architecture (AGA) should be reviewed and ratified by African leaders, if they are indeed committed to the regional security beyond ceremonial rhetoric.

## References

1. Aberg, S. (1971). *Woodrow Wilson and the League of Nations: why was a just cause defeated*. New York: Scholastic.
2. Adebajo, A., & Landsberg, C. (2003). South Africa and Nigeria as hegemons. In M. Baragu and C. Landsberg (Eds.), *From Cape to Congo: Southern Africa's evolving security challenges* (pp. 171-203). Boulder: Lynne Rienner.
3. Adler, E., & Barnett, M. (1998). *Security communities*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
4. Adreani, G., Bertran, C., & Charles, G. (2001). *Europe's military revolution*. London: Centre for European Reforms.
5. African Union. (2002). *Protocol relating to the establishment of peace and security council of the African Union*. Addis Ababa: African Union Secretariat.
6. African Union. (2013, April 30). Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the operationalisation of the Rapid Deployment Capability of the African Stand-by Force and the establishment of an "African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crisis". Addis Ababa: African Union.
7. African Union. (2015). *Press release: Amani Africa II Final Preparation Conference concludes in South Africa*. Addis Ababa: Africa Union.
8. African Union. (2017). *The African Standby Force: Draft Maputo strategic workplan (2016-2020)* Addis Ababa: African Union.
9. Aleksovski, S., Bakreski, O., & Avramovska, B. (2014). Collective security – The role of international organizations - Implications in international security order. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Science*, 5(27), 271-283.

10. Ali, W. (2012). *The role of Nigeria in regional security policy*. Abuja: Fredrich Ebert Stiftung.
11. Aneme, G. (2008). The African Standby Force: Major issues under 'Mission Scenario Six'. *Journal of Political Perspectives*, 2(1), 1-22.
12. Arieff, A. (2015). *Burundi's electoral crisis: In Brief*. Washington DC: Congressional Research Service.
13. Atuobi, S. (2010). *Implementing the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework: Prospects and challenges*. Policy Brief 3/2010. Accra: Kofi Annan International Peace Keeping Training Centre.
14. Bachmann, O. (2011). *The African Standby Force: External support to an "African Solution to African Problems"*. IDS Research Report No. 67. Brighton: Institute of Development Studies.
15. Bah, A. S., Choge-Nyangoro, E., Dersso, S., Mofya, B., & Murithi, T. (2014). *The African Peace and Security Architecture, A handbook*. Addis Ababa: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.
16. Beza, Y. (2015). The African solution to African problems: Challenges of African Standby Force (ASF). *Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 1(4), 450-467.
17. Bialos, J., & Koehl, S. (2005). *Facilitating coalition warfare through technology transfer and information sharing*. Washington DC: Centre for Technology Transfer and National Security Policy – National Defence University.
18. Boulden, J., & Knight, W. (1995). Rapid reaction: Filling the gap. In D. Cox and A. Legault (Eds), *UN Rapid Capabilities: Requirements and prospects* (pp. 36-48). Clementsport: Canadian Peacekeeping Press.
19. Buzan, B. (1991). *People, states and fear: An agenda for international security studies in the post-Cold War era*. New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf.
20. Checha, B. (2004). From conflicts to global terrorism. *African Journal of International Affairs*, 7(3), 59-69.
21. Checkel, J. (Ed.). (2005). International institutions and socialization in Europe. *International Organisation*, 59(Special Issues), 801-1079.
22. Cilliers, J. (2008). *The African Standby Force: An update in progress*. Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies.
23. Cleaver, G., & Massey, S. (2001). DRC Africans scramble for Africa. In O. Fowley and R. May (Eds.), *African interventionists states* (pp. 193-210). Aldershot: Ashgate.
24. Cocodia, J. (2016). The African Capacity for Immediate Response to Conflict and the African Standby Force: Options for peace intervention in Africa. *Social Science Council Research Working Papers: African Peacebuilding Network, APN Working Paper: No 7*.
25. Crisis Group. (2016). *The African Union and the Burundian Crisis: Ambition vs reality*. Nairobi/Brussels: International Crisis Group.
26. De Coning, C. (2014). *Enhancing the efficiency of the African Standby Force: the case for a Shift to a Just-in-Time Rapid Response model?* Durban: The African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes.
27. Desmidt, S., & Volker, H. (2017). Conflict management under the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA): An analysis of conflict prevention and conflict intervention

