



# Crisis of Governance and the Challenge of Economic Management in Nigeria

Anyadike , Nkechi, O & Eme, Okechukwu Innocent

Department of Public Administration and Local Government

University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

Email: [okechukwu.eme@unn.edu.ng](mailto:okechukwu.eme@unn.edu.ng),

[okechukwunnent@gmail.com](mailto:okechukwunnent@gmail.com)

**Abstract:** *Crisis in governance has many dimensions. What often come to mind are the many conflicts that threaten Nigeria's national security and stability, leading to needless destruction and divert valuable resources to the task of maintaining peace and order. Without any doubt, a cessation of such conflicts will contribute significantly to national development. But crisis in governance has other facets. Perhaps the most important is the crisis of economic management. This is because good economic management could make a significant contribution to the quality of governance, in particular by creating a stable macro-economic environment, and by addressing more aggressively such critical issues as job creation and poverty reduction. Furthermore, success in coping with such issues as transparency and accountability, and in achieving a sensible order of national priorities to avoid wasteful spending, will go a long way to improve economic management and the quality of governance. This contribution will look at the linkage between Crisis in Governance and Economic Management in Nigeria. Data for this study will be generated from Focus Group Discussion, interviews and documentary sources. Tables and the technique of content analysis will serve as our data analysis technique. The findings reveal that as a result poor economic management, corruption lack of diversification and transparency have led to much economic hardship. Based on the above findings, the paper recommends that those who destroyed and looted the economy should be sanctioned and the diversification of the economy with sound economic programmes will help in addressing these challenges.*

**Keywords:** *Crisis in Governance, Transparency & Accountability, Economic Management & Politics.*

## INTRODUCTION

Despite the laudable achievements of the Buhari administration in fight against terrorism and corruption, Nigerians are not impressed with the non-challant attitude of the administration to the economic hardship they are passing through. Public Affairs commentators said the absence of a clear cut economic direction of the Buhari administration has aggravated the economic challenges in the country. Local and foreign investors are afraid of investing in the economy they are not sure of government's policy on doing business; many entrepreneurs have closed shops because of high cost of production and laid off workers.

For instance in 2015 World Bank report ranked Nigeria 169 out of 189 countries with ease of doing business. To ordinary Nigerians, the cost of living is unbearable as prices of essential commodities skyrocket on daily basis, yet the government could not provide palliative measures to cushion the effects of the economic hardship. It took the APC-led Federal APC government almost a year to come out with a clear economic policy.

However, *The Nation's* Forum on the Economy held in April 2016 provided a platform for Vice President Yemi Osinbajo to unveil the much-awaited economic direction of the Buhari administration. Osinbajo disclosed that the Federal Government's blueprint would be based on a strategic implementation plan for the 2016 budget under six thematic key areas adding that the plan would focus on about 33 priority actions. The key areas listed are: Lasting changes in the policy environment, national security and governance; Diversification of the economy by fast-tracking industrialisation, agriculture and agro-allied processing, attracting investment into the solid minerals, tourism and entertainment sectors. Others are Priority critical infrastructure, focused on increasing investment in power, rail and roads; restructuring of oil and gas sector and providing enabling environment for ease of doing business in Nigeria.

Economic analysts posit that the Buhari administration kept the international community waiting for long on its economic blue print. According to them the government inaction could scare genuine foreign investors. On the other hand, they said if the economic policy was released immediately Buhari was sworn-in, it will not make any difference because there was no budget to implement his programmes. *In this paper we are addressing an overview of the first anniversary of the President Muhammadu Buhari administration by highlighting the achievements of the regime and examines the gaps between expectations and government's projections.*

### **Governance**

The philosophical foundation of this concept has history that dates back to the writings of social contract theorists (Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean J. Rosseau), J. S Mill, Adam Smith, Jeremy Betham, Robert Dicey, Montesquieu, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle among others. These philosophers equate good governance and democracy with ethical standards. Since the thread of morality runs through the entire fabric of these definitions. Mill, for instance, was concerned with government, which he equated with high morality and ethical standards for public office holders. He assumed that social welfare is at the heart of all such people of good will and therefore of concern to them. He identified integrity, personal distinction, self-respect and freedom as hallmarks of ethical standards of behaviour apart from the contribution they make to the happiness of mankind as hallmarks of ethical standards needed by leaders. For Hobbes, a regulatory mechanism in society control social behaviour of the populace. According to him, it is upon this regulating framework and power of reason than man's transition from the "Savage" "Brutish" and solitary" to "the Civilized" and "Social Condition" depends. Dicey and Montesquieu on the other hand espoused the doctrines of the rule of law and separation of powers among the legislature, judiciary and the executive respectively. They argued for the need for balancing of these powers against each other as a basis for political liberty and good government.

