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## YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT AND SECURITY SITUATION IN NIGERIA: THE LEADERSHIP CONNECTION

By

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### ABSTRACT

Youth unemployment has become a major social problem in Nigeria. Many school leavers and employable adults are roaming Nigerian streets in search of employment while government efforts towards addressing this intractable problem have not yielded expected results. This, has resulted in increased rate of crime and insecurity such as terrorism, kidnapping, militancy thuggery and a lot more. The work adopted the descriptive method and relied on secondary data for its analysis. It is of the view that unemployment with its attendant insecurity in the country is a function of leadership and could only be addressed through some revolutionary measures by a proactive leadership. Such measures include zero tolerance for corruption in public and private lives in Nigeria.

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### INTRODUCTION:

Youth unemployment is becoming an increasingly troublesome issue in many parts of the world. In Nigeria, it has become one of the most serious socio-economic problems confronting the country. The magnitude of this is appreciated when one looks at statistics provided by Federal Bureau of Statistics on the number of unemployed youths roaming the streets of Nigerian cities. As Obadan and Odusola (2001) observed, unemployment in Nigeria was more acute in the 1980s and this has been on the increase ever since. In 2008, 15% of the nation's work force was unemployed and in 2011 the figure rose to 20% (Lamido, 2013); and the victims of this phenomenon are the youths who till date have had the highest unemployment rate in Nigeria. According to Akanda and Okuwa (2009), between 40-60% of those unemployed in Nigeria are aged between 15-25 year and Rotimi (2011) puts the age between 18 and 45 years. The unemployed are poor and most of

them carry the phenomena on into their old ages. Akwara et al (2013) observed that most of those paraded by the law enforcement agencies before the mass media in the country as members of criminal groups fall within this age bracket. Most of those used in suicide bombings by terrorist groups in the country also fall within this age group.

Most of those involved in the Niger Delta militancy are also of this age group. Investigation revealed that if some of these youths have alternative means of livelihood or are gainfully employed in the economy, most of them would not take part in these criminal activities (Okafor, 2011). The most disturbing aspect of this phenomenon is that some of those involved in these crimes are educated. The worst thing that would ever happen to a nation is for the nation's educated citizens to be involved in crimes, and most of them are involved in cyber-crimes and advanced fee frauds. Whereas the uneducated are mostly involved in violent crimes,

the educated are involved in non-violent crimes which are worse in magnitude and scope than the violent crimes; and they have greater consequences and impacts on the socio-economic processes and administration of the country.

The scourge of unemployment has ravaged almost all nations of the world in different dimensions and shades. But in Nigeria, as Akande and Okuwa (2009) pointed out, the unemployment challenge is captured by the growing number of unemployed youths roaming the streets all over the country. It is seen in the informal sector of the economy as under-employment; declining real wages; reduced incentives; reduced private investment in all sectors of the nation's economy and a reduction in the quality of education and training given to the citizens in our educational institutions across the country. The rising crime waves are consequences of this phenomenon.

Compounding this situation is the problem of underemployment- that is, people are employed only part time or at work that is inefficient or unproductive with a corresponding low income that is insufficient to meet their needs. Unemployment is a dangerous condition that reduces the self worth of an individual and demoralizes his sense of values over time, if there is no respite. It makes a man anxious and can take a toll not only on his health, but his world view. Once unemployment builds apathy in the individual to the affairs of national life, resentment is sure sets in and the affected one is willing tool for nefarious and nebulous activities in the hands of criminals.

### **Conceptual and theoretical Issues**

The National Bureau of Statistics defines the unemployment rate as the percentage of Nigeria's labour force that is qualified to work but did not work for at least 39 hours in the week preceding the survey. The International Labor Organization (ILO) defines the unemployed as numbers of the economically active population who are without work but available for and seeking work, including people who have lost their jobs and those who have voluntarily left work (World Bank, 1998:63). Also, for Adebayo (1999) this exists when members of the labor force wish to work but cannot get jobs. When the supply of labor outstrips the demand for labor, it causes joblessness and unemployment.