- by African Union and Regional Economic Communities in violent conflicts in Africa for the Years 2013 – 2015. *ECDPM Discussion Paper*, No 211, April. Retrieved from <http://ecdpm.org/publications/conflict-management-under-the-apsa/>.
28. Deutsch, K., Burrell, S., Kann, R., Lee, M., & Lichterman, M. (1957). *Political community and the North Atlantic area: International organisation in the light of historical experience*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
  29. Dorn, W. (1998). Regional peacekeeping is not the way out. *Peacekeeping and International Relations*, 27(3&4).
  30. ECHO Factsheet (2015). *Burundi refugee crisis*. Brussels: European Commission Humanitarian and Aid and Protection.
  31. Ekiyor, T. (2008). *ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF): A new approach to old challenges*. Accra: West Africa Civil Society Institute.
  32. Engel, U., & Porto, J. (2009). The African Union's new peace and security architecture: Toward an evolving security regime? *African Security*, 2(2-3), 82-96.
  33. Essuman-Johnson, A. (2009). Regional conflict resolution mechanisms: A comparative analysis of two Africa security complexes. *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, 3(10), 401-422.
  34. Fabricious, P. (2013, November 7). Does the unwieldy label of the African Capacity for Immediate Response to crises conceal a real determination to act? *ISS Today*. Retrieved from <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/does-the-unwieldy-label-of-the-african-capacity-for-immediate-response-to-crisis-conceal-a-real-determination-to-act>.
  35. Fearon, J., & Laitin, D. (2003). Ethnicity, insurgency, and civil war. *The American Political Science Review*, 97(1), 75–90.
  36. Franke, B. (2006). In defense of regional peace operations in Africa. *Journal of Humanitarian Assistance*, 185, 136-148.
  37. Gilbert, N. (2008). *Researching social life* (Third Edition). London: Sage.
  38. Gleditsch, K. (2002). *All international politics is local: The diffusion of conflict, integration, and democratization*. Ann Arbor: University Michigan Press.
  39. Greenhill, K. (2001) Mission impossible? Preventing deadly conflict in the African Great Lakes Region. *Security Studies*, 11(1), 77-124.
  40. Haggard, S. (1997). Regionalism in Asia and the Americas. In E. Mansfield and H. Milner (Eds.), *The Political economy of regionalism* (pp. 20–49). New York: Columbia University Press.
  41. Hartman, C. (2017). ECOWAS and the restoration of democracy in The Gambia. *Africa Spectrum*, 52(1), 85 – 99.
  42. Helman, G., & Ratner, R. (1993). Saving failed states. *Foreign Policy*, 89, 3-20.
  43. Hendrickson, D. (1993). The ethics of collective security. *Ethics and International Affairs*, 7, 1-15.
  44. Hendriks, R. (2014). *Response force galore; A guided tour*. Clingendael Policy Brief. Hague: Netherlands Institute of International Relations.
  45. Hintjens, H. (1999). Explaining the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 37(2), 241-286.

46. Human Right Watch. (2016). *More fear than fair: Gambia's 2016 Presidential Election*. New York: Human Right Watch.
47. ICISS. (2001). *The Responsibility to Protect: Report of the Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty*. Ottawa: International Development Research Centre.
48. Idaka, I., & Anagbogu, G. (2012). Research Design. In A. Isangedighi (Ed.), *Essentials of Research and Statistics in Education and Social Science* (pp. 64-77). Calabar: EtiNwa Associates.
49. International Peace Academy. (2002). *International Peace Academy seminar on Standby High Readiness Brigade (SHIRBRIG)*. New York: International Peace Academy.
50. Jeppsson, T. (2009). Sweden military transformation and the Nordic Battle Group – for what and towards what? *KunglKrigsvetenskapsakademiensHandlingarOchTidskrift. Diskussion and Debatt 05*.
51. Kaitera, J., & Ben-Ari, G. (2008). *EU Battlegroup and NATO Response Force: A marriage of convenience? Euro focus*. Washington DC: Centre for Strategic and International Studies.
52. Kaldor, M. (2007). *The new and old wars*. California: Stanford University Press.
53. Kalyvas, S. (2001). "New" and "Old" civil wars: A valid distinction? *World Politics*, 54(1), 99-118.
54. Kamm, F. (2004). Failures of just war theory: Terror, harm and justice. *Ethics*, 1(4), 650-692.
55. Kasumba, Y., & Debrah, C. (2010). An overview of African Standby Force. In C. de Coning and Y. Kasumba (Eds.), *The civilian dimension of the African Standby Force* (pp. 10-19). Addis Ababa: African Union.
56. Katzenstein, P. (1997). *Introduction: Asian regionalism in comparative perspective*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press.
57. Katzenstein, P. (2005). *A world of regions: Asia and Europe in the American imperium*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press.
58. Kleingeld, P. (2004). Approaching Perpetual peace: Kant defence of a league of states and his ideal of a world federation. *European Journal of philosophy*, 12(93), 304 – 325.
59. Kliengebiel, S. (2005). *How much weight for military capabilities? Africa's new peace and security architecture and the role of external actor*. Bonn: Deutsches Institut fur Entwicklungspolitik.
60. Knight, W. (1996). Developing a Rapid Reaction Capability for the United Nations, Ralph Bunche Institute on the United Nations. *Columbia International Affairs Online*. Retrieved from <http://www.ciaonet.org/wps/kna01/>.
61. Koops, J. (2009). Effective inter- organisationalism? Lessons learnt from Standby High Readiness Brigade (SHIRBRIG). In J. Koops (Ed.), *Military Crises management: The challenges of Inter-organisationalism*. *Studia Diplomatica*, LXII(3), 81-89.
62. Koops, J. (2012). *Peace operations partnership; assessing cooperation mechanisms between secretariats*. Berlin: Centre for International Peace Operations.
63. Koops, J., & Varwick, J. (2008). *Ten Years of SHIRBRIG – Lessons Learned, Development Prospects and Strategic opportunities for Germany*. GPPI Research Paper Series No 11. Berlin: Global Public Policy Institute.

