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SECURITY VOTES AS MISSING VAULTS IN NIGERIA`S CHECKERED SECURITY ARCHITECTURE

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Abstract
Though Security votes are not recognized in the Nigerian constitution, yet, since the democratic transition in 1999, huge sums of unaudited monies are released monthly to state governors and other offices for unquantified security services - just as it was done during the military regimes. This has become more problematic because while insecurity persists, such funds are neither audited nor are the expenditures published. Once security votes are released, it is akin to missing vaults. On the other hand, some National Security Advisers and those in charge of anti-corruption agencies have been severally accused or indicted for misappropriating funds budgeted for security. To worsen the problem, 178,459 firearms and ammunitions are reportedly missing from the armory of the Nigeria police since 2018 while killing and kidnapping by non-state actors continues. Misappropriation of security votes have also led to weakened morale and the resignation of at least 500 soldiers within two years. Results shows that unaudited security votes give room for corruption, missing vaults and worsening insecurity. This paper uses descriptive qualitative analysis to examine the causes of these anomalies and to proffer recommendations which include the regular auditing for accountability and transparency in security budgets and expenditures; giving state governors full control of the security architecture of their respective states and the amendment of the Nigerian constitution to remove the power of the president to appoint heads of anti-corruption agencies, the Inspector General of police and the Chief of Army Staff.
Keywords: Anti-corruption Agencies; Corruption; Non-State Actors; Security Budgets; Weakened morale.

> *I used to think that the causes of war were predominantly economic. I came to think that they were more psychological. I am now coming to think that they are decisively "personal," arising from the defects and ambitions of those who have the power to influence the currents of nations*. **B. H. Liddell Hart**

1. Introduction

Security votes are funds allocated by the federal government of Nigeria to state governments and other institution to address security challenges within their domains. The funds are spent at their discretion on any matter related to security without legal obligations. Internal insecurity within a country, mostly lead to regional and global security complexes and challenges. Apart from the destruction of property, the loss of lives, the Internally Displaced Persons and the exodus of refugees, insecurity usually call for global cooperation for stability. The history of 'security votes' in Nigeria dates to the late 60s during the military regime of General Yakubu Gowon. The regime dished out some funds to state administrators to placate the political elites, traditional rulers and to solicit their cooperation with the military government. In some cases, it became effective for gathering information against persons that pose security risks. In the

current situation, local vigilantes and hunters have been integrated into the security architecture in some states of the federation.

The release of security votes continued into the successive civilian government of Shehu Shagari (1979-1983) and other successive governments. When Major General Muhammadu Buhari overthrew the democratic government of Shagari in 1983, he was so concerned about fighting corruption that in 1984, he arrested and jailed Adamu Atta the former Governor of Kwara State for *embezzling $2.7 million (equal to $6.3 million today) in security vote (*Adediji, Banji Oyeniran. 2013). The irony of this arrest is that when the same Muhammadu Buhari became an elected democratic president, he expanded funding for security votes from 30 to 190 federal government Ministries, Departments and Agencies, MDAs (Page, 2018). The funding were not accounted for.

Despite increasing the disbursement of security votes, insecurity in the country nose-dived to the point where many farmers became too scared to go to their farms. The consequent hunger is a function of poverty. It is such poverty that led to the loss of confidence in the leadership and consequent disrespect for rules, policies and authorities, resulting to social, economic or political violence (Ibbih, 2010). Such poverty further lead to the loss of confidence in the leadership and consequent disrespect for rules, policies and authorities. It is expected that people in position of authority should be compassionate and patriotic enough to consider the country`s checkered security architecture when spending security votes.

This paper is subdivided into six parts. Part one introduces the subject matter. Part two briefly discusses conceptual interrogation; part three is the theoretical framework; part four discusses and analyzes the crux of the paper; part five summarizes and concludes the paper while part six offers recommendations.

2. Conceptual interrogation

Security vote as a term, has few literary definitions. Therefore, it has been defined in various ways as perceived by those who have found interest in the subject. In simple definition, security votes are monies voted to different tiers of government to address and prevent insecurity in Nigeria. Ema and Anyadike (2013) define security as a desideratum for achieving… developmental goals. With such a definition, he sees the outcome of security votes but not the history or the processes of disbursement and how it is being utilized. It is difficult to develop in an unstable society.

