

# **ELECTORAL VIOLENCE, ARMS PROLIFERATIONS AND ELECTORAL SECURITY IN NIGERIA: LESSONS FROM THE TWENTY-FIFTEEN ELECTIONS FOR EMERGING DEMOCRACIES**

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## **Abstracts**

*This paper attempts to look at the rise of violence resulting from the accumulation and use of arms whenever elections are being conducted in Nigeria. It argues that elections in most cases are fraud with violence, defeating the purpose for democratic governance. The worst scenario of electoral violence is the surge in arms proliferations. Acquisition of arms has become synonymous with possessing voter's card. This trend has been a common phenomenon in Nigeria, to the extent that election periods are often wrought with fear, anxiety and desperation between the political class as they seek electoral mandate. Political parties, party-candidates and supporters acquire their own private security, militias or party thugs; and armed them to carryout acts of electoral violence. This paper looks at the 2015 elections in Nigeria and the trends towards electoral violence following the rise and proliferation of arms in the course of the preparation/arrangement for the election. It posits that contrary to the arms built up and the expectation that the 2015 election was going to be the most violent of all the elections, and the likelihood that it might set the country apart/ablaze; it rather turned out to be the most credible elections; widely accepted, not only in Nigeria but the entire world. The paper will be interrogating the interplay of various dynamics that melted the drive towards violence and the circumstantial development that reinforced political stability for peaceful election. It will conclude by identifying some lessons from the 2015 Elections for emerging democracies, the basis on which it should build developmental democracy in Africa.*

*KEY WORDS; electoral violence, arms proliferation, privatization of security and militias*

# **ELECTORAL VIOLENCE, ARMS PROLIFERATIONS AND ELECTORAL SECURITY IN NIGERIA: LESSONS FROM THE TWENTY-FIFTEEN ELECTIONS**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The increase in electoral violence at every turn of election in Nigeria has been alarming until 2015 when Nigeria had the most stunning elections. Hitherto, because of electoral apprehension and the tendency towards violence by all means a prior prediction was concluded by some experts in the US in that 2015 was likely to signal the dismantling of the Nigerian state into some banana republics.

Nigerians are also sensitive to national political stability and have always demanded safe strategy whenever elections are getting dysfunctional. Two paradigms have always been hawked as stability measures for arresting any direction towards the collapse of the Nigerian state. First, is the use of military coup to interject in any slightest political turmoil resulting, mostly from elections. Subsequently this has become a northern strategy whenever power is sliding away from its control. After the first coup in 1966 organised mostly by Igbo soldiers subsequent ones were organised by northern elite. Though coups are no longer fashionable as international norms especially from the ECOWAS and AU Protocols outlawing it, its outcome (military rule) in Nigeria has left the nation worst off than expected. However it remains a political yardstick to be contemplated by Northern Nigerian elite in an extreme political scenario. In fact as we shall see later in this paper, at the build up to 2011 and 2015 elections, it was one of the options to actualise northern political interests.

The second paradigm is the increasing demand for a government of national unity. This has always been experienced in Nigeria since independence, especially the political alliance between the Northern People's Congress (NPC) and the National Council of Nigerian Citizens and Cameroun (NCNC). In the second republic the ruling National Party of Nigeria (NPN) and the Nigerian People Party (NPP) went into alliance to form a broad base government. Thus, at anytime the formation of a government of national unity is always an attempt to accommodate the opposition in order to diffuse political tension. However, in 1993 Nigeria experienced an unusual formation of national interim government put in place by a fleeing military regime (of Ibrahim Babangida) that was avoiding to be consumed by a political turmoil arising from the annulment of the 1993 elections. The Interim government headed by Chief Earnest Shonekan was intended to save Nigeria from the brink of collapse. While General Sani Abacha (in a coup like scenario) upstaged the Shonekan Interim government he was not able to achieve his transmutation bids following his death in 1998. However, his successor General Abdulsalami Abubakar organised the 1999 elections that brought Olusegun Obasanjo to power, as he (obasanjo) was also faced with the challenge to put up a government of national unity. In fact some of the political parties agitated for such broad base government. The late Chief Bola Ige of the Alliance for Democracy (AD) called on the Obasanjo's government to form a broad base government to accommodate the opposition groups (Olawole, 1999: 15)

However this trend has continued giving the indication that the right political formula for resolving electoral violence is yet to be determined in Nigeria. The election of 2003 being the first to be conducted under the present dispensation by the civilian regime of Olusegun Obasanjo was heavily flawed to the extent that there were demands for a government of national unity. An International Observer Darren Kew called it Tokunbo elections (Kew:2003) General Mohammadu Buhari one of the Presidential candidates of All Nigerian People Party (ANPP), criticized the 2003 election as unacceptable and unprecedented 'monumental fraud' in the history of elections in Nigeria, calling for a provisional national government to be headed by Chief Justice of the Federation for the first three months to organize new elections to be conducted by 'new and truly independent electoral commission' (Okadigbo, 2003). This was also re-echoed by other notable politicians such as Tunji Braithwaite, leading a coalition of Nigerian United for Democracy (NUD), to rescue the nation from the "hands of the illegitimate and corruption administration"; and also by Chief Chukwumeke Ezeife, Deputy National Chairman of Democratic People's Alliance (DPA) among others (Okaeki, 2008). Indeed the idea of ING was also floated in run up to 2015 election by some stalwarts of People's Democratic Party (PDP) but was kicked against by All Progressive Congress (APC). Meanwhile as the 2015 elections geared up the president Goodluck Jonathan called for constitutional consideration where parties that perform well at the polls be 'made to have a share of appointments in the government to avoid conducts and utterances that will destabilize the political system (Wakili, 2015). Rejecting this position the Northern Elders and Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF) rather pledged their support for Mohammadu Buhari as the only credible candidate that to actualise northern interest (Bshir, 2015)

Meanwhile, as it turned out, the dramatic conduct of 2015 elections allayed the fear of post 2015 dilemma which either the paradigm of coup or government of national unity was envisaged to address the likelihood that the nation was about to collapse. Therefore, this paper makes an attempt to critically analyse the dynamics involved in conducting elections in Nigeria; and how this has often led to electoral violence. It begins with the position that electoral violence thrives on arms proliferations or vice versa within the context of the fallout from post colonial contradictions. It is on these contradictions that this paper examines the Nigerian election experience where electoral violence and the use of arms have played critical roles in undermining the construction of robust democratic institutions. In concrete terms the paper focuses its interrogations on the development that trailed the 2015 elections which in spite of all predictions, doubts and fear have become the most credible elections in Nigerian history. The lessons of the 2015 elections are highlighted for some of the emerging democracies that have been afflicted with perennial conflicts as result of electoral fraud in most of their political processes.

## **2. CONCEPTUAL CONTEXT**

### **Election and Democracy**

It is important that we identify and understand in this section some key concepts that should give directions to our discussion. First, there is the need to understand the synergy between election and democracy. Election is the cardinal principle of democracy though not a sufficient determinant of democracy, but remains the primary indicator for democratic governance. Election is about competition on how leaders are selected by voting (and/or by appointment/ nomination; howbeit, consensually), to govern the society. Competitive

electoral democracy which is by voting as articulated by Joseph Schumpeter (1942) is an “institutional arrangement for arriving at political, legislative and administrative decisions. It is a method by which the individual acquires the power to participate in decisions by means of a competitive struggle for the peoples vote” (Ighodalo, 2006) Thus election defines and determines what democracy is all about. Election empowers the ‘citizen- electorates’ to decide who governs. And whoever is elected to govern is expected to meet the expectation of the electorates who initialed the mandate to govern. Therefore, the success of acceptable election is based on the existence of autonomous electoral management body, capable of conducting free, fair and credible elections. This is the roots of good governance which can only be defined when core institutions of democratic imperatives such as ( Ade:Not Dated)

- i. A freely and fairly elected parliament that is broadly representative of the people of the country and whose election is overseen by an independent election commission
- ii. An executive that is answerable to and funded solely through parliament
- iii. An independent judiciary , (which means that judges must be financially secure the during the period of their appointment and in retirement)
- iv. A transparent and straightforward public account system(which clearly reflect where money is coming from and where it is going to) and a public accounts committee responsible for monitoring public expenditure
- v. An auditor General answerable to parliament i.e. the public accounts committee ensuring the financial accountability of the executive
- vi. An independent human rights commission that protect citizens from discrimination and human rights abuses and ensures that the government treats all citizens equally
- vii. The freedom of Information Commission that enables the public to gain access to information about executive decisions and allows individuals to access information heard about them by the police and public bodies
- viii. An ombudsman
- ix. A police force that responds to the law for its operations and government for the administration , and last but certainly far from being the least
- x. Armed forces that is answerable to government and parliament and not to political parties and which are responsible for the defend of the country

Therefore elections are imperative for democratic growth (Yoroms:2005); and as Sklar equally noted: “In democratic form of government rulers are the stewards of the common weal, accountable to citizens for the conduct of their stewardship. Liberal democracies secure such accountability by means of democratic election for a fixed term” (Sklar, 1998). This is important for weak democracies as it helps to address sharp division and indeed violence in competitive elections.

## **The Concept of Violence**

One of the celebrated authors in the study of violence Johan Galtung in his earlier study conceptualised violence in term of influence ( to mean harm), and explains the relations between the influencer, ‘influencee and a mode of influencing’ categorised in terms of a subject, an object and action. His accepted though within the limited assumption , that the end state of violence is its somatic incapacitation or deprivation of health of the individual by means of killing which is an extreme form of violence in the hands of actors who intend it (killing) to be the consequence of their action (Galtung, 1969). He sees violence as

“present when human beings are being influenced (harm) so that their actual somatic and mental realization are below their potential realization ‘. On the strength of this, he went further beyond the limited assumption to, theoretically, conceptualise and empirically clarify that violence is ‘defined as the cause of the difference between the potential and actual, between what could have been and what is. Violence is that which impedes the decrease of the distance. Thus, if a person died from tuberculosis in the eighteenth century it would be hard to conceive of this as violence since it might have been quite unavoidable, but if he dies from it today, despite all the medical resources in the world, then violence is present according to our definition’( Galtung 1969:168) . In other words violence occurs in a situation where the possibility of averting impediment to its escalation are apparent but those responsible to do so are not willing to take deliberate responsibility. This can be termed ‘shunning the process of conflict resolution mechanism’. Shunning process in conflict resolution is the deliberate refusal to resolve a conflict in spite of the available instruments at one’s disposal. This has to do with attitudinal disorientation and (institutional) breakdown in spite of a level playing field.

Galtung acknowledges the problematic between potential and actual violence by categorizing violence into psychological, physical and structural violence. It is therefore clear that violence can start or occur, covertly with a build up emotion and in process manifest gradually from hate approach in terms of negative /hate speeches and comments made with aggressive attitudes/behaviour, manifesting in form of hostility and confrontation through furious behavior that involves assault, intimidation, fighting and attacks among other means. Galtung gave six dimensions or distinctions of violence such as;

- i. Physical and psychological violence which are not exclusive of one another
- ii. Negative and positive violence which have to do with punishment and rewards
- iii. The object of violence
- iv. The subject of violence which can either be direct or indirect , defined in its structural manifestation
- v. Intended and unintended violence, which refers the guilt (rather than the consequence) that is the ethical or logical dimension
- vi. Manifest and latent violence ,the observable empirical violence and covert violence

These distinctions can be analysed using the categorization of physical, Psychological and structural violence. First, **physical** violence begins with either mild and /or hard assaults in form of physical manifestation of fighting. ( Albert IO;2003;13; Galtung 1991)

The **psychological** violence has to do with a situation where citizens are left under the condition of perpetual state of fear of what will happen in a given threatened situation . In this case the citizens are left unprotected as security agencies find it ‘difficult to assure the citizens of their protection within the framework of electoral security’ ( (Albert, IO,2003) ‘

**Structural** violence is the accumulation of long period of exclusionary or discriminatory politics, ethnic manipulations, religious and regional cleavages. Where exclusivist approach is entrenched in the society the aggrieved may find alternatives means of addressing their dilemma. One of these methods is the use of arms as a means of violence in the face of social injustice. In *table 1* below the categorizations are tabulated and could be related to the how electoral violence can take place..

Table1: showing in details the categorization of Violence related to Elections

DIMENSION OF ELECTORAL VIOLENCE	COMPONENTS
PHYSICAL VIOLENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical assault on individuals during campaign, elections and when election results are released</li> <li>• Assassination of political opponents or people perceived as a threat to one's political ambition</li> <li>• Burning down of public or opponents' property and cars among other</li> <li>• Shooting , shoot outs</li> <li>• Killing of individuals</li> <li>• Partisan harassment by security agents , arrests, forceful dispersal of rallies, or shooting , wounding or killing of people</li> <li>• Kidnapping and hostage taking</li> <li>• Bombing of infrastructure</li> <li>• Forceful disruption by thugs at political and campaign rallies</li> <li>• Destruction of ballot boxes and ballot papers from polling agents</li> <li>• Free for all fight</li> </ul>
PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Threats against and harassment by security agents of opponents of the ruling regime or party , which create political apathy</li> <li>• Shoot-on-sight orders that breed fear in voters</li> <li>• Terror inflicted by political assassinations, which makes people scared to participate in politics or elections</li> <li>• Publication or broadcast of abusive , insulting , or intimidating material or advertorial</li> <li>• Threats to life through phone calls, text messages , etc</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coercion of citizens by government to register or vote or be denied certain national facilities</li> <li>• Exclusionary acts and policies</li> <li>• Unequal opportunities for political parties and candidates</li> <li>• Deliberate changes in dates, venue or times of</li> </ul>

	<p>events to the advantages of others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partisan delimitation of electoral constituencies and location of polling stations/booths</li> <li>• Excessive fees for the collection of party nomination forms</li> <li>• Absence of free campaign</li> <li>• Reliance on money and brute force instead of moral integrity and competence</li> <li>• Restraints imposed on voters</li> <li>• Use of the incumbency factor to give undue advantage to some candidates</li> <li>• Announcement of false or fraudulent results</li> <li>• Lengthy delays in announcing election results</li> <li>• Absence of adequate voting materials and electoral result forms</li> <li>• Delay in voting</li> <li>• Absence of electoral officers from polling booth at an appropriate time</li> <li>• Partisan behaviour of police and other security agents</li> <li>• Discriminatory acts and policies</li> </ul>
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*Source; update from Nwolise OBC , Electoral violence and Nigeria's 2007 elections Journal of African Elections vol 6 No.2 October 2007 pp. 155-179*

### **Electoral Violence**

In light of the above, electoral violence has to do with violence that take place during elections in fragile democracy resulting from the failure to meet the rising expectation of the electorates. From *physio-psychological* context one can establish that all violence; and especially political violence (electoral violence inclusive) are traceable to 'relative deprivation as gaps are created between expectations and capabilities (i.e. the lack of capabilities to meet the rising expectations). This then creates frustration that swells up to anger. When the anger reaches a threshold of intolerability it burst into aggression and subsequently into violence. . This discourse has been well articulated by Ted Gurr with empirical validation by Anifowose in their respective works (Anifowose:1982:6;Gur,T **Why Men Rebel** n Princeton University Press 1970).Biblically, this has also been established long ago that violence and war results from desire(expectation and lust) which if not attained/obtained(capability) leads to violence(Bible:James:4:1-2).