Some forms of unemployment that have been identified and discussed in the literature include seasonal, frictional, cyclical, and structural and hidden unemployment (Adebayo, 1999; Damachi, 2001; Hollister & Goldstein, 1994; Robert, 1993; Todaro, 1992). Unemployment is measured among people in the labor force (Obadan & Odusola, 2001; National Bureau of Statistics, 2010). The labor force of a country as defined by National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) (2009) is a set of people or citizens of a country who are willing and are able to make available at any given point in time their efforts for gainful employment. Unemployment is a global trend, but it occurs mostly in developing countries of the world, with attendant social, economic, political, and psychological consequences. Thus, massive youth unemployment in any country is an indication of far more complex problems. The total labour force is made up of people aged between 15 to 64 years and excludes students, home-keepers, retired persons, stay-at-home parents, and persons unable to work or not interested in work.

According to the social contract theoreticians, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the individual is prior to the political community and the government. His natural rights and freedom, too, precede society and government. For men, they say, first lived in a state of nature where they had absolute freedom and right to live in the way they considered best for them to compete or struggle, if necessary, among themselves for the acquisition of the material things necessary for their realization of happiness and security for their persons and estate. In this regard, man made so much use of his freedom and right to compete that there emerged a condition called war, according to Hobbes (1904), "and such a war as is of every man against every man" with the result that there was "continual fear, and danger of violent death; and the life of man was solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short".

For John Locke, men in the state of nature were in a state of "perfect freedom to order their actions and dispose of their possessions and persons, as they thought fit, within the bounds of the law of nature; without asking leave, or depending on the will of any other man". That state was also a state of equality "wherein all the power and jurisdiction is reciprocal" men had perfect political equality and dependence.

There was no subordination of any one man to another. Because Locke (1937) considered man reasonable and guided by the law or nature, the life of man was, unlike Hobbes' view, good. Men lived together, however, according to reason, "without a common superior on earth, with authority to judge between them" where a criminal violated the right of another man. In such an instance, the injured person relied on his ability or power to redress the injury. Here, at times, might determine right to the disparagement of justice and detriment of the weak.

Living as they did under continual fear and danger of violent death, with no authority to whom an appeal for settlement could be made by parties to a controversy, men in the state of nature reached, as Jean-Jacques Rousseau puts it, "a point at which the obstacles that endanger their preservation in the state of nature (overcome) by their resistance the forces which each individual can exert with a view to maintaining himself in that state".

To overcome these obstacles, men coalesced with one another to establish a form of association which could defend and protect with the whole force of the community, the person and property of every associate as well as the association itself. In other words, the intolerable situation in the state of nature gave rise to society and government in which men agreed to respect one another's rights, "not for altruistic motives, but for protection and expediency".

In keeping with the purposes for which the government was established or the terms of the social contract, citizens expect that the government will, on its own initiative pursue policies that will enhance the general well-being of all in the society including creation of employment. In this regard, they expect the government to be responsible for all its actions and behaviours, that is to say, that it will take credits for its successes and accept the people's blame or castigation for its failure. Any government that has gone thus afoul has breached the term of the social contract. Accordingly, the people stand absolved of their obligations to that government, and as Thomas Aquinas puts it "If to provide itself with a King belong to the right of any multitude, it is not unjust that the King set up by that multitude be destroyed or his power restricted, if he tyrannically abuse the royal power". This tends to support the view that aggression is always a consequence of

frustration and that frustration always leads to some form of aggression (Leeds, 1978; Dollard, 1939). As theorized, frustration breeds hostility and produces anger, (an emotional readiness to aggression). Hostile aggression springs from anger. The principle works everywhere. Ivo and Rosaline Feierabend (1972; 1968) applied the frustration – aggression theory in a study of political instability within 84 nations. It was found that when people in rapidly modernizing nations become urbanized and literacy improves (as being experienced in Nigerian today) they become more aware of material improvements. However, since affluence usually diffuses slowly, the increasing gap between the rich and the poor intensifies frustration and unprovoked aggression ensues and escalates. These aggressions are sometimes manifested as crimes and violence in Nigeria.