Due to the controversies arising from the misappropriation of such funds, security votes have also been defined by Egbo, Nwakobi, et al (2010) as *an opaque fund reserved for the executive arm at various levels of government, to manipulate security issues for political and economic gains...(*Egbo, Nwakoby, Onwumere; Uche, 2010). This definition clearly expresses how security votes have been wrongly channeled to other areas to gain political clout. For example, when Theodore Orji, the former governor of Abia state was interrogated by the anti-corruption agency known as the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (2020) he explained that he shared security votes with Abia lawmakers, informants and traditional rulers. Spending security votes in such a manner defeats the purpose for which it was meant.

In reaction to the presentation of the defence budget in 2012, Nasir Ahmad El-Rufai expressed his worries thus: "*For a nation that is not at war, Nigeria's defence spending raises several critical concerns. The paradox of course is that the more government spends on defence, the more insecure Nigerians feel* (Sahara Reporters, 2012). Due to the controversies arising from the misappropriation of such funds, security votes has also been defined as *an opaque fund reserved for the executive arm at various levels of government, to manipulate security issues for political and economic gains...(*Egbo, Nwakoby, Onwumere; Uche, 2010).

In my opinion, I agree with the highlighted definitions and worries about how security votes are diverted in a country with security challenges. Therefore, it needs to be examined.

3. Theoretical framework

This paper is hinged on qualitative content analysis which offers the opportunity to do an in-depth exploration of the attitudes and behavioural patterns of those that receive and spend security votes. What are the patterns of those that handle security votes? What gives them the impetus to indulge in the act of diversion? How is the trend sustained? These questions and the gap created by the inability to achieve the purposes of security votes, give justification for the subsequent recommendations.

The qualitative content analysis helped in creating statistical and discourse analysis, thereby enabling the analysis to focus not only on the result, but also on the processes and shortcomings on issues of security votes. Other data have been sourced from existing literature and from the internet. Nigerian newspapers and other journals were used to record current events and updates which hitherto, have not been published as academic materials.

4. Security votes and military expenditures

From military to civilian governments, the issue of security votes has been problematic. During the regime of the late head of state Sani Abacha, Sahara Reporters (2014) cited the documents of the United States District Court of Columbia by the Asset Forfeiture and Money Laundering Section, in which Abacha, Mohammed, Bagudu, and others, systematically embezzled public funds worth billions of dollars from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) on the false pretense that the funds were necessary for " national security". After the CBN dispersed the funds, Abacha and Bagudu moved them overseas. The document revealed that in all, more than $2bn was stolen from CBN alone.

In 2011, the former President of Nigeria Jonathan Goodluck constituted a committee on how to cut federal spending. The committee which was headed by Steve Oronsaye, recommended that many MDAs should be merged and scrapped (Orosanye Report 2011). The report was largely rejected and unimplemented by the governments of Goodluck and his successor, Muhammadu Buhari. These are the same MDAs that Buhari was releasing security votes to. Statistics show that apart from other allocations, security agencies receive separate security votes. For example, in the 2018 budget proposal (Transparency International, 2018), shows that the Nigerian Army (NA) and Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA) were expected to receive the largest sums: roughly $11.6 million (N4.2 billion) each. DIA's 2018 security vote would be more than twice what it received in 2017. DIA would also receive $2.6 million (N920 million) separately budgeted for its defense advisers (military attachés) stationed overseas. Compared to all other MDAs, the DIA by far receives the largest percentage of its budget—over 18 percent—in the form of security vote. The SSS would receive about $4.7 million (N1.7 billion) in 2018. Other budgets for security votes include that of the Ministry of Defense ($4.2 million / N1.5 billion), the Nigerian Air Force ($3.3 million / N1.2 billion), the Office of the National Security Adviser ($3.1 million / N1.14 billion), the Nigerian Navy ($3 million / N1.08 billion), National Intelligence Agency ($1.4 million / N505 million), and the Nigeria Police Force ($1.1 million / N388.6 million). Apart from these security agencies, it is also strange that MDAs such as museums, academic institutions and theatre directors receive security votes with classified expenditures.