64. Kupchan, C., & Kupchan, C. (1991). Concerts, collective Security and the future of Europe. *International Security*, 16(1), 114–161.
65. Kupchan, C., & Kupchan, C. (1995). The promise of collective security. *International Security*, 21(4), 241 – 277.
66. Langille, P. (2004). *Bridging the commitment - capacity gap: A review of the existing arrangements and options for enhancing UN Rapid Deployment*. New Jersey: The Center for United Nations Reform Education.
67. Langille, P. (2014). *Improving United Nations Capacity for Rapid Deployment*. New York: International Peace Initiative.
68. Lewis, R. (2014). *Conflict prevention in West Africa: Understanding institutional approach for integration of preventive measures in the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework*. A paper presented at the 10<sup>th</sup> Biennial Graduate Conference, University of Massachusetts, Boston, October 31 – November 1.
69. Lotze, W. (2015). The future of African peace operations: Time to adjust the operational design. Berlin: Zif Centre for International Peace Operations.
70. Mansfield, E., & Solingen, E. (2010). Regionalism. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 13, 145-163. DOI: 10.1146/annurev.polisci.13.050807.161356.
71. Mawdsley, J., & Quille, G. (2003). *Equipping the rapid reaction force: Options for and constraints on a European defence equipment strategy*. Bonn: Bonn International Center for Conversion.
72. Mengisteab, K. (2011). *Critical factors in the Horn of Africa's raging conflict*. Uppsala Discussion Paper 67. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet.
73. Molling, C. (2007). NATO and EU rapid response: Contradicting or complimentary? *CSS Analyses in Security Policy*, 2(22), 1-3.
74. Moravesick, A. (1998). *The choice for Europe: Social purpose and state power from Messina to Maastricht*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press.
75. Morgenthau, H. (1967). *Politics among nations*. New York: Knopf.
76. Newman, E. (2004). The “New Wars” debate: A historical perspective is needed. *Security Dialogue*, 35(2), 173-189.
77. Odigie, B. (2017). *In defence of democracy: Lessons from ECOWAS management of The Gambia 2016 post – election impasse*. ACCORD Policy and Practice Brief No 46. Durban: The African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes.
78. Okoro, J. (2002). *Understanding Nigerian foreign policy*. Calabar: Cats Publishers.
79. Olawale, I. (2015). *Towards a community of practice: ECOWAS and peace and security policy in West Africa*. New York: Social Science Research Council.
80. Prunier, G. (1995). *The Rwanda crisis 1959-1994: History of genocide*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers.
81. Prunier, G. (2005). *Darfur: the ambiguous genocide*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
82. Pugh, M. (2004). Maintaining peace and security. In D. Held and A. McGraw (Eds.), *Governing, Globalisation, Power, Authority and Global Governance* (pp. 217-225). Cambridge: Blackwell.

83. Reid, R. (2014). Horror, hubris and humanity: The international engagement with Africa, 1914-2014. *International Affairs*, 90(1), 143-165.
84. Rivlin, A. (1983). *Rapid Deployment Force: Policy and budgetary implication*. Washington DC: United States Congressional Budget Office.
85. Roux, A. (2013, June 14). New super combat brigade: Creation of African elite? *ISS Africa Today*. Retrieved from <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/new-super-combat-brigade-creation-of-an-african-elite>.
86. Russett, B. (1967). *International regions and international systems*. Chicago: Rand-McNally.
87. Sanyang, E., & Camara, S. (2017). *The Gambia after election: Implications for governance and security in West Africa*. Dakar: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.
88. Saxi, H. (2011). *Nordic defence cooperation after the Cold War*. Oslo: Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies.
89. Siegle, J. (2015). *The political and security crisis in Burundi*. A Testimony to the United States Senate Foreign Relations Sub-Committee on Africa and Global Health Policy, December 9.
90. Simon, L. (2010). *Command and control? Planning for EU military operations*. Paris: European Union Institute for Security Studies.
91. Söderbaum, F., & Shaw, T. (2003). *Theories of new regionalism: A Palgrave Reader*. Houndmills and New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
92. Solingen, E. (1998). *Regional orders at century's dawn: global and domestic influences on grand strategy*. Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press.
93. Solingen, E. (2005). East Asian regional institutions: characteristics, sources, distinctiveness. In T. Pempel (Ed.), *Remapping Asia: Competing Patterns of Regional Integration* (pp. 31–53). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
94. Solingen, E. (2008). The genesis, design, and effects of regional institutions: lessons from East Asia and the Middle East. *International Studies Quarterly*, 52, 261–294.
95. St. Pierre, K. (2006). *The role of rapid reaction force: Predicating responsibility in cases of humanitarian crises*. Ottawa: Centre for Security and Defence Studies.
96. Tagarev, T. (2003). Developing South East European cooperative crisis management capacity. *Information and Security. An International Journal*, 10, 72-83.
97. Tatschl, C. (2009). SHIRBRIG's support to the African Standby Force: A view from practice. In J. Koops (Ed.), *Military Crises Management: The challenges of Inter-organisationalism*. *Studia Diplomatica*, LXII(3), 91-97.
98. Tavares, R. (2010). *Regional security: the capability of international organisations*. London: Routledge.
99. Thompson, W. (1973). The regional subsystem: a conceptual explication and propositional inventory. *International Studies Quarterly*, 17, 89–117
100. Travers, R. (2004). *The state of the art of regionalism: The past, present and future of a discipline*. Gothenburg: Peace and Development Research, Gothenburg University.
101. United Nations (2000). *Report of the panel on United Nations Peace Operations, A/55/305-S/2000/809*. New York: United Nations.

102. Viros, T. (2002). Sub regional cooperation in South Eastern Europe. *AARMS*, 1(2), 283-297.
103. Warner, J. (2015). Complements or competitors? The African Standby Force, the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises, and the future of rapid reaction force in Africa. *African Security*, 8, 56-73.
104. Williams, P. (2011). *War and conflict in Africa*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
105. Wolphe, H. (2011). Making peace after genocide: Anatomy of the Burundi process. Washington DC: United States Institute for Peace.
106. World Food Programme. (2015). *Burundi crisis – Regional impact*. Situation Report No 13. Rome: World Food Programme.
107. Yang, A., & Liao, M. (1999). PLA rapid reaction forces: Concepts, training, and preliminary assessment. In J. Mulvernon and R. Yang (Eds.), *The People Liberation Army in the Information Age* (pp. 48-57). Santa Monica CA: RAND Corporation.
108. Zenko, M. (2004). Saving lives with speed: Using rapidly deployable forces for genocide prevention. *Defence and Security Analysis*, 20(1), 3-19.