Electoral violence is a component of political violence which is broader in perspective, encompassing or relating to violence that is political. It is according to Ujo ' perpetrated in the course of political activities including pre, during and post election periods , and may include any of the following thuggery , use of force to disrupt political meetings or voting at polling stations, or the use of dangerous weapons to intimidate voters and other electoral

process , or to cause bodily harm or injury to any person connected with electoral processes”(cited in Ladan and Kiru 2005: 33) Similarly Fischer defines it as ‘any random or organised act that seeks to intimidate physically harm, blackmail or abuse an electoral stakeholder in seeking to determine ,delay or otherwise influence the electoral process’(cited in USAID:2010:2) . Electoral violence as an aspect of political violence is specifically referred to ‘physical violence and coercive intimidation directly tied to impending electoral contest or to an announced electoral results (cited in USAID *Ibid.*) . Condensing this together Ochoche noted that ‘Any attempt at any stage of the electoral process to corrupt, influence or determine the outcome of an election beyond what it would have been objectively, does damage to the election and could be said to amount to electoral violence’ ( Ochoche:1997:15) . Electoral violence is therefore an isolated harm perpetrated by and/or through the mobilisation of private security outfits, ethnic militias, thugs, community vigilante groups and privatisation of security with serious implications for electoral democracy becomes a business, which the former Nigerian Head of State, General Murtala Mohammed, noted while inaugurating the Nigerian Constitutional Drafting Committee in 1975 that:

Our politicians could not distinguish between the art and the artifact of politics. They failed to develop wide political base and maintained armies organised for fighting elections .Wining election became a life and death struggle which justified all means –fair or foul; ...the vile abuse of political process raised question as to the need to accept the politicians’ method ‘as the base and basis of democratic governance’ (cited in Sam Oyavbaire: 2000:174)

Fundamentally the point raised by Murtala Mohammed is not only about business but also about political power and representation of ethnic group interests rather than national interest. Here election is a zero-sum game. Ethnic groups see politics as an opportunity to share national cake, and whoever should represent them should be supported at all cost. This is sustained by a culture of impunity as violence becomes the means for achieving political end. Therefore, private security groups appearing in form of ethnic militias or political thugs are mobilised and armed for the purpose of winning elections. Because resources and political powers are concentrated in the national government every ethnic, religious and communal groups finds it very critical to use whatever means to access and occupy the political power at the centre. In this case, electoral violence is undertaken through various steps :(Alemika 2011; Albert;2007) :

- a. Preventing supporters of opponents to register or vote in elections
- b. Preventing opposition parties or individuals to campaign in areas where a political party or individual has its electoral strength
- c. Intimidating and /or preventing supporters of a political opponent from voting
- d. Scaring supporters of opponents from the polling centres to enable the party or candidate that is at advantage to stuff , snatch or switch ballot boxes
- e. Politicians and their political parties using their thugs at the collation centres to intimidate officials to falsify results in their favour; scaring away oppositions so that ballot boxes containing vote from oppositions’ stronghold may be destroyed and switching or exchanging of boxes containing genuine votes with ballot boxes containing papers, illegal thumb –printed by thugs and party supporters
- f. Declaring results , during which those who lost and feel cheated may ignite violent protest resulting in affray , arson and murder
- g. Competing for nomination during party primaries among politicians which might lead to violent confrontations between supporters of rival politicians and parties or assassination of opponents, and



- h. Attempt by the ruling party to muzzle opposition and critics which it finds or consider intolerant.

### **Arms proliferations**

Electoral violence can only thrive and be sustained by the use of arms. The proliferations of small arms and light weapons (SALW) therefore, have poised serious challenge economically, socially and politically to weak and fragile countries. Therefore, easy access and misused of them endangers the safety, security and development of a country. The definition and classification of SALW has not been easy but accordingly it includes a range of weapons from clubs, knives and machetes to those weapons just below those covered by the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms such as mortars that are below the calibre of 100. According to the UN Panel on Small Arms and Light Weapons, they :

are manufactured to military specifications for use as lethal instruments of war and are used by all armed forces, including internal security forces, for, inter alia, self-protection or self-defence, close or short-range combat, direct or indirect fire, and against tanks or aircraft at relatively short distances. Broadly speaking, small arms are those weapons designed for personal use, and light weapons are those designed for use by several persons serving as a crew.'(UN Panel Report )

The existing of arms and their proliferation does not in itself lead to violence but the accumulation and uses of them for ulterior motives do generate violence, among which are ethno-religious violence and political/ electoral violence. This has equally impacted on electoral violence and indeed with the consequence of aggravating either coincidental or subsidiary which Ibeanu calls reactive violence. Coincidental violence occur significantly during and around the period of election, though might be isolated and unintended, but because they are concurrent to a smoldering principal conflict or electoral violence, they eventually can become symbiotic, and in the end exacerbate the anarchical scenarios where interests involve score cheap (political) goals. In this case( in the symbiotic process) coincidental conflict could become a subsidiary/reactive violent conflict of a type, deliberately and or well intendedly engineered to populate violent scenarios in order to achieve a given political ambition. Both coincidental and reactive violent conflict could manifest in various ways and may take any form to include insurgency, terrorism, ethno-religious conflicts, communal crises, kidnapping, cultism and armed robbery and are fed into electoral violence. From the foregoing, it is clear that arms proliferation has a direct link to violent electoral conflict the consequence of which ultimately the brothers on political instability.

Evidence from conflicts over the last decades has shown that armed conflict reverses development, and that underdevelopment spurs conflict. This creates a mutually reinforcing cycle of violence and poverty that is broadly referred to as conflict trap (Ashenazi, *eta'l 2008: 32*). Part of this reversal process of development is indeed electoral violence. And African conflicts are principally caused by electoral disputes and are exacerbated by coincidental or reactive violence. There are claims that 75% of most of the conflict occurring in Africa use these weapons which are mostly imported to the continent. Accordingly Africa has 30 million illicit weapons while in West Africa the figure is put at 8 million in circulation. This figure is contested

because Nigeria alone is said to be harboring about 10 million illicit arms in circulations (Yoroms: 2010;288)

### **Electoral violence, private and privatisation of security**

The increasing trajectory of abuse of rule of law provides enabling ground for private security , militias and thugs to thrive because politics has become a war( and no more a game) as winners take all . This is being justified by the ravaging electoral violence in weak democracies. In the process it creates business for private security companies, militias and mercenary to avail themselves in the conduct of violence. In terms of thriving for political power, no ethnic group would want to remain at the margin of political power till the next round of elections. As a result, most ethnic groups either engage in private security or build their ethnic militias as a means to defend their ethnic interest (Yoroms,2005; Chris Kwaja 2014)

. Private security companies are more or less commercial sector driven involving (security) business activities and/or operatives including the sales of security equipments and material to achieve a particular purpose which may be political, economic and social (Gumedza(ed) :2008) Meanwhile militias and /or political thugs are armed groups of any given political party or ethnic groups that are involved in conflict for the purpose of achieving communal or political interests . They are mostly internally groomed armed members of aggrieved (ethnic or political ) groups but could also be hired or paid like mercenaries to protect, defend and secure the interest of the group or persons that contracted them. The militias, thugs, and mercenaries can only carry out their assignments with availability of arms which private security companies are readily available to provide.( Anne-Maerie and Buckland:2015)

As we shall see later the failure of the state to exercise its legitimate monopoly of the use of force in order to ensure political stability can equally lead to the privatization of security where both the aggrieved, the marginalized and rebels in weak and fragile society are made to take ownership of their security . This can happen through (Alemika: 2011;128) ;

- i. the appropriation of public security and law enforcement agencies by those who control the political and economic system of a country
- ii. the involvement of large and increasing number of private security companies in the provision of security services as profit making enterprise; and
- iii. ability of groups in weak and fragile societies to organize their own security through the mobilisation of community human and non human resources in form vigilante

### **Electoral security System**

Electoral security system is the whole gamut of security architecture involving election management institutions and processes, electoral legal instruments, security forces and civil society electoral monitoring bodies which are brought together to ensure credibility in the electoral security governance. In general context Electoral Security is defined as “...the process of protecting electoral stakeholders such as voters , candidates , poll workers, media , and observers, electoral information and campaign material; electoral facilities such as polling stations and counting centers; and electoral events such as campaign rallies against death, damage , or disruption of the electoral processes( USAID *ibid*) In this paper we

categorise it into three: Election security, Electoral conflict and violence , and Electoral security justice.

*Election security* (as distinct from the broader concept of Electoral Security) is specific issue of securing elections through physical security (protection and safety of election facilities and materials facilities); personnel security (Election Management board and other stakeholders); information security (computers and communication equipments) and election events involving day of elections, campaign and meetings. It also covers adhoc logistic services offer during election period

*Election conflict and violence* involves the deployment of security forces to stem the rising tide of conflicts and violence through physical attacks, killings and damages to properties during pre-election, election period and after election. This also involves surveillance and reconnaissance operation.

*Election security justice* deals with the impartiality of the security agencies in the conduct of their assignments. . Being the first contact in the event of security challenges during elections they are expected to be impartial and create confidence –building environment for all stakeholders including individual electorate, political parties and electoral management board or personnel that found themselves in aggrieved situation in the course of the conduct of elections to find interim recourse or solace

. In light of above electoral security in a comprehensive term is the process whereby professional security forces are themselves modicum of all that take place around election environment. They are watchers, observers, monitors, protectors of elections and more than that, by the essence of their presence, are expected to give confidence to the election process and provide the assurances that with their presence the credibility of the elections will not be in doubt. Electoral security therefore addresses the “risk in conducting elections but at the sometime creating confidence and security building measures for the electorate to have sufficient trust in the electoral process (Yoroms 2010). Electoral security is the overarching structure of the electoral architecture.

From the above therefore, there are three levels that security agencies are engaged in election: adhoc deployment or engagement. This schedule is the involvement of security agencies for adhoc duties such transportation of logistics activities. The second schedule is the reconnaissance / surveillance involving unarmed security agencies dovetailing their presence with the polling units and election environment to maintain law and order, and safety of the elections including the voters, election officials and materials. The third deployment which has been a controversial among the politicians especially the opposition is the garrison- style deployment involving armed military and security agencies who displayed some show force by quarantining the electoral environment in a manner like a battle readiness ready to shoot at sight rather ensuring public safety and security.

### **Emerging Democracies**

The concept of emerging democracies is related to Samuel Huntington’s discourse on wave of democratization. He categorised democratisation into the first wave which began with ‘America in the early nineteenth century culminated at the end of the world War 1 with thirty countries having democratic regimes’ at the time. The second wave started with the Allied victory in the World War 11 and the decolonization period in the 1960s which brought about thirty six countries to the stable of democratic governance. The third wave occurred at the time ‘political leaders and publics in the 1970s and 1980s ended authoritarian systems and created democratic ones’ (Huntington,1991/92: 580) . Each epoch of the waves also has its reversal mode spinning between authoritarianism and democracy which Linze and Stepan (1978) termed ‘breakdown of democratic regimes. Thus emerging democracies or the third

wave of democratization relates to countries emerging from military rule and or authoritarianism which are muddling through the process of building institutional structure of democracy to provide inclusive political participation for groups that have hitherto been estranged from the political process. This is important because ‘the incidence of continuous political involvement of these groups is on the rise, and that it often takes on the characteristics of direct confrontation with incumbent regimes ( Chazan , 1992) . Inclusive political participation is critical to the deconstruction of overdeveloped instrument of violence in societies with deeply segmented cleavages. However, clearly noted by Momoh it is not the wave of democratisation that is critical and important in avoiding violent conflict in Africa but that ‘democracy and its definition must proceed from what the people need. How the people perceive things and above all whether with democracy empowers the people or not. What we have witnessed with the spate of democratization in Africa is the further disempowerment of the people , what Ake aptly calls the ‘democratization of disempowerment’ ( Momoh:2006:21)

### **3. ELECTIONS AND THE OVERDEVELOPED INSTRUMENT OF VIOLENCE**

In order to give meaning to the above concepts it is imperative that we tie them with a theoretical analysis. We begin with the emphasis that election is an institutional arrangement and a process for regulating the management of state affairs .It is the principal tenant of democracy that resolves and reconciles differences and contradictions in the society. It determines who governs. Earlier on we have listed the institutional instruments of elections in liberal democracy. However, in most of the emerging democracies it is often difficult to organize free and fair elections without violence. Why is the emphasis on violence? Unlike in developed democracies where there is a distinction between the state and the government, in developing liberal democracies the thin line (if at all it exists) is smeared by the contradictions within the society. The concept of state is variably contested but generally defined in liberal democracy by the assumption that it has dominant power standing above both the ruler and ruled. Secondly, it is an independent geographical entity with jurisdiction .Thirdly it has ‘maximum control over its resource and legitimate monopoly of the use of violence. And fourthly it fundamentally promotes the common goods of the society (Hussain Abdu , 2010 :10)

However, every epoch defines the nature, structure and organisational management of its own state and society. In this case there are two approaches to understanding the concept of the state. The first which is agreed by both the liberal and radical scholarship is the primary view of the state as independent and standing above all in the society. The second view which we shall revisit later views the state as the agent of the dominant class in the society. Meanwhile the first view as generally conceptualised by both the liberal and Marxist scholars such as Laski , Hegel Lenin and Marx was summed up by Engel id that:

The state ... is a product of society at a certain stage of development .It is the admission that society has been entangled in an insoluble contradictions with itself, that it is cleft into irreconcilable antagonisms which it is powerless to dispel. But in order that these antagonisms, classes with conflicting economic interests might not consume themselves and the society’ then the state emerged (cited in Abdu 2010; 12)

The assumption here is that the state is not only an autonomous organisation but also serves as a reconciling institution or balancing scale between and among classes that are antagonistic and are entangled in contradiction basically in plural societies. As Eme Ewa noted 'the state is the hub of all activities in plural system and is quite intricately structured' to function through branches and agencies of government such as bureaucracy, military (security forces), and the various federating units, interacting with one another and with groups in both public and private sectors (Ewa:1995:6)

Indeed the argument of the state as a reconciling institution of the society arises from the Westphalia treaty which ended the 30 year wars against the absolutist regimes in Europe. Nnoli quite well asserted that the 'vicissitudes of the thirty year war compelled the state's population to unite with, and around the central authority where the consent of the citizens defines the sovereignty of the state' (Nnoli:2003:12). Unfortunately what Europe gained at the aftermath of the Westphalia treaty became the woes of the third world countries. Peter Ekeh treated further on this when he noted that the state in Africa was a migrated social structure disembodied of its original relevant content before it was parceled to Africa from Europe.(Ekeh:1983) In this case the nature of the state system which was imposed on Africa as Cohen painted the picture as follows;

Colonialism both accelerated and modified the course of capitalist penetration, providing the organisational and technological basis for the rapid spread of capitalism and sharply increased the level of production, meanwhile tying this development more closely to dependent relations to European capitalism (sic) (Cohen:1991:90)

The post colonial state further deepened the development of capitalist relations by decomposing the communal production. This eventually led to the rise of free market and the Proletarianisation of the peasantry into cheap labour thereby stimulating increase in foreign investment which in turn facilitates the growth of indigenous elites (Cohen :1991; 91). In concrete term Gavin Williams emphasises that the force of production was developed but only in ways which meet the requirement of capitalism' (Williams:1982:23) This provoked a frightening warning by President Nyerere while admitting real danger which the deepening implantation of capitalist values and attitude in colonial Africa poised to the continent (Cohen ibid. 90-92). This danger emanates from the failure of the Westphalia security doctrine to 'take into account the possibilities of the demand for security' in the event where the aggrieved elements within it (the state) are uncomfortable. This worry is conducive to the fact that the Westphalia security doctrine predicated the legitimacy of security on the state, 'politically and morally, building on aura or mystique 'that reifies it and makes it look like a system divorced from the interests of individuals and groups that composed it' (Nnoli:2005 10).

In summary, it is clear that the intended purpose of the state acquiring maximal or autonomous security structure is assumed on Hegel's 'deification of the state', which is that the state is itself and/ or should be considerably more than the sum of its parts, and that it therefore has interest of its own'. In view of this, the primary view of the state from both the liberal and Marxian scholarship, is characterised by the fact that it is : (Buzan:1991:41)

- i. Primordial and necessary as it exist as an independent force
- ii. Does not ask primarily for opinion but demands obedience
- iii. A collective entity encompassing the nation, and stands above individuals and regime interest
- iv. It is not created by individuals or regimes but through the social contract mandated by the population (in form of the constitution)

- v. Serves or represents all sources of values in the society and as condition for realising these values (public goods) it supersedes the individuals and regime-values from which it notionally derives its mandate
- vi. The State is independent from and superior to all social classes being the dominant force in society than the instrument of dominant class .

