

CROSS-BORDER SECURITY, COOPERATION AND INTEGRATION

Focus on Nigeria's Immediate
Neighbours in the North-West Zone



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FOREWORD

Cross-Border Security, Cooperation, and Integration: Focus on Nigeria's Immediate Neighbours in the Northwest Zone

Ever since her independence, Nigeria's pre-eminence in the West African sub-region has never been in doubt. This has been manifested in the forms of a very large population, a large land mass and an economy that can arguably be described as the hub of the sub-region's market. Indeed, in an effort to spread the benefits of her relative economic strength, and possibly stimulate and invigorate the economies of neighbouring states through the process of integration, Nigeria championed the formation of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

However, her policy of good neighbourliness and the promotion of integration have not been entirely devoid of predicaments. Thus, phenomena that constitute threats to the country's security, such as armed banditry, smuggling, farmer-grazier clashes and sundry transnational crimes, have become recurring incidents within the context of Nigeria's efforts to promote cooperation and integration with our immediate neighbours and the sub-region at large.

This book derives from a three-day national workshop, which examined the issues of Cross-Border Security, Cooperation and Integration with a focus on Nigeria's immediate neighbours in the northwestern zone of the country (primarily Benin Republic and Niger). The issue of cross-border security is one that acquired salience with incursion by bandits, smugglers, refugees and renegade soldiers and fighters into Nigeria mainly from the country's northern neighbours of Chad and Niger and being the fallout of years of civil strife in those countries.

An earlier workshop (October, 2000) held in Yola had

examined the security scenario in the north-eastern zone of Nigeria with the general findings being largely similar.

The analyses that are provided by the respective chapters are predicated largely on cross-border and national security as focal points. Cross-border security is taken as a derivative of national security which emphasizes the safety of the territory and population of a state, and by extension the policies that are adopted for its preservation. In this regard, the sources of threat that have transnational implications, as well as factors that enhance the security of Nigeria's northwestern zone and the border communities constitute central themes in the respective chapters.

The concepts of cooperation and integration are critical to the extent that they define the politico-economic context of the country's cross-border security milieu. Both cooperation and integration represent constant themes in Nigeria's foreign policy, as well as comprising two sides of the same coin. Nigeria's efforts at cooperating with her immediate neighbours have resulted in the formation of bilateral commissions with all of them. In similar vein, the country's role in the formation and consolidation of ECOWAS does not need re-emphasis here.

It is within the tripodal conceptual framework of security, cooperation and integration that discourses of the respective chapters are situated. The book has three broad sections corresponding with the thematic arrangement of presentations at the workshops. The first part comprises chapters that explore the historical background to cross-border relations in Nigeria's northwestern region, the geo-political character of the region, as well as elucidation of the concept of security. The second part throws light on the dynamics and defining features of cooperation, integration and interaction between the neighbouring communities of the northwestern zone. Issues such as trade (formal and informal), conflicts, the environment and bilateral cooperation are subjected to critical examination. The third part focuses on the issue of sub-regional security and

the institutional frameworks and organizations that are devoted to maintaining security. In this regard the growth of democracy, security institutions, and a prospective collective security system for Nigeria and its immediate neighbours are all examined.

Indeed, given its focus on cross-border security, cooperation and integration in Nigeria's northwestern zone, this book breaks new grounds. Research works on Nigeria's security are quite sparse and inadequate to meet the needs of students, scholars, and policy-makers with an interest in this area. This book not only helps towards filling the lacuna, it is also suggestive of the need for works with a similar focus on other parts of the country such as the southern zone of the country.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

BY

**HIS EXCELLENCY, ALHAJI ABUBAKAR ATIKU,
VICE-PRESIDENT, FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA**

Your Excellencies,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

I welcome you to the historic city of Sokoto, the gateway to Nigeria's North-West borders and beyond. Today marks the beginning of a three-day workshop organized by the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs and the Presidency, on *Cross-Border Security, Cooperation and Integration with Nigeria Immediate Neighbours in the North-West Zone*.

I recall with pride, the highly successful workshop on Cross-Border Armed Banditry in the North-East Zone, also organized by the Institute at Yola in October last year. It is against this background that I express with confidence a lot of hope that our presentations and discussions within these three days would be highly fruitful and rewarding.

