

READINGS
IN PEACE &
CONFLICT

Essays in honour of
Professor Isaac Olawale Albert

Editors:
Elias Suleiman Bogoro
Matt Meyer
Nathaniel D. Danjibo

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Farmers'-Herders' Crisis in Nigeria: A Basis for Sustaining Peace Approach?

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BACKGROUND

No matter how aesthetically attractive the race (Fulani) may be, or how deep its roots in history, they and their cattle must be settled if the large issues in Nigeria are to be solved in the interest of the Nigerian people. (Adebanwi 2016: 51)

Nevertheless, critical security analysis has inspired a new stream of analysis and research. It offers a nuanced view of violent conflict, seeing it not only as an obstacle to development but also a potential site of social and political innovation (Luchham and Kirk 2013: 4).

Insurgency, militancy and violent inter-group conflicts constitute major causes of violent deaths in Nigeria's Fourth-Republic which was inaugurated on the 29th of May 1999. Indeed statistics of fatalities resulting from violent conflicts in Nigeria are quite alarming and reflective of the challenging task of precisely numerating fatalities arising from conflicts. Governments at all tiers in Nigeria play the politics of statistics of death by deliberately playing down the death toll arising from such incidences (Pavesi 2017). Taking into cognizance the prize paid by both elites and everyday people in the struggle that culminated into the cessation of sixteen brutal years of military rule and the emergence Nigeria's Fourth-Republic Wale Adebanwi (2016) describes it as *The Fought Republic*. It has since lived up to the description as successive administration has had to grapple with threats to peaceful co-existence and national security arising mainly from inter-group conflicts, militancy and insurgency. Each of these has necessitated the deployment of armed security personnel as symbols of state power to conflict and insurgency-affected sites across the country.

The extent of inter-group violence especially intra and inter-ethnic violence that occurred in the first five years of Obasanjo's eight year rule was unprecedented in Nigeria's post-colonial history (Adebanwi 2004). Besides the Niger-Delta and Sharia crisis of that period, it was the era of ethnic militias like the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) that has metamorphosed into the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) eventually labeled as a terrorist organization by the Federal government in September 2017. Others in the period were the *Egbesu Boys*, the *Bakassi Boys* and the *Odua People's Congress* (OPC) whose activities an irked president Obasanjo described as "complete madness" (Olarinmoye 2010:139) for which he threatened to declare emergency rule and a shoot on sight order in Lagos state, Nigeria's economic capital.

In an apparent *apologia* for the allegations of human rights abuses that trailed the conduct of the military in sites of communal conflicts like Odi, in Bayelsa State and in Saki Ibiam in Benue State which made national headlines, former President Obasanjo averred that "I believe

in human rights just as I believe in citizens' obligations and sanctity of life and therefore impunity in taking other people's lives which only God alone can create must not be condoned." (Obasanjo, 2014: 303).

Pertaining to other conflicts, he clarified that the federal government only intervened militarily when State governments were overwhelmed by the threats to security of lives. Numerically, Obasanjo's administration from 1999 to 2007 had the highest mix of identity conflicts involving both religious and ethnic communities within States and nationally which made military deployments imperative most of which were largely criticized for their high rates of indiscriminate human rights abuses.

On assumption of office in 2007, it was clear that the main conflicts warranting direct presidential intervention by the President Umar Yar'adua and Goodluck Jonathan administration were the militancy in the Niger Delta and the Boko Haram insurgency in the northeastern geopolitical zone of Nigeria. According to Olusegun Adeniyi (Adeniyi 2011) resolving the Niger Delta crisis was one of the cardinal concerns of Yar'adua. In approaching this, he aimed at addressing years of developmental neglect and criminality in the zone using what can be described an inclusive and participatory approach that paid attention to the *local turn* as prescribed by Roger Mac Ginty and Olivier Richmond, because rather than a top-down approach, Yar'adua demonstrated receptiveness to the views of the locals of Niger Delta which informed acting on the recommendation of the Ledum Mitte that an Amnesty programme be initiated (Adeniyi 2011). Although the origin and activities of the *Boko Haram* arguably dates back to 2002, the group whose full name is "Sunni Community for the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad" (*Jama'atu Ahlis-Sunnah Lidda'awati Wal Jihad*) (Moncton 2017:19) had overtaken the Niger Delta conflict by the time of the demise of Yar'adua.