In light of above, it is unfortunate that the occupants of the state , (government) which is given mandate to govern by law based on the ideological philosophy of the state deviates and subsequently deflates to regime security interest which has provoked the second view of the state ( Jervis: 1985; Yoroms:2001).

The second approach which is the secondary view of the state is based on the radical school of thought developed by Marxist scholarship. This position is led by Karl Marx and his cohorts as they parted way with the first position when they later discovered that the state (Authority) is an appendage of the regime (government) in power. Marx and Engel arrived at the conclusion that “the executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the affairs of the bourgeoisie. In a treatise Marx analysed the Bonapartist state ( of Napoleon Bonaparte ) and finally reached the conclusion that however independent ( the modern state) might be , politically from any given class , it ‘remains , and can’t in a class society but remain , the protector of an economically and socially dominant class” ( cited in Alavi :40 ) . Though one may not totally agree with Marx and his cohort on this, it is, however, obvious that in most of the emerging democracies encircled by conflicts the state has not performed creditably well.

Contrarily in developed societies the state (authority) and government (facilitating force/power) coexist to the extent that the later knows its limit of enforcing the rule of law authorised by the state (even if it has its hidden and vested interest, it hardly manifest). It is in this line of argument that Hamza Alavi noted that “In Western societies we witnessed the creation of the nation state by indigenous bourgeoisie, in the wake of their ascendant power, to provide a framework of law and various institutions which are essential for the development of capitalist relations of production .In colonial societies the process is significantly different ( Alavi;1979:400 The experience with the empirical function of the state in post colonial societies as clearly noted by Harry Goulborne is that:

... the high degree of unity that was achieved around the issue of independence during the nationalist struggle could not be easily maintained in the immediate post independence period. Generally speaking, organised labour which had joined forces with the nationalist party in the independence struggle was blamed for threatening an apparent unity by making legitimate demands for workers. This was generally interpreted a threat by those who held state power and who wished to use this power to provide the dominant classes with secure economic bases(Goulbourne :1979:119)

On this platform Alavi argues further that the instrument of violence in third world , bureaucracy-military structure, is overdeveloped because they have acquired relative autonomy in relations with the state as the later (state) lacks the ability to exercise its legitimate authority which in most cases has been compromised in favour of certain dominant characters in the society. According to Claude Ake ‘the state is in effect privatized. It maintains an enormous force but no longer a reassuring presence guaranteeing the rule of law but a formidable threats to all except the few who control it, actually encouraging

lawlessness and with little capacity to mediate conflict in society' (cited in Etannibe EO Alemeka:2014) This, as clarified Adele Jinadu is based on;

The protracted intensity of some of the ethno-political conflicts in Africa is, on one interpretation, due to opposition by marginalized ethnic groups against what Fanon... once aptly described as an "ethnic dictatorship...". They reflect the recourse of marginal and dominant ethnic groups to armed political struggle to underscore their demands for inclusion and meaningful participation in governmental processes. The violent response of the state to their demand for inclusion led them to resort to violence or armed resistance to counter the state sponsored violence against them ( Jinadu:2004)

Therefore, causes of electoral violence are traceable to political exclusion and economic deprivation in a situation where there is no "level playing field among political parties ... laws are rarely respected or fully implemented. The ruling party often gains undue advantage by deploying its power of incumbency to corrupt the electoral process"(Economic Commission For Africa:2009:39) . The dimension of increase in electoral violence tends to provoke other means of violence such as coincidental or reactive which are either linked or isolated from electoral dispute. In any case, as we earlier noted, whether they are linked or isolated the cycle of violence helps to catapult and populate the dimension of electoral violence and in the process weaken the strength of the state not only to exercise its legitimacy but also that it should not abuse its functions and responsibility to the citizens. While populating violent conflicts coincidentally or reactively the process helps to confuse the political atmosphere as it serve the purpose of those who intended it. Consequently, coincidental and /or reactive violence tend to become part of the oppositional political processes to challenge the state and the fragile regime for the failure to meet the expectation of the society. As Ibeanu argues 'the dynamics of petty bourgeoisie state and society have translated into the rising physical and social insecurity in Nigeria particularly as various factions of this class have sought to the state and use the state for private interests' ( Okechukwu:2011)

In the foregoing, therefore, the security structure it incapacitated and weakened in its responsibility to provide public safety and security, and eventually operating on discriminatory yardsticks, making it possible for the opposition group to provide alternate or *counterfactual* security measures. This can lead to 'crisis of security,' generating what Ibeanu calls 'defining characteristics' of security such as the manipulation of security by the political elite, communalization of security as communities create their security outfit, and the privatization of security involving the appropriation of public security for the interests, safety and protection of the few in the society ; (Ibeanu *ibid*) . The implication of this is that security becomes a staggered octopus, no longer responding and responsible to national security interest but a multiplicity of variegated interests by means of:

- i. Rendering ineffective the capability of the state to enforce its legitimacy in the society
- ii. Diffusing the obligation of the citizens to the authority of the state
- iii. Enabling oppositions to build on the crisis of violence to attain their political goals
- iv. Populating violent conflicts through the emergence and spread of coincidental/reactive process to reinforce and deepen the structure of segmental cleavages and diversity in the society, and
- v. Further weaken rather than strengthen democratic institutions to function in line with constitutional imperatives.

Therefore, this makes stakeholders not to be sensitive to the ripple effect of their actions and inactions which in turn either populate violence or peace. In other words leaders can play key role in escalating or deescalating conflict.

Thus, violence tends to be embedded in the psyche of the elites who hardly concede defeat and remain unwilling to handover the baton of leadership/power to opposition political party when the electoral votes have decided otherwise. In summary therefore, we posit that in any given political system where the state is no longer strong there exist *critically significant and critically insignificant variables* which play critical role in triggering violent conflict overtly or covertly. *Critically significant variable* here refers to elites whose views are not just critical but significantly provocatively embellished with seriously monumental consequences on national political stability. However, *critically insignificant variable* could be defined by those whose views though are critical in the society but not significant enough and are immaterial to the consequences of national political stability. Here the channel of violence flows from the vertical line to the horizontal level of the society where it ignites violent conflicts. The ripple effect of this is the mobilisation of ethnic militias, thugs, armed groups and consequently the private and privatisation of security. In process they seemingly become turgid, acquiring relative autonomous strength enough to confront the state conveniently, even if they are not on equal strength. Thus, in this instance violence becomes an ideology fashioned to respond to all types' of physical, psychological and structural.

#### **4. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF ELECTORAL VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA**

Since independence from British colonial rule the history of elections in Nigeria has been built on violence. The British colonial administration left behind several contradictory policies that affected not only the nature of governance but some strange political relationship between and among the ethnic groups. As such the ethnic groups relate with each other on grounds of suspicion and conspiracy. Therefore, virtually all elections that were conducted in Nigeria were definitively violent often making the state ungovernable. The only periods when there was minimum or no violence at all were elections conducted by the military in 1979 and 1999. This was obvious as the military would not tolerate act of violence neither could the politicians allow it, in order to avoid a situation where the military might renege in returning power to civilians. The military may cling to power on grounds that the politicians were yet to demonstrate political maturity to rule. Thus electoral violence is historical to the reading of Nigerian politics. The collapse of the Nigerian first republic in 1966 was precipitated by electoral violence of 1964 and 1965 in western Nigeria but reinforced by coincidental and reactive crisis taking place in the North, in particular the Tiv crisis of 1963 and 1964; as well as the controversial 1963 census. The official figure of the death in the 1965 election was of 153 people, out of which police killed 64 in direct confrontation. However the unofficial figure speculated a up to a total of 2,000 death ( Anifowose : 1982) .

The second republican period which started from 1979 to 1983 when another coup took place was another face of serious political violence especially with the 1983 election which gave Shagari what the ruling party, National Party of Nigeria(NPN) said a 'landslide' victory but was dubbed by General TY Danjuma as 'gun slide victory shows the level of how violence was used to win the election. In Ondo state the Federal Electoral Commission (FEDECO) declared Chief Akin Omoboriowo of NPN as the elected Governor. However, a counter announcement was made over the state radio by the Unity Party of Nigeria(UPN)



pronouncing Adekunle Ajasin as the true winner . The later allegedly went round Akure, the state capital in an open van ‘calling on his supporters to come out and defend their votes’.( Sokoto:2011:48) . In Oyo state Chief Bola Ige and Sam Mbakwe of Imo state both press conferences and radio broadcast threatened that ‘if NPN went ahead to rig that election as planned the wives of those who helped them will become widows and their children orphan. Indeed both Oyo and Ondo states experienced monumental violence that eventually led to the collapse of the second republic . The weight of rigging in the 1983 election was so devastating that they were not only calls for its cancelation but there moves towards confederation ( Osaghae; 2005)

Meanwhile there began a second phase of military interregnum in 1983 which lasted till May 1999. During this period Nigeria experienced some military coups and counter coups. However, efforts were made to organize elections to return the country back to civil rule. The most feasible one was the 1993 elections which were fundamental to the quest of Nigerians for liberal democracy. The military leadership under General Ibrahim Babangida however annulled the elections; thought to be the most freest and credible election in Nigerian political history. The presumed winner of the election Chief Moshood Abiola, and his running mate Ambassador Babagana Kingibe were both Muslims. Nigeria voted for him because he was accepted across the country irrespective of his religious background. The election was conducted peacefully but the annulment which Nigerians are yet to be told precipitated the post election violence. ( Yoroms 1994) .

For the second time in 1993 Nigerians began to move back to their home state of origin for fear of impending war. The first experience was in 1967 during the civil war. And for the third time in 1993 the western part of Nigeria was held up as the gravity of violence. The first and second were the 1964 and 1965 election that led to the western regional crisis. Giving the impending doom Babangida decided to hand over power to an interim government headed by Chief Ernest Shonekan, Abiola’s kinsman from Abeokuta, Ogun state. This arrangement however did not avert the doom as the Interim government was declared illegal, The outcome of which General Sani Abacha surreptitiously upturned the Interim regime and took over power in military styled coup. In the process Nigeria experienced for the first time serial bombings, killings and threats to life and property. As result a Nigerian Airways plane was hijacked and forced to land in Niger Republic. Never the less General Sani Abacha began a series of transition programmes that would have led to his transmutation to a civilian president but for his death in 1998.

At the time General Abdulsalami took over power after the death of General Sani Abacha it was not possible for the military to hang on to political power in spite of options given to him including extension of tenure to cushion the turbulent environment before election. Therefore Abubakar began a quick-fixed transition programme which led to the election of Chief (General) Olusegun Obasanjo that opened up Nigeria’s Third Republic on the 29<sup>th</sup> May 1999.<sup>1</sup> Like the 1979, the 1999 elections were conducted presumably in a peacefully atmosphere as it was done under military vigilance. However subsequent elections conducted by Obasanjo in 2003 and 2007 were marred by serious irregularities and violence. It could be recalled that immediately, the military left the political stage Nigeria began to experience several ethnic and religious conflicts earlier suppressed and bottled up by the military.

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<sup>1</sup> The author is contesting the cliché that the current dispensation which began in 1999 is Nigeria’s Fourth Republic. The point is, as I argued we never had a third Republic before. See his paper ‘Third or Fourth Republic? The Concept of Republic in a Democracy and the Failure of Nigerian Political Scientists to give meaning to the construction of Democratic Imperatives *Mimeo* 2005

Already according to the records of Human Rights Watch between 1999m and 2011 more than 15, 7000 people died in communal conflicts political and sectarian violence since the return to civil rules in 1999. Table 2 below shows the extent to which conflicts have occurred in Nigeria since independence. Ethno-religious conflicts at this time took its turn around the country. Immediately after the inauguration of democratic rule in 1999 Nigeria was erupted into violent conflicts as ethnic groups saw the democratic opening as a means to express their demand for self autonomy which has been bottled up the long period of military rule .’Thus through Various social cultural ethnic groups ethnic militias were armed to defend ethnic course. For instance the Odua People’s Congress (OPC) serves as an armed wing of Yoruba social cultural group , *Afenifere*, intended to be the defender of Yoruba interest . The *Egbesu* is an Ijaw Militant group set to champion the course of Jaw nation .It may appear not be an armed group of Ijaw National Congress but the common course which both them crave for , is to champion the interests of the Ijaw nation. . In the north *Yandaba* exist as an armed group made up of he Hausa-Fulani nation , though an unorganized group , they can easily be mobilised to defend the northern course , which is primarily defined by the Hausa-Fulani establishments. The formation of Arewa People’s Congress (APC) tends to provide a cover for such unorganized militia groups in the north to find basis for their operation. Though initially it started as an armed group to challenge the rise of OPC in the Southwest ‘which had become notorious for launching premeditated onslaughts on other ethnic groups living in Lagos’ ; APC has now largely become more political in setting agenda which influence violent conflict in the north, overtly or covertly. This was coming at the wake of the massacred of some Hausas in Shagamu, near Lagos by OPC in the wake of some ethno-religious killings in the north especially Kano where some Yorubas were killed.

**Table 2 indicating conflicts and impact since in independence**

<b>PERIOD</b>	<b>NATURE OF VIOLENCE</b>	<b>WEAPONS</b>	<b>PARTIES IN CONFLICT</b>	<b>IMPACT</b>	<b>REMARKS</b>
1959-1966 FIRST REPUBLIC	1959 Election, Tiv crisis, Census crisis, and Western Nigeria Regional Elections crisis	Axe, bows and arrows, knives, cutlass, cudgels	Ethnic Groups and Professional violent? party Thugs	Number death and property destroyed including 154 deaths (official) and 2,000(unofficial)	Military coup and the end of the First republic
1967-1979 FIRST MILITARY RULE	Civil war , rise of armed robbery	Use of mortal , assorted rifles, and sophisticated weapons including armoured tanks, artillery and	The Nigerian government and Biafra rebels, armed robbers	At least 100,000,000 people dies in the civil war	No compensation for abandoned property of the Igbos scattered across the country
1979-1983	Political , electoral	Use of arms	Political	Several deaths	Collapse

SECOND REPUBLIC	violence, religious crisis especially Maitatsine in North East and North West	, petrol, dane guns , knives , cutlasses and others, petrol	party thugs/militas, gang of Maitatsine	and destruction of property ;	of the second republic and military intervention
1983-1999 SECOND MILITARY RULE	1987 Local government elections, 1992 Party Primaries and the 1993 Elections	Emergence of rein of terror, hijacking, sporadic bombing , assassinations etc	Emergence of strong ethnic and regional militias NADECO	Finally a return to civil rule in 1999	Sporadic killings
1999-2007 FIRST PHASE OF THE THIRD REPUBLIC	Electoral/political violence,	IED, Bazooka, AK 47, Grenad	Party thugs, militias (ethnic).	About 15,700 deaths in various conflicts	
2008-2011 SECOND PHASE OF THIRD REPUBLIC	Elections, communal conflicts, insurgency , kidnapping and armed robbery	Light rifles, MG, Magazines, rocket launchers, grenade	Political parties, ethnic militias	800 deaths from the post 2011 elections	IDPs
2012-2015 THIRD PHASE OF THIRD REPUBLIC	Terrorism/insurgency, political parties and security forces; election violence fuel subsidy crisis	Use of various arms by Boko Haram and ethnic militias	Boko Haram insurgency , Party thugs	Over 15, 000 death resulting from Boko Haram insurgency	IDPs,

## 5. ARMS PROLIFERTION AND POLITICAL/ELECTORAL VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA

The spread and abuses of small arms and light weapons in Nigeria after the civil war have been on the increase at alarming rate. According Ebo this has entrenched a culture of violence since 1990s when the Nigerian state unleashed violence and terror as SALW rein in an increasingly restless population. (Adedeji:2005;10) . In a reaction to state sponsored terror; aggravated by the spread of SALW the aggrieved in the society equally found rationality in

arming themselves for both defensive and offensive purposes. Therefore, violence is elevated to the level of political ideology where individuals and groups found political relevance in the society. Since the return to civil rule in 1999 political violence, particularly during election periods, has become endemic. As at 2002 over 100,000 persons were reportedly killed in 'coincidental violence' which variably could also be seen as reactive violence, defined in terms of ethno-religious and religious crises with linkage to political and electoral differences

Subsequently Nigeria has continued to experience several underlining political assassinations and violence with implicative use of SALWs. The killing of a serving minister of Justice and Attorney General of the Federation Chief Bola Ige in December 2002 is very instructive in understanding the sophistication of the use of SALWs for political gains by the political elite to guarantee their political ambition in any (upcoming ) elections. Nigerian political terrain is inundated with avalanche of arms following the ardent quest by elites to capture political power. Thus armed gangs, party thugs, ethnic militias, private security guards and companies, vigilante groups and community subalterns became security managers, relatively developed and enhanced in competition with state security apparatus. They became deployed and engaged for 'both offensive and defensive purposes, either to intimidate their opponents and /or to protect themselves against surprise attacks by other opponents. Akinola was worried about this scenario and painted a picture of Nigerian political terrain that took off from 1999 as follow: "Today, what is happening can be described as mafia-like elimination of political rivals or significant actors. It amounts to provocation to a state of crisis. What used to be known as political thuggery, in which thugs used to harass and intimidate political opponents , has now graduated to a new phenomenon" (Akinola: 2003: 14) . He rightly noted that the political violence though not new in Nigeria but the frequency of occurrence is now 'with monotonous regularity'. In fact the killing of Chief Bola Ige was followed immediately with the killing of Harry Marshall in March 15 2003. Marshall was the national vice chairman of the defunct All Nigerian Peoples Party (ANPP) under which Mohammadu Buhari contested election in the 2003 presidential election. A champion for the course South South when he formed the Committee for the Realisation of a South South Presidential Candidate (CRESSOP) but later joined ANPP on realizing that Mohammadu Buhari 'would help the Southern minorities to actualise their political interest more than the presidency of Olusegun Obasanjo and the then Governor of River state , Frank Odili . He believed that Obasanjo who was both as a military leader, and later elected president(whose first tenure in office) never favour them' how much would be his second tenure in office by 2003.( Barret 2003; 14) Two other prominent deaths of key political figures in Lagos and Ekiti states were also reported. They included Chief Funsho Williams, a PDP chieftain in Lagos and Dr Ayo Daramola in Ekiti. These serial killings were tended to scare credible candidates from contesting, and unfortunately the police were not in the position to apprehend the murderers ( *The Punch*, August 25 2006 :11) .