# Nigeria: Rural Banditry and Community Resilience in the Nimbo Community

Jasper C. UCHE  
Chijioke K. IWUAMADI

**Abstract.** *This paper examines the upsurge in rural violence in Nigeria occasioned by the activities of armed herdsmen. Focusing on the 25 April 2016 invasion of Nimbo Community in Enugu State, the paper argues that rural governance deficit and absence of effective security tending mechanisms took a turn for the worse. The major finding is that, beyond the common conflict triggers, the factionalization of a local vigilante in Nimbo bred criminal activities that escalated the tensed milieu. Traditional qualitative method of research was applied. The paper suggests prioritization of rural security in terms of intelligence gathering, response to early conflict warning signals and combat operations, as well as a multi-stakeholder consensus in mapping out mutually-rewarding terms of engagements for the pastoralists and sedentary farmers.*

**Keywords:** *Rural Banditry, Insecurity, Agrarian Community, Herdsmen, Armed Clashes, Resilience.*

Jasper C. UCHE  
Department of Political Science,  
University of Nigeria, Nsukka  
E-mail:jasper.uche@unn.edu.ng

Chijioke K. IWUAMADI  
Institute for Development Studies,  
University of Nigeria  
E-mail: chijioke.iwuamadi@unn.edu.ng

---

Conflict Studies Quarterly  
Issue 24, July 2018, pp. 71-82

DOI:10.24193/csqr.24.5  
Published First Online: 05/07/2018

## Introduction

The incessant bloody clashes between the cattle herders and sedentary-farmer communities have come to pose serious human security challenges in Nigeria. Between 2010 and 2015, the country lost 6,500 persons, \$14 billion and 62,000 internally displaced in 850 perennial clashes in the North-Central region alone (*Daily Trust*, 2017). Given the multi-faceted dimensions and the surrounding narratives, tracking down the perpetrators of the crime and finding solutions to the drivers became politically sensitive. In 2017, the clashes between nomadic

herdsmen and local farmers led to at least 549 deaths and displacement of thousands in 14 states (Ameh, 2018). The killings had continued unabated with the mass burial of over 70 native farmers that lost their lives through the attacks of herdsmen in Benue State in January 2018. As such, the phenomenon of rural banditry in Nigeria has transmogrified “from crisis of nomadism to state crisis” (Ibrahim, 2016). It is also described as ‘both a symptom and a cause of rural underdevelopment’ (Kyari & Chinyere, 2015).

A number of ‘push and pull’ factors accounted for south-ward movements of nomadic herdsmen. Firstly, drought and desertification in West African Sahelian belt occasioned the search for water and pastures beyond the original environment. Secondly, the exponential rise in cattle rustling in northern Nigeria, especially in the Kamuku forest of Kaduna, Falgore forest of Kano, Dansadau forest in Zamfara, as well as the Davin Rugu forest that stretches through the three states, contributed to the south-ward migration (International Crisis Group, 2017). Thirdly, the insurgency in the North-East, which feeds on cattle rustling, pursued the herders south-ward where they enjoyed lesser risks. Thus, transhumance has helped the pastoralists to survive the climatic crises and maintain cultural affinity (Egwu, 2015). Fourthly, population growth among the crop farmers and the increased demand for the limited land spaces for large-scale crops production pitted the two (sedentary and pastoral) farmers against the other. The clashes were usually precipitated by trespasses or movements of livestock beyond the usual transhumance corridors (where they existed), which expectedly led to destruction of crops on farmlands. The cattle herders, in turn, faced the risk of physical assaults, attacks on their lives and, in extreme cases, thievery and killings of their cattle by farmlands owners who suffered varying degrees of losses as a result of massive livestock encroachment.

In the case of Nimbo community, which had no transhumance corridor or grazing route, the herders and local farmers hitherto enjoyed peaceful co-existence. The community practiced shifting cultivation that enabled the herders to graze in the areas where farming was not done in each cropping season/year. It was a win-win strategy. However, the collapse of this constructive engagement snowballed to the armed invasion of Nimbo community on 25 April 2016. This paper is, therefore, set out to examine the conflict triggers in Nimbo community and, secondly, to analyse the coping mechanisms adopted by the community two years after the armed invasion.

## **Conceptual and Theoretical Backgrounds**

### ***Rural banditry***

The phenomenon of rural banditry, which recently gained currency in Nigeria’s public discourses, is a fallout of persistent violence in rural communities within the last ten years. The results had been traumatic. There had been massive loss of thousands of lives, forced displacement of locals and devastation of monumental proportions in

States like Benue, Kaduna, Plateau, Zamfara, Taraba, Enugu and others across southern Nigeria. Although rural banditry is also reflected in criminal escapades like cattle rustling, kidnapping, armed robbery, drug abuse, arson, rape and other forms of violence, the brazen and gruesome massacre of agrarian communities with sophisticated weapons by suspected herdsmen and reprisal attacks from surviving victims threw it up to the front burner of national security. Pastoral Resolve (2016) notes that there is a symbiotic relationship between the two production systems—agricultural and pastoral, but conflicts had arisen because of their reliance on land and its related resources. Thus, the declining capacity of the state to moderate these conflicts and undertake effective policing of rural areas led to unending cycle of violence. The attendant resort to self-help worsened the security gaps in rural communities.

### ***Community resilience***

Two working definitions are presented. Firstly, the Institute for Sustainable Communities (2015) distinctively defines resilience as the ability of people, institutions and systems to manage shocks and stressors and build stronger, more prosperous communities. Secondly, Ibrahim (2017) explained the concept as “the capacity of communities to adapt when faced with hazards or shocks by taking the required actions to maintain an acceptable level of function and structure” (p. 23). Generally, community resilience entails the capacity to absorb shocks, cope with unforeseen disruptions and unpleasant emergencies. As such, it measures the ability to bounce back from setbacks by building on adaptive and proactive initiatives, to keep the victims on the path of progressive self-renewal instead of giving up or relapsing to despondency and false sense of helplessness.