#### **Unemployment: The Nigerian Situation**

Unemployment in Nigeria varies by age group, educational level and sex classification. This is evident from the data provided by NBS (2010). The report showed that Bayelsa State had the highest unemployment rate, followed by Katsina State and Akwa Ibom State. Plateau State had the lowest unemployment rate and was followed by Ogun State and Benue state.

According to National Bureau of Statistics (2011), the national unemployment rates for Nigeria between 2000 and 2011 showed that the number of unemployed persons constituted 31.1% in 2000; 13.6% in 2001; 12.6% in 2002; 14.8% in 2003; 13.4% in 2004; 11.9% in 2005; 13.7% in 2006; 14.6% in 2007; 14.9% in 2008, 19.7% in 2009, 21.1% in 2010 and 23.9% in 2011. Specifically as regards the age group, educational group and sex, data provided by the National Bureau of Statistics (2010:3) further showed that as at March 2009 in Nigeria, for persons between ages 15 and 24 years, 41.6% were unemployed. For persons between 25 and 44 years, 17% were unemployed. Also, those with primary education, 14.8% were unemployed and for those with only secondary education, 23.8% were unemployed. Furthermore, for those with post secondary education, 21.3% were unemployed. For those who never attended school and those with below primary education, 21.0% and 22.3% were unemployed respectively. As regards sex, data

showed that males constituted 17.0% while females constituted 23.3%. It is important to note that the figures above may not have captured in totality the youth unemployment situation in Nigeria.

### Causes and consequences of unemployment

According to Lamido (2013), unemployment is generally caused by improper orientation of the youths, absence of policy on social welfare, societal attitude towards vocational and technical education, and inadequate teaching facilities, low economic growth rate, adoption of untimely economic policy measures, neglect of the agricultural sector, poor enabling environment, rural-urban migration, rapid population growth, education system, rapid expansion of the education system, and gradual collapse of the manufacturing sector.

Unemployment is undesirable, bringing economic, social and political vices in the society. It has numerous consequences to society. The danger associated with both unemployment and underemployment is immeasurable. It has led to the falsification of degrees, falsification of age, submitting of lower qualification in order to endure a demeaning position, falsification of years and place of experience, suspicion, frustration, feeling of lack of worth or recognition or appreciation, inferiority-complex, desire to steal, cheat, lack of patriotism and exposure to manipulation by the disgruntled politicians. Unemployment has also brought about unprecedented rise in crime wave, armed robbery, political assassinations, religious riots, inter-ethnic, intra-ethnic and communal clashes.

Unemployment is a serious problem because it significantly lowers overall satisfaction with life (Gerlach and Gesine, 1996) and has "mental health consequences that are negative, widespread and sometimes severe" (Fryer 2006), including depression, anxiety, demoralization, and low self esteem (Tarrin & Janson 2006; Linn et al., 1985). While employment, education, and income have significant effects on good health (Cooper et al. 2007), negative economic trends tend to increase the total mortality rate (Leight et al. 1991; Brenner 1976). In the past 30 years, the gap in life expectancy at birth has widened between professional workers (who tend to have relatively secure jobs, more education, and higher incomes) and unskilled manual workers (Canada Statistics). Nylén et al.

(2001) found that in 1973 unemployment among both women and men was associated with increased mortality, even when controlled for social, behavioral, work, and health related factors. In a study conducted on unemployed Finnish men between 1981 and 1985, Martikainen (1990: 407) found that unemployment has "an independent causal effect on male mortality" (as opposed to age, socioeconomic and marital status) and that the effects of "unemployment on mortality were more pronounced with increasing duration of unemployment". Cooper et al., 2007, 2008 also found that unemployment has "a negative effect on the duration of good health."