Indeed at every turn of election violence is manifested with the use of arms and threats of violence. As a sitting president while seeking to complete his second tenure in office Olusegun Obasanjo could not justified the unimaginably sophisticated political assassinations as political violence spread across various states of the federation. For instance in Cross Rivers state 54 guns were recovered between January and June 2002. Out of these 16 were found with politicians. In the course of this discovery a total of 48 persons were murdered. While 8 persons were killed in unsuspected circumstances and 40 others were killed during the periods of election. ( Ebo;2005 *ibid.* 27) Chigbo Maureen 2002;27) . Similarly exchange of gun shots among politicians contesting local election in Bayelsa state were recorded with 11 people killed. In Ondo the State Police Command confirmed of a politician

stockpiling arms for political purpose and in a search he was found with 13 single barrel guns, 6 empty shells and 26 cartridges. As Ekpu noted, with 'gunpowder politics' 'Nigeria's relatively fragile democracy is being substantially shadowed by the easy access of politicians to small arms, and their readiness to deploy these to their advantage' (Cited in Ebo ;2005; 15 ).

Obasanjo did everything possible under the sun to remain in office by 2003. First, he attempted to mutilate the amendment bill passed by the National Assembly on the 2002 Electoral Act before he could sign it into law. The overwhelming public outrage stopped him from doing so but it did not however stop the regime from manufacturing rigging tactics and techniques in the 2003 federal and state elections. The process of rigging is intended 'to eliminate or neutralize opposition and facilitate the commission of electoral fraud. The security organs of the state were not able to prevent the fraud neither were they able to prosecute the perpetrators. Unfortunately the ruling party protected those involved in the 2003 election violence especially those of the ruling party, Peoples Democratic Party (PDP' (Alemika 2007; 155). Also his Vice President Atiku Abubakar, in an attempt to hold on to his political empire in Adamawa in 2003, threatened 'to slap the chairman of the Adamawa State Electoral Tribunal in 2003, Justice Kassim Zanna for daring to declare that ...Governor Bonni Haruna , did not win the 2003 election' (Ocheroeme Nnanna :2014)

In a survey conducted by United Nations Electoral Assistance Division .United Nations Development programme (UNEAD/UNDP) that monitored the 2003 it was revealed that fear of violence prevented a lot of people to come out to vote .Nationally 21 per cent of the sampled population did not vote because of fear of intimidation and violence. In Lagos 17.0 percent , south west(16.8 per cent), South East (19.0 percent ) South South (36-8 per cent ), North west (9.4 per cent), North East(19.2 per cent) and North Central (20.4 percent).(Alemika 2007 ) . In petitions filed by General Muhammadu Buhari against Peoples Democratic Party and its presidential candidate, Olusegun Obasanjo, in the 2003 elections , the details of how security agencies were involved in inflicting violence on electorates and condoning same by party thugs loyal to PDP were provided. Thus at least one hundred people were killed in the 2003 general elections as well as the 2004 local elections ; with more injured by supporters of the ruling party .

Meanwhile in his failed bid to change the constitution to enable him go for third term in the 2007 election Obasanjo had no option than to look for a successor. Earlier he had parted way with the Vice President, Atiku Abubakar, who would have had the privilege to take over power from him. .At the end Alhaji Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, a junior brother to the late General Shehu Musa Yar' Ardua who had served as a second in command to him (Obasanjo) when he was a military Head of State between 1976-79. General Yar'Adua, joined politics after disengaging from the military in 1979 and changed the political landscape of Nigeria. He did not only become a formidable politician but an epitome of modern Nigerian politics through his political organisation, People Democratic Movement (PDM). His political clout was insurmountable to the extent that General Sani Sani Abacha feared it would affect his intended transmutation as civilian head of state. Therefore, General Ya'ardua and Obasanjo were implicated in a fathom coup where he died in detention while Obasanjo was lucky to survive. His brother Alhaji Umaru Yar Ardua was then completing his second tenure (1999-2007) as the governor of his home state, Katsina when he was privileged to be selected in line with the party's zoning principle as PDP Presidential candidate. Accordingly, the zoning principle was specific, on the condition that after Obasanjo's presidency political power would be reverted to the Northern part of the country. In order to ensure that PDP win at all

cost, the President, Obasanjo led Umar Yar'adua to almost all the presidential campaign rallies across the country campaigning that the 2007 elections was a do or die affairs.

And indeed it turned out that the 2007 elections were worst off; more than any other previous elections ever conducted in Nigeria, especially the incontrovertible 2003 elections. While the 2003 elections were adjudged to be 'monumental fraud', the 2007 elections could be termed exercise in 'rocket rigging' as virtually all measures of rigging that were ever experienced in the past were perfected and applied. This was even acknowledged by the beneficiary of the election, Alhaji Yar'dua, who promised to ensure that subsequent elections were devoid of malpractices. As a result he decided to set up Uwais Electoral Committee to assess the pattern of how to avoid future electoral malpractices.

As earlier noted, the rise of political violence became sophisticated as credible politicians were scared to contest and participate in the election with some more murder cases reported including that of Jesse Arukwu, the Governorship aspirant for the Advanced Congress of Democrats (ACD) in Plateau state. There was also failed assassination attempt on Pam Dung Gyang and Senator Victor Lar (Plateau); and in Enugu, Ekiti and River states Uzodinma Okpara, Rauf Aregbesola and Nyesom Wike (then chief of staff to the state governor (Rotimi Amaechi) equally escaped death respectively. Meanwhile until the amnesty granted to the militants from the Niger Delta the region was stroke with stockpile of weapons including IEDs, AK-47, Pump Action guns as well as sophisticated multi functional machine guns bazookas, FNC and rocket-propelled grenades and bombs.

The presidential election though was inundated with series of malpractices with pocket of violence in the 2007 elections including the Governorship elections where various categories of 'violence borne out of the determination for electoral victory by politicians', resulted in the killing of both thugs and ordinary citizens ... incidents of such killings occurred in Benue, Ondo, Delta, Enugu and Ekiti states (Maitambari:2007:73). The 2007 election was the election that Olusegun Obasanjo said it is a 'do or die' election. So government mobilized all energies its to rig the election in favour of the party's candidate. This clarifies Claude Ake position about politics in Nigeria:

"We are intoxicated with politics. The premium on political power is so high that we are prone to take the most extreme measures in order to win and maintain political power, our energy tends to be channelled into the struggle for power to the detriment of economically productive effort, and we habitually seek political solutions to virtually every problem. Such are the manifestations of the over politicization of social life in Nigeria".(cited in Larry Diamond 1985) .

The over-politicisation as Ake noted also encapsulated the spread of arms into Nigeria from both local and international sources. It was so overwhelming that Obasanjo's regime set up a Presidential Action Committee on the control of violent crimes and illegal weapon in 2005. The Committee raised fears of continuous spread of arms including the growing presence of extremist sects in the country. This is did not assuage th spread of arms as pockets caches continue to build to around the country. There was a discovery of armoury in Edo state after the 2007 election where violence had become a common phenomenon. Security operatives quantified the cache to worth N2 billion. They were owned by a local politician, stocked with both local and foreign made pistols and explosives. The arms and other yet uncovered facilitated the spade of violence between Action Congress (AC) and PDP which had won the governorship election in the state to the displeasure of the AC members: 'the gunmen who seems to be increasing in numbers and daring have continued to identify opponents to their perceived pay master and would do anything to hack them

down(Omonodo:2008:1&31) . Among other destructions were the bombing of the house of the chairman of the Edo State Election Tribunal Justice Rowland Amaize and breaking of the Oko prison by hoodlums. In the build up to the 2007 elections the Vice President Atiku Abubakar who became the presidential candidate of Action Congress of Nigeria (CAN) alerted the nation how the government of Olusegun Obasanjo had voted the sum of N300bn to purchase arms to crush the Niger Delta militants (Bello and Abubakar , 2007, ;1&3) .Though President Ya'ardua 's amnesty progress seemingly neutralized the Niger Delta agitation the nation is yet to know what happened to the money>Was it used for the amnesty or diverted for something else. This is important because the regime of Obasanjo was notorious in spending resources without budgeting recourse to the National Assembly during his tenure in office.

From the local perspective armed groups and gangs including ethnic militias continue to unleash variety of arms on the nation. Nigerian politicians are not only the beneficiaries but notorious as 'armed riggers' in the spread and use of these arms like armed robbers. They arm their thugs, militias, unemployed youths and political volunteers to indulge in various violent activities including being trained on how to engage in election manipulation with or without their knowledge. Thus quite a number of SALW such as pump actions, pistols of all types, short guns and the popular AK 47 rifles have increased in quantum by late 2013 as large caches of arms were recovered in parts of the country. (Raymond Mordi :2013). In fact as confessed by Atek Tom, erstwhile kingpin of Movement for Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND) that he collected N50 million naira from Governor Rotimi Amaechi of River state to buy arms for elections, which he did. This indeed , and this increase the before he had problem with his party, the PDP( Emerson Gobert ;2008;10)

. According to the National Task Force on SALW, most of the government officials especially the state governors are involved in transferring arms into the country through their private jets to their states. Because they are covered by immunities security agencies do not have the authority to check and screen them. For instance when the governor of Zamfara state Alhaji Abdullaziz –Yari imported some illegally 1,500 arms into the country, he justified the purpose as for arming the state vigilante groups to tackle the threats of insecurity in the state and indeed the Northwest. Also Senator Mohammed Ndume, allegedly involved in the sponsor of Boko Haram, openly stated in the floor of the Senate, which was never denied, that half of the 109 senators of the 7<sup>th</sup> National Assembly were in possession. This has further led other groups such as ethnic and religious groups arming themselves either for self defence or for vengeance. Equally too, Fulani herdsmen are now heavily armed in term of self-defence or taking offence against cattle rustlers, as well as being faced with equally armed farmers as they both face the challenges of grazing fields.

The increase and spread of arms have become threatening especially for those in the conflict zone of north east that the governor of Borno state Shettima alleged that the Boko Haram posses sophisticated arms more than the Nigerian military. Though the federal government and the military denied this the point by the governor raised two fundamental issues. First, the longer period it took for the Nigerian military to tackle the sect confirms the fact. Secondly, the interceptions and recovery during security operations, of several hundred of weapons including rocket launchers, antimissiles, high profile bombs, rifles of different types and their ability to seize some Nigerian Army Armoured Personnel Carriers (APC), in Maiduguri and its environs has shown the strength of the sect at some point.

. However, the alarming rate of arms flow into the country made the presidential candidate of Congress of Progressive Change (CPC) Muhammadu Buhari when he lamented at his party convention that;

Some areas of the nation are virtually war zones in a country supposedly at peace. While local governments in some states of North East are no go areas to representatives of constituted authority. Marauders of every description armed to the teeth with all manner of sophisticated armaments roam the national landscape with total and murderous impunity. The patience of this country and the various communities were being tried and stretched to its limits. And there is no end in sight (Oluchike:2013)

The military which is the custodian of national defence and security is equally worried that arms proliferation in the build up to 2015 general elections has led to the influx of illegal arms, ammunition IEDs, light arms and other varieties of rifles, rocket launchers and grenades openly procure and use for kidnapping, gun fighting with police and criminal gangs including campus. (*Leadership* March 8, 2014). It is also infuriating that security operatives trade their arms to criminals for stipends to augment their economic advantage. Though Nigeria is the first African country to have signed and ratified the UN Arms Trade Treaty its commitment to stopping the proliferation of arms has been very abysmal.

Foreseeing what will happen in 2015 Governor Al-Makura of Nasarawa state called on ethnic militias ahead of 2015 elections. Nasarawa state is one of the states threatened by the activities of militias like Ombatse cult group who had previously killed almost 70 security agents; and the running battle between herders and farmers where several lives and property have been killed. Similarly in Benue, Plateau and Kaduna states cache of arms were recovered by the military. In Benue state where a cordon and search were conducted in Anyibe led to the seizure of arms belonging to some armed gangs. The arms include 2 rifles, 3 locally fabricated pistols and 61 rounds of special ammunitions. In Kukke and Reweinko also in Benue IEDS materials, 45 live cartridges, various calibres of ammunition, bows and arrows cutlasses, axes and diggers were recovered.

From the international perspectives trading in arms Nigeria is said to be second only to crude oil. The Governor of Bayelsa state Seraki Dickson acknowledged the fear in the Niger Delta where militants are engaged in acquiring arms through the proceeds of legal bunkering and oil theft. In a confirmation one Kennedy West, president of the Association of Non Violence in the Niger Delta warned that the region might witness another wave of criminalities and violence if nothing was done to stop arms build up in the region. In the turbulent days of Niger Delta militancy trade in illegal oil bunkering for arms was lucrative and it is, even till date 'as for every oil illegally moved out of the country shores [is] in kind.. That kind is actually gun. As the oil vessels berth they already know that their partners in the sleaze need money as they need guns. They are happy about it because when the crisis (in Niger Delta) gets tougher, the bunkerers-some Nigerians, some foreigners make more money through illicit crude sales from agents at cheaper rates' (Kenna Emewu 2008 : 13)

From the international perspective, the discovery of 13 containers loaded with arms and ammunition shipped to the country in 2012 by an Iranian merchant Azim Aghajam and his Nigerian accomplice Ali Jega on the pretext that that they were building materials destined for The Gambia. The culprits were brought Justice Okechukwu Okeke who only gave them 5 year jail sentence. Earlier on in July 2010 custom officials also recovered a ship loaded



with arms and ammunition, bombs rockets imported by Beihemen Trading Company into the country and were labelled as glass and pallet of stones .

