
NIGERIA AND THE CHALLENGES OF NATIONAL UNITY

*(A Strategic Research Document by Savannah Centre for
Diplomacy, Democracy and Development and
Sir Emeka Offor Foundation)*



© Savannah Centre for Diplomacy, Democracy & Development, 2021

NIGERIA AND THE CHALLENGES OF NATIONAL UNITY



ISBN: 978-978-948-682-3

All rights reserved

No part of the publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without prior permission of SCDDD.

Savannah Centre for Diplomacy, Democracy and Development (SCDDD)

Plot 239 P.O.W. Mafemi Crescent, behind Chida Event Centre
beside Daily Trust, District 900108 - Abuja.
+234 7039296332: +234 8024240029:

info@savannahcentrenig.org: www.savannahcentre.com
Twitter.com/savannah_Centre: facebook.com/savannahcentreng



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents	ii
Foreward	iii
Introduction	1
History	3
Challenges	7
Recommendations	12
<i>Convene a National Dialogue:</i>	
<i>Constitutional Reform / Review:</i>	
<i>Mass / Civic Action:</i>	
<i>Ethnic Nationalities Conference / Sovereign National</i>	
<i>Conference / Regional Conference on Restructuring:</i>	
<i>Engagement for National Unity and Gaining Stakeholders' Trust</i>	
Conclusion	15
References:.....	16
Research Contributors:.....	17

FOREWORD

When Nigeria attained independence on 1st October 1960, Nigerians and the international community had great expectations that the new nation would make giant strides toward the attainment of good governance, durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. Such expectations and high hope were not misplaced considering the abundant human and natural resources with which Nigeria is endowed. Unfortunately, since independence, Nigeria as a nation has been plagued with diverse negative tendencies such as political instability, ethno-religious crises, claims of marginalization and consequently, a devastating civil war that some of the wounds are still being nursed. The consequences of these challenges have made it very difficult for Nigeria to attain the lofty ideals that came with political independence.

In spite of having overcome the 30 months bitter civil war, its consequences, regrettably, have continued to remain with us till today. Attempts at stabilizing the polity, led Nigeria's political leaders and the elite to try out different forms or structure of government- federalism, parliamentary democracy, military dictatorship and now, presidential democratic system. The National Conference of 2014 was one of these engagements or the series of dialogues on the best system of government and structural arrangement for effective governance of the country. Unfortunately, its Report is yet to be fully implemented.

Half a century since the civil war ended, different levels of expressions and agitations for the soul of the Nigerian State kept emerging from and across the six geopolitical zones, threatening national unity and desired development. The security challenges that have continued to plague our country include the Boko Haram insurgency, which had and continue to have devastating impact on Adamawa, Borno and Yobe States, cattle rustling across the nation, particularly,

North West and North Central, not forgetting the Shiite- Military clash with unimaginable backlashes, especially in the North West. Other security challenges are the resurgence of the Avengers in the Niger Delta in the South-South and kidnapping for ransom across the country. These violent conflicts sometimes have their roots in the perception and reality of economic, social, political and even security imbalances, feelings or perceptions of being marginalized and or excluded from governance. Today, Nigerians appear to have drifted away from each other or away from the Federal Government. This is a threat to national unity and cohesion, with negative impact on the socio-economic development of Nigeria.

In view of the foregoing, the Savannah Centre for Diplomacy, Democracy and Development (SCDDD), in collaboration with Sir Emeka Offor Foundation (SEOF), sees an opportunity for renewal of efforts to engage a cross section of interest groups across Nigeria for National Unity and cohesion. We believe strongly that in the current atmosphere where consensus among the critical stakeholders is lacking, necessary buy-in by the majority for national unity, durable peace and sustainable development cannot be achieved. Hence, SCDDD and SEOF are proposing a programme of Continuous Engagement for National Unity (CENU) to advocate for effective management of the challenges of governance and national cohesion in the country. For effectiveness and impact, a group of eminent Nigerians tagged “Advocacy and Mediation Council” (AMC), drawn from the six geo-political zones, is established by SCDDD and SEOF to help drive this very important narrative alongside national questions as well as governance priorities for sustainable development.