Suicide (Ruhm 2000; Blakely et al. 2003), heart disease (Brenner 1976), and automobile accidents (Adams 1981) have also been positively associated with higher unemployment rates, as are increases in military enlistments (Dale and Gilroy 1983), which can, and often do, contribute to an increase in the mortality rate, especially during warfare. Too often unemployment affects not only unemployed individuals but also members of their immediate families, especially children. A large number of those who are unemployed tend to have children who are affected both physically and psychologically (Aber et al. 1997). Studies in neuroscience reveal that the brains of children who grow up in poverty, a direct result of unemployment, tend to have higher levels of stress hormones than children who grow up in more affluent families. Excessive levels of stress hormones cause irreparable harm to children's brains since they "disrupt the formation of synaptic connections between cells in the developing brain" and affect the blood supply. The early years of a child's development (between six months and three years of age) are the "foundation of all social problems" they might encounter later in life.

Unemployment can thus condemn children to a life of suffering. These findings debunk the claim that it is the generous compensation offered by the government in the form of unemployment benefits that are responsible for high unemployment rates (Freedman 1981). One could only view ill health as a benefit by failing to distinguish between, what McMurtry calls, "money-capital" and "life-capital" (1999: 257, 2002).

Also, the evil effects of mass unemployment have cracked some families in the country. It has led

to broken marriages of once happily married couples. As well, "Awake magazine" (July 22, 1984) supported this when it stated that families have broken up and the future of their children bleak owing to unemployment. Graham (1992) maintained that some unemployed people, and their families, experience anxiety and despair, frustration and desperate unhappiness. He also stated that the psychological pressure of unemployment caused some people to suffer stress.

In addition to security problem, the high rate of unemployment among youths in Nigeria has negative social and economic implications on so many aspects of the life of an average Nigerian. First and foremost is the fact that unemployment leads to unnecessary waste of resources and less productivity. Brain drain and loss of purchasing power are also important effects of the high rate of unemployment in Nigeria. The Nigerian economy is losing some of the best brains available to other countries. Graduates with good and outstanding skills, after walking the streets looking for jobs, take on the journey for greener pastures abroad. Many youths now take to riding commercial motorcycles while others make do with street hawking in order to keep body and soul together in order to earn a living. The economic costs of unemployment are not limited to the above. Unemployment leads to a gap between the actual Gross National Product (GNP) and the potential Gross National Product. This is known as the GNP gap – indicating a vast waste of resources and an inability to maximize the utility of both human and natural resources.

Unemployment represents a waste of human labour. An increase in the size of the non-working population is a simultaneous increase in the burden of "liability" of the working population. An implication can be drawn from here that some difficulties do arise as to how to manage the meagre finance of the working force, also it can imply grossly lowered standard dissatisfaction and insecurity. The unemployed eventually becomes a psychological wreck. There are many more consequences of unemployment such as poor housing, poor clothing, lack of medical care, poor means of transportation and so on.

These have manifested in the alarming rate of armed robberies in the south-west region; militancy

and arson in the south-south region; terrorism in the north-west, north-central and north-east regions; and in kidnapping in the south-east region. All these have impacts on the security situation of the country, and on business and investments; socio-political processes and governance. They for instance raise the cost of governance. The unemployed must find a means of livelihood and this they do by engaging in crimes and making themselves available to the political class as thugs and assassins. Political violence, ethno-religious conflicts and terrorism in Nigeria today are partly the consequences of unemployment and poverty.

### **Unemployment and Security: The Nigerian Experience**

Since the 1960s, several studies have tried to look at the link between increase in crime on a local or national level and unemployment (Alexis 2011). Several others also show that although there is some correlation between small scale theft and unemployment, it is not very clear that poverty, unemployment and national security have direct links. Unemployment brings a serious problem to democratic governance as well as the security integrity of the nation itself but their consequences have a number of security implications. For example, lack of employment opportunities has contributed to youth involvement in urban conflicts and militancy that confront the Nigerian nation today. The increased rate of sectarian violence, crimes and terrorism are connected with unemployment (Rotimi, 2011). Where the youths cannot get clean jobs, they make themselves available for odd jobs to stay alive which takes any imaginable criminal dimension (Akwara et al 2013).