### ***Theoretical perspective***

This paper is anchored on frustration-aggression model. It was propounded and captured in a monograph by five scholars in Yale Institute of Human Relations in 1939. The major assumption of the model is that “aggression is always a consequence of frustration”, and “that the occurrence of aggressive behavior always presupposes the existence of frustration and, contrariwise, that the existence of frustration always leads to some form of aggression” (Dollard, Miller, Doob, Mowrer, & Sears, 1939, p. 1). They also defined frustration as “an interference with the occurrence of an instigated goal-response at its proper time in the behavior sequence” (Dollard et al., 1939, p. 7). The interrogations and disputations that the perspective generated led one of the proponents to intervene with some modifications of the central thesis. Thus, Miller (1941) noted that it was too general to assume that frustration must always lead to aggression or that aggression is always propelled by frustration. His intervention led to the second lap of the hypothesis which reflected a more acceptable reality thus: frustration produces instigations to a number of different types of response, one of which is an instigation to some form of aggression.

However, fifty years later, a significant modification came from Berkowitz (1989) who argued that aggression can be driven by inherent personal benefits to the aggressor and not necessarily by past wrongdoings and that people are more akin to attack when they discover that they are wilfully sabotaged or denied what it's legitimately theirs than when the interference is an accidental occurrence. He surmised it as "frustrations are aversive events and generate aggressive inclinations only to the extent that they produce negative effect" (Berkowitz, 1989, p. 71). As already noted, the unending attacks between pastoralists and sedentary farmers across the country are largely driven by frustrations and struggles to protect the economic assets of land, cattle and farm products. Herders were pressured to provide pastures and water to their flocks in the light of climate change realities, while crop farmers were in dire need of lands for increased agricultural production. Thus, the ensuing cattle rustling, physical attacks and encroachments on farms bred frustrations between the two groups, which got effused in violent clashes and the manifest weakness of the state in curbing the menace made resort to self-help fashionable.

### ***Methodology***

Traditional qualitative research method of the social sciences was adopted. This method includes gathering data from primary sources through interviews of key informants drawn from Nimbotown union leadership structure and interactions with relevant stakeholders identified within Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area (LGA). The interviews were guided by a set of predetermined questions. In addition, secondary data were sourced and largely used to complement shortfalls of the interviews and interactions. Here, a desk review of relevant literature like scholarly articles, government reports, submissions to panel of inquiry, media accounts, and publications of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were analysed. These materials were sourced from various knowledge repository centers and platforms.

### ***Agrarian Practices in Nimbo Community***

Nimbo is a border town in Uzo-Uwani LGA of Enugu State, South East, Nigeria. Other towns in the border within the LGA include: Adani, Ogurugu, Igah, Opanda, Abbi, Ezikolo and Nrobo. Nimbo is blessed with rich, fertile and large expanse of land that stretches towards Eshi River, the boundary between Enugu State and Kogi State. The huge agricultural potentials of the area attracted the first President of Nigeria - Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe to set up a family farm there. The then Premier of Eastern Region, Late Dr. M.I. Okpara also established a farm settlement in the community as part of the defunct Eastern Regional Government agrarian policy. The foregoing led to continued influx of persons to Nimbo community as far back as 1922.

Geographically, the farms were located at about 7 km from their residences. The farmers used to trek to and fro the bush paths on daily basis in order to access, work and

harvest their farm products. For convenience and to save man-hours, the progenitors of the community used to build makeshift huts in the farm areas where they could sleep for consecutive three days and return on the (*Eke Market*) day at home to sell their farm products. The farm products included: cassava, yam, groundnut, garden eggs, cucumber, plantain etc. Thus, the community enjoyed peaceful co-existence with their neighbours and settlers. A key stakeholder in Nimbo community noted that even when herdsmen came and settled in the 1990s, they lived harmoniously with the locals, and compensated owners of farms whenever their cattle caused unintended damages. However, as destructions on farmlands increased with entrance of more herders, the indigenous farmers wanted the cattle to be labelled for easy identification. This was rebuffed by the 'newest' herdsmen and they relocated from the community. They resisted all entreaties to abide by the subsisting practice. In 2001, 'they returned with aggression and it is on record that that they killed our people yearly' (personal communication, May 4, 2017). In retaliation for the dead, Nimbo people killed their cows.

According to a Memorandum from Nimbo community to the Judicial Panel of Inquiry set up by Enugu State after the April 26 attack, Mr. Ogobe Dieke was shot in 2005; in October 2010, a school teacher – Mr. Charles Igwebueze was killed by herdsmen; on July 19, 2012, Messers Michael Oke and Thaddeus Utazi were brutally murdered in their farms. In June 2013, the two members of a local vigilante – Messrs Ozoemena Eze and Onyemachi Ajogwu were ambushed and killed on their way to respond to distress calls from the farms. There were also cases of rape, armed robbery, armed assaults, kidnap-for-ransom and general air of insecurity facilitated by brandishing of dangerous weapons by the herdsmen. When the herdsmen who abandoned the Nimbo axis came back, they settled at Enugu - Kogi border. By that time, cases of armed attacks started happening. Attempts by the traditional ruler of Nimbo to prevail on the herdsmen from attacking his people could not yield result as the leaders of the herdsmen did not show up at a meetings scheduled at the palace of the paramount ruler of Igalaland (*Attah Igala*) in neighbouring Kogi State (where the herdsmen largely operated from). Apparently, they were yet to come to terms with the killings of their cattle allegedly perpetrated by Nimbo gangsters. On one hand, the local farmers felt frustrated by the massive destructions in their farms by cattle rearers, hence they opted for killing and stealing of cattle. On another hand, the herdsmen recounted their losses and the risk their businesses face in Nimbo, and resorted to bloody confrontation with the locals. Thus, frustration bred the aggression in Nimbo community.