In contemporary third world politics, one of the hydra-headed puzzles threatening their cooperate unity and survival is acquisitive instinct of some of her political leaders who, when they find their ways to public positions, they turn the entire state to personal fiefdoms. They abuse the mandates and trust of the electors and turn to public enemy once they assume positions of authority. Today, Africa has many failed states due to the rapacious instincts of their leaders. Most recently, late Mobutu Sese-Seko of Congo Democratic, Charles Tylor of Liberia, and Marcos of Philippians are some of the leaders that have brought their countries to the nadir of economic and political hardship due to mal administration and corruption. The position of Nigeria in corruption and Human Development indexes are not enviable for any serious nation. For example, the revelations of late President Umar Yar' Adua that about \$16 billion was wasted on the power sector is a pointer to the level of economic mismanagement that Nigerian leaders often subject their country to.

Aristotle, have been recognized as the great master-piece of the study of Government and political thought. Government first evolved in the ancient city state of Greece and was first evolved in the ancient city state of Greece and was studied by philosophers. In the fifth century, B. C., the defeat of Persia by the Greeks under the Athenian leadership brought to limelight the power and magnificent democratic government of Athens which attracted the attention of Athenian philosophers. The first great philosopher, Socrates, studies the organization of Athens and questioned everything, until, he was put to death in 399 B.C. unfortunately, and Socrates did not document any of his studies. His pupil, Plato's and Plato's pupil Questions concerning the purpose of the state could be discovered in such classical philosophical documents such as Plato's "Republic", Aristotle's "The Politics", Marcus Tullus Cicero's "The Republic", St. Thomas Aquinas's "Treatise on law" in the "Summa Theologica", Thomas Moore. "The Utopia", Thomas Hobbes' "The Leviathan"; or Charles Montesquieu "The Spirit of Laws". In all the works, the ideal state is purposed upon the creation of an environment and institutions whereby the good and betterment of man is sought for. Before the search for good governance in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, these known philosophers had sought to question and determine the fundamental purpose behind the creation of the state and the objective of governments. A critical evaluation of their positions reveals a lot about the philosophical fundamentals and constructs that underpin good governance today.

Charles Montesquie takes the position that it is only a system of government under the rule of law that can successfully drive the attainment of societal good. In Thomas Hobbes' The Leviathan the postulation is a situation whereby the state comes into being as the Leviathan to hold in trust the authority of governance to do well and to promote a peaceful society. Such trust is contained in a social contract within which the members of the society forfeit their rights and allow the state to manage these rights. The Leviathan well help in governing the society in such a way that everybody's rights are protected and that there will be a reduction of poverty and the maintenance of the general wellbeing of the citizens that have

surrendered their rights . To Thomas Moore, in his “The Utopia” “the ideal state is one which “aims at the happiness of its citizen. The state is made from his philosophical position to create the happiness of the citizens; the government should be managed to achieve the welfare of the people-if we define happiness in material terms in the context of a good government administration. At the heart of achieving the goal of happiness of the citizens is the creation of not just the state but also durable institutions for governance. Thomas Aquinas’s critical contributions to this search is centered around his concept of the three things needed so that people can live the good life such as peace, moral life (values) and the availability of the good things of life – basic infrastructures and structures. However his words are more seminal and the aims of the state deserving of being reproduced here:

Firstly, that the state should be established in the unity of peace, second, that the state, united in the bond of peace, should be directed to good actions. . . third, that through the ruler’s diligence there should be the sufficient supply of the necessities for the good life ( Aquinas , 1994;11, and 13).

The Aristotlean concept of good governance contains a philosophical position which is inclusive of a dual definition of good governance and bad governance. For him, a good government is a government that focuses on the interests of the community at large and a bad government is one which seeks its own private interest rather than that of the whole community . . . the state exists for the sake of every one’s moral, social, political, economic and intellectual fulfillment . . . when a government is functioning rightly, it governs for the common good of all the people (Osondu, 2009; 15).

The problematic for Marcus Tullius Cicero is not just the advocacy for the “common good of the citizens” but ho to provide for that common good since “the state belongs to the people as an association of a good number of persons based upon justice and partnership to secure the good life (Cicero, 1967; 36).

Aristotle’s political take is that the state is that that promotes this idea of the common good as justification for the existence of the state and government. In summary, man is a being created to survive only in the state and society because it offers him the opportunity to develop his full potentials and to be happy. Every state should exist to provide and promote this good life, leading to man’s happiness, society’s happiness can exist only when the rulers appreciate this philosophical fundamental and become good rulers, providing good governance.

The platonic concept of justice supplies an encore that assists the well-promote an orderly society. Only the knowledgeable and the virtuous few can be called leaders; only the philosopher-kings can promote good governance and the happiness of this well-ordered society.

Philosophy hinges the happiness of the citizen as the only justification for the existence of the state, government and institutions of governance. The search for good governance and sustainable development in Africa has deep roots in classical and medieval philosophy. The development of the human mind and potentials become the inexorable objectives for the creation of states and justification for governments.