It is also unfortunate that the Lebanese bunker in Kano where several arms in various categories such as anti-tank and anti-personnel mines were uncovered on May20, 2013 after a nationwide publicity has remain a mystery. In another dimension it might not be mystery because government officials have also abused with impunities the control of arms in the country. Thus the mystery behind the Lebanese armed bunker discovery has been shielded on alleged ground of diplomatic consideration. However, it is important to note that the controversial Australian, Stephen Davis, did not only commended the government of Nigeria for the seizures of series of sophisticated arms and drugs, and especially the Iranian vessel which contained mortars, grenades, rockets and ammunition; but for making a report to the United Nations Security Council through a coordinated strategy from the presidency , the office of National security Adviser and foreign affairs ministry which was a 'new and welcomed level of intervention, which has only seen lip service paid to illegal importation in earlier years ( Stephen Davis;:2010 19) Extortion Not Militancy *Next On Sunday* 28 November 2010:19)

## **6. SECURITY AND ELECTORAL VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA**

Security agencies have been involving in election management especially the police since independence. With increase in the number of electoral –citizens (voters), and the quantum of materials expected to facilitate efficient conduct of elections the electoral management body, INEC would certainly require some more number of security agencies to assist in coping with the challenges of conducting election. However with the continuous exclusion of the opposition at every conduct of election from channels of feedbacks on electoral management the credibility of security agencies is seen to have been compromised. This makes the opposition party not only to be doubtful of the credibility of the security agencies but also would not easily accept the deployment of security agencies during elections.

Beginning from the transition election of 1999 where the number of police and staff of the Department of State Services supported by a number of staff from the Prisons Service, security agents have been involved in the intimidation of opposition parties by show of presence and force. The 'threats from President Obasanjo against opposition especially against Muhmmadu Buhari the presidential candidate of ANPP also strengthen the resolves of the security agents to go on rigging free (Alemika :2003 : 158). This arrogance and compromising attitude of the security agencies in elections is worrisome as the debate, as to whether to deploy security agencies for election activities is worth it or not; continue to rage on until the experience with the Edo, Ekiti and Osun elections.

There were reported cases of widespread 'violence and intimidation at polling stations in different part of the country during the 2003 elections; especially in the South South and South East Zones where 'political officer holders used their orderlies to intimidate voters, disorganize voting process and snatched electoral materials (Alemika :2007 158). This was also confirm by the report of the Police Service Commission (PSC) monitoring team set up to monitor the efficacy of the police in performance in the course of their duties during

election . The report indicated that though the police were courteous in the discharge of their duties but were found not to be impartial. In a questionnaire administered by the PSC Monitoring team in the 2003 elections only 34 % of respondents indicated that police officials at the polling stations acted impartially. Similarly the Transition Monitoring Group (TMG) reported further that security agents assisted in stuffing ballot boxes and /or condoned acts displayed by politicians and their agents in rigging elections (Alemika: 2007) . The security agencies would not have done this without the consent of the INEC staff who facilitated the rigging process .As it turned out together with the security agencies INEC officials were muzzled financially to ‘condone , thumb print and stuff ballot boxes in the 2003 elections. This was worrisome to a Priest who raised a lamentation to Professor Alemika about the garrison nature of the security engagement in the 2003 elections as follows:

To the best of my knowledge what took place in Nigerian on those days has no semblance of democratic elections. Hundreds of thousands of the Nigerian Army , the police and hooded political thugs were armed to the teeth and were let loose on innocent citizens in the name of keeping and ensuring free and fair elections. That is what we and the so called international observers who came to monitor elections were told. But that is a blatant lie .The truth is that they came to compel people to submission over the unprecedented electoral malpractices that characterised the whole charade. Whoever it was perceived that voted in disfavour of the almighty ruling party –the PDP-the police , the army and the hordes of fierce looking political thugs were ready to divert ballot boxes to wherever the figures to be announced to the public had been prepared...the elections of April 2003 were the worst in the history of Nigeria. They were not peaceful. They were nit free. They were not fair( Alemika: 2007: 160 )

This point was substantiated by the presidential candidate of the All Nigerian Peoples Party (ANPP) Muhamadu Buhari who filed petition at the election Tribunal against PDP and its presidential candidate , president Obasanjo. The petition detailed instances of numerous incidents of security involvement in election violence, condoning party thugs loyal to PDP to carry out violence rigging of lections. The petition further provided proofs of perpetrators and locations of incidence which included the case of soldiers from motorized Battalion at Ibagwa Akwa Ibom state. It alleged that 35 soldiers and officers identified with their service numbers were bribed and deployed to various local government areas in the state to thumb print ballot boxes and to produce false results in favour of PDP ( Alemika 2011 :138.; The Buhari Organisation 2003:21-23) .

At the end of the appeal the lead judgment by Justice Francis Fabode Tabai established that Muhammadu Buhari was robbed of his victory by sheer security compromise of the security agencies and the cooperation of the electoral management officials . However, the judiciary failed to revise the result of the election in favour of Buhari. Part of the Judgment reads:

Allegation of perpetration of violence by PDP thugs in the presence of military and police personnel or by the military and police personnel themselves...There were instances of some violence in all the 14 states which elections were questioned in this petition.... from Enugu state we heard the case of how police Sgt Anthony Abba , one of the six policemen attached to the ANPP Gubernatorial candidate was killed... by some men among whom was Mike Onu a PDP stalwart... Instances of such brutal killings either immediately before or on the 19/4.03 are numerous .These allegations were in most cases not controverted...and the most tragic and disturbing aspect of the incidents is that these incidents either happened in the presence of policemen and soldiers or were immediately reported to them. No arrests were made and

no investigations. The scenario created from various incidents was that some politicians were, in the of police, licensed to to destroy lives (and) properties .It is serious dent to democracy and democratic ideals(cited in Alemika: 160).

In a lamentation over the ruling in the 2003 election and his comment on Obasanjo's regime to organize national political reform conference, Buhari said;

Forget about the national conference denying Buhari to become a President; if Chief Obasanjo does not think of how God works, he ought to remember that he was in jail with death sentence hanging over his head and now he is trying to say nobody will rule Nigeria without his permission .I think he who believes in God , does not act like that. [The PDP has rigged comfortably into changing the constitution any day .They have all the two thirds of the state, and therefore they have more than two thirds of the states of the federation. So I don't know why they can't they proceed and change the whole constitution( Gusau 2004 ; 39)

## **7.ELECTORAL VIOLENCE AND SECURITY IN THE 2015 ELECTION**

### **Critical factors to the build up to the 2015 Elections**

There are four factors that are critical to the build up of the 2015 election at the pre-election level. These are the issue of party primaries and zoning principle by the ruling PDP, the question of voters protecting their votes during election, deployment of security for election duties and the brazen introduction of hate speech into the political campaign for the first time in Nigeria

First , is the intra-party crisis in PDP over the reneged on the zoning policy. This generated both legal and moral questions. Accordingly the North took a moral stand and expressed her deep betrayal by President Jonathan to go ahead to submit himself for the Party primaries which he won and was presented by the party for the national presidential election. Hitherto the North according to Alhaji Lawal Kaita, the presidential ticket of PDP belongs to the North:

If someone has moral he will not betray such agreement. When President Umaru Musa Ya'Ardua was alive, he (Jonathan) agreed that there was zoning agreement. Now that the man (Ya'Ardua ) is dead, they are saying there was no zoning agreement. Our conception as Northern Muslims is that we look at the decision of Goodluck Jonathan to contest for the 2011 election as immoral. Maybe in their own conception as South South people they don't see it that way. That is why (North) feel very bad about the whole thing( Okafor :2011) .

However in an counterfactual position Senator Anietie Okon , a member of the 2011 President Goodluck Jonathan Campaign Council, and also a former National Publicity Secretary of PDP noted with anger the legal imperatives of president Jonathan's interests to contest for the 2011 elections: The presidency of this country is not the birth right of any particular section of Nigeria. Are they saying that when it is them at the presidency, there will

be peace, but when it s others, there will be no peace? Let anybody show me in the constitution where this despicable pedestrianism called zoning drew its legitimacy (*ibid.*27)

The North sees President Jonathan's effort to upturn the PDP zoning principle not only as immoral, fraudulent but lacking credibility and decency. Therefore, the North, which is the constituency of late President Ya'Ardua, under the umbrella of the Northern Leaders Political Forum (NLPF) (which Atiku Abubakar assembled together) decided to sponsor Atiku Abubakar from the North East for the PDP presidential primary to challenge president Jonathan bid. The South South however believes Jonathan's intention to contest on the PDP presidential candidate was not only legal but constitutional that must not be allowed to slip away as there might never be such an opportunity again. The nation was thrown into dilemma as the unresolved controversy of PDP zoning principle tends to affect national political stability. The likes of Asari Dokubo, one of the key Niger Delta militants, kept boiling the frying pan of an eminent splinter of crisis if president Jonathan was not allowed to contest in the 2011 election. He had insisted that Jonathan would complete his 8 years tenure of presidency. In several interviews granted to the press he threatened to mobilise his ethnic group to ensure that 'those who have held us down will never get to power again' (Bulus;2012; Daily Sun 5October 2010; Daily Sun M15, 2013). Shortly before the 2015 elections he pointedly said that 'Jonathan can't be defeated, they can't defeat him they don't have the right, every parts of the country must have equal stake in the presidency. He clearly stated that he was ready for war if Jonathan fails to make a second term. The APC took an exception to this and called on the SSS to arrest him for declaring war against the nation. This was further exacerbated with the stoning of president Jonathan In some states of the North(Katsina, Bauchi and Adamawa) which he promised to retaliate.

. Though President Jonathan got the mandate to contest on the ticket PDP Presidential ticket in 2011 the controversy surrounding the primary which he emerged was appalling to the North as well as to Atiku Abubakar. Atiku did not only ask INEC to cancel the primary election but his sponsors led by Lawal Kaita also filed a case in court asking that Jonathan be disqualified as a PDP candidate for the 2011 presidential election. Atiku Abubakar went for to make an inflammatory speech to the effect of making the country ungovernable when he quoted JF Kennedy the effect that 'those who make peaceful change impossible make violence change inevitable' (sic). Never the less there were some hard negotiations where Jonathan allegedly accepted to run for only one term, for the 2011 election, and thereafter power will revert to the north. Nevertheless some Northerners accepted this negotiation but majority declined insisting on the PDP zoning status quo.

Hence it was not certain to the North whether Jonathan would keep to the single term in office after 2011 or he would renege. The north irrespective of its sharp and divided ethnic and religious composition always gather together against a common opposition (enemy?) . This time the decision by President Jonathan to rum for the 2011 presidential election became a rallying point. The decision led to a split in the ruling PDP with Malam Adamu Ciroma, leading a group of aggrieved Concerned Members of the People Democratic Party, including Iyorchia Ayu, Lawal Kaita, Bello Kirfi, Yahaya Kwande and Bashir Ibrahim and their followers. This group wrote the PDP leadership on the 17<sup>th</sup> September 2010 to restrained president Jonathan from contesting the 2011 election as the north had not yet completed its eight years of the two term ceded to the north after the tenure of Olusegun Obasanjo following the death of President Umar Musa YarArdua. They wanted a northern to fill the gap created by the death of President Ya'Ardua. This was necessary or else according to the former military president Ibrahim Babangida it would be ha harbinger to national

integration; but for Lawal Kaita , who was blunt the north was going to force president Jonathan out of office. In verbatim Kaita said :

Anything short of a Northern president t is tantamount to stealing our presidency. Jonathan has to go and he will go. Even if he uses the incumbency power to get his nomination on the platform of the PDP, he would be frustrated out.( If Jonathan emerges as president next year).The North is determined , if that happens , to make the country ungovernable for president Jonathan or any other Southerner who finds his way to the seat of power on the platform of the PDP against the principle of the party zoning policy( Orji and Uzodi : 2012:39) .

They went further to strategize on how to achieve this . First the formation of Northern Political Leaders Forum (NPLF) which was seen as Atiku's creation was coordinated by Mallam Adamu Ciroma to source for a consensus candidate from among the PDP northern presidential candidates (Ibrahim Babangida, Atiku Abubakar, Aliyu Gusau and Bukola Sarki). In the process Atiku emerged as the consensus candidate, selected by a panel of 9-Wisemen. The north was confident of the choice of Atiku, who was considered formidable enough to win the 2011 election, and it was boasted that 'if Jonathan is lucky, he may take plateau and may be Benue out of the North, nothing else. ( *Next On Sunday* 28 November 2010:3). Secondly, this enabled Atiku to be so elated that he berated president Jonathan for breaking PDP constitution as well as party caucus agreement:' He did not consult with anybody. Not with anybody. And me, if you break law, I will follow you to the end, I can't imagine how a president can sit down an break laws that brought him to power' ( Ahmed and Owete 2010). He repeated this position while addressing delegates at the PDP Convention 13 January 2011 where he bluntly accused President Jonathan:

: if rules can be thrown away by just anyone who feels he is powerful enough to do so, then it is an invitation to lawlessness and anarchy. Nobody wants that .The founders of this party , in their wisdom, devised rules for the rotation of power between the North and South in response to cries of marginalization and domination . We wanted peace and justice to reign . And we put in our Constitution (section 7.2c) , and we all know what a constitution means. That has not been altered. In 2002, an expanded caucus of our great party met and reaffirmed that policy .Here are the minutes of that meeting. My main opponent was at that meeting and voted in favour of that resolution. He signed as no.35 on the list. Today he pretends that that meeting never took place and that the resolution never happened .Yet he would not summon a meeting of our party to discuss that issue and if deemed appropriate jettison it. In fact on 27 October 2010 he publicly declared that zoning does not exist in our party. Talk about throwing away the ladder that got you up there ! That is not the kind of person you would entrust the fate of this country .Our words must be our bond. But my main opponent (i.e. Jonathan) believes in doing things simply because it is convenient. He does not seem care if the country is thrown into chaos and anarchy as long as he remains in power .This is dangerous ( Atitku Abukar:2011) .

This is indeed dangerous because at the end of the Primary which Atiku lost to Jonathan the later boasted that those who make peaceful change impossible make violent change inevitable. This indeed inevitably led to the third strategy of translating whatever they say to reality , as the regime of President Jonathan began to face frustration and indeed dovetailing into various coincidental violence that occurred throughout his tenure.

The heat generated by the 2011 PDP primary made the party to avoid similar situation in 2015 as present Jonathan was merely endorsed as a consensus candidate in spite of also his promise in 2011 that he was only going to run form one term. His decision to go for a second term in spite of protests and litigations by some party members against his candidature for the

2015 election re-sounded the drum of violence. One Umar Ardo asserted that the litigation against Jonathan candidacy was ‘to forestall constitutional crisis in our party and our country’; (Agbesi 2014:20. Others who have also filed litigation included Samuel Tunde, Junaid Mohammed, Rasek Adeosun and Yahiya Ezemoo who argued that based on section 135 to 146 of the 1999 Constitution Jonathan was already statute barred from contesting election.

