



COUNTRY REPORT OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

**PRESENTED DURING THE 2021st ORDINARY SESSION OF ECOWAS PARLIAMENT
Abuja, 27 May – 12 June 2021**

BY

THE NIGERIAN DELEGATION OF MEMBERS OF ECOWAS PARLIAMENT



The Delegations

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2. Hon. Mohammed Ali NDUME
3. Hon. Biodun Christine OLUJIMI
4. Hon. Adebayo BALOGUN
5. Hon. Emmanuel BWACHA
6. Hon. Sahabi Alhaji SEN YAU
7. Hon. TolulopeAkinremi ODEBIYI
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30. Hon. Bamidele SALAM
31. Hon. Bashir DAWODU
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33. Hon. Robert Ajayi BOROFFICE

PROTOCOL

1. INTRODUCTION

Your Excellency, the Speaker of the ECOWAS Parliament, Honourable Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen.

On this First Ordinary Session of ECOWAS Parliament, the Nigerian delegation sends its warm greetings to Mr. Speaker and other members of this Parliament.

We are delighted to present our report which is drafted in line with ECOWAS Protocol and framework, and is structured as follows:

- Political Situation;
- Security Situation;
- Human right Situation;
- Health Situation; and
- Status of implementation of the ECOWAS texts.

2. POLITICAL SITUATION

Nigeria remains stable, despite considerable social, political, economic and security challenges currently being faced. As at today, the political scene is charged due to the state of insecurity in the country, however, there is notable progress in some areas

Notably, the Nigerian National Assembly has been working tirelessly to address the various concerns of the Nigerian people through a comprehensive review of the 1999 Constitution. The Constitution Review highlights the following:

- Active local government participation in governance – by enabling direct funding from the Federation Account, local governments would become more impervious to interference by other actors in the political domain. Thus, allowing people-oriented governance;
- Increased women participation in politics and the promotion of a more gender-balanced public space;

- Devolution of power to state governments by the migration of specific items on the Exclusive Legislative List to the Concurrent Legislative List, for example matters relating to quarantine, minimum wage etc.;
- Extensive electoral reforms geared towards the promotion of democratic growth;
- Comprehensive Judicial reforms aimed at a more independent and efficient judiciary.

Indisputably, these proposed amendments to the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria would enable the growth of stronger democratic structures and institutions, while also promoting inclusive governance.

3. SECURITY SITUATION

In clear and unambiguous terms, the security situation in Nigeria is dire. There has been tremendous increase in the spate of unfettered violence, abductions, and killings by terrorist groups, bandits and other criminal elements. The number of reported security incidents within the reporting period shows progressive increase in insecurity. In the fourth quarter of 2020, 256 security incidents were recorded in which 384 persons were killed, and 510 persons kidnapped. By the first quarter of 2021, the number of recorded security incidents have increased by 31.25% to 336 incidents, with the number of people killed increasing by 88.54% to at least 724 persons, while the number of those kidnapped rose by 57.25%, this translates to 802 persons.

The highways and schools of learning have become target places for the nefarious activities of these bandits and kidnappers, with the North-Western region being hardest hit. Between December 2020 and April 2021, at least 364 students have been kidnapped from their schools, along with countless highway travellers.

Primarily affecting the Middle Belt and North West states, clashes between farmers and herders over land have spurred the formation of ethnic militias and vigilante raids, that has resulted in extrajudicial killings and the decimation of towns and villages. These nomadic herdsmen ravage towns in their path and have had incursions into some states in the South East, South-South and South West of Nigeria. To prevent further loss of lives

and properties brought about by these clashes, there is an outright ban on open grazing in the Southern parts of the country.

In similar vein, the Federal Government of Nigeria is in the process of establishing a National Centre for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (NCCSALW) to be domiciled in the Office of the National Security Adviser. The NCCSALW is set to serve as the institutional mechanism for policy guidance, research and monitoring of all aspects of small arms and light weapons in Nigeria. This initiative is part of ongoing restructuring of Nigeria's security architecture to address emerging threats and strengthen regional mechanism for the control, prevention and regulation of small arms and light weapons. Establishment of the National Centre for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (NCCSALW) will curtail the impact of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons across national borders in Africa and the Sahel region which has resulted in terrorism, human trafficking, organized crime, insecurity and insurrections in West Africa and Nigeria in particular.

3.1. Nigeria's Regional Role in the Security of the Gulf of Guinea

Nigeria as a key part of the Maritime Organization of West and Central Africa (MOWCA) plays a leading role in the security of the Gulf of Guinea. In this regard, we are pivotal in the running of the ICC – the International Coordinating Center for the SHADE concept. The concept entails sharing of "awareness and deconflict" amongst MOWCA states, and in particular in this case, the Gulf of Guinea.

