

MODERN SLAVERY IN NIGERIA: IMPLICATION FOR HER NATIONAL SECURITY

Jude C. Okafor, Ph.D, B.L

*Department of Political Science, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, Nigeria
Ph+08035001291 Corresponding Email: okaforjc51@yahoo.com*

Abstract

Slave Trade (Trans-Atlantic, Trans-Saharan and National and or Local) was abolished in the early 1800s. In spite of the ban, slave trade is still going on in more advanced, vicious, sophisticated and complicated manners and patterns. This paper therefore, investigated the dimensions of this modern or neo-slave trade and its implication for Nigerian National Security. The study is qualitative. It adopts secondary method of data collection, presentation and analysis. Globalism is adopted as the framework of analysis. The investigation reveals that modern slavery cut across international borders, highly complicated, obnoxious, makes movement of small arms, light weapons, and human beings easy and threatens Nigerian national security and as such requires transnational cooperation, political will and commitment to tackle the menace.

Keywords: Modern/Neo-slavery, Security, National Security, Political Will, Nigeria

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Conceptual Clarification

The 1929 Slavery Convention as adopted by the League of Nations described Slavery as “the status and/or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are excised”. The term Slavery may also be defined as the condition of control (absolute or near absolute) by one person(s), group or network over another or group that is(are) not in the interest of the controlled (Okafor, 2014). The General Assembly of the United Nations (UNO) in 1948 adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 4 proclaims that “No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms”.

The UN Supplementary Convention 1956 offers a definition of servile status and “slavery-like practices”, such as debt bondage, serfdom, unfree marriages and the exploitation of young people. The Economic, Social and Cultural Covenant in 1966, recognized “the right of every one to the opportunity to gain his living by work which he freely chooses or accepts”.

The Classical Definitions of Slave Trade only recognized practices that involved trade in captured person(s) which involves engagement in the business of capturing, buying and selling human being as slave workers. Modern day slavery involves all acts concerned in the capture, purchase, or sale of a slave with intent to reduce the person to a slave; all acts involved in the acquisition of a slave with a view to selling or exchanging the person and in general, every act of trade or transport in slaves (Okafor, 2014). The Supplementary Convention on Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery (1956) brought into focus institutions and practices resembling slavery but which were not covered by the Slavery Convention, such as debt bondage, servile forms of marriage, and the exploitation of children and

adolescents. A look at the following findings and reports show how children are engaged in all manner of child labour: The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) (2017) reveals that 50% of Nigerian children engage in Child Labour. The NBS in its 2017 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) declares that about 50.8% of Nigerian Children, between ages five and seventeen, are involved in child labour.

The NBS conducted the Survey with other relevant agencies such as the National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA) and the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) and their findings further show that children work in mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful conditions that deny them opportunities to attend school, and develop properly.

Further analysis of the NBS Report by Mrs. Maureen Zubie-Okolo, UNICEF's Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist shows the percentage of children working in hazardous conditions in six geo-political zones as follows; North Central has 49.6% the largest, followed by North-West 41.9%, South-South 37.9%, South-West 36.1%, North-East 34.1% and South-East 25.% respectively (News Agency Nigeria, 2017).

Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery brought into focus institutions and practices resembling slavery but which were not covered by the Slavery Convention, such as debt bondage, servile forms of marriage, and the exploitation of children and adolescents. The objective of the Supplementary Convention was to intensify national and international efforts to abolish slavery and all institutions and practices similar to slavery. Craig et al (2007:12-13) provides three-fold categorization and definition of modern slavery involving:

- i. Severe economic exploitation;
- ii. Absence of any framework of human rights;
- iii. Maintenance of control of one person over another by the prospect or reality of violence.

The last element, which they noted to be important because very often relationships of enslavement do not actually involve physical violence, aptly captures the manifestation of the scenario in Nigeria. Weissbrodt and Anti-Slavery International (2002:7) summarized the main characteristics of traditional and modern day slavery.

Traditional slavery was referred to as "chattel slavery" on the grounds that the owners of such slaves were able to treat them as if they were possessions, like livestock or furniture, and to sell or transfer them to others. Such practices are extremely rare nowadays and the criterion of ownership may obscure some of the other characteristics of slavery associated with the complete control of which a victim of slavery is subjected by another human being, as implied by the Slavery Convention's actual wording. "any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership". In the modern context, the circumstances of the enslaved person are crucial to identifying what practices constitute slavery, including: (i) the degree of restriction of the individual's inherent right to freedom of movement; (ii) the degree of control of the individual's personal belongings; and (iii) the existence of informed consent and a full understanding of the nature of the relationship between the parties.

