

# Multilateral Diplomacy and the Management of Nigeria's Internal Security Affairs under Muhammadu Buhari's Administration

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## Abstract

From time, multilateral diplomacy has necessitated the physical presence of representatives of the different state or non-state actors involved. However, with the evolution of technological advancements; especially in light of the recent Covid-19 global pandemic, these actors have adopted a virtual multilateral diplomatic system, which has proven effective to varying degrees. In Nigeria, the government of President Muhammadu Buhari has been kept on its toes in the aspect of multilateral diplomacy as it has, on several occasions, represented the country's interest in international summits and multilateral interactions, while spearheading a number of diplomatic efforts in the continent of Africa. Despite this, President Muhammadu Buhari's administration has received harsh criticism from worldwide audiences and knowledgeable citizens alike for some of her actions, inactions, and decisions over the last six years. This study seeks to examine the dynamic nature and impact of multilateral diplomacy, and the management of Nigeria's Internal Security Affairs and Public Security since the emergence of Muhammadu Buhari as the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The study depends on qualitative methodology, relevant trusted sources in form of textbooks, journal articles and media reports was consulted to validate the arguments and ultimately balance the scale of objectivity. The study found that the Buhari-led government has not done enough to manage her internal affairs and recommended amongst others, that there should be the establishment of law and order while the principles of democracy are held sacrosanct by the government.

**Keywords:** Internal Security Affairs, Multilateral Diplomacy, Security.

## Introduction

Internal security management has taken a different course since the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States of America, along with similar attacks in other parts of the world like the November 15, 2001 attack in Istanbul, Turkey, the train bombing in Madrid, Spain on the 11th of March, 2004 among others (Alumona et al., 2019). The paradigm of internal security shifted drastically to combat a growing menace, a cankerworm that was an imminent terrible danger to the world. It is worthy of note that conflicts and security issues are as old as man. As long as there are differences in interests and goals, conflict will remain a phenomenon in human society.

The dawn of the 20th century was greeted with a major challenge – terrorism. The 9/11 terrorist attacks on the soil of the United States of America shook the world terribly and life, as was known, was never to remain the same again. In Africa, the issue of terrorism and other forms of internal security challenges have evolved with the rest of the world. Extremist religious groups morphed into terrorist cells, which in turn expanded into terrorist organizations as we know them. The Al-Shabaab group operating in East Africa, the Boko-Haram in the West, and parts of Central Africa are examples of the internal security problems the continent of Africa continues to battle. This issue has altered the course of International politics and created an increasing foreign military presence in Africa. Insecurity and terrorism has become a subject of several multilateral discussions and negotiations.

On April 14, 2014, over 250 girls were abducted from their Secondary School in the Chibok area of Borno State in the Northeastern part of Nigeria. This event was a breaking point for many Nigerians and there was an outrage on the media; local and international. Many people were perplexed as to how over 200 girls were taken hostage over several hours and transferred inside a community unnoticed by security personnel. This embittered Nigerians against the incumbent government and the popular thirst for change led to the victory of Muhammadu Buhari of the opposition party at the 2015 General Elections and his eventual emergence as the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The unfortunate Chibok incident was the highlight of Muhammadu Buhari's campaign, as he promised to put a stop to the Boko-Haram insurgency and other security issues. Given the inability of the incumbent Goodluck Jonathan administration to adequately bring back the abducted school girls among other people that had been abducted by this deadly group, as well as combat this menace, coupled with the track-record of Muhammadu Buhari as a military Head of state, it was expected that his emergence would be the beginning of the end of these insurgent groups.

Unfortunately, the reverse is the case. Over the years, we have had what appeared to be the worst cases of insecurity in the history of Nigeria. The government of President Muhammadu Buhari has had to deal with, not only the Boko-Haram insurgency but the Fulani herdsmen and farmers conflicts, bandits across several parts of the country, armed robbers and kidnappers along highways; most prominently along the Abuja-Kaduna express road. In response to this security decadence recently, the ENDSARS campaign was launched. The series of events that jaded what started as peaceful protests is a testament to the rotten security system.