Governance is the social organization that has authority to rule over a political entity that possesses people, territory otherwise called a state (Levine, 1990:2). According to Shively (2007:56) government is a group of people who have the ultimate authority to make and enforce rules for a people living within specific or defined geographical boundary Government therefore is the organ of the state that has the right to make decision that everyone has the duty to accept and obey. From the thesis, the concept of governance in the context of promotion of sustainable economic development comprises of the efficient government, effective civil society and successful private sector. Good governance has many characteristics. Good governance systems are participatory in that the members of governance institutions have a voice in the decision-making process based on democratic traditions. The procedures and methods of decision making reflect transparency to ensure effective participation. The governance system aims at bringing about sustainable development. Good governance promotes equity and equality of treatment to all based on the concept of non-discrimination.

The basic consideration in good governance is being able to develop the resources and methods of governance. In the context of social development parameters, it promotes gender balance, promotes synthesis of diverse perspectives and mobilises resources for social purposes. Good governance strengthens indigenous mechanisms and ensures effective and efficient use of resources. All civilised societies are based on rule of law which promotes good governance. Good governance engenders and commands respect and trust. The persons entrusted with the task of taking decisions in government, private sector and civil society organisations have to be accountable for their actions to the members of public and institutional stakeholders. Governmental organisations have to be service oriented, responsive

to the hopes and aspirations of the people, act as facilitative and enabling, regulatory rather than controlling, take ownership of solutions to national social problems and able to deal with temporal issues. One of the major problems before the developing countries and the transitional economies is to create a conducive economic environment for economic growth and social progress. Each country must ascertain and evaluate its stock of natural, physical and financial resources and formulate its strategy for economic growth on the basis of its ability for capacity building, resource mobilisation, strengthening of the institutional framework and administrative capability. There should be positive steps taken to promote private sector development by creating conducive atmosphere for its nurture and healthy growth. Wherever possible, attempts should be made to encourage and foster private-public sector partnership and establish adequate legal and regulatory framework to provide a level-playing field to both public and private sectors of the economy.

### **Methodology**

The methods used in this work are the descriptive and analytical methods. The use of library materials was employed. Related text books, journals, special publications and newspapers were analyzed. Crisis in governance is not a fairly recent issue, and not much has been written on the subject, hence the reliance on daily news as recorded by credible sources. The data's unit of analysis for this paper was derived from the research and analysis of scholars, analysts and practitioners, government documents, and recent newspaper and journal articles. The sources of information were, however, carefully evaluated and analyzed to determine their veracity. As noted earlier, previous political leaders of Nigeria have not kept their promises.

### **The Paradox of Crisis of governance in Nigeria: Exploring the Issues**

As fate would have it, Buhari defeated Jonathan in the 2015 polls, thereby making history as the first Nigerian opposition party candidate to defeat of an incumbent president in Nigeria's political history. He also became Nigeria's second former military ruler after Obasanjo to return to the presidency through the ballot. But not much has changed after one year of the APC-led Federal Government. The high level dissatisfaction and discontent in the polity that compelled most Nigerians to seek for a new beginning in the last general elections is yet to be addressed, no thanks the "empty treasury" President Buhari claimed he met on coming to power and the nation's dwindling revenue as a result of falling prices of oil at the international market. Many Nigerians are however not interested in listening to the tale of economic recession as a justification for yet to be fulfilled promises. To them, the President and his party were aware of the prevalent situation before they made promises of a better life for the citizenry.

Despite patience running out, the government has persistently appealed for time to work out measures to alleviate the sufferings of the citizenry even as the opposition political parties keep reminding the ruling party of its promises to turn the country to an Eldorado within the shortest possible time. His campaign train which took off from Port Harcourt, Rivers State on January 6, 2015 criss-crossed 35 out of the 36 states in the country and the Federal Capital Territory except Yobe due to the security situation in the North-East then .He made several promises, which he said will bring positive changes in the lives of Nigerians within two years as his desire for change has not diminished. The promises revolve around three key issues – fight against corruption, insecurity and job creation.

Nigeria is one of the most governed state in the world, and yet also the most misgoverned with everything falling apart. Nigeria has 774 local councils, 36 state governments, 36 state parliaments, a bicameral legislature at the centre, whose members are paid the highest salaries and allowance in the world, 26 federal ministries, 541 federal agencies, with 263 of them being statutory agencies, backed by law. Nigeria operates a presidential democracy that has proven to be very expensive to run, with local , state and Federal officials living fat on the resources that ought to be used to develop the country. With all these structures in place, Nigeria has failed to fulfill the basic needs of her populace because of high cost of governance. Below are some of the areas the Presidency has made giant strides.

### **Diversification of the Economy**

The drop in oil earnings has exposed Nigeria as a country without solid alternative sources of revenue. This reality has made the diversification of the economy non-negotiable. Put differently, the monolithic nature of the economy is unsustainable. We must immediately begin to initiate and sustain policies directed at economic diversification. We must look at solid minerals, manufacturing and agriculture, which have the potentials to create employment opportunities.