Apart from what the States receive from the federal government as monthly security votes, they also use their various state legislators to budget for separate security votes. In 2017, for example, Kogi State set aside 4.6% of its total budget as security vote; Adamawa budgeted

3.8%, and Ondo State just 1.4%. These funds are usually disbursed through the offices of the Secretary to the State Government or other Permanent Secretaries as directed by the Governors. At the local government level, security votes are widely unaccounted for. Joint accounts operated between States and local government councils make it easy for Governors to manipulate allocations of security votes among others. That is why State Governors are very influential in the election of State Legislators, Local Government Chairpersons, and their Councilors. Governors arm-twist them into submission against the general development of the communities. The Governor could even decide not to disburse security votes to the local government councils. For example, Transparency International also cited that in Bayelsa state, government chairmen receive as much as N40 million ($110,000) a year. Meanwhile, in 2013, a former local government chairman in Ogun State was jailed for six months for embezzling N4,000,000 (over $17,500) in security vote outlays over a six-month period. In

Rivers State,over $1 million in security votes were doled out in 2006 to the chairman of just three of the state's twenty-three local governments. In 2015, local government chairmen in one area in northern Delta State received a N36 million ($100,000) annual security vote while local government councilors each received more than N6 million ($16,700) a year.

Despite these monetary allocations, the mentioned agencies have not been able to actualize their statutory responsibilities of securing the country. There have been numerous brutal attacks on Nigerians across the country resulting in mass burials. There are cases in states like Benue, Katsina, Borno, Yobe, Sokoto, Plateau, etc., where terrorists kidnapped and killed many persons and razed villages in operations that lasted for more than one hour. Security agencies seldom respond to some distress calls. It is expected that the State Security Service ought to have the capacity to gather intelligence reports that could stop attacks during their planning stages.

With the regular news that some states are frequently attacked by terrorists, the state governors continue to siphon security votes even when their people are being killed in large numbers. Among others, Plateau State has been the epicenter of such attacks from ethnic clashes and invasions by terrorists and Fulani herdsmen. In June 2013, gunmen attacked three villages in Taroh community in Plateau State killing at least 28 persons. In January 2014 gunmen stormed Shonong, in the Riyom area of Plateau state, leaving some 30 people dead (BBC, 2020). On 20 May 2014, two bombs exploded in Jos the capital city of Plateau State and killed about 118 people and injuring more than 56 others. These tragedies did not deter the then Plateau State Governor Jonah Jang from allegedly embezzling state funds budgeted for security! During Jang's governorship (2007-2015), Plateau State officials allegedly embezzled funds from the state security vote [...] functionaries within the SSG withdrew a total of N16.7 billion (over $100 million) in 'classified expenditures' from state coffers - N150 million at a time- and delivered it to the governor in cash (Page, 2018).

Though unconstitutional, the term 'security vote' has become a norm in governance. This money traditionally released to the three tiers of government – federal, 36 States and 774 local government areas including the federal capital territory to secure their territories no longer serve the intended purposes and its illegality has been a subject of many debates. Since there are regular budgets for security agencies such as the Army, Police, Navy, etc. in all the States, why is another funding necessary when these security agencies receive regular salaries which have been budgeted for as separate expenditures? This is considered a duplication of budget. The irony is that despite the duplication, the issue of security continues to be of growing concern especially with the Boko haram attacks, kidnapping, and the murderous activities of herdsmen militia. Security votes are not recognised in the Nigerian constitution but the government continue to support it. In contrast, the United States of America which remains the

highest military spender in the world, has legislative backing for such expenditures. The Congress has the responsibility to authorize and appropriate funding for issues of security and intelligence. This oversight function is a powerful tool used by the US legislature to ensure that funds allocated for national security and intelligence are expended for the uses to which they have been appropriated.

In the case of Nigeria, there is no accountability for expenditure on security votes. The disbursement is secretly classified and the contracts that are awarded in the process, do not always pass through public bidding or tenders in accordance with the Public Procurement Act of the country.