However the insistence of Jonathan to remain unperturbed on this did not deter the north. As earlier noted the people of the North both elite, including their middle class and peasants are traditionally obligatory to hierarchical authority in spite their differences. That is, in as far as the issue at stake is to the survival of the North within the Nigerian polity. The Middle Belt region of the North equally declares its commitment to Northern course when Senator George Akume, noted that ‘we are Middle Belt without distinct culture and so on ; but again we know that politically we belong to the North .So we are a Northern of Middle Belt extraction’ ( *Weekly Trust* April 21-27, 2000; 1&13) . This comment buttressed the boasting made by a renowned Northern newspaper, that:

No one is begging anyone to be a Northerner .The choice is for any sensible politician is dictated by hard realities. It is also does not mean that there would be no differences or even serious conflicts such as over the introduction of Sharia .Individuals and groups could and have made alliances with political groups in other parts of the country. *The North is big enough to survive...But let nobody deceive himself about the survival of this country once the North as we know it breaks up into wrangling units.* [It was the united and resolute action by the North that defeated Biafra and kept Nigeria one. It was the steadfast and pragmatism of the North that produced Obasanjo and the Fourth Republic after seven difficult years during which most Yorubas seemed to have succumbed to the false promises of secession. *If the North holds together, the clamour for ethnic autonomy will begin and die on the pages of Lagos newspaper.* And poor old Enahoro may perhaps permit himself to quietly retire to Uromi for ultimate appointment with his maker (Front Page Comment: One North or anarchy *WeeklyTrust* April 21-27, 2000; 1&13) (emphasizes mine)

It is on this caveat that it doesn’t take formal recruitment to enlist for the defence of the North. The unemployed and even the middle class comprador bourgeoisie both being passionate of the north do value statements from various northern political groups, individuals and opinionated leaders as clarion calls ‘to do something’. Thus the available anti-establishments sortie from such militia groups like *yandaba*, *Almajiri* stocks, *Kala Kato*, *Taliban* group among others could be deployed to defend the core value of the north, overtly or covertly. Thus the built internal crisis in the PDP which has turned to national crisis ( with the ultimate impact on the north being felt cheated) added up to spiting of fire and brimstone from the opposition party ( CPC at that time ) the ruling party (PDP) and the government of Jonathan were already put at the edge exit from power . The CPC presidential candidate Muhammadu Buhari who has suffered electoral injustices in the hand of the ruling PDP pepped up his supporters (in Hausa language) ‘ *Ku Kasa , Ku tsase , Ku raka; duk wanda ya taba muku kuria, ka gama da she (You must wait , escort , and any one that tamper with your vote finish him (sic)* ( Omorotinmwan 2011). Thus the frustration arising from the inability of , what Orji and Ozudi termed the ‘presumed dominant forces in the north to win political power’ made them to find alternative through the means of violence; the only option to elevate their strength relative to the power of Jonathan’s incumbency .Therefore , attacks on individuals and institutions that stand out against their interests becomes inevitably endemic.

. The attitudes, comments and disdain for President Jonathan built up northern moles inside his (Jonathan's) circles. This also influenced the feelings of the downtrodden of the North such as the peasants, proletariat, artisans, the unemployed and even the working class as well as religious and business class of the North; who may not have overtly identified with such course but acquiesced with it covertly. This development fed into the larger interest of some foot soldiers who wanted the pre-eminence of the North in Nigerian politics. The Boko Haram group could also not tolerate this as they saw the Northern political interest basically representing Islam. With this glaring cheating on the side of the North the election of Jonathan in 2011 became an issue that later turned to, either, coincidental and or reactive violence that trailed the post 2011 electoral violence.

. This led to some scenarios being painted around to the effect that the North was not ready to concede power again in the 2015 election. Rather it was prepared to remove Jonathan from office, if not by the ballot box (giving his power of incumbency) but certainly by bullet through a military coup and/ or necessary measures put in place to populate violent reactions that could make the country ungovernable for him. This was earlier stated clearly by Lawal Kaita; that if President Jonathan refuses to go 'soldiers might come and take him out. They will overthrow him. Simple'. (*Nigerian NewsLeader*, January 2011 p.15). Thus apart from rumours of coup there was an insinuation that Jonathan had also perfected a safe exit strategy to hand over power to the military in anticipation of losing the 2015 election. In raising this alarm Olusegun Obasanjo also warned against the plan to either introduce interim national government or military takeover as the country has gone beyond these two options( Olatunji : 2015) . Thus even when president Jonathan gave his acceptance speech as a consensus candidate for the 2015 election he should have known that the North was no longer with him in spite of his sleepless night to earn their confidence in terms appointments and ward of contracts.

His much admired non violence philosophical speech at the 2015 PDP presidential primary (consensus convention) that "my ambition to serve you is not worth the blood of any Nigerian. I remain committed to this principle of non violence", was only a wish as violence was only about to led loose if he wins the 2015 election, genuinely or otherwise. Never the less the crisis in the party has deepened so much that there were mass exodus the last which broke the camel's back was the formation of New -PDP by some seven governors which eventually led to exist of Murtala Nyako (Adamawa), Ahmed(Kwara), Rotimi Amaechi(Rivers) Rabiw Kwankwaso(Kano) and Magartakarda(Sokoto) .The exits of these governors led to waves of decamping in the National Assembly from PDP to APC , nailing any chance of PDP or president Jonathan wining in the polls. This is in spite of the hope that Ahmed Muazu , the new PDP Chairman brought into the party as a 'game change'. The change turned out to negatively uproot PDP from power. And PDP believed that Muazu himself could be one of the northern moles in Jonathan's bosom.

This narrative, from Ayorchia Ayu and Lawal Kaita, showed that if the zoning principle fails and the North happens to get back power it will take 50 years before political power will return to any part of the country outside the north, They boasted of northern population and its majoritarian political voting power. It is important to quote extensively this narrative to make the point clearer: According to them:

Now that the south south wants to take it, the north will not agree. We are fighting to retain it and we will succeed. And if we get it back through any protracted struggle with those who want to destroy it, we will. We will then go back to the status quo .This means that the whole idea of zoning, in the first place , will die naturally , because what belongs to us was not freely conceded .It will then means whoever

commands the majority in this country will keep the Presidency in their domain for as long as they wish. That is the implication of what Jonathan is doing. That is the message Dr Iyorchia Ayu was trying to pass. The whole zoning will be automatically destroyed. That was our fear when we conceived zoning. We knew we (North) are in majority. But being that we are good people we said alright, let's zone this thing so that every section of this country will have the opportunity to rule this nation. Now if not for zoning how can Jonathan be president today. It is not possible. The Igbos and the Yorubas are in a majority. If not for zoning there is no way the south south can be there at the Presidency when the Ibo's have not had their turn. They (south south) are now saying that they don't want zoning because they have the incumbent from their own area now in power. Forgetting that elections are all about the power of the majority. So if that is the case, then we (North) can rule forever with a simple majority. But because we are honourable and decent people, we agreed to the idea of zoning. We will certainly take what belongs to us when the time comes (NewLeaders January 20 2011 p. 28 and 15)

The second fact is the call for voters to protect their votes. It could be recalled that what led to the post 2011 election violence was basically linked to this issue of protecting one's vote. This was the cause of the post 2011 election violence that led to about 100,000 death with over 65,000 others dispossessed from their homes while properties worth millions were destroyed. There were various reports from both governmental and nongovernmental that identified causes of electoral violence. Among which was the Lemu Committee Report. The report subtly indicted that the 'Provocative utterances by many individuals and the widespread charge by prominent politicians including the CPC presidential candidate to the electorates 'to guard their votes' appeared to have been misconstrued by many voters to include recourse to violence which they did' (Federal Government: Lemu Report;2011)

However, in a private meeting with the CPC presidential candidate the committee discovered that he was a victim of the post election violence. By implications therefore, the Committee seemingly revised its earlier position and exonerated the CPC presidential candidate for his role in the post 2011 election crisis. But contrarily the CPC party's National Secretary Buba Galadima confirmed without regrets by acknowledging that:

We said those who rigged should be punished. So does it mean it is the PDP who rig? If it is the PDP people who rigged, then they should be shot dead. We said those who rigged. Why do they ascribe to it to themselves if they are not the ones that rigged? We said that whoever rigs election is worse than an armed robber; he is worse than a hired assassin; he should be dealt with summarily. We didn't say PDP. WE SAID THOSE WHO RIGGED. If they didn't rig, what is the problem. (Ibeanu; Okechkwu;Forthcoming)

However as the 2015 election period approaches Mohammadu Buhari reiterated his call for voters to protect their votes. At a rally in Kaduna he urged the APC supporters 'we are calling on you, on February 14, pick your voters cards, vote, protect your votes, escort your votes and wait'(Shalam, John and Wakasa, Aisha, 2015:12); . This made the police to become apprehensive as the 2015 elections drew near. The Inspector General of Police(IGP) directed all voters to leave the polling stations once they cast their vote. However the Chairman of INEC ruled him out by acknowledging the extant law allows voters to wait if they wish to do so. This made the IGP to revise his earlier directive but warn that:



“Anyone who tries or attempts to disrupt the national elections will be arrested and prosecuted. This attempt can be outside the polling units, around the polling units, around the collation centres and can even be after the declaration of results. Whoever wants to take the law into his/her hands should have a re-think. The police and other security agencies are together in this regard.... if you cannot behave yourself well at a polling unit which is within the radius of 30 metres, then you should better leave. If you try to intimidate anyone, it is an offence; if you solicit for vote, it is an offence; if you carry any weapon, it is an offence. The offences are so many,”.(Akinsuji: 2015)

Thirdly, closely related to the above is the rise, for the first time in Nigerian political history, the *campaign of hate speech syndrome*, which has brazenly increased the tempo of violence. The campaign of hate speech syndrome can be categorised into three. These include political hate speeches, ethno-religious hate speeches and moral hate speeches. Generally political hate speeches are repulsive statements made by politicians during political campaigns and rallies to capture votes of the electorates. Political hate speeches are not just hate speeches made at political rallies that are assumed to be detestable but are also politically motivated that may lead to national political destabilization. For instance, while receiving a delegation of his party, CPC from Niger State, Muhammadu Buhari called on his supporters to prepare for bloodshed in the 2015 election. According to him:

“God willing by 2015, something will happen. They either conduct a free and fair election or they go a very disgraceful way. If what happens in 2011 should again happen in 2015, by the grace of God, ‘the dog and the baboon would all be soaked in blood.’” ( Luka Binniyat, : 2012) ‘

The government of presidency Jonathan and his party the PDP reacted and condemned this statement. They accused Buhari for being ‘a serial election loser who has never taken past election defeats graciously even when such elections were generally acknowledged to be free and fair by EU, Commonwealth, AU and other independent election monitors’ ( Emmanuel Aziken, Henry Umaru and Dapo Akinrefon;2012) “.

From these two opposite political camps we established the thesis that within the critical situation in the society there exist critically significant individuals from within the elite whose statements can ignite violence beyond the ordinary imagination. Therefore, under this critical electoral environment Buhari and Jonathan are the critically significant political elites who hold the mace of violence and peace. While other elites (Obasanjo and Soyinka Ango Abdullahi among others) might have critical views but theirs are not significant enough to retool violence or peace; though they are critical they help to polish the scenario but cannot determine and populate the critical factor of violence and peace in a given critical situation.

Accordingly, a legal luminary, Itse Sagay noted that “ ... I agree [with him] that we must have free and fair elections, but not on the issue of bloodshed because that is a bit frightening and a bit extreme. But I think those who have been rigging and getting away with it, should also have a rethink that it is time for peoples’ vote to count. Nigeria has been left behind.”( Aziken, Umaru andAkinrefon:2015) In other words statements from revered political figures can become sacriplitique (politically profane) in the same way a thing could be sacrilegious. It is on this note that Fredrick Fasheun, the leader of Odua People’s Congress added that:

“I think he must have spoken too early but Nigerians desire to have a free, fair and credible election come 2015. The election of 1993, which was free and fair but was annulled, has left Nigeria bruised for some time. Mr Buhari is giving that warning; he is acting as an elder statesman and former Head of State who feels that unfair elections may be a stumbling block and progress in 2015. It is a warning which is good for the country. He is not threatening (Ibid.).

From *ethno-religious hate speech syndrome*, there were so many things said and done. The glaring one was when PDP in an apparent effort to win the votes of the Igbos went as far as asking Buhari to clarify his role in the massacre of 300 Igbo soldiers and civilians during the Nigerian civil war, a war that has been foreclosed by the principle of no victor no vanquished. (Okocha and Ezigbo 2015). Similarly Jonathan was accused for positioning his Ijaw ethnic elder Edwin Clark to champion the cause of Jonathan. Also President Jonathan was accused of religionising Nigerian politics as he was fond of ‘hoping from one church to the other, canvassing support for his re-election. Hon Naabba former seepa of the House of Representatives added that ‘Jonathan was in the habit of going from one church to another here in Abuja, even to the embracement of some section of the Christian community (Salaideen:2015;49), Lemnus Nwabughbuogo:2015:47) Religionisation of politics or politicisation of religion whatever it is, is rooted in Nigerian politics. Jonathan cannot be blamed for it. As Hassan Sani Kontagora noted Religion has been part of Nigerian politics in terms of elections and appointment. He attested to the fact that ‘as a Muslim there is no way politics can be separated from religion. Islam as a religion teaches the virtue of spirituality, morality, leadership management in public affairs and economic resources... Some of my Christian friends who are well informed in biblical doctrines also agreed that religion and politics are intertwined’ (Kontagora:1999:8-9). It is important to note this and appeal that even if religion is used in politics it must not be with bitterness. The question however is, at what point can religious politics be undertaken without politics. As it turned the Governor of Jigawa state, Sule Lamido, at the 2015 PDP Presidential rally in Dutse, Jigawa state, accused APC for fanning the ember of religion. He lamentably expressed his disgust with campaign of calumny against Northern Muslims that were supporting Jonathan as they were given all sort of names such *arna* (infidel) and pastors among others. He was worried that the impression in the north is as if APC is a Muslim party while PDP is a party of pagans and Christians. He said APC is only riding on the back of Buhari and if that Buhari is removed from the party today it will collapse. He sees PDP as a party that cuts across various interests in the country. The issue of religion among anti-Jonathan clan in the North was further buttressed during the 2011 PDP presidential primary when the *International Crisis Group* (ICG) disclosed how “mass text messaging campaigns, often used to incite communal violence, warn Muslims not to vote for Christians candidate, like Jonathan and explicitly refer to the president’s backtracking on zoning (ICG :2011)

In light of this as president Jonathan was being sworn as the President of Nigeria at Eagle Square Abuja on the 29 May 2011 a middle aged man stood at the park of the popular Sahad Stores, Area Eleven, Garki and uttered some words in Hausa language ‘*daga yau ya’ uwan shi kritsa za su yi mutuwam shi*’ to mean “from now onward his Christian brethren will die his death’ (interview, 29 May 2011). Initially the allegation was dismissed as a mere gibberish not until when Nigeria began to experience serial attacks and killings. This continued to build up from 2011 to the 2015 election, leading to the increasing manifestation of Boko Haram insurgency; either as a coincidental or reactive violence; defined by the perception of social injustice. Hence, initially, in both ways, there were jigsaw counter offences between the Boko Haram and their Christians targets in some of the places like

Kaduna and Plateau state. But later the Boko Haram turned against Muslims only at the a point which either because such Muslims have opposed them *publicly* or cooperated with government authorities against them. The key targets of these groups of Muslims were traditional rulers and Islamic clerics. (Human Rights Watch 2012:152). For instance a part of the palace of the Sultan of Sokoto' was destroyed while the Emir of Kano Ado Bayero, was attacked in a broad day light which eventually traumatized him to death. These and many other episodes scared the northern leaders and Muslim clerics, intended or unintended, from commenting on activities of the Boko Haram. However the concentration by Northern elites on the political front serves to harmonize the goal of the North, even if there was no mutual agreement on other issues, especially the threats by Boko Haram.