### **Armed Invasion of Nimbo Community**

On April 25, 2016, Nimbo community witnessed a bloody invasion and massacre of locals by suspected armed herdsmen. The seven villages in Nimbo (Nimbo Ngwoko, Ugwujiro, Ekwuru, Ebor, Enugu Nimbo, Umuome and Ugwuachara) were the most affected. They first attacked Ngwoko village and young boys flee from the area. Before

then, rumour had filtered that the herdsmen would attack Uzo-Uwani LGA. This created anxiety in Nimbo. In fact, 'it was gathered that herdsmen at Adani had at the weekend imported 500 others from Nassarawa State to help them invade Nimbo community' (*This Day*, 2016). Also, the complaints of rape and kidnapping along Adani-Umulokpa Road elicited growing concerns. But the security report of impending attack by herdsmen was swiftly reported to the Governor of Enugu State and the Commissioner of Police. A meeting with Fulani leaders in the state was convened two days before the armed attack. The Fulani leaders confirmed that there were attempts to bring in mercenaries from Nassarawa to retaliate the killings of their people within the axis of Nimbo and Abbi communities. It was resolved at the meeting that the Fulani leaders would dissuade their people from embarking on violent attacks, but that could not happen. Two days later, numerous armed men invaded Nimbo in the early hours of Monday, 25 April, and left the community with unimaginable carnage and destruction of property. The ugly event occurred 30 minutes after the security operatives policing the community reportedly deserted their duty posts (Nimbo town union leader, personal communication, May 4, 2017). According to the Memorandum submitted by Nimbo community to the Judicial Panel of Inquiry set up by Enugu State Government, at least 13 persons were killed, while about N100 million (US \$279,000) was lost in ten burnt buildings, vehicles, motorcycles, slaughtered domestic animals, as well as many persons that got severely wounded and deep matchets while escaping the marauding herdsmen.

Beyond the deterioration of the security climate in Nimbo, the economic activities nosedived considerably. People especially women and children, could no longer go to farms freely except accompanied by able-bodied men or local vigilante. The rural markets – *Eke Nimbo, AforUkpabi and Opanda* known for cheap and affordable farm products and which used to be bee-hive of commercial activities degenerated into near-extinction. The rumours of more reprisal attacks turned the community into a ghost town. Two women (Mrs. Agnes Ajogu and Mrs. Eberechukwu Ako) whom their husbands were matcheted to death in their presence suffered from trauma-induced madness (*The Sun*, 2016). It took the re-assurances of Enugu State Government and heavy police presence along Enugu-Kogi border to bolster the people's confidence and the return of displaced persons back to Nimbo.

### **Undercurrents of Nimbo Security Breach**

Three outstanding issues contributed to the security breach in Nimbo community. Firstly, is the complacency/politicization of crisis by government. Secondly, is connivance of security operatives and thirdly is the Nimbo community's internal contradictions.

- a. **Complacency/ politicization by Government:** Despite the serial carnage of the herdsmen and its labelling as the fourth deadliest terror group in the world in 2014, Nigeria's government failed to decisively deal with the rampaging security

threat. It was widely believed that President Buhari's loud silence over the matter was on account his business interest. He was a one-time patron of Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association (MACBA). Oyeyipo, James and Sanda (2016) noted that the authorities perceived the violence as 'a mere internal security challenge with ethnic colouration'. Herdsmen were scarcely arrested and prosecuted even after massive killings and razing down of communities. In fact, it took public pressure to elicit initial condemnations of the internecine strife from President Buhari. Hence, there was little or no clear-cut measure to tackle the menace. The dismissive dispositions of a section of the ruling class (who are largely owners of the livestock) also festers the debacle. Besides, the different ethno-religious backgrounds of the combatants – (the herders are mostly Muslim Fulani, while the crop farmers are mostly Christians from other ethnic extraction) led to the politicization of the armed conflict. Incrementally, the unsettling crisis sets centrifugal sentiments and security fears on alarming crescendo so, when the savagery played out in Enugu State, the Governor of the State appeared helpless. The weeping of the Governor Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi at the scene of horrific incident at Nimbo left much to be desired. Again, the inability of Enugu State Government to issue a white paper on the findings of Judicial Panel of Inquiry that investigated the crisis after two years depicts a lack of political will to address the national catastrophe.

- b. **Connivance of security operatives:** Nimbo case is a clear example of avoidable violence that occurred due to culpable negligence and manipulation of the security structure. At the receipt of intelligence report on Nimbo case, the Governor Ugwuanyi summoned an emergency security council meeting which was attended by the heads of security formations. There were assurances of deployment of men of Anti-Terrorism Unit (ATU), Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) and the Police Mobile Force (PMF) to Nimbo by the Police Commissioner, as well as the claim of deployment of military to Nimbo by the Garrison Commander to forestall the attack. The Governor recounted that "the State Government provided logistics for these deployments' and 'after receiving these assurances of deployments to Nimbo, I felt quite confident that we had done everything possible to forestall an attack on Nimbo" (*Vanguard*, 2016). Evidence from the community indicated that prior to the day of attack, there was a combined team of soldiers, policemen and men of Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) deployed to the community (*The Guardian*, 2016). But what created suspicion was the abandonment of duty posts in the community by the security agents and, in less than one hour, the armed invaders swooped in on the community. Up till today, nobody in the top echelon of security agencies had been called to account for the alleged official complicity. The Commissioner of Police was immediately transferred to another state yet lives had been lost. Who ordered the security operatives to step off from Nimbo? What could be the motive? If it was a mere coincidence, was there a counter intelligence report or directives that warranted

the sudden exit of all the security personnel? However, Governor Ugwuanyi pushed the blame to the doorsteps of security operatives thus: "What happened between 6.30 am and 7.30 am on Monday 25 April, 2016 despite assurances from the Security agencies? Only the Security Agencies can answer this question" (*Vanguard*, 2016).