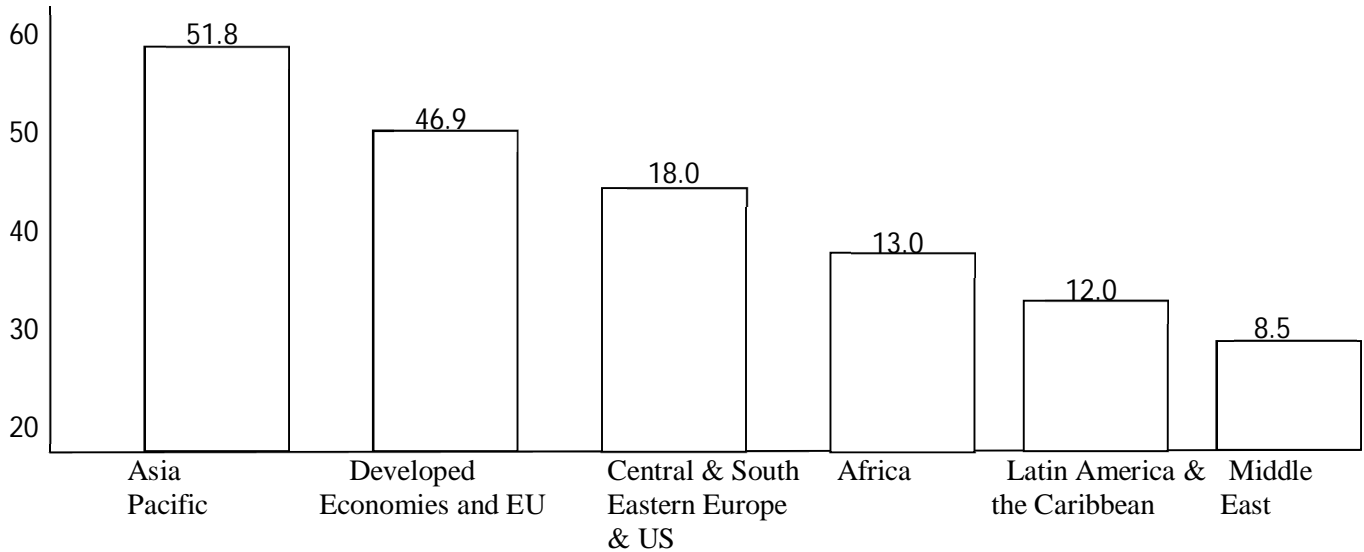
2. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Globalism is considered most appropriate for this investigation. Globalism recognizes no territorial boundaries, hence it operates round the world. It believes in the integration and convergence of world powers, economic systems, and administrative practices (Sapru, 2009). Globalism uses Globalization to achieve its goals. In other words, Globalization is a process and a means to achieve the goals of globalism. It has political, economic, social, cultural, etc dimensions, and focus on question of borders, territorial demarcations of state jurisdictions, and associated issues of governance, economy, identity and community. Furthermore, it advocates for increasing interdependence of world society in the global age (Sapru, 2009) Proponents of this framework of analysis include Ohmae, K, Fukuyama, F, and Huntington.

Modern Slavery cut across borders (ie, it is borderless). In fact, it is a network connecting persons, groups, associations etc whose actions, reactions and interactions operate locally, nationally and internationally with the main purpose of making

huge money, pressure, exploitation, etc from vulnerable persons, particularly the children, especially, the girl child. Global Slavery market is established for the purpose of moving young persons, especially the young women and children from mainly underdeveloped countries such as Nigeria, Benin, Togo, Sierra Leone, Ghana to Europe, particularly Italy, Middle East, etc, mainly for sexual exploitation and other hazardous labour. International Labour Organization (ILO) (2014) presented estimates of profits annually from Forced Labour globally to be US\$/50 Billion.