### **Agricultural Incentives**

The Buhari administration has reiterated its determination to invest heavily in agriculture and make it an income yielding sector while also providing employment for youths. The administration has recently obtained 15 billion dollars from China in aid for the sector. The Minister of Science and Technology, Dr.

Ogbonnaya Onu said: "If a country like China, with a population of over 1.4 billion, can provide food security for her citizens through mechanised farming, Nigeria with less than 200 million people could do the same." Many people shared the same opinion. But the government needed to do more in the sector before it can thrive. Agriculture should be made attractive and it can only be attractive if it is profitable. Farmers' farm produces rot away on the distant farms, in the absence of feeder roads. There is lack of immediate market for the products, which are mostly perishable. Government can assist in facilitating the marketing of agricultural products. Canning is also very important. Youths will not embrace agriculture, if the rural areas are unattractive because of lack of social amenities and if agriculture is unprofitable.

### **Solid Minerals Development**

The reality has dawned on the Buhari administration that the country can no more be salvaged by oil. Thus, Nigeria is now emulating countries that are reaping the fruits of diversification. Examples are China, India, Mexico and Indonesia. Nigeria has natural endowments, which remained untapped. These resources include bitumen, tin, copper, zinc, coal, gold, celica, clay and limestone. Others are laterite, cassilite, koolne stones, columbite and marble. The President of Nigerian Mining and Geosciences Society, Prof. Olugbenga Okunlola, recently posited that Nigeria could earn more from solid minerals than oil. The University Don lamented that despite Nigeria's natural endowment, efforts have not been made to harness the natural resources besides oil. He pointed out that of the 44 non-oil resources available, at least 20 are of economic value. According to him,

We suffer in the midst of plenty. If government puts just about 10 per cent of what is in oil and gas into the solid mineral sector, our national income will be more than triple. The MDAs in the Ministry of Steel and Mining will be richer than the NNPC. We are talking about 44 minerals with many more being added. In 2006, we were talking about 34 minerals. In eight years, we are talking about 44. If we have adequate data acquisition, we will have more minerals that will generate more incomes for us. If there is close monitoring, no gold will be smuggled out. Investors will come in. So, we are endowed and it is a shame we are not tapping into them (Eme, 2015).

The Minister of Solid Minerals, Dr. Kayode Fayemi, has been up and doing. His ministry is working on a new policy and a legal framework that will guide exploration and mining activities. Due to the neglect of the sector, illegal miners have been on the prowl. To the minister's consternation, five million Nigerians are engaged in illegal mining. The minister's aide, Yinka Oyebo, said: "The ministry is putting in place a mining road map that will define the standard practice in the sector." (Lucas, 2016:2). Also, the ministry is partnering with governors and the host communities to ensure that environmental safety is accorded a pride of place. A machinery is being put in place to coordinate miners as they organise themselves into cooperative societies so that they can acquire licences and work legally.

The Ministry of Solid Minerals is also trying to woo investors by granting them tax holiday and making their equipment duty-free. It is also working with the Central Bank, the Bank of Industry and other banks to make funding available to miners. Banks are being encouraged to set up mining desks and guarantee them lease on equipment because mining equipment are expensive. The ministry is also working with the ministries of works, transport and interior to ensure a better investment environment and security.

The second crisis hinges on our that governments proclaiming they are serving public interests by building schools and hospitals and even roads. But when officials fall ill, they do not attend the hospitals; their children do not attend our schools even when they call the schools model schools; they are sent abroad for their education. And lately, our officials do not even drive on our roads for long distances. Because the roads have been made unsafe by the shoddy job of their preferred contractors, with whom they have shared money, the leaders have now chosen to move about in private jets or chartered helicopters, from one Nigerian town to the other. We wonder then, for whom are those schools and hospitals built?

Buhari's priority is the repositioning of the power sector. But, in the last one and half year, nothing has changed in the sector. He is concerned about the problem in the oil sector. The president has apologized for the poor service delivery in the sector. The recent deregulation policy, whereby fuel price is being pegged to N145 per litre has been received with mixed feelings. Generally, there is the dearth of infrastructure facilities. Many roads are still death traps, leading to avoidable accidents.

Lamentably, federal roads are an eyesore. Many of them are abandoned projects. Project sites have been deserted by contractors. Where they stay back, there is hypocritical commitment to the job. The Federal Government owes huge amounts of money to states for federal roads constructed by the states. The Minister of Works, Power and Housing, Mr. Babatunde Fashola (SAN) has reiterated the determination of

the Federal Government to complete the rehabilitation of the Lagos/Ibadan Expressway. The Calabar/Lagos Rail Project is one of the projects expected to be executed as from 2016.

The energy crisis has become a national albatross and an embarrassment. Power generation and distribution are a mirage. Although there was a glimpse of hope when President Buhari was inaugurated, the relative electricity supply has now been displaced by acute darkness. This explains the limitation to the efficacy of presidential body language. The saving grace is the generator. Yet, not all Nigerians can afford it. Power supply is fluctuating. It has now dropped to 2,140 megawatts. This has led to a high cost of production. The manufacturing sector is groaning. The result is the recurrent capital flight. An official of the Manufacturing Association of Nigeria (MAN), Babatunde Odunayo, said the expansion programmes of the sector are hampered, making it difficult or impossible to assist in resolving the challenge of growing unemployment.