As roots of violence and insecurity tend to be complex, sometimes people resort to violence when they are oppressed, discriminated against, socially isolated or economically deprived. Some researchers hold that poverty and inequality trigger violence (Awake 2012). According to Awake (2012), about 90% (percent) of all violence-related deaths have occurred in the world's less prosperous nations; and the poorer neighborhoods of cities are often high-crime areas; and according to Akande and Okuwa (2009), youth unemployment and poverty are playing a major role in African conflict experiences including Nigeria. The prevailing socio-economic

environment is enticing youths to turn to war, crime and violence as a means of livelihood.

Emerging literature points to the fact that the collapse of social institutions and the failure of the economic system to generate sufficient means of livelihood for people is an explanation for youths' increasing involvement in conflict and war situations all over Africa.

The nature of the insecurity in Nigeria has assumed a new and alarming dimension. The security situation has negatively progressed from the conventional age long armed robbery to the contemporary making of terrorist and its allied forms of human annihilation in Nigeria. Bombs are now manufactured in Nigeria at will and deployed for destructive purposes. The Boko Haram Islamist group is killing and maiming people. Terrorism has worsened the security situation in the country. The reign of fear is captured in scenes of horror in the day and the constant crackle of gunfire at night. The menace of suicide bombing notoriously prevalent in the Middle East and hitherto alien to this part of the world has found its way to Nigeria. The bombing of the Police Force Headquarters and other Police stations, the United Nations offices in Abuja, churches, mosques, markets, banks other public and private buildings where Nigerians and foreigners alike lost their lives, are sad reminders of the level of insecurity in Nigeria. This obviously has drawn global attention to the nation and placed it among terrorist nations.

For instance, the conflict situation in the Niger Delta is spearheaded by youths, most of whom were unemployed and poor. At the very least, there is a correlation between economic hardship (occasioned by poverty and unemployment) and those accused of taking part in the orgy of violence or violent disorder taking place in this country are the youths. In all, it is discerning that unemployment pre-dispose people to poverty and the two problems co-jointly influence national security by creating insecurity situation. Rising crime waves are therefore the consequence of poverty and unemployment.

The unemployed youths have become political thugs and blood-thirsty hoodlums at the disposal of the politicians. Unemployment and their quest to survive have forced and made youths to become willing tools in the hands of maverick and disgruntled

politicians who use them for anti-social and clandestine political activities. The utilization of the unemployed youths to perpetuate ethno-religious clashes in the present democratic dispensation are well documented (Ibrahim, 2006; Okafor, 2007). However, the utilization and manipulation of mostly unemployed and ignorant youths to perpetuate pre and post elections violence during 2011 elections that claimed over five hundred lives in especially states like Kaduna, Kano, Bauchi, Katsina and Gombe Akwa Ibom (including nine youth corps members on national assignment) and displaced over fifteen thousand persons in the Northern parts of Nigeria is a clear indication of an attempt to use this category of youths to breach security (Adepegba, 2011; Ibrahim, 2011; Lartey, 2011; Olatunji & Abioye, 2011).

Besides using the unemployed for political thuggery, unemployed youths have been used as local militants to attack, bomb, vandalize and destroy oil pipelines, lives and property in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria (Gilbert, 2010; Ojakorotu, 2010). For more than a decade, this category of youths have constituted the larger population of the militants in the areas who have been terrorizing and kidnapping both the expatriate and local oil workers and demanding hefty ransoms (Epelle, 2010). With this, all kinds of kidnapping including those of the political opponents and /or their relatives have spread to parts of Nigeria thus creating a general state of insecurity. Besides the legitimate agitations and demands of the youths in the Niger Delta as exemplified in militancy, some politicians have used this opportunity to sponsor the kidnappings of their political opponents. It is pertinent to note that some investors would not want to invest in a country characterized by insecurity, confusion and uncertainty.

Unemployed youths are the area boys and are a threat to security as they are idle hands and minds often recruited by the politicians to harass and intimidate political opponents. These youths are being manipulated by the politicians for a mere token. These groups besides being used for political thuggery, are also used for action, behavior and activities such as ballot box stuffing, ballot box snatching, killing and maiming of political opponents.