In term of *moral hate speeches*, the campaigns and rallies were morally dehumanising as each political party scandalised each other's presidential candidate. PDP serialised documentary on two televisions, the AIT and NTA. The documentary exposed the moral bankruptcy of Muhammadu Buhari including his failed marriage and the mysterious death of his daughter. They went as far as revisiting the activities of the oppressive military regime he headed in 1983 to justify the fact that Buhari is not a democrat, and therefore should not be voted into office. In a reaction to these amoral campaign the APC National Publicity Secretary, Lai Mohammed took an advert to debunk the documentary which he dubbed '*documentlies*' and rhetorically asked;

Is this the sort of campaign we should be getting from an incumbent president which when economy is collapsing and exchange rate is now out of control with \$1 at N207 ? Again, Buhari has never referred or attacked President Jonathan's family. He has never said Dame is barren, he has never said GEJ has children out of wedlock; he has never blamed GEJ for bad drinking habits. He only concentrated on issues based campaign! Let campaign be issues based and enough of attacking Buhari's family. MAY HER DEATH HUNT THOSE (PDP AGENTS) THAT MOCK HER IN DEATH( Lai Mohammed:2015;15)

. Though the PDP presidential candidate, Jonathan, has been noted with his famous speech that 'his election does not worth the blood of any Nigeria'(sic) ; yet his party , especially the PDP Presidential Campaign Organisation headed by Fani Kayode continue to fan the ember of amoral political campaign speeches. Though the rhythm of Jonathan statement is on non violence Nigerians have become securophobia to the extent that they were no longer ready to be swept away by sanctimonious sermon where the compromised nature of the Nigerian security to the regime has held him suspect, which only needed to be proved otherwise by him (Jonathan) after the 2015 elections. This drew the concerns of the society as the Sultan of Sokoto Abubakar being a royal father, captured the perceptive sensitivity of conflict trigger scenario by these critically significant variables; and thereby offered advice to the president, who was in Sokoto for his campaign;

We want to hear campaign based on issues not sentiments .We want to hear of campaign promises from our leaders how they intend to tackle the problem of insecurity , unemployment and the rot in the education sector. I think that these are critical issues that that should bother our presidential candidates instead of mudslinging and calling each other names...I am indeed very please to the two leaders hugging each other few days ago but the main problem is the people

downstairs who are being killed in Kano, Sokoto and other places because of political campaigns. (Mohammed:2015;10)

Fourthly the deployment of security forces for elections has been controversial since after the 2011 elections .The hostile security environment in 2015 is not different. This will be discussed on two assumptions; first, the rise of *secuorophobia* from among the electorates; and second , the credibility of INEC in managing the process under crippling public apathy . On the first assumption, it remains a concern as to whether security will be guaranteed in the 2015 election. This fear and anxiety were driven by the previous scenarios, especially the 2003 and 2011 elections where innocent lives, including members of National Youth Corps were killed while participating as both officials of INEC and voters during the elections. The 2011 election violence affected the members of National Youth Service Corps(NYSC). As noted

After Goodluck Jonathan was declared winner of the April16.2011, some youths took to the street of principal towns of Kano, Kaduna, Gombe Bauchi , Adamawa and Katsina states in protest against the results .In the ensuing chaos, a number of youth corps members mostly of the southern origin were sought out and attacked...it followed spreading and unverified rumours that the youth corps. members , who were engaged as adhoc electoral staff , had been colluding with politicians to rig the election. About 10 of them were killed in the attacks , several more sustained injuries’( DailyTrust Editorial ;2011:30)

And given the preponderance of contending forces and counterfactual narratives on campaign hate messages among the political parties; especially PDP and APC; it only requires Nigerian, political contenders, indeed the critically significant variables to submit to voice of reason, or the need for some divine intervention. This is because the tempo was such that not even any international friend of Nigeria had the capacity to stop the alarm of violence arising from the turbulent political environment. Despite efforts from various countries including the US Secretary of State, John Kerry, the United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki Moon and others from the Western world the determinant factor that can either populate violence or peace remains with the templates presented by the critically significant variables. Never the less, given the improved capacity of INEC and instances of security performance in some staggered elections especially in Edo, Ondo, Ekiti and Osun states where oppositions parties retained power, especially APC in Edo and Osun states, Labour Party in Ondo and except in Ekiti where PDP made an enroute to replace APC; there was indeed some respites of hope that the security in the 2015 could be guaranteed.

The general apprehension generated over the deployment of security forces to the polling stations arose from the background of the compromised nature of the security forces. As earlier noted the previous performance of the security agencies where they were caught in supporting the ruling party during elections created the basis for public *secuorophobia*. Governor Adam Oshiomhole was at a dilemma as to whether or not to accept the deployment of security agencies in the election which he was seeking re-election to complete his second tenure as the governor of Edo state. .At the last minutes he gave in to fate and in a broadcast to the state and said : I believe we need the army to compliment the efforts of the police ... so don't allow anybody fool you that the army is going to harass you, or prevent you from voting . No! The army is here to assist you so that you vote will count( *Punch* July 13, 2012).

At the end of the election which his party Labour Party ( he later joined APC) won Oshiomhole said the Edo state election has proved and confirmed that:

‘the nation is capable of organising credible election...When the President and Commander in Chief puts the country first and foremost, conducts himself as statesman, and not just a party leader, credible elections are possible. People were apprehensive that the Nigerian army could be misused. But of course, I told them that I did not think they were right because the president gave a clear directive that votes must count. He warned that there will be no rigging, no manipulation, no ballot snatching, and orders were given to the army ensure none of these things happened, and the army carried out the order( Cited in Obi :2015)

Indeed the deployment of security agents to the polling elections in Edo, Anambra, Ondo, Ekiti and Osun states was a *litmus test* for how the 2015 election. However the deployment of hi-tech security gadgets to Ekiti which eventually led PDP to unseat the incumbent APC governor, Kayode Fayemi heightened the level of apprehension on subsequent elections..The Inspector General of Police Suleiman Abba in the name of electoral security deployed helicopters, Armoured Personnel Carriers(APC), patrol vans and other law enforcement gadgets to reinforce other measures already put in place by the police, such as the deployment to strategic locations of Police Mobile Force (PMF), Bomb disposal unit, mounted troops and police Air Wing, all designed “to effectively boost the integrity of the electoral process and ensuring an atmosphere of persons, voters and all sensitive election materials during the June 12 2014 governorship election in Ekiti state; (Molly Kileti:2014) 2014). It was a surprise that all these hi-tech were deployed to one state in a garrison style manner as if it was a war scenario. Some believed that if these were deployed to the Northeast earlier on the military would have defeated Boko Haram. Though in the spirit of sportsmanship Fayemi accepted the defeat but it turned out to be a ploy as allegations later revealed how the hi-tech deployment was used as a cover up to rig out the election in favour of PDP. With this, the opposition would have no option than to doubt any kind of deployment of heavy troops for election that may not require a magnitude of such heavy deployment.( Andrew:2015;1)

This could have possibly informed the debate in the House of Representatives as Hon Nathaniel Agumabiade expressed his worry about the unusual type of dressing the security agencies put up during the Ekiti and Osun elections. Accordingly Hon. Nathaniel Agumabiade raised the motion on the floor of the House for the need to restrain security forces like military and DSS operatives from routinely using masks and hoods openly, particularly while monitoring elections and carrying out their duties. This, it is believed could be a terrifying development as it conceals the identity of the operatives wearing them from members of the public and could endanger trust in security services. It is also feared that hoodlums and criminals may infiltrate to using the same. The motion also noted that operatives also might have used them to perpetrate illegal arrest, harassment and detention of innocent citizens ( DailyTrust 2014;58)

It was in light of this the House of Representatives as well as the Senate debated the issue of whether or not to deploy troops for 2015 elections. Though it was resolved on the floors of the two chambers that security should be deployed for elections the courts across in the country were inundated with demand to give juridical interpretation, and if necessary stop the deployment of troops for future elections. For instance, in Abuja, Sokoto and Lagos judicial opinions were sought on the issue. In Abuja, the court ruled that deployment of troops for security runs contrary to section 217 (2) C and Section 1 of the Armed Forces Act. Similarly,

from Sokoto Justices RA Akawa on January 29 2015 condemned troop deployment while from Federal High Court Lagos headed by Justice Ibrahim Buba clarified the case instituted by Hon Femi Gbajamila seeking court's clarification on the issue, ruled that the use of soldiers in an election is undemocratic and thereby granted perpetual injunction restraining the federal government and the service chiefs from deploying soldiers for general elections without the approval of the National Assembly; in accordance to section 270 . According to Justice Buba 'any election which is militarized through deployment of soldiers where there is no insurrection is antidemocratic and not in consonant with the constitutional democracy and civil rule' ( Akhaine et'al;2015). However the federal government filed a counter appeal at the Federal Appeal Court Abuja requesting that the ruling of the High Court, Lagos should be set aside as it do not represent the state of situation in the country; more so that the plaintiff Hon Gbajamila being a minority leader in the House of Representatives lost to the majority decision taken by the resolutions of both chambers , against his position which lacks strength to be heard. Equally too, the Political Adviser to the president, Rufai Alkali, challenged the opposition to have rejected the Osun election result if indeed they did not want security deployed to the polls. According to him APC position was 'crass opportunism because soldiers as far back as when Edo state Governor Mr. Adams Oshiomhole was being elected, were deployed and Oshiomhole even with his radicalism swallowed his pride and came to thank the president for supporting the election with adequate security' ( Akhaine et'al :2015) . Never the less opposition parties were caught between the fact of the issue to allow for security deployment in order to ensure the safety and security of voters during election and how to curb the rigging machineries of the compromised security agencies without deployment of security forces..

Despite the rigmaroles, and given the aftermath of the 2011 election which saw the country in turmoil it was incumbent on the government to deploy soldiers for the security of the elections. The INEC Chairman Atahiru Jega categorically affirmed that Nigerians should expect deployment of troops during the 2015 elections .. (Atahiru Jega:2014. This position was supported by Ajanaka, Vice Chancellor, university of Port Harcourt who noted that it would be mischievous and over-politicisation of national security not to deploy troops for election(Kelvin Ebiri; :2015). Accordingly, as he rightly noted given the fact that the 2015 election would be contentious and volatile arising from the acrimonious feuds , hate speeches and threats from overzealous party supporters who are deeply entrenched in regional, ethnic and religious differences the imperatives of for the deployment of troops for election was unquestionable.

Thus the INEC Chief Press Secretary Kayode Idowu further clarified that the deployment of security agencies for the 2015 elections would provide peripheral cordon such as manning only points into towns, to check trafficking of arms that could be used to disrupt the elections. Security forces would be positioned in covert readiness for rapid deployment if there is a security crisis beyond the capacity of the police. This role of the security is aside from other logistic support that the Nigerian Air Force (NAF) and Nigerian Navy will provide(Saxon Akhaine *ibid.*) . Earlier on the Inspector General of Police Suleiman Abba assured that 2015 election will be one of the most peacefully conducted national elections and promised Nigerians and the international community that the elections would not only safe and secured but are free fair and credible ( **The Guardian** December19.2014 ;4)

Secondly, is the readiness of INEC to manage the process by giving confidence to the electorates without their choices being truncated. On this the INEC Chairman Professor Atahiru Jega assured of the prospect of having remarkably much better elections in 2015 but one challenge which he could not account for is the issue of security. He assured of new

techniques in the use of ballot boxes, the permanent voters cards and the card reader machines to check fraud and rigging. He however concluded that

‘struggle for democracy is worth it. Participation to depend democracy is worth it , but also we (INEC) have to do our best to ensure that we satisfy that aspirations that Nigerians have for democracy. As far as INEC is concerned the 2015 general elections will see Nigeria take its rightful place in the global comity of nations where democracy is consolidated ( Atahiru Jega :2015)

It is in light of the above that INEC established its Electoral Security body, Interagency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) . ICEES are made of all functional security agencies in the country. The essence is to build confidence and trust among the public of INEC determination to meet their expectation for credible elections. ICCES is asked with the responsibility of;

a). coordinating the design of comprehensive election security management system for INEC

b). develop locally focused plans for providing security before, during and after elections

c) Harmonize the training, deployment and actions of security personnel on election duties

d) Assess existing security threats across the country that have implications for elections and produce a red, amber and green electoral security map for the country, which will be regularly updated

e) Advise INEC on rapid response to security threats around elections including voters’ registration

f) Ensure a reduction in transaction cost to INEC of dealing with individual security agencies on issues of elections

g) Evaluate the performance of security agencies on elections duties and recommend improvement and sanctions, where necessary

h) Harmonize the election budgets of security agencies and sources of funding commonly .if possible

Though the INEC Chairman coordinates the activities of ICCES it is seems as if it operates as an adhoc structure , lacking any statutory power to operate except the delegation by the INEC Chairman

### **Pre-Election Security Situation**

The pre-election period played out security apprehension and threatened by hate speeches during the campaigns across the country. In the process the basis for the 2015 election became intertwined with the avalanche of both coincidental and reactive violence. One of the credible surveys conducted in the pre-2015 election period was done by CLEEN Foundation and the Transition Monitoring Group (TMG). In its Security Threat Analysis (STA) . CLEEN mapped out panoramic view of security threat issues and situations across the country as activities build up towards the 201 5 elections. .The study covered the period from Jnuary2013 to January 2015.

In 25 months of the survey CLEEN published nine STA reports covering specific states at particular point in time along with occurrences of security threats that are critical to the 2015 elections. The states were categorised according to perceived level of threats using traffick light colour signals, graded on level of impacts with first, RED being highest risk found in most volatile states characterised by insurgency, intense volatile politics activities leading to destruction of lives and properties among others. This is followed by AMBER representing mid level threats often with recorded high political tensions which are likely to

spill over into violence which requires effective monitoring. The last being GREEN indicator stability/lowest threats, usually threats that are not inclined to red and amber. The table below presents the details including the states.

Table : Showing Pre-Election Security Threats Analysis (STA)

STATES	RED	AMBER	GREEN	REMARKS
Adamawa, Benue, Borno, Imo, Kaduna, or Nasarawa, Plateau, Rivers and Yobe	<b>Insurgency, intensity of violent political activities, destruction of lives and properties</b>	Not required	Not required	STA met the predictions by CLEEN during the elections
Abia, Akwa Ibom, Anambra, Bauchi, Delta, Ebony, Edo, Ekiti, Enugu, Gombe, Katsina, Kogi, Lagos, Niger, Ogun, Ondo, Oyo, Sokoto, Zamfara and FCT	Not required	<b>Kidnapping, armed robbery, cultism, rustling etc</b>	Not required	Some states stated on the Amber line were critical during the election and indeed spilled over to the RED line as predicted by CLEEN. The states are Borno, Bauchi Akwa Ibom, Niger and Delta
Cross River, Jigawa, Kebbi, Kwara and Osun	Not required	Not required	<b>Cattle rustling, Farmers-Herders conflicts etc</b>	STA on Green line here met the prediction by CLEEN during the elections. However state like River spilled over to the RED line during the election

Source; tabulated and analysed from CLEEN STA mapping process.

The CLEEN analysis only clarified a previous report by the National Working Group on Armed Violence (NWGAV) which showed that from the beginning of 2012 arms proliferation has flooded the country to exacerbate violence during election. As the data shows up 80 per cent of weapons in circulation are illegally in private hands, 40 per cent are utilised by ethnic and communal militias engaging in various political violence while 75 per cent others are found in various conflicts, coincidental or reactive, taking place across the country. With this kind of report the apprehensions that 2015 election was not going to be peaceful was underestimation. Thus from the build up to pre-2015 election the Nigeria National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) on February 14 2015 in its A Pre-Election Report And Advisory On Violence In Nigeria's 2015 General Elections reported that 58 people were killed in violence that took place in 22 states of the Federation .

There have been manifestations of drumbeat of electoral war in the North and South-South where Buahri and Jonathan come from respectively. The streets, taxis, motor parks and market places were places where rumours of war drumbeats were commonly trumped up. This made the Inspector General of Police to warn against the rumour. He promised to



investigate the rumours of planned violence after the election. However he promised to protect voters and INEC officials during the elections: 'any violence after the announcement of election result will be severely dealt with' (Patrick Odey :2015:8). This continues to fuel the mobilisation of urchin party thugs and unemployed in the society to gear up for confrontation. And as the 2015 election days approached most of the Nigerians from the south who were in the North began to relocate back to the south. Igbo families in Wuse, Abuja who were within the Northerner residential settlement in the area relocated back to Eastern Nigeria. In Gwarimpa War College Quarters of Abuja some residents were told after the election that if APC had not won the election hell would have been let loose among non APC members. Several of such hate streams of speeches inundated various places. In South South, especially in River state serial killing of APC members were recorded during the pre-election period and further threats to life of APC members were common in Akwa Ibom and Delta state among others.