Since her return to democracy in 1999, Nigeria has had to deal with one internal security issue or the other; a seemingly never-ending menace that has been ascribed mostly to the incompetence of the government. As Alumona, Oshita, and Onuoha (2019) observe, Nigeria is faced with several problems, one of which is the inability of the state to properly manage the internal security issues. Another is the increasing participation of non-state actors such as vigilante groups, ethnic militias, private security among others in the safeguarding of lives and properties. The growing ethnic tension and discontent among the people, if not properly managed, could result in violence on a larger scale. Hope may seem like a luxury that cannot be afforded in the case of Nigeria, realistically, however, there is a theory that Nigeria is, like her more developed peers, going through a rough, unavoidable path on her way to true independence and development.

A nation state would be said to have failed if it cannot safeguard the lives and properties of its citizens and so it is fundamental for every government to consider her internal security as a permanent interest in her relations with other States. However, internal security issues in Nigeria is one that has garnered a credible amount of noise for a very long time, the state has constantly witnessed several acts of violence in forms of ethno-regional, political and religious acts. Citizens are constantly on the edge of falling victims to this phenomenon, and this has shown that the government has failed in this regard.

The government of Nigeria constantly embarks on peacekeeping operations in other countries while it has failed to keep the peace in its own country. This development is not only a threat to life and property but also a cost to Nigeria's reputation, as the security issue has drawn the attention of several international bodies and states and has therefore affected its run for a hegemonic power in Africa. It is not inaccurate that the President of Nigeria, Muhammadu Buhari has made several attempts to solve the issue of Nigeria's insecurity. More so, Nigeria under the leadership of Muhammadu Buhari has participated in several International summits on security and even hosted several summits and multilateral interactions to this effect. The question that begs to be asked is that with the involvement in multilateral organizations, how is there still an increasing spate of security issues in the country? It should be of note that Nigeria has been involved in multilateral institutions since its year of independence in 1960. What then has been achieved from this union in terms of her internal security issues?

Nigeria as an independent nation is still being phased with internal and external security threats which has received attention amongst scholars and also in the international realm. However, the extent to which the parties or the phenomenon of multilateral diplomacy have helped to salvage or worsen the problem have not received serious academic attentions. In light of the foregoing, the main objective of this work is to fundamentally relate multilateral diplomacy to the issues of Nigeria's internal security using the incumbent government as case study. The efforts made by the administration of President Muhammadu Buhari in diplomatic relations with other States as well as the internal affairs security of the State will also be closely examined. Against this background, the work is set to study multilateral diplomacy and Nigeria's internal security.

### **Literature Review**

This study essentially evaluates two major concepts which include; multilateral diplomacy and internal security. Several scholars have adequately assessed and defined these concepts. However, this study aims to not only define these concepts but to show the relationship between them.

Diplomacy is as old as time, and it can be said to be the conduct of affairs and negotiation between two or more states in the International community. There are several dimensions of diplomacy in International Relations. We have, notably, bilateral and multilateral diplomacy. While bilateral diplomacy involves the conduct of international relations between two states, multilateral diplomacy is the art of negotiation and interaction between more than two states in the International community to achieve their respective national interests. In essence, multilateralism is the affairs of multiple states in International Relations. Berridge (2015) defines multilateral diplomacy as a type of diplomacy which is conducted through conferences attended by at least three or more states on the bases of generalized rules of conduct. He goes further to explain that multilateral conferences vary hugely in subject, scope, size, level of attendance, longevity, and extent of bureaucratization. And so, multilateral diplomacy, in certain circumstances provides the best chance for a successful negotiation seeing as they are subject-focused and concentrate minds on the issues to be discussed.

Marleku and Emini (2016) defines multilateral diplomacy as the approach of administration of international relations through the direct contact of negotiations at different forums such as conferences or congresses by representatives of at least three sovereign countries. They corroborate with Berridge (2015) that multilateral diplomacy took shape in Europe in early 19<sup>th</sup> century. They go further to pinpoint and argue that multilateral diplomacy was first introduced at the event of the Congress of Vienna and that the framework of international organizations which is an important actor of international relations was also created there. Although true, Marleku and Emini's argument dealt with already established rhetoric and did not give enough enlightenment on the Congress being the beginning of multilateral diplomacy. Other authors like Binaku (2019) asserts that the most current form of multilateral diplomacy emerged in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, reaching its highest point in the Security Council of the United Nations.