Figures supplied by the Nigerian Prisons

Service (National Bureau of Statistics, 2009:248) actually confirmed this. For instance, persons admitted into the prisons by age groups are as follows:

Year	16 – 20 years	21 – 25 years	25 – 50 years
2004	31, 700	39, 045	63, 100
2005	40, 170	34, 600	65, 140
2006	19, 122	28, 705	75, 491
2007	16, 236	57, 736	80, 134
2008	25, 317	28, 049	73, 071

Source: National Bureau of Statistics (2009:248)

The table above clearly shows that the vast majority of people admitted into prisons for various offences in the countries are youths most of whom are unemployed. With the array of unemployed youths on the streets, the security situation in the country get worse, hence the prevalence of vices such as political assassination, kidnapping, armed robbery, militancy, and etcetera. The continuing insecurity in the country clearly attests to the leadership failure in Nigeria.

#### Leadership Challenge in Nigeria

Although government, admittedly, is a promoter of the common good, some governments have also been known to be corrupt. Some have failed to perform necessary functions while others have wasted the taxpayers' money. Government functionaries and elected officers have seized position from the principals and become masters instead of agents or servants of the society. Nigeria is having problem of leadership. In this regard Achebe (1983) asserted

*The trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. There is nothing basically wrong with the Nigeria character. There is nothing wrong with the Nigerian land or climate or water or anything else. The Nigerian problem is unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to the responsibility, to the challenge of personal example which is the hallmark of true leadership.*

These explain why Nigeria and Nigerians have remained poor and impoverished and less developed with many remaining unemployed, in spite of about thirty three solid mineral deposits and

vibrant human' resources. The poverty profile in Nigeria showed that the incidence of poverty increased from 28.1% in 1980 to 43.6% in 1985 but declined to 42.7% in 1992 and rose again to 65.6% in 1996 (FOS 1999). Since 1990 the country has been classified as a poor nation. The UNDP Human Development Indices (HDI) for 2001 ranked Nigeria the 142nd with HDI of 0.40 among the poorest countries.

Without deliberately underestimating the influence of other factors, the principal cause of unemployment with its attendance consequences including insecurity is leadership failure. Bad leadership encapsulates a quite sufficient parameter ranging from corruption to lack of visionary leaders. Corruption and it's endemic effects have no doubt greatly impacted positively on the rate of unemployment. Many government functionaries in purporting to carry out their duties divert huge sums of money to their personal accounts; some inflate the true Naira value of contracts in order to conveniently secure their own share of the 'national cake'. In essence, resources which should be deployed towards the creation of more job opportunities for the mass unemployed are mismanaged and embezzled ( Graf, 1988).

In Nigeria, while political leaders at national, state, and local levels are counting their real estates in many parts of the federation and roll around in expensive flashy chauffeured cars and parade themselves as very important persons (V.I.P.) in public occasions, it is deeply appalling to observe that the country is retrogressing abysmally and the unemployed are still in gloom (Tom, 2012).

The country is facing the problem of poor leadership in managing and harnessing the full potentials of men and materials of the nation toward creation of employment. For many years, Nigeria has been under the coalition of poor leadership at all levels. A state is expected to be effective on all counts: establish strong and effective institutions; control and defend its territory; have a stable, loyal, and cohesive population; exercise sovereign and legitimate power within its territory and possess the resources to ensure the well-being of its citizens; and, finally, enjoy the recognition and respect of other states as a credible member of the global community. The changing realities and paradigm



shifts of the post-cold war period have seen further elaboration and extension of these attributes to include good-governance variables such as strong and effective political institutions and civil society, democracy, rule of law, accountability, transparency, conflict management, equitable resource management, poverty alleviation, and economic growth and development. The nature of corruption that pervades the institutions of the country is accountable for the inefficiencies of such outfits. It is the reason for the surge in the negative employment profile in the country. It is a systemic problem.