As a crucial regional player, Nigeria provides leadership and support for successful regional maritime cooperation. In practical terms, as a nation, we have recently invested heavily in platforms to enforce maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea under our Deep Blue Program. This program consists of the acquisition of surveillance aircraft (manned and unmanned), helicopters and patrol boats, including the provision of training and logistics to maritime security personnel.

4. HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION

Nigeria is currently grappling with human rights situations involving both state and nonstate actors. The human rights state is made particularly precarious by the dire security condition discussed above. Conspicuously, state interference with the rights of peaceful assembly and freedom of expression, inadequate investigation and accountability for violence against women, incidents of child molestation and rape and press freedom, has been on the rise.

The year 2020 saw widespread reports of impunity and extrajudicial killings by government agents and security forces, particularly officers of the Nigerian Police in the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) unit. This resulted in a nationwide protest that was echoed in the international sphere, and consequently led to the disbandment of the unit. The Government's efforts to disperse protesters using the military specifically in Lagos state, however, led to further violation of human rights and the death of countless civilians. Amnesty International reported it had received credible but disturbing evidence of excessive use of force occasioning deaths of protesters. As the events were reported by International media, Nigerian media houses were prevented, with threat of sanctions, from covering these events that impacted the lives of citizens.

As a show of sincerity and peace, the Federal Government constituted the Judicial Panel of inquiry in all States of the Federation to look into cases of police brutality. Additionally, the Police High Command in October 2020 launched a review of the Force Order 237 that regulates the police rules of engagement, introducing the use of taser and stun guns in place of conventional live bullets for low-risk operations.

On its part, the Nigerian National Assembly, further proposed two Bills, to wit:

- The Police Service Commission Bill 2020;
- The Police Institute (Establishment) Bill 2020; and

These Bills make provisions for funding, training, recruitment, welfare and accountability in police operations.

In the face of apparently soaring levels of crime and violence, the Federal Government of Nigeria, has notably, launched a community policing initiative wherein ₦13 billion has been set aside to fund the launch and recruitment of additional 10,000 police constables.

5. HEALTH MATTERS

Nigeria recorded its first confirmed case of the corona virus in February 2020, and since then, the country has been recording new cases at an increased rate. While Nigeria has been spared the worst of the pandemic, the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) has recorded about 165,000 confirmed cases of COVID 19 infection and just over 2,000 deaths.

As the spread intensified, Nigeria's already weakened public health infrastructures were buckling under the immense weights of the pandemic. To combat the negative impact of the pandemic, the Federal Government of Nigeria implemented the following measures:

- A COVID 19 National Pandemic Response Plan;
- The establishment of the Presidential Task Force on COVID 19 to contain the spread and mitigate the impact of the COVID19 pandemic in Nigeria;
- The setting up of 39 labs spread across 25 states, 131 treatment centres with a total bed capacity of 7,040, 256 ICU beds, and other key healthcare infrastructures. Through these facilities, 138,462 people were tested, with 25,694 testing positive, while 9,746 persons of these were successfully treated and discharged, with 590 deaths. This is a fatality rate of 2.29%;
- The training of 17,000 Health Care Workers across different areas such as infection prevention and control, laboratory operations, and case management;
- Social Intervention Programmes through the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development and its agency, NEMA, aimed at aiding individuals and households in need and cushioning the effect of the lockdown on Nigerian citizens by the distribution of palliatives;
- The provision of the CBN/NIRSAL COVID 19 Loan for Small and Medium Scale Enterprises;

- The passage into law of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID 19) Health Protection Regulation 2021.

Commendably, various stakeholders in the country, particularly the private sector and Non-Governmental Organisations, pooled resources to prevent the total collapse of the country's public health system. This has enabled the Federal Government of Nigeria to intensify its preparedness towards preventing the spread of other COVID 19 variants, while ensuring the speedy vaccination of her citizens.

The Government of Nigeria, through the Nigerian Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA) the agency in charge of the vaccine rollout, has received 3.92 million out of the expected 14 million doses of Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine. The country has also placed a bid for 70 million doses of the one-shot Johnson and Johnson vaccines. With this development, Nigeria is striving sustainably towards eradicating COVID 19 in her territory.

With the 2021 improved health budget of about ₦13.08 trillion, a 21% increment from the previous year, the Federal Government of Nigeria aspires to build resilient and sustainable health infrastructures for her citizens.

6. PAYMENT OF ECOWAS COMMUNITY LEVY

Nigeria has paid a substantial part of the community levy, and is also working towards being up-to-date, in compliance with her financial obligations.

7. CONCLUSION

The Federal Republic of Nigeria remains committed to developing and supporting the development of resilient and sustainable democratic structures within Nigeria and the West African sub-region. Nigeria will continue to collaborate with member-states to forge lasting solutions on security and other matters that would ensure peace and prosperity in the ECOWAS region.

On behalf of the Nigerian delegation to the ECOWAS Parliament, thank you for your attention.

Long live ECOWAS Parliament and

Long live ECOWAS!

Thank you

Merci

Obrigado