Mallam Abidu Yazid, OON

Chairman, Board of Directors

Savannah Centre for Diplomacy, Democracy and Development (SCDDD)

INTRODUCTION

“ A man who calls his kinsmen to a feast does not do so to redeem them from starving, because they all have food in their own houses. When we gather in the moonlight at village ground, it is not because of the moon, as every man can see it from his own compound. Therefore, we come together because it is good for brotherliness and nation building. Therefore let us continue with the team spirit and enjoy the power of togetherness, and let's smile not because we don't have challenges but because we are stronger than the challenges. ”

~ Professor Chinua Achebe

The above quote from one of Nigeria's foremost scholars, Professor Chinua Achebe, gives credence to the significance of maintaining national engagement regardless of the challenges being faced in the process of promoting and consolidating national unity and solidity. On the other hand, a few years before independence, late Chief Obafemi Awolowo, one of Nigeria's founding fathers had argued thus:

“Nigeria is not a nation; it is a mere geographical expression. There are no 'Nigerians' in the same sense as there are 'English,' 'Welsh,' or 'French.' The word 'Nigerian' is merely a distinctive appellation to distinguish those who live within the boundaries of Nigeria and those who do not.”

The late Chief Awolowo's argument reflects, to a great extent, the pessimism still being nursed by some people that it has been due to the lack of the attributes of a nation that Nigerians have not and would not be able to unite and

act together to build a nation. This reality upon which the country's growth has been tied to has continued to saturate discussions on unity and nationhood, especially in recent times, so much that the nature of federalism practiced in the country has largely been met with discontent, with many opting for a review or, as many would term it, a 'national conference' to collectively redesign the country in the manner and structure that would give all citizens a sense of belonging.

In many ways, the Nigerian State has not lived up to its full capacity, especially in terms of harnessing its natural and human resources and investing the proceeds for national growth and development. Nicknamed the 'Giant of Africa', Nigeria has, since its independence, continued to play a 'big brother' role in the African continent, but has found it difficult to replicate those gestures internally, especially with regards to fostering peace and unity among its people. This has continued to raise questions why Nigeria's 'big brother role' in Africa is succeeding but it is not making any headway internally. Many analysts have blamed this on the difficulties of meeting up the diverse demands of the over 250 ethnic nationalities that make up the most populous black country in the world, each wanting to be adequately recognized and be given equitable share of the nation's commonwealth.

HISTORY

Nigeria gained independence from the British colonialists in 1960, after a sustained agitation for self-rule by some of its foremost nationalists – Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, Sir Herbert Macaulay, Sir Ahmadu Bello, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Chief Anthony Enahoro among others (Ubaku, Emeh & Ankikwa, 2014). Considered against the backdrop of the huge diversity and division along ethnic, religious and regional faultlines since independence, the biggest challenge Nigeria has been contending with is the issue of national unity and harmony for growth and development. In all, the most disturbing of these divisions with deep implications on unity and nation-building has been the sharp divide between the Muslim majority north and the Christian majority south, notwithstanding the fact that there are other minority ethnic and religious groups across the north-south divide in the country. This dichotomy negatively impacted the political trajectory of the country in ways that led to the civil war between 1967 and 1970, as well as the series of agitations and recurrent violent conflicts experienced in different parts of the country such as: the herder-farmer conflicts, the Yoruba-Hausa disturbances in Lagos, the military coups and counter coups as well as the Igbo massacre of 1966, the clashes between the Itsekiri and the Ijaw in Delta State, the Ile-Ife and Modakeke clashes, the religious clashes in Kaduna and Plateau States, etc.