On the other hand of this study is the management of internal security affairs using Nigeria as a case study. Oshita and Ikelegbe (2019) observed that security management at all levels involves certain internal and external dimensions. While internal security management involves all matters within a community, state, or country, external security management refers to the dynamics of security that, though external, may affect the security of the country. Basically, internal security affair is responsible for all matters that may affect the National security both internal and external. In Nigeria, the Ministry of Internal Affairs is especially saddled with the responsibilities of the state's internal security affairs. Other agencies, especially security agencies, intelligence agencies, and military organizations in Nigeria play collaborative roles with this ministry.

Nwagboso (2016) presented qualitative research with various surveys and case studies showcasing the different sectors that have been unable to effect the security challenges in Nigeria. He identified and measures the impact of internal security problems on the socio-economic development of the Nigerian State. Nigeria's internal

security problems affect both the country's economy - rape, murder, cyber-crime, armed robbery, drug trafficking, etc - and the statehood - Niger Delta crises, Jos crises, kidnapping, terrorism/Boko Haram crises. Nwagboso (2016) also argues that the persistent re-occurrence of internal security problems is due largely to the weakness of the country's National Security Policy. This is mostly because rather than formulating policies aimed at confronting the generational causes of insurgency such as poverty, unemployment, inequality, bad governance, among others, policy makers were only interested in adopting approaches and strategies to address the immediate internal problems through the use of ad hoc security outfits (Nwagboso, 2016).

In modern politics, actions and aspects of internal security is conducted through multilateral channels and often through the halls of International Organizations such as the United Nations Security Council, the European Union, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Most world leaders, to this end, have oftentimes discussed their internal security concerns in International Summits and multilateral congregations. Often, it has been the subject of some of these gatherings. The NATO yearly summits are one of the notable examples of this assertion. In 2019, at the 70th anniversary of the NATO summit, the secretary-general of the Organization, Jens Stoltenberg laid out the general agenda of the summit which included; fighting terrorism, arms control, the relationship with Russia, and the rise of China as CNN reports. These are, no doubt, issues that may affect the internal security of the member states of this Organization.

There is existing literature on the workings of multilateral diplomacy and also more than enough work on Nigeria's security issues. There are also literatures that connect multilateral diplomacy to Nigeria's foreign policy and economic activities. However, there are few works that connects multilateral diplomacy to internal security in Nigeria. A chapter in Stephen Chan's book focuses on African diplomacy, he gives detailed diplomatic relations in some selected case studies like Ghana and Rhodesia and the African Union in regards to Nigeria. The work however did not link these relations to internal security. Nagar and Mutasa (2018) edited a book which analyzes in detail Africa's relations with international institutions and the rest of the world. The work explains multilateral relations through some international organizations like the United Nations, International Criminal Court and others. It also mentions the factors that has weakened Africa and aided its fall from its past dominance, however, it did not examine the internal security issues that are plaguing the continent, Nigeria to be precise, which is what the researcher would like to focus on in this work.

Nwagboso (2016) comes close as he measures the impact of internal security problems on the socio-economic development of the Nigerian State. However, he neglected multilateral diplomatic solutions as means to aid improvement of the Nigerian system. And so, this research aims to fill in the gap in scholarly work which would be very relevant given the growing multiplicity security issues arising in the country in recent times. This study will significantly bring to the fore issues in Nigeria's multilateral diplomacy via-a-vis its internal security, thereby serving as a guide for diplomatic and security policy formulation for the government.

In this study, the efforts made by the administration of President Muhammadu Buhari in diplomatic relations with other States as well as the internal security affairs of the State will be closely examined.