Eko Distribution Company Deputy Managing Director Ramesh Narayanan has listed the factors that inhibit the supply chain at the level of power generation, transmission and distribution. The impediments include inefficient and outdated technology and the dearth of a national grid. "This is responsible for the bottleneck hindering access from power source to the point of use, resulting in poor quality of supply (Lucas, 2016:3).

There has been no respite in this critical oil sector. It is still ailing. Paradoxically, the sixth largest producer of crude oil is also an importer of oil for domestic consumption. The scarcity of fuel has persisted, resulting in the unmitigated agony of long queues at filling stations. Last month, the Minister of State for Petroleum, Dr. Ibe Kachukwu, attributed the scarcity to sabotage. He said the fuel was being diverted. "I have had sleepless nights. I work round the clock to solve this problem. Over 30 per cent of fuel is diverted to Chad and Cameroon. You see people making money out of agony of Nigerian's Government has only overcome a hurdle. The amount of crude oil being lifted and actual earnings from the crude oil can now be determined. But, refineries are at low ebb, despite the huge investment on turn around maintenance. Oil theft has become a lucrative business, fuelling suspicion of an institutional cover-up. President Buhari cried out in London last week that, unless oil theft is listed as an international crime, the trend may persist.

Kachukwu has embarked on some reforms. He has reduced the number of subsidiary heads from eight to four. In his view, cutting costs will reduce efficiency and profitability. Oil subsidy may have been removed. But, deregulation too will require adjustment. Another area of focus should be the health and capacity of the refineries. Should Nigeria continue to import fuel as outrageous costs when the refineries can be rehabilitated and bridge the gap? What has happened to the huge investment on maintenance? Which is a better option-importation of refined fuel or domestic production and distribution? What time frame is apposite for full domestic production?

The third problem in the crisis of governance is budget fraud. We want to highlight is about our padded and skewed budget that really shows why Nigeria will never work. Senator Bukola Saraki and Hon. Jubril pointed out some of the anomalies in the 2014 and 2016 budgets, where several ministries requested for money to buy computers. While one ministry quoted N250, 000 for a computer unit, another quoted N500, 000 and yet another quoted N2million. This lack of streamlining of expenditure can only happen in Nigeria. Related to the above is the increasing hijack of the commonwealth by those we put in government, the politicians and the civil servants. The modern government developed out of the mutual agreement by all that we have a government with all the structures we have today, a parliament, an executive, and the judiciary. The government was created to serve our common interests, the interest of the majority of our people. But what do we find today? Government is serving its own interests at the people's expense. And we see this selfish interest manifested in the amount of money government people appropriate for their own welfare. In the 2014 budget alone, the Federal Government voted 78 per cent to itself and 22 per cent to the remaining 160 million Nigerians. We find this skewed allocation of resources all over the country, except in one or two states, where capital expenditure still takes pre-eminence over recurrent expenditure.

As we reflect over this, the conclusion that comes to our mind is that the spirit of governance has been turned upside down in Nigeria. The trustees that we elect into office have appropriated resources to themselves, forgetting that the money belongs to us Nigerians. Like caretakers of an estate, they are entitled to only salaries or commissions, not that they will take almost all the proceeds away. We surely need to address this problem to forge ahead as a nation. And we do not need a team of World Bank economists or IMF specialists to tell us that Nigeria can never make it if we do not reverse the ratio of resource allocation in favour of capital expenditure.

Another problem of this country is the wage structure and the cost of living. For instance, the effect of the rise in pump price of petrol was spontaneously felt as the cost of transportation rose astronomically and cost of transporting goods and commodities to the markets equally hit the roof. For most traders who had taken a break from the markets during the festive season, it was tough meeting up on the new trend as prices of procuring new stock had shot up and this had to be borne by final consumers. According to Abigael Nwosu, a trader at Iddo International Market in Lagos, "I am still in shock over the sudden rise in cost of our dried crayfish; suddenly, stocking the goods is becoming unbearable for me. At the popular Oyingbo market which is noted for dried pepper, a standard measure of pepper at Christmas sold for N1,800; but during the week, it went up to N2,600. A measure of melon seed, another staple, which sold at N,200 at Christmas now sells at N1,600. "A mudu of crayfish during Christmas was sold here at N1000 now sells for N1,500."(Nwokolo,et al,2012:1).The ever-busy Mile 12 Market however seems to have become a shadow of itself, as there were just a few buyers making purchases and the sellers seem to attribute the low patronage to the holiday and cost of transportation.