Nigerians are familiar with conflict and compromise, a pattern that has continued even in recent times. Interestingly, the theory of 'conflict and compromise' has now gone one step further to make up the two sides of the Nigerian Social Contract. Regular conflicts and eventual compromise have become recurring features of our national story. Most of these meetings carry the same themes – planning and strategising how to co-exist in today's Nigeria,

and the resultant effect; 'a White Paper' containing detailed explanations on why we need to tolerate each other and then come to a compromise for national unity. When it is the gathering of the political elite on a national scale, with the goal of fostering national development, we call them 'National Conferences.' Some people have argued that the amalgamation of the Southern and Northern Protectorates into one Nigeria in 1914 immediately sowed the seed of disintegration in the colonial enclave. That the amalgamation was done not to unite the people but mainly to exploit the territory for the British political, economic and ideological interest, as was seen in the construction of the railways linking the two protectorates.

In his summation of Nigeria's history, Richard Bourne argues that the British rationale for amalgamation was 'balancing the books', or put more simply, 'colonial convenience.' By no means did they care about the peoples across the Niger at that time, they only wanted an easier way to dominate the hinterlands and exploit the locals. Professor Wole Soyinka further underscored this point by drawing attention to the fact that "Nigeria lacks the coherent philosophy of reproducing our existence, of harmonising co-existence, or reintegrating the constituent parts into a discernible, functional whole all of which transforms a mere nation space into a true nation state".

Just like Soyinka and Richard Bourne, so many other social commentators and nationalists have, at different times and using more robust platforms, introspected the Nigerian State in consonance with the recurring clamour for unity and peaceful coexistence. But one would be tempted to pose a question: Is Nigeria a nation, a true nation?

The formation of a nation-state by default implies a group of people sharing a particular geographical location, having shared ideologies and culture. But the case with Nigeria seems far from this reality. Some people have often referred to late Chief Obafemi Awolowo's quote as their base argument that since his days till date, Nigeria lacks the attributes of a nation state, hence the unlikelihood of the country emerging as one. In 1947, prior to independence, he argued:

“Nigeria is not a nation; it is a mere geographical expression. There are no 'Nigerians' in the same sense as there are 'English,' 'Welsh,' or 'French.' The word 'Nigerian' is merely a distinctive appellation to distinguish those who live within the boundaries of Nigeria and those who do not.”

When scholars define the concept of a united Nigeria, they like to picture the fusing of many different units to coexist as a single unit. But how far have we been able to live and coexist as an entity? Or does our existence only lie in our ability to heal wounds and repair damages made possible by the stains and strains of ethnicity and religious bias?

Efforts towards fostering national unity in Nigeria are viewed as a long term challenge (Paden,2012), as against the quick-fix measures that are often deployed, particularly as part of conflict management approaches that suffer from lack of detailed planning. Nevertheless, some efforts have proven valuable in dealing with some of the country's existential challenges to state-building. Some of these challenges are linked to the country's political development since independence. Elaigwu (2005:4-5), identified four key challenges to Nigeria's political stability, which, in many ways, have had serious implication for national unity. These are the challenge of authority, in the context of state maximisation of its authority; the challenge of creating unity among the heterogenous groups in the country; the challenge of participation, in terms of the extent to which people are involved in decision-making processes; as well as the challenge of extraction and distribution, which has to do with the ability of the state to extract and distribute scarce, but allocatable resources equitably and fairly.

Nigeria has embraced federalism as a system of government that is ideal for the management of diversity. However, what has been termed the politics of federalism has made it difficult to create a balance between the centripetal and centrifugal forces in the country, as evident in the disquiets over the way and manner federalism is practiced in Nigeria (Adedeji, 1971). The call for the practice of 'true federalism' by some section of the country throws up some of the underlying discontent in the polity since independence. For the proponents of federalism, such as Wheare (1964), a successful federal system is one in which

none of the constituent or federating units is so powerful that it can overrule the others and bend the will of the federal government to themselves. Nigeria's experience with the practice of federalism represents one in which the constituent units continue to express real and imagined fears of political domination. The country's post-independence reality is one of mutual fear of domination in which while the north fears southern domination through skills, the South fears Northern domination through population. In essence, while the North dominates politically, the South dominates economically (Elaiwu, 2005:10-11).