### **Theoretical Framework**

In order to identify and critically evaluate the current administration's management of Nigeria's internal security affairs, it is necessary to evaluate a theoretical concept in Nigeria's internal security management. Security as we know it is both theoretical and practical, but for the sake of this framework, we shall be assessing the theoretical issues attributed to multilateral diplomacy and internal security. The concept of multilateral diplomacy and internal security are inextricably linked as examined in the conceptual analysis section of this study.

Multilateral diplomacy can be assessed through a number of theories as reviewed by Giallombardo (2016). However, for the sake of this study, we shall be examining the theories that explains multilateral diplomacy as a tool for the effective management of States' internal security. The Liberal Internationalist theory, whose founding father is Immanuel Kant, epitomizes multilateral diplomacy as a tool for the collective security. Liberal internationalists encourage global democracy and address how best to organize and reform the international system. Bell (2016) explains that liberal internationalists regard violence as a last resort policy and push for diplomacy and multilateralism as the most appropriate strategies for states to pursue. They advocate not only for states but for supranational structures and international organizations to intervene when necessary to uphold and keep the peace. These organizations should achieve multilateral agreements, free trade and democracy between states that promote liberal democracy.

International law however, is criticized as powerful states can ignore it as there is no sovereign to enforce it, they can refuse to cooperate with international organizations and even choose to leave, Brexit in case. The theory however argues that cooperation, progress, and even shared values are possible in International relations, as a matter of fact; they can be mutually beneficial among States involved. The theory is linked to this research as it epitomizes multilateral diplomacy as a tool for collective security of which are the bases for the formation of International Organizations such as ECOWAS.

Neoliberal institutionalism is another theory that adequately justifies multilateral diplomacy as a tool for the effective management of internal security. The neoliberal institutionalist theory is the fusion of the liberal internationalist theory and the realist theory. While the realist theory epitomizes anarchy and state dominance which does not justify the topic of this research, the liberal internationalist theory, as previously discussed, embodies peace and collective security for the sake of perfect harmony in the International space. To this end, the neoliberal institutionalist theory accepts "anarchy and power politics as a key factor in understanding International politics" according to Giallombardo (2016). Notwithstanding, States will always need to tackle collective threats and problems and so must cooperate to ensure the proper management of their internal security.

### **Menace to Internal Security in Nigeria**

Security is one of the most crucial aspects of state affairs. It is fundamental for every government to consider her internal security as a permanent interest in her relations with other States. As Alumona (2019) puts it, the modern state is principally a product of the realization of the need for security. This principle has been adequately theorized by John Locke, Thomas Hobbes, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau in the social contract theory that demonstrates that the existence of a state is an agreement of protection and in essence, security between the people and the government. It is therefore, the paramount responsibility of every state to provide adequate security for her people; protect their lives and properties. This is one of the major causes of global interaction and multilateral diplomacy. Therefore, any state that cannot guarantee the safety of its citizens has failed on all accounts.

The difficulties and threats associated with internal security in Nigeria date back to the country's amalgamation in 1914. It could be said that the amalgamation was a forceful or rather desperate connection of strange bed-fellows. The Southern protectorate and the Northern protectorate of the British Empire which culminated into the state of Nigeria had limited interactions, history, common values, and other factors that could be regarded as veritable tools for national unity. This amalgamation, therefore, created a legacy of perpetual conflict in the heterogeneous and culturally diverse state.

Towards the independence period, these ethnic and historical differences became evident as party groups fell on ethnic lines and there were major disagreements on the need for Independence between the Northern factions and Southern people of Nigeria. Anthony Enahoro proposed the motion for self-governance on March 31, 1953.

It was supported by the NCNC and AG parties of the South but the NPC of the North rejected it. As a result, the Southern leaders walked out of the parliament session, and the Lagos crowd mocked the Northern leaders. In response, riots erupted in Kano, Nigeria's northernmost state, after some Southern leaders went to solidify support for self-governance, they were led by Samuel Ladoke Akintola. During this period, there were several other internal crises in different parts of the country like the Aba Women riot, Wild West crises, Abeokuta women rebellion, Zikist movement uprising among others.