During the military era, it was reported that cheques meant for the `procurement` of military equipment were sometimes written in the name of the late head of state San Abacha (Baker 2005, p.60). The monies and equipment were never accounted for. By the time Abacha died in 1998 after about 5 years in office, it was discovered that he had stolen up to $5billion. (Vanguard, 2023). Some of such funds were stolen under the guise of security votes, acquisition of security equipment and peacekeeping operations.

The governors claim that issues of security ought not to be published, yet they treat security issues with insouciance. Refusal to publish expenditures of security votes breeds more insecurity because the lack of checks and balances does not give room for transparency. For example, it was reported that a former Governor of Abia State known as Theodore Orji diverted security votes into his private account throughout his 8 years in office. This amounted to 48bn naira is estimated to be 120 million Euros. During his defense before the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, Theodore Orji who later became a Senator representing Abia Central Senatorial District at the National Assembly, said that what he received as security votes during his tenure was 38.8billion naira. According to him, he shared the amount with "members of the state House of Assembly, security informants, traditional rulers, military units, the police, the Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps (NSCDC) and security agencies as what he called statutory allocations (The Nation, 2020). Such diversion was possible because of the lack of accountability.

In the case of the USA, the Congress uses the technique of `reporting requirement` which is a check and balance technique of monitoring and evaluating the implementation of government policies by way of accountability and transparency. In 2020, the Nigerian government dished out at least 241.2bn naira as security votes to states. The federal government spends 18billion naira ($50m) for security votes. The 774 local government councils receive 20m naira ($56,000) monthly as security votes. In 2021, state and local government councils collected 375 billion naira ($375million) as security votes with nothing tangible to show for it (Vanguard, 2019). It has been reported that in one year, the opaque spending exceeds 70 percent of the annual budget of the Nigerian police, more than the Nigerian army`s annual budget and more than the Nigerian Navy and Nigerian Air Force`s annual budgets combined. These are in addition to the huge international support for security. According to Transparency International, In just one year, these cash-in, extra-budgetary, expenditures add up to over nine times the amount of the US security assistance to Nigeria since 2012 ($68.6 million) and over 12 times the $53.5 million (£40 million) in counter-terrorism support the UK promised Nigeria from 2016-2020 (Page, 2018).

In 2020, the court struck out a case filed by Legal Resources Consortium, Legal Defense and Assistance Project, and Chino Obiagwu, a Senior Advocate of Nigeria in which they requested the court to mandate the 36 State Governors to publish expenditures of their security votes. The court order given by Justice Muslim Hassan, dismissed the case because, according to the judge, it lacked jurisdiction. According to the Judge, the High courts in the respective

states should be approached for such judgements (Premium Times, 2020). Section 85 of the Nigerian Constitution demands that the Auditor-General must audit the accounts of all offices of the Federation and that the reports of the audit must be submitted to the National Assembly. Security votes received by states are not specifically excluded from being audited.

Below are security votes released to state governments in Nigeria.

States	Monthly Amount (In Billion)	Annual Amount	Remarks

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NIGER	N1.308B	N15.7B	**1 USD exchanges for N1,250 as of October 2023**
BENUE	N3.092B	N37.1B	**personnel and overhead costs + security vote + others**
PLATEAU	N216.667M	N2.6B	
KOGI	N400M	N4.8B	
KWARA	**		
NASARAWA	N100M	N1.2B	
ZAMFARA	N600M	N7.2B	
KATSINA	N17.583M	N211M	
KANO	**		
KADUNA	N400M (N175M + N225M)	N4.8B	**[N175M (Security vote) + N225M Security Vote Preventive and Supportive**
TARABA	N316.667M	N3.8B	
YOBE	N316.667M	N3.8B	
BORNO	N806.25M	N9.675B	
BAUCHI	N1.417B	N17B	
EKITI	N100M	N1.2B	
OSUN	N400M	N4.8B	
OGUN	N80-N100M	N960M-N1.2B	
ONDO	N750M	N9B	
LAGOS	**N1.429B	N17.149B (N15.559B + N1.59B)	** N1.297B (Public order and safety) + N132.5M (Social Protection)
CROSS RIVER	N500M	N6B	
RIVERS	N1.5B	N18B	
DELTA	N2B	N24B	
EDO	N900M	N10.8B	
BAYELSA	N1BN	N12BN	
IMO	N333.333M	N4B	
ABIA	N700M	N8.4B	
ANAMBRA	N850M	N10B	
ENUGU	N600M	N7.2B	
EBONYI	NA		
JIGAWA	NA		
GOMBE	N192.9M	N2.315B	
KEBBI	N600M		