Moving from acting to being a full and elected president, Goodluck Jonathan sustained the amnesty programme which although quieted militancy cannot be described as having achieved its intents and purposes. However, he had to contend with the Boko Haram insurgency in its fiercest form (2009-2015) so much that it has been argued that he lost his re-election bid to the *Boko Haram* (Ewi 2015). While *Boko Haram* remains kicking despite being fractured by the rejuvenation of the Nigeria's counter-insurgency architecture by the Buhari administration (Animasawun 2017), the inception of the Buhari presidency has coincided with the ferocity of "Nigeria's third conflict" involving pastoralists also known as Fulani herdsmen who are accused of ethnic cleansing and destruction of farm produce (Mungai 2016).

As an escalating conflict dating back to 2011 with a rising death toll, it remains largely under-reported partly because it occurs more in the rural and peri-urban settings, nevertheless the herder-farmer conflict attracted global attention in 2016 when it got to an unprecedented height that made the United Nations Human Rights Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) to warn that if immediate action and dialogue are not initiated the surge in violence in could spring out of control (UNHCR 2017). Similarly, President Trump expressed a strong concern about it during the visit by President Buhari to the White House that "We have had very serious problems with Christians who are being murdered in Nigeria, we are going to be working on that problem very, very hard because we cannot allow that to happen (BBC May, 1 2018)." Indeed, this reflects the perception of the conflict held by many locally and internationally. For instance during the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) debate on the matter held in the British Parliament on November 22, 2018, Higazi and Owen (2018) rejected the notion that the protracted conflict between the two groups is an "Islamic jihad" as claimed by some of the participants at the meeting.

From the fore-going, unpacking the landscape of conflict and insecurity and clarifying the issues and actors cannot be avoided. In this presentation, the conflict between the two is seen as part of Nigeria's unresolved national and social questions. Since the end of colonialism the national question remains as predicted, a question of "how to hold the country (countries) together" by (Wallerstein 1961). As described by Mkandawire (2009: 51) "the social question addresses problems engendered by social differentiation along ethnicity ... and other social

cleavages that arise or are unresolved within a nation." This is reflected in the first epigram of above. Therefore, unpacking the conflict requires appreciating it as part of the national question, the social or co-existence question, livestock question, and now a climatic question. This is why certain readings like the Fulani jihadist slants or Christian-Muslim narratives are considered unhelpful.

Therefore, as a student of conflict, insurgency, peaceful co-existence and national security, the article examines changes and continuities that have occurred in these in Nigeria's Fourth-Republic. This is followed by an assessment of what the government has done in (mis)managing the conflict, spotting of the gaps in these approaches and suggesting what might work guided by the words of Charles Tilly by "Doing away with dogmatic devotions to what is not working (Wallestein 1961:51)." The theory of change takes elastic and integrative approach to conflict management by combining both formal and informal approaches that draw strength from each other towards strengthening the conflict resolution process (Adam and Boer 2015). As an on-going work data are being sourced from the archives, observations, trend mapping through the traditional and social media and semi-structured interviews with key informants.

RETHINKING CONFLICT AND (IN)SECURITY FOR SUSTAINING PEACE AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Indeed, "violence ... is generally not a product of "ingrained" hatreds ... but of a complex web of politics, economics, history, psychology and a struggle for identity" (Nicholas Hildyard quoted in Alao 2007: 14). The protraction and spread of violent conflicts will continue to challenge received wisdom about their motivations, drives, weapons, battle-related deaths and remedies. Writings about conflicts reveal that they are mostly classified according to intensity, casualties and degree of violence (Alao 2007). This underpins the assumption that refuses to regard clashes recording less than 1000 deaths as minor conflicts while those recording over 1000 deaths as war or major conflicts. This comes with inherent and obvious limitations. For instance, it is not sensitive to the manipulation that can occur from the media, technology and even governments. Also, its sensitivity to the population of affected people raises questions that are hard to answer.

