


RESTRUCTURING AND ITS NEXUS WITH NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT IN NIGERIA: AN AFRICAN POLICY

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Abstract

This article analyzes the fundamental conditions governing national security and development management in Nigeria. In this regard, it takes into account the specifics of Nigeria's political history during the colonial era and the unification of the Northern and Southern Protectorates. This paper attempts to determine whether current calls for restructuring in Nigeria, despite the objections of some groups, will provide a bright future for the country. Restructuring is examined in terms of granting states greater power than the federal government, as well as in terms of resource control and the creation of state police forces.

Nigeria's security is challenged on a number of fronts, including the inability to feed itself, ensure economic growth and decent living conditions for the majority of the population, and protect itself from external aggression and internal conflict. All of this is exacerbated by an underdeveloped scientific and technological base, as well as inadequate governance. Despite the country's abundant natural resources, they are either underutilized or under the control of international economic entities that are primarily concerned with their own financial well-being rather than the well-being of local residents. Globalization brings with it problems such as the illegal exploitation of human and natural resources, unrestrained by any international norms, the infiltration and active operation of international organized crime groups, amidst weak legal protections for citizens and pervasive corruption, which also poses one of the main threats to Nigeria's national security.

The article concludes that modern Nigeria is in dire need of patriotic leaders who could strategically lead the country toward sustainable development.

Keywords: *political restructuring, national security development, political history, colonial era, administrative convenience, military intervention, patriotic leaders, sustainable development, globalization.*

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Introduction

The importance and relevance of Nigeria's restructuring demands and the objectives to support the political calculation of the people's aspirations within their territorial landscape are the main subjects of this study. This is required in order to quantify the extent of national development and the security components that have been a part of it since the post-colonial era. This paper will make an effort to examine some historical elements and contrast them with the current reasons behind calls for the Nigerian state to be restructured from its current configuration to a contemporary, democratic new form of government.

Given the factors affecting the elite, it makes sense that those who are unable to achieve political relevance and power in Nigeria would continue to call for political restructuring, while others would use it to gain access to resources and power at the state level as well as political relevance. The people in charge of affairs at the center will continue to view the agitation as a diversion and a waste of time because the majority of calls for political restructuring, also known as true federalism, aim to decentralize the Nigerian Federation in order to create stronger state components or regions and a weak central government (Vinson 2017).

Northern resistance to Nigeria's restructuring was another aspect of disagreement over the factors and demands of other parts of the nation regarding what constitutes the basis of national unity and cohesion, in the context of addressing issues of political restructuring, devolution of powers to promote genuine federalism, and the preservation of national issues (Aiyede 2013). It is frustrating that, despite the North's insistence on maintaining the status quo and constructiveness against any calls for a Sovereign National Conference (SNC), efforts to address issues of national importance continue unimpeded (Onwudiwe 1999; Egwim 2026).

The scholars' citations above help us to understand that the restructuring of the Nigerian state has always been based on the argument that the national agenda is biased in favor of some areas and elements while disparaging others. As a result, it became common for any region that felt oppressed or marginalized by others and was unable to obtain benefits from the state to organize into an oppositional or agitational group in order to cast doubt on the foundations of the coexistence and unity of the country. It makes sense that the separatists from Eastern Nigeria have returned to call for the creation of the Biafran Republic via MASSOB and the Kalu Group; in the South-South, dynamic youth are demanding resource management, while in the South West, certain factions are advocating for the Yoruba nation. People in the north want to keep things as they are. The recent wave of violence that has accompanied agitation has occurred despite the roles that the people of South Eastern Nigeria were given under the administrations of Obasanjo and Jonathan. It is particularly prominent today in the South East and South West during the Buhari Administration, which ran from 2015 to 2022, and it has seriously compromised national security. For example, in the South East, agitators have threatened to hold elections in 2023 if their demand for the release of their leader is not met, and they have declared Monday to be a free working day in the Zone. Can we continue this way while maintaining our claim to be a single nation? Likewise, the Federation is on the verge of disaffection due to the planned and orchestrated Fulani/herdsmen-farmers conflicts in recent years, which are fueling the

call for a Sovereign National Conference and restructuring. This further supports the opinions of academics who believed that meeting the needs of the populace is the only way for the political leadership in Nigeria to continue to exist and pursue its aspirations for growth.