The North-West zone is an important part of Nigeria. It is rich in culture, its people are distinguished and it holds immense natural wealth and resources. The zone is also a strategic part of Nigeria's international frontiers, making it an indispensable factor in any calculus of national interest and security, good neighbourliness, sub-regional cooperation and integration.

Like the North-East, the North-West has two sides that are equally relevant – the internal and the external. While the internal side deals with issues of law and order, peace and stability, and

the well-being of our people, the external side deals with national defence and relations with our immediate neighbours and trans-border cooperation on issues of mutual interest. In some ways, the division between the internal and the external is merely artificial as our people on both sides of the border continue to maintain long established historic, socio-cultural and economic ties, in spite of colonially established lines of demarcation and the policies of successive post-independence governments.

This administration is well aware of the challenges that confront the country in the area of regional integration and the important roles our immediate neighbours can, and must, play in this regard. Therefore, in the quest of building an integrated community and a West African common market, both being concerns that are close to the heart of government, we must literally begin with our neighbours. In the North-West, we have two equally important neighbours: the Republic of Benin and Niger, with whom we have continuously enjoyed excellent relations. We need to build on such harmonious relations to expand the possibilities of development, prosperity and peace for all our peoples and countries.

It has been established that political developments and economic policies in Nigeria have a pronounced impact on our neighbouring countries. What is perhaps not well-known is that such trends and policies on neighbouring countries also have similar impact on Nigeria. Through omission by successive governments, some well-organized informal commercial networks have taken full advantage of the apparent disharmony in our policies on each side of the border to make quick profits at the expense of our countries. The activities of smugglers of refined petroleum products out of Nigeria, and the illegal re-exportation of fairly used automobiles, clothing, electronics and household goods from neighbouring countries, create scarcity, undermine local industry, and deny government badly needed revenue. Worse still, the activities of cross-border bandits, illegal

gun runners and drug couriers, have a lot of dire consequences for national and regional security. This explains the relevance of a forum such as this one, as a platform for meeting and engaging in frank exchanges in order to reach a consensus on how we can harmonize our policies, and pool our resources within a framework of cross-border security, cooperation and integration.

In the 21st century characterized by rapid globalization, the emergence of regional economic blocs and the re-definition of international peace and security, we cannot afford to be complacent. Local-global linkages in contemporary international relations and the further marginalization of Africa in a global economy that is becoming highly integrated, strongly suggests that we too must cooperate and integrate, or we risk losing out in the new global order. Fortunately, this administration is a very strong advocate of regional and sub-regional integration and has demonstrated this by matching its words with actions.

This workshop will enable us understand ourselves better on both sides of the border. It is hoped that after the presentations, we can also better evaluate cross-border security and cross-border economic and socio-cultural exchanges with a view to promoting more efficient integration. This would involve among others, a deeper understanding of the nature of the security problems in the North-West zone and the most sustainable options for tackling them within and outside our borders, a sound knowledge of how the factors of history, culture, economics and politics shape cross-border relations, and how these relations can be expanded and consolidated within a framework of cooperation and integration. Beyond this, and as noted earlier, it provides a veritable and credible platform for government agencies and officials, academics, political leaders, members of the media and labour, religious and community leaders, business men and women, to meet, debate and reach agreements that would nourish intra-regional dialogue with our brothers and sisters in Benin and Niger Republics.

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, before leaving you in the competent hands of our experts, policy-makers and government officials and other participants, while not forgetting our excellent hosts, the government and people of Sokoto State, and the organizers of this workshop, let me emphasize the high regard with which we hold this workshop, and look forward to the outcome of your deliberations.

I thank you for listening.

WELCOME ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY, ALHAJI ATTAHIRU BAFARAWA, EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR, SOKOTO STATE

Your Excellency, Vice President, Federal Republic of Nigeria, Your Excellencies, State Governors,
Members of the Federal executive Council,
His Eminence, The Sultan of Sokoto,
Your Royal Highnesses,
Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps
Distinguished Guests from the Republics of Benin, Chad and Niger, Distinguished Senators & Members of the House of Representatives, Local Government Chairmen,
Distinguished Participants,
Members of the Press,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is my profound honour and privilege to welcome you to this workshop and to the historic State of Sokoto. On behalf of the government and the entire people of the State, I most sincerely welcome you and assure you of a happy, memorable and comfortable stay in our capital city.