The violence that has characterized the conflict between the two occupational and ethnically different groups warrants an understanding and explanation of conflict that is sensitive to the context. Another dominant definition and explanation of conflicts is guided by causes which are seen variously as ethnic, religious and political (Alao 2007). However, accepting this in absolute terms will also not be helpful given the complexity of actors and issues. For instance, a conflict between indigenes and settlers can be internationalized if parties mobilize resources outside the borders of the country. Also, an identity conflict can become an *insurgency conflict* (Englebert and Dunn 2013) leading to the emergence of both roving and stationary militias. Stationary insurgents occupy physical enclaves, have rudimentary structures of governance and control while roving insurgents are on the move sometimes in the country sides or in the cities depending on their relationships with communities, availability of resources and recruits and the capacity of security agents. Most insurgents have exhibited the two patterns as seen in the use of the bush path by the Revolution United Forum (RUF) Sierra Leone (Abdullah 2004), Lords Resistance Army (LRA) and Forces Nouvelles in Cote d'Ivoire 2001-2011 (Englebert and Dunn 2013). The Boko Haram as an insurgent group also occupied territories at the height of its monstrosity.

Conflicts have also been examined through the functions, interactions and situations that give rise to them (Tidwel 2003). The *functionalists* ask the functions served by the conflict, the *interactionists* ask the interactions that lead to conflicts while the *situationalists* inquire into the situations that give rise to conflicts. So, the conflict as a *situational conflict* (Tidwel 2003) because the relationship between the two has not always be adversarial but has been brought about by certain situations. The involvement of mercenaries and militias in the conflict sometimes engaging the Nigerian security agents makes it comparable to an *insurgent conflict*. The targets, victims and endorsers also reveal the shadow parties and conflict entrepreneurs. It is also a

resource-based conflict because at the center of the contention "over space to farm crops and to graze cattle and the failure of government to resolve the crises is behind the clashes between farmers and ... herders" (Bukar 2017: 373). It is also a relationship has switched from one that was symbiotic to adversarial owing to certain situations that were hitherto not present.

The change that has occurred in the relationship also calls for a rethinking of the ways of handling the conflicts as argued by Adam and Boer (2015). This is because "...all the attempts to develop, to improve on, or to replace traditional pastoralism have failed and people have grown poorer simply the people at last must be put first" (Baxter 1994 in Bassi 2017: 4). This chimes with the view of admonition of Chabal (2009) on the need to bring the people back as the focus of research if academics must impact on policy.

Whether from crime, epidemic, conflict or natural disasters, the need for security with the intention of preventing suffering from vulnerability to threat cannot be foreclosed. The fact that negligible issues initially seen as inconsequential and non-threatening or distant can metastasize into a complex security concern underscores the need for context-specific and context-sensitive thinking about security. Veirwegin and Brabant (2017:2) provides a typical context of the farmers and herders conflict thus:

agropastoral conflict intensifies armed mobilisation, allowing armed groups to draw upon particular conflict narratives that generate popular and elite support. It also creates incentives for armed actors to engage in cattle-looting, or the defence against it, for both symbolic and material reasons

The above reveals the factors that mesh into the conflict which calls for detailed attention in order to unpack and comprehend the motivations, expectations, fears and needs of the conflict entrepreneurs, the weaponry and foot-soldiers as well as the incentives for mobilization and the kind of under-world economy it generates all of which must inform security thinking and planning. Such settings are sites where rights clash because of the role of identity, memories of pain and enemy images constructed and sustained by narratives of hatred.

The emergent conundrum typifies an *hybrid* setting where security is contested at the realm of idea and politics (Luckham and Kirk 2013). This is because in one breadth, it justifies the argument of those who believe that "security concerns the organized force to establish and maintain social order and to protect from external threats" (Luckham and Kirk 2013: 3). On the other hand, there are those who opine that security is "about how individuals and communities are protected (or protect themselves) from violence, abuse of power and other existential risks" (Luckham and Kirk 2013: 3). These two perspectives must be kept in focus because in their thinking underpin the position of the state and that of those who seen nothing wrong in self-help. A major implication of this is that the absolute monopoly of violence hitherto enjoyed by Weberian state comes into contention and not from outside but from within. This is what Luckham and Kirk (2013:4) describe as a hybrid setting because there is no side that absolutely controls the security and conduct of others.

In the context of the conflict between farmers and herders, the provision of security must be sensitive to the *hybridity* of the setting towards having an informed understanding of the limitations of the state in imposing order and providing protection as evidences of security. This must not lose sight of the shift that has occurred in the conception of security as now encompassing: "a more diverse range of dangers and threats, including issues of human rights and emancipation, freedom from want, the prevention of infectious diseases and the management of climate change" (Luckham and Kirk 2013: 4). Also, an affirmation that post 9/11 is an age of insurgency is another reality that stares one in the face going by the violence in communities affected by the conflict between the farmers and herders across the country owing largely to the absence of the state in those communities. Therefore, the aptness of critical security approach to the complex hybrid situation prevalent in many communities where the farmers and herders

conflict plays out warrants the need for premising security on empirical realities that combines the perspective of the end-users and providing it as a service and public good.