Today, the minimum wage in Nigeria is N18, 000 a month, which translates to less than \$120 dollars or \$3 a day. Some states in Nigeria are paying less than this starvation wage to their workers. But the worse news is that many Nigerians, about 80 percent of the work force, whose jobs are not governed by the minimum wage rule are earning between N10, 000 and N12, 000 a month. If they are lucky, they earn N15, 000. At a glance, we can see that what a Nigerian worker earns a day is not even up to what a worker earns in one hour either in the UK or the USA. The parlous wage level is one of the fundamental problems of our country, for it breeds a vicious cycle of poverty: families not being able to afford the basics of life, families living far below the poverty line, earning less than a dollar a day, families not being able to send their children to good schools, families not being able to afford good health care and thus putting their faith in faith healers, miracle churches and native doctors among others. It also does not enhance patriotism and commitment to the cause of the nation by the citizens.

In recent times, we have seen facets of this problem manifested in crucial areas: A Federal police and military personnel that do not adequately reward its manpower and even more, security agencies that is gravely underfunded, such that it is unable to pay the approved peanuts. In the face of the recent serial Boko Haram attacks in Nigeria's northeast, we must have wondered why the Nigerian military forces did not offer much resistance. We now know: Our soldiers are not well paid and not well equipped. And because of a combination of these factors, when they see the Boko Haram militants coming their direction they take to their heels, rather than engage them in combat.

According to his blueprint, part of his strategies and plans, especially in the area of corruption, is to draw a line to ensure that the cankerworm, which has remained bane of Nigeria's development, is dealt with. According to him, henceforth, whoever is trusted with public office and betrays the trust would be dealt with. On the economy, he said:

We have lined up programmes on how to tackle unemployment. We are going to assemble a team of professionals for wealth creation and employment for our teeming youths. We will also put a mechanism in place to improve on the economy. Our main objective is to make sure that agriculture and other non-oil sectors get priority to create opportunities for Nigerians, so that whether educated or not, they have gainful employment"(Eme, 2015:7).

He also assured on security, saying: *"Whatever we are going to do, we have to secure Nigeria first. What we are witnessing in the North-East where people are being killed is not acceptable. We know that the Nigerian military is capable of bringing peace and stability to this country. They need to be given the leadership and that is what I promise, if elected* (Eme, 2015:7). "While it is a fact that the President is yet to fulfill some of the promises he made during the campaigns, the Presidency is of the view that it is uncharitable to say that it has not achieved anything. A report by the Centre for Democracy and Development during Buhari's seventh month in office claimed that he had only achieved one out of his 222 tracked electoral promises, representing 0.5 per cent of the promises. But the Special Assistant to the President on Media and Publicity, Mallam Garba Shehu, who countered the report, said it was unfortunate to attribute to the President, promises he did not make during the campaigns and hold him accountable.

The presidential spokesman warned the group against misleading Nigerians with its cooked up analysis, saying no sincere Nigerian will fail to recognise the courage of the President to tackle corruption in a country where impunity was once celebrated. According to him, as a result of these efforts, the Nigeria Customs Service had quadrupled its revenue base within seven months, a feat the service could

not achieve in years. Shehu asked, “Doesn’t the President deserve credit for this and other efforts to confront the monster of corruption?” (Eme, 2015:7).

The international community has started changing its views about Nigeria’s image under Buhari. His avowed commitment to repositioning the country and fighting corruption has received almost universal applause. World powers have also given an assurance to assist the country to combat terror, encourage investment flow and boost diplomatic ties. The most applauded was President Buhari’s recent visit to China. The trip brought instant dividends: 6 billion dollar loan to finance infrastructural development, 15 million dollar for agricultural development and currency swap. But, critics fear that the loans will increase Nigeria’s foreign debt.

### **Governance Promises yet to be fulfilled: the Challenges**

#### **Delayed take off**

It is indisputable that Buhari’s quest for the presidency after three unsuccessful attempts was fired by the zeal to bring about positive changes in the lives of Nigerians, but some say the way his administration took off didn’t show that he was prepared for the job. For example, it took the President 166 days, before he constituted his cabinet of 36 ministers. While the ministers were named in two batches between September and October, they were sworn in and assigned portfolios on November 11 – six months after the President’s inauguration. The delay in the appointment of ministers made Buhari, Nigeria’s only president to take such an extensive period to constitute a cabinet since 1999.

His predecessors – Obasanjo, Yar’adua and Jonathan spent less time in doing that. Obasanjo was sworn in as president in May 1999 and he chose almost all members of his cabinet within the next month. In his second term as President in 2003, the cabinet was announced two months after his inauguration. For Yar’adua, who was sworn in as president in May 2007, he announced his cabinet in July, just two months after his inauguration, while Jonathan, who succeeded him, followed the footsteps of his predecessors by announcing his cabinet in July after winning the 2011 election.

Expectedly, Buhari received knocks for the delayed take-off of his government but he linked it to Jonathan and the PDP’s unpreparedness for the outcome of the 2015 presidential election, saying they didn’t put in place structures that will make the transition seamless. He maintained that had a system been in place, real-time information would have been available to assist him to quickly settle down, form cabinet and go about the business of governance. He also insisted that the inadequacy of the handover notes from the immediate past administration contributed in no small measure to the delay in constituting his cabinet, stressing that he needed to have a clear idea of what his administration was inheriting.