From 1967 to 1970, Nigeria experienced the most devastating warfare in history. The Nigerian civil war, which began at the declaration of independence of the People's Republic of Biafra which comprised of the Eastern Nigerian groups, led to the loss of lives and properties of more than a million people in Nigeria.

At the dawn of the 21st century, a greater menace arose which has since posed the greatest challenge to the Nigerian internal security. Terrorism has grown to become a big thorn in the flesh of the Nigerian government over the years. Despite efforts made by the different administrations to defeat this menace, it continues to linger. During the inaugural speech of President Muhammadu Buhari on May 29, 2015, he instructed that the Nigerian military move to Maiduguri, at the heart of the Boko-Haram insurgency. This move was expected to tackle the insurgency effectively and was met with gusto by Nigerians. Six years after and several battles fought, the Boko-Haram has remained a major threat to Nigeria's Internal affair's security.

With the over 270 girls that were kidnapped from their secondary school at Chibok community in Borno, the northeastern part of Nigeria in April 2014, about 100 are still missing. This violent group has displaced large numbers from their homes over the last five years, causing havoc wherever they go. Their activities have led to the death of thousands of Nigerians especially in the Northeastern part of the country. On February 19, 2018, more than a hundred school girls between the ages of 11-19 were abducted from their government secondary school in Dapchi in the northeastern part of Nigeria by the notorious Boko-Haram group and were returned a few months after except for one girl named Leah Sharibu who refused to convert to Islam from her Christian faith.

More recently, a large group of unknown gunmen wielding Ak-47 rifles has abducted more than 300 students from an all-boys Government science secondary school in the town of Kankara in Katsina state on Friday, 11th December 2020. Although this area is away from the affected zone of Boko Haram, the leader of the group, Abubakar Shekau has come to claim responsibility for the abduction saying that it was perpetrated by his brothers according to reports from *The Guardian*.

In the last seven years, there has been a rise in the attacks perpetrated by herdsmen across the country. In some parts of Nigeria, communal conflict and banditry have become a huge menace. The issue of banditry in recent times have multiplied such that Nigeria's National Security Strategy (2019) shows that banditry constitutes about 40% of national insecurity in Nigeria. Reports by ACAPS (2020) indicates that about 30.6 million persons in the northwest region are threatened by the menace of banditry while 309,000 persons were displaced as at June 2020 in the northwest region of Nigeria. This proves the devastating nature of these crises. In a country where Boko Haram is already causing lots of mayhem, other internal security issues render her a war-torn zone. Between 2015 and 2018, more than 4000 were killed and thousands displaced from their homes and properties due to the clashes between the herdsmen and farmers in middle-belt Nigeria according to reports from Amnesty International.

The herdsmen crisis which started as a provocation has now evolved to deadlier premeditated attacks especially in Plateau, Benue, Adamawa, and Taraba states of Nigeria. Thousands of Nigerians have died as a result of the crisis and the statistics holds a near casualty number as the Boko Haram insurgent groups in a few years.

*ThisDay* reports that between 2017 and 2020, the Fulani herdsmen conducted 654 attacks, killed 2,539, and kidnapped 253 people in Nigeria.

Furthermore, kidnapping for ransom has been another menace to Nigeria's internal security as there have been records of several Nigerians kidnapped especially along the Abuja-Kaduna highway for ransom. According to reports from SB Morgen, between June 2011 and March 2020, about \$18.34 million has been paid to kidnapers as ransom. However, the larger proportion of that figure (just below \$11 million), was said to have been paid out between January 2016 and March 2020, indicating that kidnapping is becoming more lucrative in Nigeria. This has become a great cause for concern and fear for road travellers especially.

The unending crises in Nigeria have ultimately harmed her economy with unemployment rates skyrocketing. Against this backdrop, more youths continue to engage in cybercriminal activities such that Nigeria has been placed on a watch out by some countries around the world for fraudulent activities. In 2019, the United States department of justice reported that 167 Nigerians were arrested in business emails compromising schemes, which was by far the largest apprehension of a group of nationals during this operation. In the year 2020, a popular Nigerian influencer, Ramon Abbas popularly known as *Hushpuppy* was arrested along with others for Business email compromise and other fraudulent activities. An occurrence like this does not only affect internal security but puts a strain on the reputation of the country in the International community.