CHALLENGES

“The present unity of Nigeria, as well as its disunity is in part a reflection of the form and character of the common government- the British superstructure – and the challenges it has undergone since 1900”

(Coleman, 1958:45-46).

In recent times, there has been growing concerns about the negation of the federal character principles by the Nigerian state and its officials. For instance, at no time in the history of the country was its security architecture dominated by a section of the country. President Muhammadu Buhari has been severally accused of sowing the seed of nepotism through his appointments. The Chief of Army Staff, Chief of Air Staff, Inspector General of Police, Director-General of the Department of State Services, Director-General of the National Intelligence Agency, National Security Adviser, Minister of Defence, Comptrollers-General of the Nigerian Immigration Services, as well as the Nigerian Custom Services and Minister for Police Affairs are all from the northern part of the country until recently when a more federal character compliant appointment of new Service Chiefs were made by the President. Such an imbalance is something that is viewed as inimical to efforts towards national unity.

The security challenges that plague our country today include the Boko Haram insurgency which has continued to have devastating impact on Adamawa, Borno and Yobe States, cattle rustling and banditry across the nation, the North-West

and North-Central in particular, not forgetting the Shiite-Military clash and its consequences, also in the North West. Other security challenges include the resurgence of the avengers in the Niger Delta in the South-South and kidnapping for ransom across the country, particularly in the North West and the South East, where the indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) has been agitating for self-actualization, and the increasing occurrences of herders/ farmers clashes across every region of the country.

Also, the derivation principle, in the context of revenue distribution, is one of the major challenges to national unity in Nigeria. In the late 1990s, agitation for resource control in the oil-rich Niger-Delta region of the country reached alarming levels which led to the emergence of militant youths that were engaged in armed confrontation with the Nigerian state. Within the polity, attempts towards addressing this challenge has generated varied forms of responses in terms of proposals by a wide spectrum of citizens and states alike. Some of these proposals include the call for a review of the derivation principle to allow states to control natural resources within their domains and pay tax to the federal government; having equal share of the revenue between states and federal government; a revision of the derivation downward; revision of the revenue formula in favour of the states; make derivation applicable to solid minerals among others. So far, the derivation formula in practice is one in which the federal government takes the “lion's share”.

What has been described as a the challenge of 'dual identities’ in the context of the tension between religion and secularity in Nigeria (Elaigwu, 1995:4), determines the extent to which the nature of the Nigerian society continues to breed rivalry along religious lines. Since the First Republic, the formation of political parties took regional character, which divided the country into two – largely North and largely South. For the minority ethnic population in the North, the establishment of the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC) represented an attempt to resist what was largely perceived as political domination by the Hausa/Fulani. This situation led to an alliance of convenience between the UMBC and political parties from other regions outside the north. Today,

sensitivities that are linked to religion are extremely strong in ways that both the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and the Jama'atul Nasril Islam (JNI) have become vocal platforms for articulating their interests in all aspects of human lives in the country.

While at the core of the #Endsars Protests was the Police high-handedness and brutality, in which most victims have been the hapless youths, it must be admitted that addressing the prevalent conditions of abject poverty, huge unemployment and unemployable youths as well as deficits in critical infrastructure from their root causes, remain the most significant pathway in the resolution of the multiple challenges facing the nation.

In our decades of existence as a nation, there have been so many challenges that have impacted our democracy at various levels. Discussions in panels, seminars and media outfits coated with academic research questions and public opinions at newspaper stands and at leisure centers have saturated the polity. The discussions never end, and they have had little or no significant effect on the healing path Nigeria needs as a nation. Although there is a general agreement that the path to discovering a system that works best for Nigeria is feasible, it must be borne in mind that we do not have to wait for a perfect solution before embarking on the Unity Project. We have already organized numerous engagements costing billions of Naira. The Unity Project is now.