SOKOTO	NA	
ADAMAWA	NA	
AKWA-IBOM	N1.8BN	N21.6BN
KOGI	N666M	N8BN
OYO	N1BN	N12BN

Figure 1. Monies released by the Federal government of Nigeria to States for Security Votes. Source: Vanguard Newspaper, https://www.vanguardngr.com/2019/09/security-votes-n241bn-spent-annually-unaccounted-for-says-transparency-intl/ 19 September 2019. *The allocations were unpublished.

The total military spending of Nigeria has been increasing annually due to continuing security challenges. By NATO definition, military expenditure includes... current and capital expenditures spent on the armed forces. This includes forces assigned to peacekeeping, domestic defense agencies which are involved in defense activities including...paramilitary forces, trained and equipped for military operations and military space activities. Such expenditures include military and civil personnel, including retirement pensions of military personnel and social services for personnel; operation and maintenance; procurement; military research and development; and military aid in the military expenditures of the donor country (Worldometer, nd).

Within the last decade, there have continuing security challenges despite increase in budget. Record shows that the Military expenditure of Nigeria stayed within an average of $1.2bn from 1960 until it reached a record high of $4.5bn in 2021 from a record low of $23.4m in 1960. Below is the statistics of military expenditures in response to insecurity within a period of five years.

Nigeria`s Military Expenditure 2017 - 2022

Year	Expenditure	Remarks
2022	**$3.10B**	**13.85 % decrease** from 2021
2021	**$4.47B**	**73.93% increase** from 2020.
2020	**$2.57B**	**38.04% increase** from 2019
2019	**$1.86B**	**8.95% decline** from 2018
2018	**$2.04B**	**26.02% increase** from 2017.

Figure 2. Nigeria`s Military Expenditure 2017 - 2022. Figures from macrotrends. https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/NGA/nigeria/military-spending-defense-budget Edited by author.

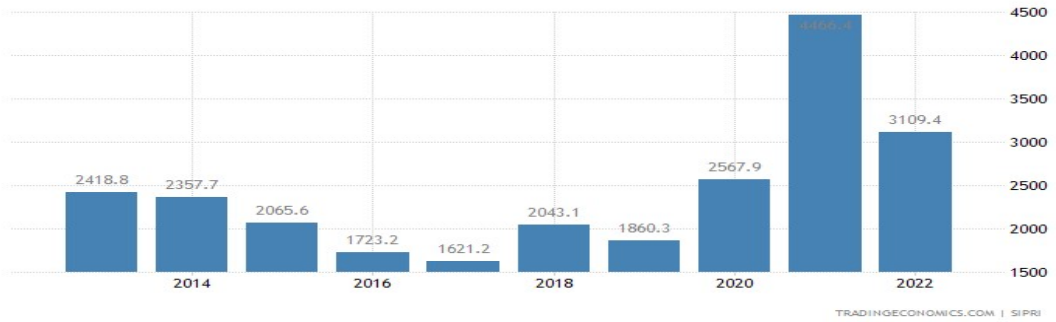


Figure III. Nigeria Military Spending/ Defense Budget 2014 - 2022 Macrotrends, https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/NGA/nigeria/military-spending-defense-budget (Downloaded 29.10.2023).

Military expenditure drastically moved up in 2020 due to the emergence of the Islamic State of West African Province, ISWAP, in addition to the existing Boko haram, Fulani herdsmen, and other bandits such as the subtle Eastern Security Network.

The role of security and anti-corruption heads

Despite the huge sums of money spent on the military, several cases of misappropriation have been recorded against persons who are supposed to lead the sensitive offices. For example, $1billion was taken from the treasury of Nigeria by President Buhari, to buy equipment for the military (Premium Times, 2018. The few equipment bought did not make significant impacts against the terrorism fight. On several occasions, Boko haram troops invaded military bases, neutralized soldiers and carted away their firearms because the terrorists seem to have superior weapons.