Akin to security, peace is needed whether there are apparent threats to it or not. The end of the Cold War, more than any period in the post-colonies, has emphasized the need for this. The path-breaking work of Boutros-Boutros Ghali spells out in sequence the *modus operandi* of peace-making, peace-keeping, peace-enforcement and peace-building (Ghali 1992). But since then realities outcomes of full-blown wars and low-intensity conflicts have continuously called for rethinking the search and means available for preserving peace prior to, during and after conflicts. This informed the review of the peace-building architecture and the subsequent adoption of landmark identical resolutions by the UN Security Council and General Assembly in April 2016 (IPI 2017). While not denigrating peace-building which was conceived as an encompassing process, it has been largely interpreted as “time-bound, exogenous interventions that take place “after the guns fall silent” in fragile or conflict affected states” (IPI 2017). Beyond restriction to pre or post-conflict imperatives, sustaining peace seeks to reject knitting peace to just the prevention and aftermath of conflict. The overall intent of sustaining peace wants to:

Broaden the peace agenda to include proactive measures aimed at building on peace where it already exists by reinforcing the structures, attitudes, and institutions that underpin it. It is not a radical call to substitute existing interventions with new processes, but it is intended as a complete overhaul to how we approach peace and peace related interventions (IPI 2017: 3).

The appropriateness of sustaining peace in communities affected by the farmers and herders conflict is justified by the argument of Richards (2005) describing many post-Cold War African countries as “zones of no war, no peace” owing to the intermittent and episodic violence that breaks out in such communities. Therefore, premising the need for peace strictly on conflict, risks making the pursuit of peace tenuous making it easy for shirking of responsibilities especially in situations where the state is implicated in violence or war-making. So, “Sustaining peace seeks to place greater emphasis on detecting and strengthening what is already working, not only what is in disrepair and needs fixing” (IPI 2017: 4). Tschudin and Trithart (2018: 36) spells out the goal of sustaining peace applicable to communities affected by farmers and herdsman conflicts because it is a “goal and a process to build a common vision of a society, ensuring that the needs of all segments of the population are taken into account.” This can be achieved “by delivering services and promoting sustainable development more effectively and efficiently; by giving people voice in a representative and inclusive way; and by nurturing political will to resolve conflict and sustain peace” (Tschudin and Trithart (2018: 37).

A plausible outcome of sustaining peace is its implications for human development. As a form of paradigm shift, “human development is now regarded as development that improves people’s lives and their livelihoods and places human beings at the centre of all development efforts” (HDI 2016:4). This goes beyond the notion of development that conceives and appreciates development in economic or material terms. While not rejecting the notion, human development posits that both material and immaterial of people should be given equal attention. In measuring human development index, HDI (2016:7) prescribes measuring based on three basic dimensions; namely: “a long and healthy life; access to knowledge as well as a decent standard of living.” Indeed nothing threatens these three more than violent conflict and the fear of living in contexts as experienced by residents of communities affected by the farmers and herders conflict.

The preceding underscores the place of change in approaching key concepts like peace, conflict, national security and human development in line with changing realities in conflict settings. The next section deepens this by examining what has changed and what must change in sustaining peace and security.

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WHAT HAS CHANGED AND WHAT MUST CHANGE?

As a *situational insurgent conflict* comprehending the conflict in its transnational and macro context is apposite. As reasoned by Rogers (2016), understanding the contemporary global threat posed by insurgency and irregular warfare must pay attention to the increasing threats arising from the fear and actual loss of livelihoods by those on the margins like farmers and herdsman. This invariably brings climatic change into the calculus of the conflict informing its argument of environment-marginality-insecurity, which is, change in climate increasing the number of the rural poor in this context, leading to violent conflicts and insecurity. Indeed the domino effects of this chain differ from state to state in Nigeria, however, certain things that must change can be identified some of which are discussed below relying on the author's data and secondary sources such as Higazi and Owen (2018), Bukar (2017), Hazama 2016 and Adebayo (1991).