In the heat of the multi-faceted ethnic crises, most of which have occurred in Kaduna and Plateau States and, most recently, in Benue, Plateau, Nasarawa and Taraba States involving farmers and herders is the recurrent misguided insinuations that the crises have religious connotations. At different levels and in the past, certain groups have complained of religious and ethnic discrimination. This has led to most ethnic groups asking for religious and ethnic rights within their states. Furthermore, the use of religious tenets in public discussions and actions have further exacerbated conflicts in certain States in the country. The reality of one group having its interest met and another group having its own denied or delayed has brought about heated arguments and discussions within states. In other words, it becomes very difficult to calm nerves and avert crisis

when certain groups are denied equal rights to increase their stakes or power and wealth or to alter certain beliefs and norms in a shared State.

Every section of the country seems to have a solution to Nigeria's sluggish growth and disunity, offering solutions at intervals and at times when they feel marginalized and underrepresented at the center. For example, in Benue State, the Idomas are fighting for equal opportunity to hold power, if not, they should be granted their own state. In Kaduna and Nasarawa States, the minority population are hoping to get a fair share of the commonwealth and state power. Some people have always argued that the challenges of national unity and cohesion have persisted so long because successive governments' policies have tended to exacerbate rather than assuage the feeling or perception of being politically excluded, economically marginalized and socially oppressed. By virtue of the inequity and inequality that have characterized most policies of the federal government on the basis of ethnicity and religion, it is safe to say that the process of promoting real unity and harmony among the people has not even started in earnest. They further argue that from the Gowon's post-civil war healing rhetorics of "No Victor No Vanquished", the post-civil war peace initiatives of 'Reconstruction, Reintegration and Rehabilitation programme carried out in the Eastern Region, the introduction of the National Youth Service Corp (NYSC), the reclaiming of properties across the country to the creation of more states, the challenges to national unity, growth and development have persisted in different forms. Even, the federal character principle enshrined in the 1979 constitution and the quota system, as well as the geopolitical zoning principle aimed at assuaging the eastern region and the entire ethnic nationalities that constitute what is known as Nigeria have not helped out. Not that the policies are defective but the problem has been the biases in their implementation

Conflicts always occur in a context. But common to many inter-group conflicts is the skewed distribution of socio-economic and political resources. In most situations, activities leading to the conflicts rise from poverty and a collective decision to find justice through any means.

Despite the deliberate act and plan to get governance to the grassroots through

various forms of representation, the issue of identity has continued to hamper the fabrics of unity. This is even made possible more so as some of the representatives of the people in the National and State Houses of Assembly have continuously acted as a barrier to the progress and growth of certain groups. It is apparent that both religion and ethnicity have emerged in the minds of some people as the strongest factors militating against national unity, growth and development in Nigeria. In some parts of the country, it has been quite difficult to distinguish between ethnic and religious clashes, although it is widely believed that ethnic differences would not have been a very pronounced cause for disunity if it had not been overlapped with religion.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the analysis above regarding the solutions to removing the deep seated disunity in Nigeria, the following key recommendations should be considered:

CONVENE A NATIONAL DIALOGUE

National Dialogue remains a credible option for the Nigerian government to explore. Though there has been series of national dialogues – 2004 and 2014, the inability of the governments in power then and the successive ones to implement the recommendations remains a key drawback to the national unity project. The present administration would leave an indelible landmark in the history of Nigeria's journey to nationhood if it convenes and implement the recommendations of a National Dialogue on unity and national development. The form and character of such a national dialogue should benefit from past records and the input of all sections of the country and should not be by a presidential fiat.

CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM / REVIEW

Since the return of democratic rule in 1999, there has been numerous attempts to reform/review the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended), with limited success. The focus has been to craft a constitution that reflects the wishes and aspirations of the citizens – “We The People”. This idea of a constitutional reform/review is important to the extent that it will be participatory, rather than having a “rubber stamp” process whereby the National and state Houses of Assembly are doing the bidding of their political parties, Governors and the Presidency. In the context of the series of efforts towards constitutional review/ reform, proponents of the North Central geo-

political zone or Middle Belt region have been consistent and active participants in the process. There is a broad based assumption that the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (As amended) is fundamentally flawed because it was the product of the military government. For national acceptance, the strong call for the Constitution to be subjected to a referendum is supported.