Finally, the United States Department of State has reported that in the year 2020, Nigeria did not meet the minimum standard for the elimination of human trafficking which implies that Nigeria did not make enough efforts to combat the menace of human trafficking. In all this, Nigeria is subjected to all forms of violence, chaos, police brutality, armed robbery and so on. The last five years has become a nightmare for Nigeria's internal security.

#### **Assessment of President Buhari's Management of Internal Security**

Despite the major setbacks attributed to Nigeria's internal security, the President of Nigeria, Muhammadu Buhari has, through the aid of bilateral and multilateral diplomacy, made several attempts to solve the issue of Nigeria's insecurity. Nigeria, to this end, is a member of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) which is made up of military assets from Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, Benin, and Niger. Although this group was formed in 1994 to fight issues relating to border crises of the member states, it is now majorly focused on the fight against Boko-Haram. In the last five years, this task force has fought a thorough and gallant war against terrorism winning several battles.

On one occasion, the President of Chad, Idriss Deby joined his frontline soldiers in a battle that led to the decimation of Boko Haram camp at the Nigerian-Chadian territories. This operation codenamed "Operation Wrath of Bomo" led to the release of several Nigerian soldiers held captive at Magumeri in the Northeastern part of Nigeria.

As soon as the administration of Muhammadu Buhari kicked off in 2015, he launched a diplomatic offensive by visiting other countries like; Niger, Chad, United States, Cameroon, Benin, and the G7, where he sought to consolidate support and harness resources to combat the Islamist sect (Ewi, 2015). With his diplomatic alliance with these neighbouring states, the administration of Buhari has been able to isolate the terrorist group by ensuring they do not have neighbouring countries to run to in the case of attack which has proven effective to an extent. The camp of the Islamic sect has been decimated several times with only a fragment of the sect coming back through the aid of guerrilla warfare to cause more mayhem.

Furthermore, Nigeria, led by Muhammadu Buhari, has participated in a number of international security summits, as well as hosted a number of summits and multilateral interactions in this regard. In 2016, Nigeria

hosted an International summit to tackle the issues of Boko Haram with Regional and Western powers gathered in Nigeria. The World reports 2019 made a publication stating that in September 2018:

“Germany, Nigeria, Norway, and the United Nations co-hosted a high-level conference on the Lake Chad Region in Berlin that raised over \$2 billion in support, and \$467 million in concessional loans for humanitarian, peacebuilding, and development activities in Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Nigeria. The European Union also announced the release of €138 million (\$157 million) to assist vulnerable communities in the region affected by prolonged violence, insecurity, and environmental degradation.”

Also, President Buhari’s administration, in a bid to subside the Boko Haram insurgency and other security challenges in Nigeria, has purchased arms from different countries in the world. He approved the sum of one billion USD in 2018 to the Nigerian Defense authorities, for the purchase of security equipment to fight insecurity in the country (Tukur, 2018).

According to the 2019 world report, about 45 people were killed in an attack by bandits in Gwaska, Kaduna State in May 2018. Zamfara state was also gravely affected by frequent bandit attacks that have killed at least 400 people and leftover 38,000 people displaced in 2018 alone. In July, the government of Buhari deployed about a thousand soldiers to Zamfara to tackle the crisis.

Ladan and Matawalli (2020) states that the governments at the local, state and federal levels have made efforts to tackle banditry with a view to improving food security among others and also even goes further to list these efforts. Brenner (2021) reiterates that Nigerian security forces have utilized a variety of tactics over the years to combat banditry. This started with the federal government deploying police and military operations to the affected northwestern states, this has succeeded in pushing back attacks, destroyed hideouts, and killed and arrested hundreds of bandits (Brenner, 2021). However, attacks have still continued.

Although the battle is anything but over, the administration of Muhammadu Buhari's multilateral diplomatic efforts have played a vital role in the effort to efficiently control Nigeria's internal security. The President stated to BBC news as reported by the Punch Newspaper that the Boko Haram militant sect had been technically defeated and could only hit soft targets. Despite the subsequent attacks of the militant group, it is without a doubt that they have been dealt a heavy blow.