*What has changed?***Population Explosion and Land Encroachment**

From a 45 million population at independence to an estimated population of 190 million and one projected to grow to become the third largest in the world by 2050, the change in population has had a poignant impact on the relationship between the two. Along this change has been the huge youth demography leading to frightening competition for land and water by the largely youthful population, worsening socio-economic and ecological situations stifling access to these essential resources especially in the rural areas.

There has been an expansion of cultivated land as a result of encroachment on the grazing areas, water and transhumance routes for pastoralists. Manifesting the marginality-environment-insecurity argument of Rogers (2016), this encroachment constitutes a threat to the livelihood of the pastoralists exacerbated by "land alienation, urban growth and encroachment or privatization of grazing reserves" (Higazi and Owen 2018: 2). The resultant push has inadvertently expanded grazing towards the southern part of the country thereby swelling the population of the Fulani ethnic group across the southern part of the country. This has produced many local instances of indigene-settler conflicts as Fulanis come into struggle with local cattle-rearers and local farmers.

CHANGE IN FULANI SOCIETY, DISRUPTIONS AND CONSUMPTION

Unlike the in the past when pastoralist families reared cattle and sheep migrate using traditional routes, these routes are no more available. Cattle rustling have meant that many Fulani young men have lost the socio-economic status making it difficult for them to marry or acquire their desired status. The consumption of narcotics and opioids as a form of acquired taste have increased the level of rebellion by the young Fulani and spontaneity of violence.

The investment into the herd economy by many urban elites across ethnic divides and the infrequent movement in groups by young Fulani and sometimes under-aged herders lead to clashes with farmers for reasons ranging from fear of losing cattle and desperate search for pasture. Reprisal and sometimes unwarranted attacks on Fulani communities by host farmer communities are not uncommon leading to cyclical violence.

EMERGENCE OF CONFLICT ENTREPRENEURS, CRIMINALITY AND SURPLUS GUNS

Banditry as a crime worsens conflict and it is also worsened by conflict. This manifests in cases of kidnapping, turning the bodies of women into sites of violence and cattle rustling. Guns sourced from places the Niger-Delta, the south-east through conflict entrepreneurs and criminal gangs in conflict-affected places like Libya find their ways into the hands of the actors in the conflict.

CATTLE COMPLEX AND TRAGEDY OF COMMONS

The cattle complex speaks to anxieties arising from environmental change hurting the pastoral communities. The pastoral communities become endangered in this context owing to "inefficient traditional methods of raising livestock, and herders' penchant to keep large number of animals beyond their economic and reproductive functions" (Egwu 2015: 16). The *tragedy of the commons* argument posits that pastoralists are "primarily driven by self-interest in their use of land and water resources, overgraze the land; in pursuing their immediate interests, they compromise the long-term interests of all grazers (Iro, 2015 in Egwu 2015: 15). This makes criminality inevitable and self-legitimizing by both sides in the conflict.

WHAT MUST CHANGE

Not unmindful of on-going security and programmatic efforts by the Federal Government in addressing the problem change is still canvassed for in the following areas. This resonates with the theory of change as the theoretical framework of the study.

THE RETURN OF GOVERNMENT TO RURAL AREAS

As observed in the absence of the state argument by Joseph (2014), the worst affected areas are the rural communities owing to the fact that the projection of state power in Africa diminishes as it goes farther from the cities and especially seats of government. This makes the rural communities highly prone to the activities of warlords and other criminals. The absence makes the protraction and invisibility of violence occurring in the rural areas understandable especially cognizant of their high population in the rural communities. It also yields the ground to the emergence of community based militias who provide their own slants to conflicts in veiling their intent for plunder and violence. This reinforces the need for increased and effective presence of government in the rural communities.

FAKE NEWS, ABUSE OF THE SOCIAL MEDIA AND CONFLICT INSENSITIVE REPORTAGE

These three often combine in stoking tension and violence not only in the affected communities but across the country given the micro-macro precipitation of violence in other places based sometimes of unconfirmed or unverified reports of violence in distant places. Animasawun and Aremu (2015) identified the absence of violence and deaths occurring in rural communities as largely due to the fact that most correspondents of national newspapers are in the city centers and rely sometimes on sources with vested interests in the communities. The place of sensitivity in the reportage and narratives put in the public domain by all must be mindful of the fact that:

To the pastoral Fulani cattle are more important than anything else. They are a measure of wealth, a unit of account, a treasure, a property and yet not a property. It is difficult for non-pastoralist to understand what cattle mean to the Fulani. Everything begins and ends with cattle (Adebayo 1992: 2)

Insensitivity to the reality above risks reversing progress made in the search for peace in the conflict especially taking into account the widely held perception of media bias against interests of the Fulani.