I must begin by expressing our heart-felt appreciation for the choice of Sokoto as the venue of this workshop on "Cross-Border Security, Cooperation and Integration: Focus on Nigeria's Immediate Neighbours in the North-West Zone". Indeed, Sokoto has had the privilege of hosting brotherly meetings in the past and, on this occasion, we cannot but be happy for the singular honour done us in hosting His Excellency, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar,

Vice-President, Federal Republic of Nigeria, my brothers and colleagues who are Executive Governors of the States in the North-West zone and distinguished scholars and participants within Nigeria and brothers from the Republics of Benin, Chad and Niger.

We are a people with common aspirations, ideals, destinies, socio-economic and socio-cultural affinities inextricably joined by nature. The theme of this workshop, therefore, cannot be more appropriate and timely than now, considering the increasing interrelational interest in collective security, cooperation and integration in the contemporary world order. In the realization of this global aspiration, Nigeria and her immediate neighbours in the North-West zone have continued to utilize the benefits of our historical antecedents in harnessing the vast human and material resources for the betterment of our people. The result of this harmonization is the emergence of joint ventures in the field of industry, agriculture, trade and commerce, which have reinforced the ideals of economic integration as conceived by the founding fathers of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Organisation of African Unity (OAU).

You excellencies, as we are all aware, the balkanization of the African continent by Europeans at the Berlin Conference of 1885 has shown that, despite barriers of artificial state boundaries, the peoples of Africa maintain unlimited cultural and social activities, unofficial trade and commerce across their borders. A number of people from the present states along Nigeria's borders such as Sokoto, Kebbi, Zamfara, Katsina, Kano and Borno, just to mention but a few can trace their origin either on the maternal or paternal lineages to the Republic of Niger. Likewise, a number of people from the neighbouring regions of Niger Republic have their roots in Nigeria.

Today, trade flourishes between Nigeria and Niger, particularly through such border markets as Ilela, Jibia, Mai-Aduwa, Garki

and Maitagatari,. Furthermore, free movement of people, goods and services had been in existence before ECOWAS' conception in recent times. Therefore, what a workshop of this magnitude should strive to do is to devise more ways of strengthening these existing ties of friendship and understanding in promoting integration and cooperation of the border communities with their immediate neighbours in the North-West zone of Nigeria. Such a process could go a long way in achieving success in the areas of combating crimes such as smuggling, drug trafficking, money laundering and cross-border armed banditry. A gathering of scholars, experts in their various fields of study, policy makers, technocrats and para-military bodies and non-governmental organizations should provide a fertile platform for evolving policy options on the complex phenomenon of cross border security, cooperation and integration of Nigeria with her immediate neighbours in the North-West zone.

I do not intend to take much more of your time than necessary; but the imperative is that we need to build more bridges of unity and understanding by promoting better living standards through the provision of essential services, such as functional health centers and facilities, good drinking water, qualitative education, good road networks and small credit ventures to alleviate poverty and economic decline in the trans-border communities. This will advance the dream of cross-border security, cooperation and integration with the immediate neighbours.

Furthermore, this gathering could equally examine the increasingly devastating effect of desert encroachment, which has rendered vast and fertile areas of land arid, and destroyed the lifeline of many towns and cities. Similarly, the menace of pest invasion, which over the years has brought untold hardship due to destruction to crops and grains, should receive closer attention. The workshop should, therefore, explore the means by which Nigeria and her immediate neighbours, particularly in the North-West zone, would work out a framework of joint

ventures that would be beneficial to the border communities in particular. Special attention could also be focused on joint projects like solar energy to serve as alternative sources of energy for cross-border industrialization.

Distinguished audience, mention must be made of the ever significant roles which our traditional rulers have been playing in ensuring the smooth administration and development of the border communities. Their positions have placed on them enormous responsibilities, in promoting peaceful co-existence, cooperation and integration. This development has been achieved due to the vast knowledge of their communities, in terms of their yearnings and aspiration as a people with a common historical background and destiny. Today, they have been very helpful in keeping our borders secure and by so doing, reducing the volume of work for security personnel within the North-West zone.

It is on this basis that I wish to observe that issues of cross-border security, cooperation and integration between Nigeria and her immediate neighbours should not be limited to governmental bodies, but should also be the responsibility of all and sundry. On this note, I would like to wish all the participants in this workshop very fruitful deliberations. I would also like to invite all of you to find time to engage in some sightseeing and interact with the warm and friendly people of Sokoto State. Thank you.