However, that is not to posit that the present administration has done enough. Public opinion says otherwise. The inactions of the President on several occasions and reactions have made him increasingly unpopular among the people. There have been several reports on the incessant attacks of herdsmen on farmers and their communities in different parts of the country over the last seven years. However, the President has been silent as the situation persists, enabling these herdsmen to wreak more havoc unabated.

In the same vein, the United States Department of State in its 2020 Trafficking in Persons reports stated that there are reports of, and insufficient efforts to address, government officials’ complicity in human trafficking offenses in Nigeria. In addition, the Nigerian government under President Muhammadu Buhari did not continue efforts to train government officials and raise public awareness on the issues of human trafficking which have become more prevalent. To this end, Nigeria was downgraded to Tier 2 watch list.

Besides, the issues of internal security have gotten to the point that the people have on several occasions risen in protest against the government. In 2020, young Nigerians across the country organized weeks-long protests against police brutality with the hashtag ENDSARS. This protest kicked off out of frustration of the unabated and incessant persecution of young Nigerians by the members of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad unit of the Nigerian Police. Unfortunately, as it should be, the government withdrew security operatives from these protests



as it lingered on which gave room for hoodlums to hijack and cause mayhem across the country. In reaction, the government used military force to quell the protests across the country which has allowed innocent Nigerians to be persecuted while many of the hoodlums that caused mayhem are left unbothered. This, on all accounts, is an example of poor management of internal security in Nigeria.

In the words of Nnaemeka, Chukwuemeka, Tochukwu & Chiamaka (2015),

“It is sad and disheartening that 52 years after, Nigeria is still held in thralldom, it’s citizenry Pine away in the vice-like grip of political intolerance, unbridled but violent outburst of ethnoreligious and primordial sentiments across the nation and for which the security forces remain clueless; unsolved politically motivated serial murders, general lawlessness and banditry, unbridled official corruption and outright state robbery.”

To this end, it is safe to note that there has not been a proper management of Nigeria’s internal security affairs under the administration of President Muhammadu Buhari.

### **Conclusion**

Stemming from the above, it cannot be overemphasized that multilateral diplomacy and the management of internal security affairs in any country are inseparable. In effect, the solutions gleaned from the tables of multilateral discussions, summits, international relations, and alliances are veritable tools in the management of internal security. The study finds that regardless of how visible multilateral diplomacy is in managing Nigeria's internal security under President Muhammad Buhari's administration, the country's internal security is deteriorating by the day, with growing threat in all sections and divides. This shows that that the Buhari-led government has not done enough to properly manage Nigeria’s internal security, and that all efficient hands must be on deck to see to the change of the disastrous status quo.

### **Recommendations**

The Federal Government of Nigeria under the leadership of President Muhammadu Buhari has done a number in the fight against terrorism but despite the actions taken, they have not completely triumphed, if at all. The increasing silence and inactions of the government in recent times over cases of kidnap especially on the Abuja-Kaduna highway and the Fulani Herdsmen attacks on farm communities is a major cause for alarm. It is imperative that these cases are adequately managed and conflict completely quelled before it becomes a full-blown chaotic situation of ethnic war and complete anarchy. The tensions brewing in regions all over the country could become, if not properly curtailed, a major security issue for successive governments to handle. Nigeria would then be subjected to the war on all sides and divides, and be forced to commit her already recessional economy to maintaining law and order, bringing the country to the brink of economic and financial failure.

It is also important that the government responds promptly to matters of internal security however, no matter how small it should be. Action and sensitivity to national issues by the government are attributes of a responsible government.

In the same vein, there should be the establishment of law and order while the principles of democracy are held sacrosanct by the government. The government must prove to the people that they are democratic and not an autocratic regime in disguise. To this end, they must promote the rule of law, protecting and allowing the citizens to exercise their fundamental human rights including the right to protest and show their displeasure at the government, as reviewed in the ENDSARS situation. Above all, the government owes the people accountability on all fronts.

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