In 2022, the office of Nigeria`s Auditor General reported that firearms were missing from the armory of the Nigerian police. The total number of lost firearms as reported was 178,459 pieces. Out of this number, 88,078 were AK-47 rifles (Reuters, 2022). If so much is spent on security but the system could not account for what was missing in the vault for firearms, the effort to fight terrorism becomes antithetical. The Chairman, Senate Committee on Army, Senator Ali Ndume stated that Most of the arms and ammunition they use are the ones they succeed in carting away from the Nigerian soldiers and other armed forces or security agencies (Punch, 2021). Former President Buhari once requested that AFRICOM should be moved from Germany to Africa. Considering the growing security challenges in West and Central Africa, Gulf of Guinea, Lake Chad region and the Sahel, weighing heavily on Africa, it underscores the need for the United States to consider re-locating AFRICOM headquarters... near the theatre of operation (Reuters, 2021). However, there seem to be low political will on the part of the government to fight terrorism. Just three days after seeking military support from the United States, Buhari told the Governor of Benue State to comply with terrorists by agreeing to have a settlement for their cattle (RUGA) against the laws of the state (Gazette, 2021).

The governors of the states do not have complete control of the security architecture of their respective states despite being addressed as the chief security officers of their states. They require permission from the president of the country before they could take some tough security decisions. What is the point of budgeting huge sums of money for security when the governors who receive the funds do not have full control of the security apparatus? In October 2021, Simon Lalong the governor of Plateau state complained that he bought drones to fight terrorism in his state but was frustrated by the office of the National Security Adviser from using the

equipment because they refused to issue the end-user certificate needed to put the material into use. In his words, they call you Chief Security Officer of your state but are you the chief security officer of your state when you cannot control the total security of your state? (Vanguard, 2021).

It has become difficult to fight insecurity because there are several cases where the same persons entrusted with the responsibility to secure Nigeria have indulged in misappropriating funds meant to equip the army and to provide adequate welfare for security personnel. In other cases, some heads of the anti-corruption agency known as the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, assigned to arrest such corrupt public office holders, have also been indicted for corruption. The cases of Ibrahim Magu (Punch, 2021) and Abdulrasheed Mawa (Sahara Reporters, 2023) are ready examples.

While insecurity has become big business for a few persons, it has become a matter of grave concern to Nigerians both home and abroad. Among others, non-governmental organisations such as the Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP) and the Global Coalition for Security and Democracy in Nigeria (GCSDN), have been very active against corruption and insecurity in Nigeria.

It is important to highlight the roles played by various National Security Advisers who allegedly misappropriated resources meant for security, thereby worsening the security situation of the country.

General Andrew Azazi

The sum of $9m was traced to an account in a bank located in Texas, United States of America, allegedly owned by a former National Security Adviser, General Andrew Azazi. It is very clear that the stash was a product of corruption from monies budgeted for the military. *Azazi died in a helicopter crash [...]alongside the Governor of Kaduna State, Patrick Yakowa....(Punch, 2021).* While in office, General Azazi reportedly bought choice properties in Abuja, the Federal Capital territory of Nigeri. Witahin his 21 months in office, he supervised military expenditure of at least *N304.552 billion* (305m euro) which was allocated to the intelligence community to check the growing insecurity in the country.

If the value of his property was considered in terms of his salary and emoluments, he needed to serve for 274 years to earn N1.5 billion (1.5m euro), the value of one of his apartments. Meanwhile, within that period, Boko haram insurgency was ravaging Nigeria while soldiers were being killed at the frontline because of inferior arms and ammunitions compared to what the terrorists had.