Annual Profits of Forced Labour Per Region (US\$ Billion)



2.1 Forms of Modern Slavery in Nigeria

The word ‘slavery’ today covers a variety of human rights violations. In addition to traditional slavery and the slave trade, these abuses include the sale of children, child prostitution, child pornography, the exploitation of child labour, the sexual mutilation of female children, the use of children in armed conflict, debt bondage, the traffic in persons and in the sale of human organs, the exploitation of prostitution, and certain practices under apartheid and colonial regime.

The OHCHR, David Weissbrodt and Anti-Slavery International (2002) provide clear details of conventions, forms and natures of contemporary slavery. While this paper does not wish to dwell much on the forms but on their implications for national security, it is pertinent to summarize these forms as discussed by Weissbrodt and Anti-Slavery International (2002):

2.1.1 Serfdom

In its final report to the League of Nations, the Temporary Slavery Commission regarded serfdom as the equivalent of “primordial slavery”, that is to say the use of slaves on farms or plantains for agricultural production. The Supplementary Convention of 1956 categorizes serfdom as a form of “servile status”, and defines it as “the condition or status of a tenant who is by law, custom or agreement bound to live and labour on land belonging to another person and to render some determinate service to such other person, whether for reward or not, and is not free to change his status” (Art 1(b)). It is not the provision of labour in return for access to land that is in itself considered a form of servitude, but the inability of the person of serf status to leave that status. The term “serfdom” and its prohibition in the Supplement Convention appear applicable to a range of practices that still occur today but are rarely recognized or described in the countries concerned as “serfdom”, as the term is linked by many to the political and economic order of medieval Europe.

2.1.2 Forced Labour

The Force Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) defines forced or compulsory labour in article 2(1) as meaning “all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily”. The African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights (Art. 5) also provides that “Every individual shall have the right to the respect of the dignity inherent in a human being and to the recognition of his legal status. All forms of exploitation and degradation of man particularly slavery, slave trade, torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment and treatment shall be prohibited”.

2.1.3 Debt Bondage

Debt bondage (often termed “bonded labour”, which refers to exactly the same practices) is defined in the Supplementary Convention as the “status or condition arising from a pledge by a debtor of his personal services or those of a person under his control as security for a debt, if the value of those services as reasonably assessed is not applied towards the liquidation of the debt or the length and nature of those services are not respectively limited and defined” (Art. 1(a)). Debt bondage or bonded labour still exists today, affecting millions of adults and children in their own countries and migrant workers throughout the world. The ILO has observed that bondage of children generally occurs through a hereditary debt, an occasional debt or an advance on salary.

2.1.4 Migrant Workers

While all the existing instruments concerning slavery, servile status and forced labour apply to aliens and migrant workers as well as others, certain techniques of exploitation akin to slavery affect migrant workers in particular. These practices include employers confiscating workers’ passports and, particularly in the case of domestic workers, keeping them effectively in captivity. Migrant workers are subjected to a wide range of abuse and discrimination, most of which do not constitute slavery, servitude or forced labour. Women migrant workers are particularly vulnerable to slavery-like exploitation and forced labour. Migrants seeking to enter a new country without authorization are particularly vulnerable to exploitation. It is increasingly common for a person, after receiving the assistance of a smuggler or similar third party in illegally entering a new country, to be forced into an exploitative relationship that may include debt bondage, prostitution or other forms of slavery or slavery-like practices.

The Migrant smuggling Protocol covers “the procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person in to a State Party of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident” and requires States parties to criminalize the smuggling of migrants and other related offences. Employers of migrant workers acquire a significant degree of control over their employees by offering to look after their wages. This practice is usually justified by the employer on the grounds that it will ensure earnings are not lost, or that they are invested to give the employee some extra benefits. Due to the migrant worker’s vulnerable position, s/he is often unable to refuse an employer’s offer or is unaware that it would be prudent to do so. Once the employer has accumulated the equivalent of several months wages, the employee is at a grave disadvantage, and if s/he wishes to depart must consequently put up with a significant level of abuse in an effort to retrieve his/her earnings. Such abuse sometimes involves physical assault and rape. The withholding of wages contravenes ILO Convention No. 95 concerning the Protection of Wages, 1949, which requires wages to be paid regularly by employers and prohibits methods of payment that deprive workers of the genuine possibility of terminating their employment. The Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery observed at its April 1995 session that “foreign migrant workers are frequently subject to discriminatory rules and regulations which undermine human dignity” (Migrant Smuggling Protocol, 2000). Nigeria continues to be a source, transit and destination country for migrants. International Labour Organization (ILO) with Walk Free Foundation and International Organization for Migration (IMO, 2017) report that 40.3 million victims are involved. The Report further states that over 90+% (Ninety Plus Percent) of the Nigerian young women migrants are from Edo State.