MASS / CIVIC ACTION

Since governance is all about the people, the same people have a right to decide how they are governed through mass /civic actions that will compel government to act in line with the people's wishes. Though mass /civic actions have the potential for mobilising citizens for collective action for or against what is viewed by its proponents as a people's agenda, such actions can easily be hijacked by criminal elements, if they are not properly coordinated like we saw in the recently halted #EndSars protest that sought to end bad governance characterized, among others, by police brutality, extrajudicial killings as well as institutionalized corruption in Nigeria. The recommendation for mass/civic action is informed by the people's strong complaints of neglect by successive governments over the years.

ETHNIC NATIONALITIES CONFERENCE/SOVEREIGN NATIONAL CONFERENCE OR REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESTRUCTURING

Over the years, opinion leaders/influencers from different parts of the country have consistently and persistently used different platforms on several occasions to voice out the urgent need for the Federal Government to organize what they call "Ethnic Nationalities or Sovereign National Conference or Referendum on Constitutional Changes" to foster national unity, durable peace and sustainable growth and development. One of such prominent advocates for constitutional changes or restructuring is the Late Chief Anthony Anahoro, who spent a better part of his life working with ethnic nationalities across the country, towards crafting an agenda for the future of the country. This project can be advanced through regional platforms such as the O'odua People's Congress (OPC), Middle Belt Forum (MBF), Arewa People's Congress (APC), Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), Movement for the

Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSSOP). For the proponents of the Middle Belt, restructuring the Nigerian federation remains the most effective way of addressing the grievances of political and economic domination of the minority by the majority ethnic groups in the country.

ENGAGEMENT FOR NATIONAL UNITY AND GAINING STAKEHOLDERS' TRUST

The need to engage a cross-section of interest groups across Nigeria for National Unity and cohesion where consensus of critical stakeholders, including Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), would be revalidated for necessary buy-in towards durable peace, national unity and sustainable development as being advocated for and promoted by the SCDDD/SEOF-led “***Continuous Engagements for National Unity (CENU) Project***. Besides, the adoption of the 5-point demands of the #Endsars Protesters, government must move fast and transparently into the implementation stage. This would help in restoring mutual trust between the people and the Federal and State Governments, especially the trust of the young Nigerians whom many have described as the ***tribeless generation*** or ***generation Z*** whose major concerns are having a system that works for all citizens and national development.

CONCLUSION

Consequent upon the challenges of unity analysis of Nigeria, the entronement of justice, equity and fairness are flagged as core ingredients for promoting the sense of belonging, inclusivity, good governance, justice, peace, equity and national unity. Mediating the differences that magnify fault-lines and polarize Nigeria requires a thorough peace and conflict mapping of the country to identify and reinforce the factors and guarantors of peace and create disincentives for drivers of violent conflicts. The SCDDD and the SEOF share the strong belief that the best team to lead this process across the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria through the CENU Project is the carefully selected members of the Advocacy and Mediation Council (AMC). Finally, recognition must be made of the need to mainstream peace and conflict sensitivity into all facets of national planning in Nigeria – politics, economy, bureaucracy, education, housing and urban renewal, industry, security, legislation and law enforcement, among others. A strategic plan must thus recognize the short, medium and long term aspects of the engagement with stakeholders and factor sustainability into the overall design of the project to ensure the restoration of public trust for national unity and nation-building in Nigeria.

REFERENCES

Adedeji, A (1971) Federalism and development planning in Nigeria, in Ayida, A.A & Onitiri, A.M.H (eds) Reconstruction and development in Nigeria: Proceedings of a National Conference, Ibadan: Oxford University Press

Elaigwu, I. J (2005) Nigeria, yesterday and today for tomorrow: Essays in governance and society, Jos: AHA Publishing House.