The rate with which threat to life spread across the country gave Nigerians the doubt of adequate protection from the police. Thus whether these threats were real or imagined it was better that one relocate to save his life than not to be alive to tell the story. As noted 'the volume of human traffic in motor parks in the northern states tell the story of the rush to abandon business in these areas and return to their home states until after the elections'. Those who could not make it to the south increasingly flocked into 'the suburbs of Abuja where they 'witnessed increased presence of persons from other northern states , mostly Okda youth' ( Andrew ;2015;7-9)

### **Shifting of Election Dates and the Issue of Permanent Voters Cards**

Meanwhile two factors further exacerbated the fear of the elections holding at all. First, the National Security Adviser Col Sambo Dasuki appeared in Chatham House, London suggesting the need to post election as the military was about to launch onslaught on the insurgents. He noted that launching an onslaught against the insurgents during election would cause security stir. The public wonder why this has to be done outside the country. However the meeting of the National Council of State was called to mitigate on the issue did not help matter as INEC was asked to decide if it was possible to hold election in midst of military onslaught against the insurgents. While INEC affirmed it was prepared to hold election in February the military said it could not guarantee the safety of the electorate. INEC was left with no option than to change dates for the elections from 14 February 2015 to 28 March and April 11 for the national and state election respectively. Never the less the opposition saw the scenario as one of the tactics and a ploy by the Jonathan's administration to undermine the process to his advantage. The question is; why the military has suddenly waked up to its responsibility after a period of over 5 years with enormous resources spent to address the threats from Boko Haram?

The second factor was the displeasure from the South over the distribution of the permanent Voters card which they accused INEC for favouring the North more than the South especially the South South. The Southern Nigerian Peoples Assembly(SNPA) formed probably to champion the course of president Jonathan called for the removal of INEC Chairman, Atahiru Jega . Led by the former Vice President in the second Republic, Alex Ekwueme and Chief Edwin Clark among other the Assembly noted that Jega was 'providing an ethnic agenda by favouring the North agonist the South' as he was holding ' unholy conspiracy between INEC and the Northern Elders to install a northern president through rigging

(Umoru 2015;11) . One of the challenges faced serious challenges some few weeks to the election in 2015. The issue of permanent voters card (PVC), a noble idea where the voting could be authenticated but since the conduct of 2011 lections INEC's slow space in producing the PVC drew a lot of criticism. Though INEC insisted that PVC rather than temporary voters card will be used for voting there hardly equal distribution across the country a month to the election . This made INEIC to be a suspect in the electoral process.

INEC was accused of concentrating the distribution of PVC in the north especially in the North east where Buhari was expecting his votes. This led to the call by the Odua Peoples Congress (OPC) AND the Movement for the Actualization of Sovereign Sate of Biafra (MASSOB) for the removal of the Chairman Atahiru Jega. There was indeed fear that Jonathan was set to remove Jega. This fear might be genuine in light of the previous experience when the former governor of Central Bank Lamido Sanusi was removed from office with presidential fiat. However it took the president to clarify this in a Media Chat where he assured the nation that he had no plan to remove Jega. In any case as at the time the election was postponed INEC had hardly meet up with the distribution of the PVC . This later show that the postponement indeed was a blessing in disguise for INEC .

Even when INIEC announced as at Febury7, 2015 that it has registered 70,383,427 only 25,384,551 voters were yet to collect their PVCs in elections due to take place on 14 and 28thFebaury 2015, for both national and state elections respectively. There were complaints by various ethnic groups and individuals that they were being disenfranchised by INEC. The Igbos complaint that 8 million of them were disenfranchised without PVC. In light of this and following military claim that its planned insurgency was going to coincide with the period of the election I became difficult to resist the pressure for the shifting of the election date. The main opposition party APC and indeed UPP saw it saw clandestine plan by the ruling party. The National Council of State could not take decision but left it to INEC to decide its readiness or other wise to hold the elections. Meanwhile the Defence Headquarters also told INEC that it was not ready to guarantee security on the scheduled dates for the elections. As a result INEC Chairman Atahiru Jega who was ready to resign than shift election date was caught between the rock and deep blue sea . Therefore, not wanting to play into the hand of its enemies by holding the election 'if there would not be adequate security cover for its personnel given the current situation in the country' later took decision to shift the election dates to 28Febary and 11 April 2015 (Vanguard Reporters, Uncertainties Over election date *Saturday Vanguard* February7, 2015:5) . Never the less the shifting date assisted INEC to facilitate the distribution of the PVC and avoided being accused of being biased towards some states of the federation during the distribution of the exercise.

### **Election DAY and The Post Election Security Situation**

Some two weeks to the 28 March federal elections of the president and members of National Assembly the INEC Interagency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) deployed 19 military officers on the rank of General or their equivalents in the Air force and Navy as well as 42 other senior officers as part of 428 man members to all the states of the federation including the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Accordingly, the distribution the security agents cut across the nation. In Kano , Lagos and other volatile states they were armed and deployed to strategic hot spots. In spite of the deployment there were scattered violence across the country. The table below shows the nature of violence that occurred at the pre-election period, Election Day and the development that took place after the elections. There were several complains of malpractices .PDP complaint of under aged voting in

Northwest and the smart rigging. Smart rigging is the type of rigging that is officially sanctioned and done with cooperation of the community where an opposition knows he will not venture as his life will be at stake. This is what students in the university who are not cooperate cheating in examination call it ECOWAS. In the South the rigging was not smart as many reported cases of ballot snatching and stuffing of ballot boxes in government houses in the East and some states in South South. The reported killing of APC party members at the pre-election period continued up to the Election Day and even after the election. It becomes difficult to ascertain the role of ICCES in course of this development. In addition the purported interruption of election by one Orubebe, a Jonathan's kinsman, at the presidential Election Collation centre at the International Conference Centre also drew the attention of the public to the

**Table: Showing Types/sources of electoral violence During Elections in Nigeria**

<b>PRE ELECTION PERIOD</b>	<b>ELECTION PERIOD</b>	<b>POST ELECTION PERIOD</b>
Physical attack on INEC Staff and facilities	Physical attack on INEC Staff and facilities	Physical attack on INEC Staff and facilities
Intimidation of opponent By political thugs	Intimidation of voters	Intimidation of opponent By political thugs
Physical attack on Political opponent	Attack on security personnel on Election duties	Physical attack on Political opponent
Arson targeting INEC facilities	Misuse of security orderlies	Arson targeting INEC Facilities
Kidnapping of political opponent	Kidnapping of political Opponent	Kidnapping of political Opponent
Possession of illegal Weapon and substance Like drugs	Possession of illegal Weapon and substance Like drugs	Possession of illegal Weapon and substance Like drugs
Violence at party meetings And conventions	Violence at party Campaign	Violence at party meetings And conventions
Assassination of political Opponents	Assassination of political Opponents	Assassination of political Opponents
Intimidation of member of the Public thugs	Snatching and/or destruction Of election materials	Intimidation of member of the Public thugs
Physical attack on potential voters	Kidnapping of INEC Staff	Attacks on security personnel on election duties
Snatching and/or destruction of voter registration materials	Snatching and/or destruction of voter registration materials	Snatching and/or destruction of Election materials
Negative attacks in media	Negative attacks in media	Negative attacks in media
Cyber-attack on INEC database	Falsification of result And destruction of result sheet	Destruction of litigation evidence

*Source: Report of the Technical Committee on Election Project Plan 2015; INEC P. 40-41*

## **7. INEC AND MANAGEMENT OF ELECTORAL SECURITY IN FUTURE ELECTIONS**

Indeed INEC should be commended for putting up ICCES as a manifest of its Electoral security system in the 2015 Election. We note that ICCES is made of all the security forces but unfortunately during the presidential election the military tend to have an upper hand ICCES in its meeting advocated for strong military presence particularly in the Northeast zone where the insurgence has become dominant even as both APC and PDP were at loggerhead on how to determine the loyalty of the security forces. The importance of election security cannot be underestimated. Dunne (2006) set out its relevance in broad spectrum which cannot only be reduced to the election events as if it is a funfair activity. His views which are accommodated here provides for a comprehensive approach that addresses all the stages of election preparation (tactical), election conduct (or operation) and election policy (strategic level) which INEC did not factored into the process. In fact the performance of the ICCES did not address serious and critical electoral insecurity questions in the hot spots. ICCES operated a fire brigade approach and seems took adhoc rather than an effective institution fashioned to ensure efficient administration of the security of elections. It is important that ICCES should maintain an office in INEC For effective electoral security management in future. . The measurability of any electoral security success or challenges is dependent in the threats analysis and strategic planning stages. Therefore ICCES needs to be reviewed and the following factors must be taken into consideration

1. Accommodating ICCES in all aspect of electoral administration and management such as boundary delimitation, civic education , voters registrations , candidate nomination and screening , the campaign period, polling operations, tallying and counting, dispute resolution and providing the official intelligence account of the election. The election cycle is critical to the planning for next elections which might affect ‘circumstantial conditions that can alter quickly previous security position and reprioritization initial security assumption. (ibid.
2. Creating Electoral Security Situation Room to serve as a Joint security operations centre for various security agencies, institutions and experts serving as nexus for information sharing , planning , briefing and monitoring of elections
3. Dedicated electoral security training delivering system that will develop training package for security agencies involve in election and make them integrated into the functions of the election cycles. As it is all the security agencies operating under INEC are inclined to their services because INEC does not pay their bills
4. Providing Weapon Exclusive Zones within the vicinity of election environment zone (registration site, campaign, polling and counting station) should be legally created except those legally authorised to do so .The idea that an armed security stays 30 meters

away from the polling station is not feasible, because in a situation where there is a security breach in the voting station, how can he address it?

5. ICCES should be factored into coordinating its activities for campaign rally along the provisions of election management Act to include electoral security management in order to ensure that political parties keep to rules of campaigns to avoid clashes between political parties competing over rally venues or proximate venues that might exacerbate conflicts. Though as Dunne noted, this might be an infringement on the rights of freedom of association however this constraint is 'justified if public law and order issues are a valid risk'
6. Security -Media Relations; (proactive and reactive) should be established to address and manage the challenge of disinformation that might arise against electoral security administration. Hence some media might misinform voters about the role, behaviour and credibility of security forces. This component will help to deter misinformation. In a reactive circumstance security forces will use this component to respond quickly and effectively in the media
7. Enhanced Communication Network; Effective communication system serves as a force multiplier for operational activities. Given appropriate communication equipment and interoperability at key levels will enhance responsiveness and efficient working relationship between election and election security
8. Creating security Consultative Forum and Liaison Department to address apprehension arising from security operation during elections. This forum will provide opportunity for liaison, consultation and exchange with the electorate or communities where security forces are deployed
9. Rule of engagement /use of force: they must be an established procedure or what is commonly known as rule of engagement and where necessary how the use of force could be applied. Given the sensitivity of election as a stabilizing mechanism for political stability ROE/UOF Framework should clearly outlined and delineated and used for training Manual for security agencies ahead of all elections
10. Code of Conduct for Security Forces involved in election; This should be developed for all involved in the conduct of election especially the electoral management officials, Security agencies, the media and NGOs to guide their behaviour and conducts during election activities. For security agencies code of conduct is important to ensure that they conduct themselves well during elections
11. Investigation Task Force; there is need for a rapid and competent investigation mechanism to ascertain critical issues that have security implications, and should have the ability to diffuse uncertainty. Hence the 'awareness that any allegation will be thoroughly and competently investigated can in itself deter frivolous and malicious disputes from arising. Assembling credible, impartial and investigation taskforce, solely for electoral matters therefore preemptively diffuse unnecessary dispute' (Dunne 206)

## **8. LESSONS FOR EMERGING DEMOCRACIES**

Nigeria like any other African country has gone through torture road to democracy since independence. The oppositions have fought hard through the ballot boxes and it has been difficult to defeat an incumbent in Nigerian politics. What has held the country together has always been the use of the military to intervene to hold the country together by the use of force. Secondly, civilian regimes and even the military have also found useful the need to put together a government of national unity to forestall eminent collapse of the nation. These measures have not in real term solved the challenge of building democracy in Nigeria. However, one person that has demonstrated the mastery of building opposition spirit Mohammed Buhari who despite age and lack of resources proved that truth must prevail some day. What Buhari has been accused of, one thing that is sure is that he has the resilience which most of the young politicians today don't have.

Nigeria has strong institutions that express the rule of law. Thus contrary to the view that Africa needs strong institution, rather Africa indeed needs resilient leaders. It is the leader with resilience spirit that makes democratic institutions strong and functional in the application of the rule of law. Nigeria has strong institutions but the leadership that will drive these institutions with foresight and determination are lacking. Elected and appointed leaders pay allegiance to regimes rather than the Nigerian state. One understands the frustration of General Buhari as he explained with agony his ordeal at the Abuja Accord meeting. For a period of times in 2003, 2007 and 2011 his petitions against the various electoral results were met with stonewall by the compromised Nigerian Judiciary apart from intimidation he received from the security forces, being a onetime military officer. A person in such a position has no alternative to electoral vote especially when the judiciary fails to appropriately adjudicate on electoral grievances brought before it.

There are therefore, three lessons that the Nigerian 2015 elections brought out as lessons for other emerging democracies. First, we have an electoral management body that is headed by a person that gives his allegiance to the constitution of the federal republic of Nigeria and not the regime in power that appointed him. Professor Atahiru Jega is like any other previous INEC chairman. Like Maurice Iwu who was to Obasanjo Jega would have also pledged his allegiance to Jonathan. With the same INEC which drives its mandate from the same constitution, he decided to be different. This is what Africa need. Somebody that can weather the storm and do what is right and just. Similarly, the Inspector General of Police, Suleiman Abba was in the position to have done everything in the styles of his previous colleagues to cover up some of the malpractices in favour of president Jonathan but he did not betrayed his appointment. This is commendable

Secondly, in spite of what any one can say about president Jonathan his concession to defeat is what the nation must appreciate. In 2007 we had the worst election that the president that was elected, Yar' Adua, knew he was a product of electoral fraud. The Judiciary acknowledged this but for fear of Obasanjo who brought in the issue of violence into politics when he insisted on a 'do or die election; no one could do anything, as he was allowed to have his way. Jonathan would have like any other Africa leader, minding not the aftermath of violence insisted on the fact that, the results of the elections were closed enough that only court will decide. And like when Obasanjo pocketed the Judiciary in 2007 the Judiciary would have given him a comfortable judiciary mandate; or at best or worst, we would have gone for government of national unity. The military is also another AGIP (any government in power) that would have deployed its services to the protection of the regime. And indeed given the relative autonomy of various armed groups and caches of arms around the country Nigeria would have been in turmoil. So again the resilience of the leadership to concede defeat in the face of strength at its disposal is commendable. As the former Governor of

Kaduna state Alhaji Abdulkadir Balarabe noted the two political parties PDP and APC and their candidates Jonathan and Buhari by their campaign of calumny are ‘capable of throwing the nation into confusion, chaos and make the results of the general elections unacceptable .( (Saxone Akhaine :2015;1&2) But the spirit resilience demonstrated by president Jonathan is commendable. Indeed in the Nigeria style of leadership he has a choice to use his power of incumbency to withstand any opposition. After all he could have argued that the differences between him and Buahri were just two to three million votes. So this would have inched towards tribunal and subsequently a government of national unity which he had once advocared for when he addressed the audience at the January 14 Peace Accord Meeting.

Lastly, the Peace Accord that produced the Peace Committee was another lesson that we must appreciate, and hoping that emerging democracies genuinely in search of building democratic institution would adopt. The Security Thematic Group of the Vision 202020 envisioned this role when it recommended the establishment of a Peace and Reconciliation Commission to play similar role which was done throughout the election period. It is now possible for the government of the day and indeed emerging democracies to think of establishing a peace committee/Commission that can facilitate the resolution of high profile conflicts that threatens the stability of the nation. This has also help Ghana to overcome its political challenges as it has institutionalized a similar Peace Council, which it calls Peace Council. We all need to adopt this for our democracies in Africa.

In conclusion, Nigeria indeed has proved to the world that something can come out of Africa. The expected shock that Nigeria will become banana republics has turn to be a model for not only Africa but the entire world to know that Africa has its own world view that the world can copy. I therefore recommend that the government of the day should revisit the Uwais Committee report and see how it can implement its recommendations, especially the need to reestablish the Centre for Democratic Studies that will help our young politicians (new breed politicians) to study the doctrine of leadership and political resilience.

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