Slavery Index Report (2018) ranks Nigeria 32/167 of the countries with the highest number of victims estimated at 1,386,000, of which the overwhelming majority of them are from Edo State, particularly from Benin City, followed by Delta State. The National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) reports that movement of victims, starts especially from the major sources, Edo and Delta States, to Kano to Niger or Algeria before traversing 500 miles over the Sahara Desert into Libya, detained in prisons before tortuous voyage through Mediterranean Sea to Europe, especially Italy.

One wonders how and why Edo State that was governed by Mr. Adam Oshomole for eight years (8yrs) consecutively, would maintain overwhelming first steadily in migration and trafficking in persons? It is very unfortunate.

2.1.5 Trafficking

The issues of traffic or trafficking in persons and prostitution were routinely addressed together. Since instruments define traffic or trafficking to cover the movement of people for purposes other than prostitution or sexual exploitation, however, this report deals separately with the issues of traffic in persons and prostitution. The trafficking of persons today can be viewed as the modern equivalent of the slave trade of the nineteenth century. The “slave trade” was defined in the Slavery Convention as “all acts involved in the capture, acquisition or disposal of a person with intent to reduce him to slavery; all acts involved in the acquisition of a slave with a view to selling or exchanging him, all acts of disposal by sale or exchange of a slave acquired with a view to being sold or exchanged, and, in general every act of trade or transport in slaves”. The fact that individuals are still being acquired and transferred for whatever purpose today has led commentators to conclude that “this underground trade in human beings exacts such an enormous toll in human misery that it has been called a modern version of the slave trade.” The definition of slave trade was endorsed by the supplementary Convention (1956) with the addition of “by whatever means of conveyance”, thus including transportation by air. Trafficking is the most popular and largest form of modern day slavery today. At least 700,000 persons, particularly young women and children, are annually trafficked within or across international borders (US Department of State Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection, 2000). NAPTIP identified 1,128 potential trafficking victims, 529 sex trafficking victims, 426 Child Labour, 261 children in domestic Servitude and 173 Adults in Forced Labour (US Department of State, 2017)

2.1.6 Prostitution

Prostitution takes various forms and involves women, children and also men. As noted in the previous section, it is very closely related to trafficking. The suppression of Traffic Convention requires States to punish “any person who, to gratify the passions of another... procures, entices or leads away, for purposes of prostitution, another person.. [or] otherwise exploits the prostitution of another person” (Art. 1(1) and (2)). The prohibition refers both to cases in which the prostitution is subjected to some form of coercion and to acts carried out “with the consent of that person” (Art. 1(2)).

International instruments do not contain a definition of prostitution, though it is most commonly interpreted according to its ordinary meaning that is “any sexual act offered for reward profit”. The Suppression of Traffic Convention makes it clear that the reference to prostitution includes men practicing prostitution, as well as women and children under the age of 18. The act of prostitution itself committed by adults over 18 is not explicitly prohibited by international standards but the Suppression of Traffic Convention strongly discourages it. The three international instruments concerning the traffic of women for prostitution adopted before 1933 address the various forms of coercion, threats and fraud that are used to force women or men into prostitution or to continue practicing as prostitutes. For example, the International Convention for the Suppression of the White Slave Traffic 1910 requires the punishment of “any person who, to gratify the passions of others, has *by fraud or by the use of violence, threats abuse of authority, or any other means of constraint*, hired, abducted or enticed a woman or a girl of full age for immoral purposes, even when the various acts which together constitute the offence were committed to different countries” (emphasis added).