The president also added that it took him much longer than expected before making ministerial appointments as he did background checks to ensure his first cabinet would reflect his central message of “change” and integrity. However, not every appointment was a new face or completely without blemish. A majority of those who made the cabinet were known names, especially former governors with little space for technocrats.

#### **Skewed appointments**

There is no denying the fact that most of the President’s appointments have been skewed in favour of the North against South and this has eroded the goodwill earned by his administration from across the country upon coming into power last year. Some of the appointments are: Aide-de-Camp to President, Lt. Col Abubakar Lawal (Kano State, North-West); Special Adviser, Media and Publicity to the president, Mr. Femi Adesina (Osun State, South-West); Senior Special Assistant, Media and Publicity, Garba Shehu (Kano State, North-West) and State Chief of Protocol/Special Assistant (Presidential Matters), Lawal Kazaure (Jigawa State, North-West) Others are Accountant-General of the Federation, Ahmed Idris (Kano State, North-West); National Security Adviser, Maj. General Babagana Monguno (rtd) (Borno State, North-East); Chief of Defence Staff, Maj. General Abayomi Olonishakin (Ekiti State, South- West); Chief of Army Staff, Maj. General Tukur Buratai, (Borno State, North-East); Chief of Naval Staff, Rear Admiral Ibok-Ete Ekwe Ibas (Cross Rivers, South-South); Chief of Air Staff, Air Vice Marshall Sadique Abubakar (Bauchi State, North-East); Chief of Defence Intelligence, Air Vice Marshall Monday Riku Morgan (Benue State, North Central) and Director General, State Security Services (SSS), Lawal Daura (Katsina State, North-West) Acting Chairperson, Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Mrs. Amina Zakari, (Jigawa State, North-West); Managing Director, Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Habibu Abdullahi (Kano State, North-West); Special Adviser, Niger Delta Amnesty Office, Brig. General Paul Boroh (rtd) (Bayelsa State, South-South); Acting Director General, Nigerian Maritime Administration, Safety and Security Agency (NIMASA), Baba Haruna Jauro (Yobe State, North-East) and Executive Vice



Chairman/Chief Executive Officer, Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), Umaru Dambatta (Kano State, North-West).

Executive Chairman, Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Babatunde Fowler (Lagos State, South-West); Director General, Budget Office of the Federation, Aliyu Gusau (Zamfara State, North-west); Group Managing Director, Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), Dr. Emmanuel Kachikwu (Delta State, South-South); Secretary to Government of the Federation, Babachir David Lawal (Adamawa State, North-East); Chief of Staff to the President, Abba Kyari, (Borno, North-East); Comptroller-General, Nigerian Customs Service, Col. Hameed Ibrahim Ali (rtd) (Kaduna State, North Central) and Comptroller-General, Nigerian Immigration Service, Kure Martin Abeshi (Nasarawa State, North Central). Also on the list are Senior Special Assistant on National Assembly Matters (Senate), Senator Ita Enang (Akwa Ibom State, South-South); Senior Special Assistant on National Assembly Matters (House of Representatives), Hon. Suleiman Kawu (Kano State, North-West); Director, Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR), Modecai Baba Ladan (Kano State, North-West); Managing Director, Asset Management Company of Nigeria (AMCON); Ahmed Lawan Kuru (Kano State, North-West); Commissioner for Insurance and Chief Executive of the National Insurance Commission: Mohammed Kari (North-West). Out of these 30 major appointments, 23 are from the North while seven are from the South.

Ordinarily, where the appointees comes from would not have been an issue, but because the various ethnic nationalities that make up Nigeria view each other with suspicion, critics of the president are of the view that his mode of appointments, not only negates the Federal Character Principle but runs contrary of his oath office to serve as President to all Nigerians. Others went to the extreme by accusing him of promoting a Northern agenda aimed at Islamising the nation though he had promised to run an all-inclusive government during his inauguration. The president said then: "I intend to keep my oath and serve as President to all Nigerians. I belong to everybody and I belong to nobody." (Eme, 2015:8).

However, members of another political school of thought said they were not surprised with the mode of appointments given a statement credited to the President during a question and answer session with journalists in the United States on July 22, last year. He was quoted to have said: "Going by election results, constituencies that gave me 95 per cent cannot in all honesty be treated, on some issues, with constituencies that gave me five per cent. I think these are political realities. While, certainly there will be justice for everybody but the people who voted, and made their votes count, they must feel the government has appreciated the effort they put in putting the government in place."

No doubt, Buhari's emergence was a new dawn for the country given the circumstances that threw him up, but the goodwill his government has so far enjoyed is gradually turning sour as the citizenry are beginning to run out of patience although the picture has not been all about gloom. The President has been criticised for starting on a tardy note and moving at a snail speed since then, but his administration has made some appreciable impact, in some aspects of national life, especially on the war against graft and the fight against insurgency.