A society without talented and committed leaders retrogresses or at best remains stagnant. That has been the problem with Nigeria. A careful examination of the leaders or post-colonial Nigeria shows that many of the civilian, as well as military leaders were mired in the pursuit of selfish personal goals at the expense of broader national interest.

### **The way forward**

To deconstruct the high rate of unemployment in Nigeria, there must be a deliberate and concerted effort by the government to revamp the economy. Whereas it is true that the government alone cannot create all the jobs, it is the duty of government to create the enabling environment for economic growth that will encourage the private sector also to provide gainful employment. The global economy is in distress but serious governments are making efforts. A case in point is the recent \$450 billion stimulus package proposed by the President Obama's administration to stimulate the economy, support the private sector and ultimately create jobs for the American people.

The business climate in Nigeria is too harsh. The most debilitating is the lack of basic infrastructure. The epileptic power situation in the country has forced many companies to either shut down or move their production plants to smaller neighbouring countries where power is available and stable. If there is power, it will help the real sector a great deal. Small and medium scale enterprises will flourish and more jobs will be created.

There is no better time than now for the government to diversify the economy. The emphasis and dependence on oil wealth for development is risky. Global oil price fluctuation quickly affects the revenue base of the country and by extension, the

economy. The country must return to the days of massive agriculture: the groundnut pyramid in the North, cocoa in the west and palm oil in the East. Agriculture does not only employ more people, but it guarantees food security. Same goes for the untapped wealth in the solid minerals of the country.

The much needed drive to attract foreign investment in the country will be futile if the state of insecurity in the country is not tackled head on. Economic activities cannot prosper in an atmosphere of chaos, fear and threat to human lives. So if the government is serious about reducing poverty and unemployment, it should commence by ending the threat of insecurity ravaging the country.

The government should overhaul the security apparatus in the country. The nation need a security system that is 21st century compliant with the modern dictates of the best technology available. A proactive security system that can dislodge crime before it is executed.

Government must play its constitutional role by creating enabling socio-economic and political environment including the provision of infrastructure to make industrial climate investment friendly. This will encourage investors to invest and thereby create jobs in order to absorb the unemployed youths.

It is said that Nigerian employers often complain that graduates from the Nigerian tertiary institutions are unemployable. Although this may not have presented adequately the true picture of a typical Nigerian graduate from a tertiary institution in Nigeria, the fact still remains that there is the need to reinvigorate and overhaul the entire educational system at all levels to create room for entrepreneurial education so that the Nigerian tertiary education graduates will become job creators rather than job seekers. Hence, teachers at all levels of education must be properly rewarded and motivated in this regard.

The government must not relent in the crusade against all forms of corruption in public and private lives in Nigeria. As noted earlier, most scholars and institutions have identified Nigeria as one of the most corrupt countries in the world. This posture does not give Nigeria a good image. In fact, scholars often wonder why a country as rich as Nigeria with enormous human and natural resources has

remained perpetually poor and underdeveloped. The main factor that has been identified to have contributed largely to this is massive looting of public treasury at all levels of government by the past and present rulers (Aluko, 2011). Therefore government must support the various anti-corruption agencies and bodies to carry out their mandates successful so that funds meant for development projects utilized appropriately. This will lead to job creation that will absorb most unemployed youths in Nigeria.

The emoluments for both the appointed and elected public officers including that of the head of state and governors should be based on their qualifications as other public servants. This will reduce the cost of governance in the country which is adjudged to be one of the highest in the world. The situation whereby only a few privileged persons in positions of authority benefit from the system of government at the expense of the impoverished masses portends a great and real danger that may incur the wrath of the unemployed youths in the nation if not addressed urgently.

Unemployment and insecurity bedeviling Nigeria today are a human construct. Youth unemployment in Nigeria cannot be drastically reduced without a purpose driven leadership. Nigeria needs effective leadership, a leadership that is responsible and responsive and a leadership with a progressive agenda. With visionary and proactive leadership, a leadership that has the political will to do what is right for the people, the nation can overcome these challenges.

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