Forced prostitution occurs when a person is prostituted against his/her will, that is to say is compelled under duress or intimidation to engage in sexual acts in return for money or payment in kind, whether such payment is passed to others or received by the victim of forced prostitution him or herself. Forms of control over prostitutes include “(1) physical abuse; (2) physical control or prostitutes” children, with threats to keep the children as hostages if prostitutes leave; (3) serious threats of physical harm, including murder, (4) keeping prostitutes in a continuous state of poverty and indebtedness; and (5) ensuring that they have no freedom to move outside unaccompanied”. It is this element of coercion and lack of free will that clearly makes forced prostitution a contemporary manifestation of slavery as defined in the general international instruments concerned with slavery, as well in as in the Suppression of Traffic Convention. Illegal immigrants are extremely vulnerable to this form of exploitation or forced labour. More than 500,000 young women from Nigeria illegally go to brothels in Europe, particularly Italy every year (<https://www.nj.ng>, 2018)

2.1.7 Forced Marriage and the Sale of Wives

Although the most recent instruments dealing with sexual exploitation are applicable to men and women equally, within the context of marriage women are particularly vulnerable. The Temporary Slavery Commission in 1924 included in its list of practices analogous to slavery “acquisition of girls by purchase disguised as payment of dowry, it being understood that this does not refer to normal marriage customs”. The Supplementary Convention of 1956 identifies three types of institutions or practices akin to slavery to which women can be subjected in the context of marriage. The Supplementary Convention first prohibits any institution or practice whereby “a woman, without the right to refuse, is promised or given in marriage on payment of a consideration in money or in kind to her parents, guardian, family, or any other person or group”. It is not the payment which is an abuse but its occurrence in a forced or non-consensual marriage. The second practice prohibited by the Supplementary Convention is the right, by a woman’s husband, his family, or his clan “to transfer her to another person for value received or otherwise”. The third prohibited practice concerns the inheritance of a widow on her husband’s death by her husband’s brother or another member of her deceased husband’s family. This custom, known as “levirate”, involves automatic remarriage to a member of the deceased’s family.

2.1.8 Child Labour and Child Servitude

Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child labour Convention), 1999 (No. 182) as adopted by the International Labour Conference in June 1999 together with Recommendation No. 190 on the same subject. In article 3, it defines “the worst forms of child labour” as: “(a) All forms of slavery or practice similar to slavery, such as the sale or trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;

“(b) the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances;

“(c) The use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production or trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties;

“(d) Work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children”.

Article 3 of the Supplementary Convention makes it a criminal offence to be involved in the slave trade and requires State parties to exchange relevant information in a coordinated effort to combat the slave trade. In addition, article 6(1) of the Supplementary Convention views as a crime “the act of enslaving another person or of inducing another person” into slavery or servile status. There are various methods of procuring or enticing a person” into slavery or servile status for the purposes of prostitution or other forms of exploitation. The primary methods include (i) abduction (ii) purchase, or (iii) procurement with fraudulent inducements of jobs and a better life. The Trafficking Protocol defines “trafficking in persons” as having three elements, all of which must be present for the Convention to apply: (1) An action, consisting of “recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons”; (2) By means of “the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person”;

3. WHY IS NIGERIA VULNERABLE?

The nature of functional weakness of the social, political and economic institutions in Nigeria do not only deepen underdevelopment but also attract and provide safe haven for various unscrupulous economic operators. These weaknesses enhance the establishment and operations of local and cross-border criminal networks. Also the bizarre poverty degree in the country cultivates a system in which money can buy virtually everything including political power, unhealthy social consideration and criminality (Andres, 2008)

On the other hand, effective control and regulation of cross-border activities by the security forces of the regional member states and ECOWAS at large are critically weak. The security operatives are perhaps ill equipped to deal with challenges of the contemporary criminal networks within the states and across the borders. The level of corruption and

collusion with the criminal networks by the security officials are reportedly high. The movement of persons and goods is facilitated by these weaknesses and cross-border criminals are taking the advantage to further their activities (Fitzgibbon, 2003).

Andrés (2008:204) observed that:

The porous borders of West Africa, however, continue to engender cross-border crime and instability in the region, owing to the lack of an appropriate mechanism for the monitoring movements and illegal activities across the borders. Some of these activities involve the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons/ammunitions and human beings, especially women and children. The 2004 UN Secretary-General's Report on ways to combat sub-regional and cross border crimes in West Africa identified major cross-border problems including the continued weakening of the security sector, proliferation of roadblocks, youth unemployment, environmental degradation, social exclusion, explosive remnants of war (ERW), mass refugee movements and forced displacement.