#### Anti-corruption war

Perhaps, the last time Nigerians witnessed a major probe of an administration by a succeeding one was in 1984, after the fall of the Second Republic. Interestingly, it was a Buhari-led military regime that arrested and put to trial, key actors in that dispensation. Some of those tried bagged jail terms running into hundreds of years. More than three decades after, Buhari is not pretending about probing the Jonathan administration, which he succeeded.

In what seems a break from the past experience, where a president comes to power and overlooks the actions and inactions of his predecessor, President Buhari, who is known for his hard stance on corruption, insisted on probing his predecessor "to ensure a proper take-off of his government." He gave a hint of the probe, when he told Nigerians in Diaspora during a visit to the United States shortly after his inauguration that his administration had begun receiving documents to prosecute Jonathan's ministers and other government officials who stole "mindboggling" oil funds. He also during the visit appealed to US President Barack Obama to help Nigeria recover and repatriate about \$150 billion allegedly stolen by past government officials.

#### Security

Evidently, the Buhari government has made progress in the war against terror in the country's north eastern zone. As the government put, Boko Haram remain decimated despite pockets of attacks. This claim cannot be disputed because the Federal Government has succeeded in galvanizing Nigeria's immediate neighbours and the global community, including major powers, towards the defeat of the Boko Haram insurgency and the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the communities and population affected.

In essence, the insurgents have been effectively denied territory or sanctuary and are now in disarray. "Scattered, demoralised and hungry, they have resorted to terror tactics available to a degraded and defeated insurgent group. The fact that they operate in a few local governments does not equate to holding and controlling territories. We must make that distinction," Minister of Information and Culture, Alhaji Lai Mohammed said. The success recorded in the insurgency war has spurred the international community to partner with the Federal Government in rebuilding the devastated region. The World Bank recently announced that it has earmarked \$800 million to support the rebuilding of the infrastructure destroyed in the North-East by the Boko Haram.

United Nations (UN) Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Fatma Samoura, who made the disclosure, said the UN was scaling up its presence in Borno and other North Eastern states ravaged by the insurgency. She added that the world body will also support government in its work on recovery and rehabilitation for the safe return of the IDPs back to their areas of origin. While kudos should go to the government for gradually restoring peace to the troubled region and kick-starting its reconstruction, analysts are of the view that it should step up efforts to curb the upsurge in the menace of herdsmen, which has claimed several lives of late and save the country another round of violence.

### **Foreign Affairs**

From a near pariah state status, Nigeria has returned to its rightful place in the comity of nations through concerted efforts of the Buhari government though some critics have described him as a 'travelling president.' The President has in the last one year visited over 20 countries.

The countries include Niger Republic, Chad, Germany, South Africa, United Kingdom, United States, Benin Republic, France, Ghana and India. Others are Sudan, Iran, United Arab Emirates, Malta, Kenya, Ethiopia, Egypt, Qatar and Equatorial Guinea and China.

The President has been to some of the countries more than once. But justifying his foreign trips, President Buhari said they have both economic and political benefits for Nigeria. According to him, there is no way he would embark on a visit that isn't in the interest of the country. He also dismissed the figure bandied by the opposition that each visit outside Nigeria costs Nigeria \$1 million.

The Federal Executive Council (FEC) also justified the foreign trips, saying Nigeria was becoming a pariah state under Jonathan, and so Buhari is seeking to reverse that status and drive investment. "You do not run a country by being isolated and the personal presence of the president in many of these fora is very important because before now we were almost a pariah state and the two things that have been driving investments away from this country are terrorism and corruption. The Information minister said:

The cost of doing business was so high that most international businessmen didn't want to come here. Who is coming to invest in a country where there is insecurity?" No doubt, the Buhari administration has made appreciable progress despite its slow pace but it should be reminded that the deterioration of every government begins with the decay of the principle on which it was founded (Jibueze, 2016:3).

### **Conclusion**

Nigeria needs to turn a new leaf in addressing the problems of human development. We cannot continue to run a presidential system that breeds too much corruption and that is expensive to run. We cannot continue to ignore the development of our education and health sectors. More resources need to be pumped there. The Government must also widen the scope of opportunities for our youths by creating more jobs. Government needs to jettison the ideology of the World Bank and the IMF that says government has no business getting involved in business. Government needs to be involved in setting up factories that can create thousands of jobs for our people.

Government must also review the wage structure in our country. The disparity in the income level between the rich and the poor is very sickening. A nation of extremely wealthy and extremely poor people is only playing with armed rebellion or a revolution. Again a holistic approach as opposed to quick fixes will go a long way to stem the tide of recurring agitation and militancy in the Niger Delta. The interim, mopping up illegal arms and explosive devices in the region and other parts of the country would help in peace and security. This is because these arms/explosives are the oxygen that sustain insurgency and militancy. If the government is sincere, all they need to do is implement recommendations of the previous security challenges committees reports.

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