- c. **Nimbo community's internal contradictions:** Nimbo crisis has several narratives with political undertones. What is however under-reported was the factionalization of the community based on 'Igweship' and 'Ezeship' traditional authorities tussle between Ukpabi Nimbo and Oda Nimbo, which led to a formation of a parallel vigilante group officially known as -Neighbourhood Watch (personal communication, KII, 8 August 2017). Neighbourhood Watch is the government-recognised local vigilante group that operates in Enugu State. The words of the key informant which is often overlooked captured it vividly: "*There is a group of boys that formed neighbourhood watch within Nimbo community, and these boys started abusing their powers by stealing cows, then they ate or sold them in the name of revenge of destruction of their farm crops by herdsmen activities*" (personal communication, August 8, 2017).

Expectedly, a supremacy contest between the two groups added a new twist to the security vacuum in the area. It was revealed that the parallel vigilante's involvement in cattle rustling triggered the herdsmen retaliation. The parallel group also kidnapped those who stood against them. Mr. Ejiofor Enechi, a security advisor to the Chairman of Uzo-Uwani LGA was a victim. He was accused of revealing the parallel vigilante's criminal plots to herdsmen, and exposing the group as those who usually attacked and stole money and cattle from herdsmen in the bush in Oda Nimbo (*Vanguard*, 2017). Thus, the community leaders enmeshed in the local political crisis lacked the overarching influence to curb the raging youth gangsterism. Government on its part, either out of negligence, lacklustre threat analysis or poor response to early conflict warning signals, failed to nip the ugly development in the bud, which could have averted the preponderance of banditry in Nimbo community. Thus, the illegal operations of the parallel vigilante body and their criminal escapades against the herdsmen in the community triggered the armed retaliation from the herdsmen.

### **Coping Strategies by Nimbo Community**

Since the attack on Nimbo, the psychological trauma meted out to the community lingered, regardless of the survivalist resolve of the people to move on. Beyond the public empathy and torrents of condemnations that trailed the armed invasion, the ability of the community to bounce back to reckoning is gravely undermined by governance failure and insensitivity of the ruling class. Although there were relief materials from humanitarian bodies and stop-gap interventions by Enugu State Government yet the near-absence of political will to address the conflict drivers raises fundamental questions. International Crisis Group (2017) notes that the federal and state governments 'have

done little or nothing to address rural insecurity...federal security and law enforcement agencies have established neither early warning nor rapid response mechanisms;they have not arrested and prosecuted the perpetrators of violence or offered redress to the victims' (p. 3).

Notwithstanding the deployment of stand-by Police Mobile Force along Nsukka-Adani Road, (which boosted the people's confidence), the abandonment of building of a permanent Intervention Centre at the border, promised by the former Nigerian Inspector General of Police, Solomon Arase, indicates the usual official lip-service to rural insecurity. However, Nimbo community's quest to take their destiny in their hands led to disbandment of the hitherto vigilante group that was accused of aiding and abetting kidnappings and assassinations before the April 25 attack. A new Neighbourhood Watch (NW) was set up, funded and equipped by the members of the community. Women and children no longer go to farm alone. They go in groups and NW members usually climb on top of trees to monitor the activities of herdsman while the farmers are busy in their farms. At a super-structural level, Uzo-Uwani LGA also recruited about 30 men in the local government NW that complement the police in local intelligence and tracking down of criminal elements. Nimbo has witnessed less tension as a result of the seproactive measures.

However, the demand of Nimbo community for herdsmen to either leave the community entirely or take the option of grazing on fallow grounds were scarcely met. Ordinarily, the mayhem on the community should make the herdsmen to relocate elsewhere but today, 'they are still everywhere in Uzo-Uwani with their guns and machets and no government or security agency had accosted them despite that so much is spent on monthly security votes and budgets' (stakeholder, personal communication, August 8, 2017). This betrayed the impunity of the ruling class on foisting the idea of open grazing despite popular disapproval, especially among the southern part of the country. There were still reported cases of kidnapping, killings and pockets of banditry within the LGA even though the Nigerian Police had made significant breakthroughs in bursting the kidnapping ring. Our key informant suggests that the hands of local elites may be implicated in the sponsorship of kidnappings in the area; as the rag-tag attire of suspected kidnappers indicates that 'the money they are making is not for them but for some "big" men who they work for'(stakeholder, personal communication, August 8, 2017).

The arraignment of five suspects (Fulani and Kanuri herdsmen) at Nsukka High Court for their alleged roles in the 25 April 2016 invasion of Nimbo, and the excitement it elicited showed the community's craving for justice for the victims. Thus, the fastest healing process for Nimbo locals is for governments at all levels to be seen impartial, and not condone perpetrators of dastardly acts.

## **Conclusion**

From the foregoing, it was discovered that that armed invasion of Nimbo community is similar to the clashes witnessed between herdsmen and sedentary farmers across Nigeria. The combatants (herders and farmers) felt frustrated in the conduct of their businesses and hence, they resorted to self-help in the face of security vacuum and governance failure. The crises were largely driven by the tendency to protect and preserve economic assets (lands, farms and cattle) on one hand, and the absence of political will to tackle the menace by governments, on the other hand. Thus, the break down of constructive engagement with herders in Nimbo and criminalization of chieftaincy tussles sparked off pent-up emotions in an already tensed environment. The poor response to early conflict warning signal and lack-lustre approach of security agencies resulted in the avoidable destruction of lives and property in Nimbo. The inability to manage the frustrations faced by the nomadic herdsmen and local farmers led to the aggression of 26 April 2016. Generally, while Nimbo community has struggled to get over the tragedy, their resilience has been dogged by infrastructure gap, rural negligence and horizontal inequalities accentuated by governance deficit.