Elaigwu, I.J (1995) Religion and nation-building: The paradox of dual identities in Nigeria, Paper presented at the 7th Annual Conference of the Council of Nigerian People and Organisations (CONPO) in Washington, DC, September 14th – 17th.

Gambari, A. I. (2008). The Challenges of Nation Building: Case Study of Nigeria, Paper presented at the first year anniversary lecture, Mustapha Akanbi Foundation. Abuja, Nigeria, February 7, 2008

Paden, J (2012) Postelection conflict management in Nigeria: The challenge of national unity, United States: School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University

Ubaku, K.C., Emeh, C.A., & Anyikwa, C.N (2014) Impact of nationalist movement on the actualisation of Nigerian independence, 1914-1960, International Journal of History and Philosophical Research, Vol.2, No. 1, Pp. 54-67.

RESEARCH CONTRIBUTORS:

Ambassador Abdullahi Omaki, nooc, fsma

Executive Director (2014–2020)

Savannah Centre for Diplomacy, Democracy and Development (SCDDD)

Oshita, O. Oshita fspsp, ficmc

Executive Director

Ubuntu Centre for Africa Peacebuilding and Development

Professor of Peace and Development Studies

Department of Philosophy

University of Calabar

Nigeria

Chris, M.A. Kwaja, Ph.D., fspsp

Senior Lecturer / Researcher

Centre for Peace and Security Studies

Modibbo Adama University of Technology

Yola, Adamawa State, Nigeria

Mr. Obinna Ukaeje

Researcher, Department of Area and Regional Studies

National Defence College, Abuja-Nigeria

Dr. Dayo Oluyemi-Kusa

Independent Consultant/Conflict Transformation Expert & Former Director,

Institute for Peace & Conflict Resolution (IPCR),

The Presidency, Abuja

Professor Kyari, Mohammed

Vice-chancellor Nigeria Army University
Mubi, Borno State

Prof. Abubakar Sadiq Mohammad

Centre for Democratic Development Research and Training (CDDRT)
Zaria,
Kaduna State.

AIG Chris Ezike (Rtd)

Chief of Staff
Sir Emeka Offor Foundation (SEOF)

Sir Bola Abimbola

Senior Programme Manager and Head
Programme, Communication and Advocacy
Savannah Centre for Diplomacy, Democracy and Development (SCDDD)

ABOUT SAVANNAH CENTRE FOR DIPLOMACY, DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT

Savannah Centre for Diplomacy, Democracy and Development (SCDDD) is an authoritative non-governmental organization committed to research, advocacy training and policy analysis in the areas of conflict prevention, management, democracy and sustainable development in Nigeria and Africa. It was founded in 1993 by Professor Ibrahim Agboola Gambari, OCORT, CFR; a renowned scholar and seasoned Diplomat, former Nigeria's Foreign Affairs Minister and former United Nations Under-Secretary General for Political Affairs. The Centre began full operation in February 2014.

The SCDDD is leading strategic discussions on inclusive governance for sustainable development, in order to promote human security, sustainable peace, good governance, rule of law and human rights in Nigeria and Africa, shaping public policy through research and knowledge sharing. We are committed to improving the democratic and governance space through advocacy and the provision of context-specific training and solutions to governments, policy makers and some non-state actors.

ABOUT SIR EMEKA OFFOR FOUNDATION (SEOF)

Sir Emeka Offor Foundation (SEOF) is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation based in Nigeria and was established by Sir Dr Emeka Offor in the 1990s, with a vision to reduce poverty and create life-improving economic opportunities for those residing in Nigeria's marginalized communities through Education, Healthcare Services, Youth Empowerment Program and Infrastructural Development. Sir Emeka Offor Foundation also runs a Widows' Cooperative Program structured to assist widows remain independent and respected in the society.

In collaboration with Books for Africa (BFA) Atlanta Georgia, The Foundation works to improve education in Nigeria and throughout Africa by equipping libraries, schools and universities, with computers, textbooks and library books. Most recently, the Foundation has provided medical equipment, medicaments and supplies across Nigeria to assist with the COVID-19 pandemic response.