Sambo Dasuki

He was appointed in June 2012 as National Security Adviser by President Goodluck Jonathan. Prior to the 2015 Presidential elections, he advised that the security situation in Nigeria needed to be addressed before the election could take place. He assured that Boko Haram would be crushed before the election. That was how the election was postponed by the Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, from 15 February 2015 to 28 March 2015. As National Security Adviser, he was embroiled in the $2 billion arms deal which was later known as *Dasukigate*. The money was budgeted for the procurement of arms for the Nigerian army. The money was evidently shared amongst political cronies of President Goodluck Jonathan to aid his victory in the 2015 elections. An investigative panel was set up and on 1 December 2015 Dasuki was arrested by the State Security Service (SSS) for misappropriating the $2 billion arms deal. Though several courts ordered that he should be granted bail, the government refused. However, on 24 December 2019, he was released alongside Omoyele Sowore the

revolutionary campaigner who was also at the detention facility of the State Security Service. In the case of Sowore the journalist and human rights activist, he has been a consistent political and social advocate for a better Nigeria.

The aftermath of denying soldiers and police officers their basic weapons and welfare was disastrous. By January 2023, at least 534 soldiers had tendered their resignation letters while others deserted the force for lack of morale (Sahara Reporters, 2023). Between January 2021 and April 2023, at least 581 policemen and 384 military personnel were killed by Boko Haram, bandits, activities of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) and other non-state actors.

Babagana Mohammed Monguno

Retired Major General Monguno was appointed as the National Security Adviser on 13 July 2015 by President Muhammadu Buhari. He was previously the Chief of Defence Intelligence and Commander of the Brigade of Guards between July 2009 and September 2011. In March 2021 he claimed that monies budgeted to buy arms and ammunitions for the military could not be accounted for by the previous Service Chiefs. In his words, *I'm not saying the former service chiefs diverted the money, but the money is missing. We don't know how, and nobody knows for now (Premium Times, 2021).*

The same Monguno was later accused of corruptly enriching himself by spending funds meant to tackle insecurity, to acquire multi-billion-naira properties in UK, US, Dubai. When public funds are taken abroad to acquire property, it further gives the country a bad image at the receiving end. It is propagated that *the country's image as a bastion for bribery, venality and deceit has remained consistent over the years* (Daniel, 2007 p.1).

In 2021 there were allegations that Monguno was threatening the life of the Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, Abdulrasheed Bawa, because of an attempt to investigate the misappropriation of finances in the office of the National Security Adviser. The irony of the situation was that soldiers who complained of poor equipment were arrested, detained or demoted. For example, the Theatre Commander of Operation Lafiya Dole, Major General Olusegun Adeniyi was demoted by three years for sharing a video in which he called on the government to send adequate fighting equipment to the soldiers on ground. He was accused of *violating military social media guidelines* (This Day, 2020).

In another instance, Lance corporal Idakpini Martins was arrested 23 June 2020 and detained for complaining through a viral video on social media where he criticized the Chief of Army Staff, Tukur Yusuf Buratai, for failing to provide adequate resources to soldiers combating Boko Haram. Idakpini was arrested and detained incommunicado. On 22 July 2020, the court granted an order permitting his lawyer and family to visit him. The army disobeyed the court order and continued to detain him. He was eventually released in June 2023 by Maj Gen Taoreed Lagbaja the new Chief of Army Staff after spending three years in unlawful detention and attending court session for at least twelve times (Sahara Reporters, 2023).

While army officers were being detained for speaking out against the lack of equipment to protect the country, many terrorists who killed civilians and security personnel were granted amnesty and being reintegrated and paid upkeep allowances. In 2023, fifty of such persons who were kindly referred to as `repentant thugs`, were recruited into the police force in Kano state (Punch, 2023). How National Security Adviser, Monguno Looted Funds Meant To Tackle Insecurity To Acquire Multi-billion-Naira Properties In UK, US, Dubai—Northern Group Meanwhile, the families of those they killed were mostly not compensated. Report shows that *at least 2,085 persons were killed in Nigeria between October to December 2021 in violent incidents across the country, while a total of 10,366 died in 2021. Between January and March 2022, at least 2,968 people were killed while another 1,484 were abducted. 323 were killed by*

non-state actors. At least 323 security operatives were killed between January and May 15, 2022 (Opinion Nigeria, 2022). The killings were happening because monies budgeted for security were being mismanaged. On the other hand, terrorists have also suffered huge losses from Nigerian security forces. *The militants struggle against the Nigerian state was seen as counterproductive* (Umar, 2012). There is a need for Muslim clerics and activists to cooperate instead of splitting and forming factions like the Yan Izala Movement. They need to re-orientate the bandits especially because some of them seem not to fully understand their aim of joining the militancy.