## **Policy Recommendations**

- a. To ensure water-tight security in rural areas, governments should devote commensurate personnel and resources towards local intelligence gathering, early conflict warning signalling, and combat operations complemented by well-trained and well-regulated community vigilantes.
- b. Re-establish grazing reserves and stock routes in consenting areas with a multi-stakeholder buy-in. There should be absence of manipulation of legal and political institutions to foist on the people the preferences of the ruling class.
- c. Since cattle rearing is a private business, ranching remains the safest and less controversial option to discourage frequent contacts with sedentary farmers. More important, nomadic lifestyle is obsolete and raises human rights concerns in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- d. To curb the menace of cattle rustling, the federal government should encourage the evolving initiative of the Nigerian Police to develop tracking and animal identification technologies.
- e. The ECOWAS Protocol on free movements of persons and goods needs to be re-evaluated in the light of health and security implications of unregulated influx of nomads from Sahelian belt. Adequate resources (manpower and logistics) should be deployed to effectively police the national borders, which are largely porous; and to also checkmate illegal inflow of small arms and light weapons into Nigeria's territory.
- f. Governments should summon the political will (without fear or favour) to prosecute the criminal elements masquerading as herdsmen or crop farmers for deterrence value and justice to victims of banditry. Security operatives should undertake

community-friendly mop-up operations and sanitise the civil space of ubiquitous arms cache by unauthorized persons.

- g. The expectations of Nimbo people from the anticipated government white paper resulting from the Judicial Panel of Inquiry should not be dashed. Government, as a matter of urgency, should make public the Panel's findings (which is long overdue), to give justice to the victims, and allay the suspicion of bias and favouritism.

### References:

1. Ameh, C. G. (2018, January 30). Amnesty International Reveals How Many Nigerians Fulani Herdsmen Killed in 2018. *Daily Post*. Retrieved from <http://dailypost.ng/2018/01/30/amnesty-international-reveals-many-nigerians-fulani-herdsmen-killed-2018/>.
2. Berkowitz, L. (1989). Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis: Examination and Reformulation. *Psychological Bulletin*, 106(1), 59-73.
3. Daily Trust. (2017, September 25). 6,500 Killed, \$14bn Lost to Herders/Farmers Clashes – Report. *Daily Trust*. Retrieved from <https://www.dailytrust.com.ng/6-500-killed-14bn-lost-to-herders-farmers-clashes-report.html>.
4. Dollard J, Miller, N. E, Doob, L. W., Mowrer, O. H., & Sears, R. R. (1939). *Frustration and Aggression*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
5. Egwu, S. (2015). The Political Economy of Rural Banditry in Contemporary Nigeria. In M. J. Kuna and J. Ibrahim (Eds.), *Rural Banditry and Conflicts in Northern Nigeria* (pp. 14-67). Abuja: Centre of Democracy and Development (CDD).
6. Ibrahim, J. (2016, April 4). Rural Banditry: From the Crisis of Nomadism to State Crisis. *Daily Trust*. Retrieved from <https://www.dailytrust.com.ng/news/opinion/rural-banditry-from-the-crisis-of-nomadism-to-state-crisis>.
7. Ibrahim, J. (2017, May 12). The Resilience of Nigerians. *Daily Trust*. Retrieved from <https://www.dailytrust.com.ng/news/Friday-column/the-resilience-of-nigerians/197464.html>.
8. International Crisis Group. (2017, September 19). Herders Against Farmers: Nigeria's Expanding Deadly Conflict, Report No 252/ Africa. *International Crisis Group*. Retrieved from <https://www.crisisgroup.org/Africa/Nigeria/252-herders-against-farmers-nigerias-expanding>.
9. Institute for Sustainable Communities. (2015, November 5). What is Community Resilience and Why Does it Matter?. *ISC*. Retrieved from [www.iscvt.org/what-is-community-resilience-and-why-does-it-matter/](http://www.iscvt.org/what-is-community-resilience-and-why-does-it-matter/).
10. Kyari, M., & Chinyere, A. (2015). Social Impact of Rural Banditry. In M. J. Kuna and J. Ibrahim (Eds.), *Rural Banditry and Conflicts in Northern Nigeria* (pp.167 -188). Abuja: Centre of Democracy and Development (CDD).
11. Miller, N. E. (1941). The Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis. *Psychological Review*, 48, 337-342.

12. Oyeyipo, S., James, S., & Sanda, J. (2016, May 2). The New Terror Threat. *This Day*. Retrieved from <https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2016/05/02/the-new-terror-threat/>.
13. Pastoral Resolve.(2016, June 5). Addressing Rural Banditry in Northern Nigeria: A Policy Brief.*Pastoral Resolve*. Retrieved from <https://pastoralresolve.blogspot.com.ng/2016/06/addressing-rural-banditry-in-northern.html>.
14. The Guardian. (2106, May 1). When Herdsmen Spewed Death on Community. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://guardian.ng/sunday-magazine/when-herdsmen-spewed-death-on-community/>.
15. The Sun. (2016, June 15). Nimbo Attack: Trauma Causes 2 Women to Go Mad. *The Sun*. Retrieved from [sunnewsonline.com/nimbo-attack-trauma-causes-2-women-to-go-mad/](http://sunnewsonline.com/nimbo-attack-trauma-causes-2-women-to-go-mad/).
16. This Day. (2016, May 1). The Bloodletting by Herdsmen in Enugu. *This Day*. Retrieved from <https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2016/05/01/the-bloodletting-by-herdsmen-in-Enugu/>.
17. Vanguard. (2016, April 30). I Alerted Security Operatives Before Fulani Herdsmen Attack, says Ugwuanyi. *Vanguard*. Retrieved from <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2016/04/i-alerted-security-operatives-before-fulani-herdsmen-attack/>.
18. Vanguard. (2017, February 25). Why We Kidnapped Council Security Boss in Enugu – Suspects. *Vanguard*. Retrieved from <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2017/02/kidnapped-council-security-boss-enugu-suspects/>.