Andrés further noted that the outbreak of intra-state conflicts in West Africa, beginning with Liberia in 1989, added mercenarism, small arms trafficking and the recruitment of child soldiers and fighters to the cross-border crimes. Another factor that contributes to the vulnerability of Nigeria to cross-border crime is the complex nature of the criminal gangs. This has also been well captured by Andrés:

West African criminal networks are generally characterized by their flexibility and their ability to take on different forms and mode of operation. The criminal enterprises in West Africa use similar techniques to that of the legitimate traders and business people, typical of lineage-based societies. The standard procedure entails a successful individual entrepreneur inviting one or more junior relatives or dependants to join him or her in an illegal business deal. Since the 1990s, cross-border criminal activities have become widespread and highly sophisticated. They have served as an industry for former combatants and transnational (Andrés 2008:204).

The degree of the human trafficking problem is prevalent in Nigeria and the rest of West Africa. Child trafficking in particular spreads across eleven of the fifteen Member States of the ECOWAS including Ghana, Togo, Benin, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Niger, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Sierra Leone, the Gambia, and Mali. Available statistics indicates that the scale of the problem is enormous with an estimated 200,000 children experiencing this practice in both West and Central Africa. In 1998, about 10,000 to 15,000 Malian children worked in plantations in neighboring Cote d'Ivoire while in Nigeria, in 1996, 4,000 children were trafficked from Cross River State to various parts within and outside the country. Benin registered over 3,000 children trafficked between 1995 and 1999.

4. IMPLICATIONS FOR NIGERIAN NATIONAL SECURITY

Security can be simply defined as safety from harm. Edem (2000) posits that secure means unable to escape, security means the assurance of future well being and freedom from threat. This simple definition encompasses different dimensions in psychology, public safety, defense and military matters, and information access. The traditional military definition of security which often relates to "freedom from armed attack" according to Rourke (1996) is too narrow. The concept of security must include protection against all major threats to human survival and well being, not just military threats. Other security threats include poverty, disease, food, environmental degradation, interpersonal violence and oppression (Klare and Thomas, 1991). Turcotte (2002) opines that since the end of the Cold War, the field of security studies has expanded to incorporate notions of security beyond the threat of interstate warfare. Security issues now include economic, social and environmental factors.

National Security entails the ability of Nigeria to advance her interests and objectives, to contain instability, control crime, eliminate corruption, improve the welfare, and quality of life of every citizen (Obasanjo, 1999). Sadako Ogata cited in Commission on Human Security (2003) observes that in the past, security threats were assumed to emanate from external sources. State security focused mainly on protecting the state – its boundaries, people, institutions and values – from external attacks. Over the last decades, our understanding of state security and the many types of threats has broadened. In addition

to securing borders, people, values and institutions, we have come to understand the dangers of environmental pollution, transnational terrorism, massive population movements and such infectious diseases as HIV/AIDS. Most significant, there is growing recognition of the role of people – of individuals and communities – in ensuring their own security. The Commission on Human Security describe human security to involve protection the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhances human freedoms and human fulfilment. Human security means protecting fundamental freedoms – freedoms that are the essence of the life. It means protecting people from critical (severe) and pervasive (widespread) threat and situations. It means using processes that build on people’s strength and aspirations. It means creating political, social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity (Commission on Human Security, 2003). It further notes that human security complements “state security” in four respects

- Its concern is the individual and the community rather than the state.
- Menaces to people’s security include threats and conditions that have not always been classified as threats to state security.
- The range of actors is expanded beyond the state alone.
- Achieving human security includes not just protecting people but also empowering people to fend for themselves.

The idea of *human security* fits well with human development. As Amartya Sen illustrated, human development is concerned with removing the various hindrances that restrain and restrict human lives and prevent its blossoming. A few of these concerns are captured in the much-used “human development index” (HDI), which has served as something of a flagship of the human development approach. Sen contends that human security as an idea fruitfully supplements the expansionist perspective of human development by directly paying attention to what are sometimes called “downside risks”. The insecurities that threaten human survival or the safety of daily life, or imperil the natural dignity of men and women, or expose human beings to the uncertainty of disease and pestilence, or subject vulnerable people to abrupt penury related to economic downturns demand that special attention be paid to the dangers of sudden deprivation (Sen, 1999). Human security, according to Sen, demands protection from these dangers and the empowerment of people so that they can cope with – and when possible overcome- these hazards.