**ADDRESS BY THE ACTING DIRECTOR-GENERAL
NIGERIAN INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL
AFFAIRS, PROF. R.A. AKINDELE**

Your Excellency, Vice President, Federal Republic of Nigeria,
Your Excellencies, Executive Governors of the State in the North-
West Zone, Your Eminence, The Sultan of Sokoto,
Members of the Federal Executive Council,
Your Royal Highnesses,
Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps
Distinguished Guests from the Republics of Benin, Chad and
Niger, Distinguished Senators and Honourable Members of the
House of Representatives,
Local Government Chairmen, Distinguished Participants,
Members of the Press,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

For us at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, the workshop we are about to begin today has a double significance. The first is that it demonstrates and indeed concretizes our strong determination to carry our activities out of Lagos to different parts of the Nigerian federation. We have always been conscious of the fact that the Institute is a Federal Government outfit with a national constituency. This explains why this workshop is the fourth in the series of NIIA events executed out of Lagos within the last eight months. I recall, with pride, that in addition to the annual patron's dinner in honour of Mr. President, usually held in Abuja every December, NIIA successfully organized a workshop in Yola, Adamawa State, last October on *Cross-Border*

Armed Banditry in the North-East Zone of the Federation, and in January this year followed that up with an enlightenment course on *Foreign Policy and International Relations* for the legislators in the National Assembly. We are determined to maintain and enhance our relevance in the fields of research, training and enlightenment and in the search for solutions to problems peculiar to different parts of the country as long as the issues involved fall within our professional interest and competence.

The second reason for the significance of this workshop to us is that it clearly demonstrates and confirms the capacity of the NIIA to attract, command and sustain the interest and attention of top political heavyweights like His Excellency, the Vice President and Executive Governors of eight constituent states of the federation as well as top ranking professionals who, as was indeed the case in Yola eight months ago, have enhanced the value of this workshop with their presence here today.

The theme of the workshop today is *Cross Border Security, Cooperation and Integration with a Focus on Nigeria's Immediate Neighbours in the North-West Zone of the Nigerian Federation*. The workshop seeks to promote the creation of an integrated community of peoples of trans-border regions so as to facilitate the process of enhancing better understanding of, and sustaining the already existing excellent bilateral relations between Nigeria and its immediate neighbours.

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, as a publicly funded research outfit for the study of international relations, cannot but be mindful of the policy thrust of the country in domestic and foreign affairs. As a matter of fact, the theme of this workshop is a demonstration of the awareness by the Institute of the foreign policy thrust of the Obasanjo administration, which strongly advocates regional integration as a strategy for expediting development in the areas of trade, investment, finance, science and technology and free movement of persons, goods, services

and capital in the true spirit of the 1979 ECOWAS *Protocol Relating to Free Movement of Persons and Right of Residence and Establishment*. I hardly need to say that cooperation, as a policy option, has become absolutely essential and strategic because the challenges we face today on such matters as the environment, population growth, poverty, trade and development are too complex and interrelated for any single nation to address on its own. The need for socio-economic cooperation in addressing these problems has become timely and imperative, more especially as social and economic cooperation for development has become the *sine qua non* for sustainable peace and stability.

It is in this context that the Institute welcomes the establishment of a ministerial outfit under the Presidency charged with the responsibility for promoting cooperation and integration in Africa and for implementing the regional integration policies and programmes of the present administration. Similarly, the Institute commends the establishment of the Presidential Advisory Council on Cooperation and Integration in Africa under the chairmanship of Professor Adebayo Adedeji to advise the government on policies and programmes for promoting economic cooperation and integration in Africa in the 21st century.

Against this background, this workshop intends to address issues of historical, conceptual and policy interest and concern, with a focus on cross-border interaction between Nigeria and its immediate neighbours on the North-West geo-political zone of the federation. During the workshop, attention will be focused on (i) the nature of security of the border regions of Nigeria, bearing in mind Nigeria's national interest; (ii) the issue of free movement of persons, goods and services, as well as right of residence and establishment in Nigeria and its immediate neighbours; (iii) the nature of inter-dependency of the Nigerian economy and those of the neighbouring states and its implications for sub-regional cooperation and integration; and