In another instance, the United Arab Emirates informed the Nigerian government about six Nigerians who trained and sponsor terrorists. The government did not take action to prosecute the suspects. When a government receive proof against those who destabilizes the country, it is expected that such persons should be prosecuted.

Again, just like some other heads of security agencies, Tukur Buratai Yusuf was accused of various corrupt practices (Gazette, 2021). Apart from financial corruption, Buratai was also accused of various horrendous crimes against humanity and many Nigerians petitioned him to the International Criminal Court of Justice. In order to prevent his prosecution at the international court after leaving office, President Buhari quickly appointed Buratai as Nigeria`s ambassador to the Republic of Benin so that he could enjoy diplomatic immunity (Punch, 2021). Indeed, corruption as a behavior that deviates from the formal duties of a public role (Nye, 1967). If this trend continues*, the consequences of corruption on a political system and a developing economy such as Nigeria's are undoubtedly negative and disastrous and will ultimately affect the process and pace of national development (*Heidenheimer, 1989).

Transferred money from the UAE to Boko Haram terrorists in Nigeria. The Sponsors of terrorism are yet to be prosecuted by the Nigerian government but were sanctioned by the United States of America. *The men, identified as Abdurrahman Ado Musa, Salihu Yusuf Adamu, Bashir Ali Yusuf, Muhammed Ibrahim Isa, Ibrahim Ali Alhassan and Surajo Abubakar Muhammad, were convicted in the UAE of attempting to send $782,000 from Dubai to Nigeria* (Aljazeera, 2022).

5. Conclusion

This paper agree that expenditures for security are imperative. However, it has maintained that the process of disbursement must be constitutional, transparent and must achieve the purposes for which the funds were released. It is more worrisome that as the amount for security increases, security challenges persist.

So much money has been spent on security in Nigeria since 1960. Military expenditure of Nigeria stayed within an average of $1.2bn from 1960 until it reached a record high of $4.5bn in 2021 from a record low of $23.4m in 1960. This is apart from the monthly allocations from the federal government to the 36 states and the 774 local government councils. However, these amounts of monies, especially the security votes, have been grossly underutilized and mismanaged. The misappropriation and the lack of political will to fight terrorism, has further contributed to a worsening security situation in Nigeria, the largest country in the African continent. The problem is compounded by the fact that security votes are neither audited nor the expenditures published. The National Security Advisers and those in charge of anti-corruption agencies have been severally accused or indicted for misappropriating funds budgeted for security. The security votes of some states are shrouded in secrecy and no information is published about them as seen in Figure 1 of this paper. The diversion of security votes and other military funds has left the security agencies less equipped to fight terrorism. This has been a huge challenge for Nigeria in the past two decades. The disappearance of at

least 178,459 firearms and ammunitions from the police armory has further put dangerous weapons in the hands of terrorists. The consequent insecurity has led to the death of many security personnel and civilians while the fight against insecurity continue. Over 500 soldiers have resigned within two years due to the lack of morale. Those soldiers who spoke against the lack of welfare and equipment were detained arbitrarily.

Now that the security votes are missing, the vaults remain empty while the fights continue.

6. Recommendations

This paper recommends as follows:

i) There must be accountability and transparency in security budgets and expenditures. It is such transparency that will guide the heads of security agencies towards working more efficiently in delivering on the goals of securing the country. Regular auditing of security agencies are functions of transparency.

ii) State governors must have full control of the security architecture of their respective states. Such independence should lead to the establishment of state police within a given time frame.

iii) Nigeria needs a brand new constitution because the current one of 1999 has outlived emerging issues. Such a constitution must remove the power of the president from appointing heads of anti-corruption agencies, Electoral Commission, the Inspector General of police, and the Chief of Army Staff because such powers have been misused over the years.

I believe that when these recommendations are applied, they will successfully address the problems of insecurity, security votes and the missing vaults in Nigeria`s checkered security architecture.

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