There is, of course, no basic contradiction between the focus of human security and the subject matter of the human development approach. Indeed, formally speaking protection and safeguarding can also be seen as augmentations of a sort, to wit that of safety and security. But the emphasis and priorities are quite different in the cautious perspective of human security from those typically found in the relatively sanguine and upward-oriented literature of the human focus of development approaches (and this applies to human development as well), which end to concentrate on “growth with equity”, a subject that has generated a vast literature and inspired many policy initiatives (Sen, 1999). In contrast, focusing on human security requires that serious attention be paid to “downturns with security”, since downturns may inescapably occur from time to time, fed by global or local afflictions. This is in addition to the adversity of persistent insecurity of those whom the growth process leaves behind, such as the displaced workers or the perennially unemployed (Sen, 1999).

Nigeria national security has two meanings, in a military regime-it means the maintenance and protection of the person of the current despot from harm or embarrassment be it physical, sexual, spiritual, verbal or written (Edem, 2000). The activities of criminal gangs that perpetuate the transborder modern slavery not only undermine the national security but also erode development of the individual and society at large (Edem, 2000).

Another security challenges emanating from this scenario is that cross border crimes weakens further our already porous borders which have become leaky like fishing baskets thereby exposing the country to numerous dangers. Human trafficking works hand in hand with drug and arms smuggling. Each strengthen supports the existence and effective operation of the other. Closing our eyes on slavery system in the region means more robbery, ritual killings, smuggling crude oil, drug peddling and ammunition, trafficking in/across and through Nigeria. They co-exists and their perpetrators easily flout border restrictions through false identification and sneak into the country to perfect their illicit agenda (Edem, 2000).

Modern slavery also enhances human capital flight and brain drain. Potential human resources are trafficked away and potential criminals are imported via some route. No meaningful development can take place in such an environment where the ‘good’ trafficked and the ‘bad’ imported without appropriate record, check and monitoring. Modern slavery makes it

difficult for a country like Nigeria to account for the actual number of her population and what happens to the individual members of the population.

Socially, slavery and all its related practices are immoral; economically they constitute sabotage, culturally they are robbery; and politically they erode sovereignty – which belongs to the people that are being enslaved. In addition, the movement of small arms light weapons and people in West Africa and beyond e.g. Libya into Nigeria through porous and unguarded borders threatens the security of the country as traffickers have easy access to them in order to destroy those who may try to stop them from carrying out their nefarious trade.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The degree of pervasiveness of national and regional human insecurity which takes many forms including numerous versions of slavery in the ECOWAS region is alarming. Development cannot be thought of in any meaningful sense as long as human insecurity continues to engulf the region and much more in Nigeria which has the largest population in the region. Nigeria has led numerous initiatives in the sub-region in promotion of human security however the situation still remain frightening. There is need to understand the roots of slavery and other crimes against humanity at all levels. There is also need to identify the major actors in these crimes and to devise strategies to deal with them just as early fighters dealt with the traditional slave dealers. There must be, above all, the improvement of security through a watchful system, a promotion of planning and management of development that will involve all stakeholders and integrate the domains of development. This requires improvement on the political leadership, establish private and public partnership in dealing with the problem at the domestic and international levels. There also exist needs to focus on the role of transnational criminal networks that exacerbate trans-border crimes and all sorts of trafficking in the region.

Any anti-slavery effort that does not checkmate the external agents will fail to achieve long lasting solution. There is therefore need to employ traditional and non-formal monitoring mechanisms in the region and explore ways and means through which they can be harnessed to ensure human security in the region. To achieve these, it is important to intensify clear and robust planning and improved programmatic actions. The Nigerian government should strengthen its governance institutions and processes to enhance social provisioning for its citizens who are becoming increasingly frustrated over governance failure, thereby becoming vulnerable to recruitment as slave workers or potential traffickers. In particular, government at all levels (federal, state and local) need to partner with the private sectors to undertake an aggressive job creation programme for Nigeria's teeming youths. Emphasis should also be placed on monitoring illegal migration, small arms and light weapons interdiction. Greater exchange of information among the security operatives is very important as well as improvement of the capacity of security personnel on the principles and practices of protective intelligence and security situation awareness.

The National Orientation Agency should partner with CSOs and the media to create awareness on the impact of trafficking, against slavery and mobilise local communities to discourage potential slaves and identify collaborators in the crime. Parents also need to pay more attention on movement and activities of their children, and to report suspicious acts to the appropriate authorities.

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