SEPARATING THE POLITICS OF PEACE FROM THE QUEST FOR PEACE

Out of the thirty-six states in the country four had passed the anti-open grazing bill aimed as at 2017 as a way of reducing encroachment on farmlands and as a populist move towards enhancing electoral chances. However, the bill in Ekiti State is an outstanding one because of its provision for dispute resolution which reduces its likelihood of generating conflicts. Unlike that of Ekiti, the bill in Benue state triggered violence as it led to the expulsion of pastoralists from the state after which some herders were believed to have come back on revenge violence. The activities of state-backed livestock guards in seizing wandering cattle was seen indirect ways of stealing which led to rounds of violence.

DECONSTRUCTING THE NARRATIVE OF FULANI-JIHAD AND HORIZONTAL INEQUALITIES

The need for a meta-narrative that promotes peaceful co-existence cannot be over-emphasized given the widely held and promoted narrative that the conflict is meant to sack and occupy communities in the overall interest of the Fulani. This flies in the face of truth given that no convincing evidence exist showing a coordinated attempt and/or approval for a Fulani take-over of communities. Also, in some communities, like Zamfara, the farmers and herders are both Muslims while its occurrence in Plateau has its peculiar old roots as grievances. Therefore, it becomes compelling to deconstruct such narratives towards generating a Grand National narrative of peaceful co-existence, security and development.

The narrative of the Hausa-Fulani superiority complex which has promoted what Ochonu (2008:97) describes as *colonialism within colonialism* stemmed from what was designed by the British colonialists to achieve "politico-cultural uniformity to make the Middle-Belt more like the caliphate sector." More than any other part of colonial Nigeria, Ochonu (2008:98) argues that colonial rule in northern Nigeria was "founded on the Caliphate-Hausa imaginary and on the necessity for Middle Belt conformity to it" which explains the crisis triggered in Tiv and Idoma Divisions (Ochonu 2013).

As a generator of resistance, horizontal inequalities can be seen as the continuation of the (in)advertent decision to preserve the Hausa-Fulani as privileged class to which the Middle-Belt must be subordinate. Defined as inequalities among identity groups (for example, ethnic, religious and regional identities)..." which encompasses "economic, social, cultural and political dimensions" (Fukuda-Parr et al (2013: 3), the cauldron to which the herders and farmers conflict has turned the north-central into must be seen as part of a long history and sociology of resistance against what has operated as colonialism by the Hausa-Fulani. Erupting at a time the President and Commander-in-Chief is a Fulani also comes with its own implications as any limitation or constraints on the part of security agents which imperils the non-Fulani who are most likely to be non-Muslims as well, will be interpreted as part of the agenda to preserve the superiority of the Fulani and to sustain the conformity of the rest in the area. As a narrative that has gone on for so long, deconstructing it must take into consideration the need to ensure that transparency, fairness and effectiveness in the performance of policing and security functions leave no one in doubt of the sincerity of the government. By ensuring security for herders and farmers, strengthening policing capabilities to prevent rustling and banditry as well as the improvement of livestock tracking, preventing attacks and raids on farming communities, facilitating and maintaining community-based conflict management platforms, promotion of ranching and respect for grazing reserves and a deliberate policy on combatting desertification, the government will re-affirm its neutrality and readiness in ending the conflict. All of these must also leverage on regional cooperation taking lessons from the progress made by the Multi-National Joint Task Force in the war against insurgency in the Lake Chad basin.

CONCLUSION

Post-1999 Nigeria is bedevilled by a tapestry of conflicts manifesting sometimes as insurgency through the activities of militias violently resisting the state based on primordial attachments to groups within the country. The conflict between the herdsman and farmers constitutes one of the direct threats to national and human security as well as peaceful co-existence in the affected communities and beyond. The need to step back and take a look at the conflict, peace, national security and human development has been brought to the fore in this piece.

Cognizant of the fact that conflict contains dangers and opportunities for change and progress, this must however, proceed with a mind-set that takes a balanced analysis of the actors, the issues, fears, expectations, needs and aspirations not oblivious of the waning absolutism of the Weberian state in controlling the means of coercion and the conduct of others. Seeing peace beyond conflict and focusing on human development are possible paths towards maximizing the opportunities while weakening the dangers.

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