Therefore, the main goal of political restructuring should be to pinpoint the elements that divide and unite the country while advancing security, development, and unity. Reviewing the weight of Nigeria's challenging past is also necessary in order to achieve the process of political realignment, restructuring, and balance that will impact the country's future. Finding solutions to the problem is extremely complicated, anachronistic, and multifaceted because it is frequently believed that the problem transcends public service, politics, ethnicity, religion, access to the economy, and the use of power since the colonial era. Much of the resistance seen is rooted in concerns about the constitutionality and ramifications of addressing the national issues, as well as the potential for the Nigerian State to fall apart.

Statement of the Problem

As seen in several independent states, political restructuring is essential to achieving political stability as well as the general socioeconomic development and security of the modern state in Africa. This is required in the context of modernization, the impact of social movements, and the goals and transformations of the economy that accompany the establishment and reengineering of the existence of contemporary states in a foreign setting in order to create new nations with political and territorial jurisdiction. Because of this, a significant portion of this research focuses on the mechanisms of power, leadership, coercion, and the extent of threats to the existence of new African states and their ability to maintain their sovereignty while growing up to modern standards current stage of globalization.

The post-colonial population may not have been unfamiliar with many of the political difficulties that Nigerian leaders have faced since the country's independence. It is clear that different parts of the Nigerian Federation are still calling for a political restructuring of Nigeria, which, depending on which side one takes, is causing worry, trepidation, agony, hope, and distraction. Ever since Nigeria's independence from Britain in the post-colonial era, calls for holding constitutional conferences to amend the country's constitution through the promulgation of Constituent Assemblies and, more recently, a Sovereign National Conference have dominated the observable factors of political restructuring.

The Nigerian state has failed to achieve its desired goal of sustainable development and national security, despite the efforts of its political leadership and allies since 1960 to change public opinion through political restructuring and the reorganization of state institutions and policymaking processes. Therefore, there was an urgent need to ensure structural and institutional coherence to quell calls for constitutional amendments and changes, and to hold a sovereign national conference to address national concerns and political restructuring that would remain viable in the public eye. As a result, Nigeria's political development was staged and, with difficulty, achieved piecemeal.

Security in the Context of Insecurity

It is important to briefly consider the definition of security in the context of insecurity, as public authority and governance represent the state, its primary responsibility to ensure the safety of its citizens and society. Clearly, the state possesses the resources necessary to ensure security and prevent anarchy in society, and therefore the role of public authority in ensuring the safety of citizens and society is crucial to the justification of the state's existence (Jega 1996).

According to O. Fagbadebo (2025), security is perceived as a dynamic state that encompasses a state's ability to counter threats to its core values and interests. In this sense, Nigeria's security rests on two important pillars: maintaining and protecting the socio-economic order in the face of internal and external threats. This includes promoting a preferred international order that minimizes threats to core values and interests, as well as domestic order, and external security threats.

The ongoing process of globalization, which has encompassed not only the global but also virtually all national markets, has a varying impact on the economic development of states, regions, and integration associations. At the same time, for economically lagging countries, which includes most African countries, globalization makes it difficult to attract investment and sell their goods in foreign markets, leading to a slowdown in economic growth and the emergence of economic crises. Under these circumstances, developing countries are actively promoting interstate trade and economic cooperation within various regional associations.

Many low-income countries are characterized by technological and economic backwardness of their national economies, which prevents them from adequately adapting to the global economy and, consequently, from exerting a significant influence on processes occurring in international trade and economic relations. To prevent these negative effects, coordinated interstate economic policies are necessary, which is largely facilitated by the growing role of regional economic unions. Therefore, the intensification of integration processes in the world in the context of the geopolitical and economic challenges of the early 21st century requires an in-depth study of both the current and long-term consequences and ongoing changes in the formation of integration associations, their role in the economic development of participating countries, and the intensification of bilateral and multilateral international economic relations.

Nigeria's modern security has been based on a comprehensive approach that places citizens as the primary beneficiaries of all security and development initiatives undertaken by the government (Amali and Buthelezi 2025). Therefore, in order to advance its goals and objectives to contain internal and external aggression, control crime, eradicate corruption, enhance genuine development, progress, and growth, and improve the welfare and quality of life for every citizen, Nigeria must work to strengthen its capacity (Uzoagba, Okoroigwe and Onwualu 2026).

According to the academic sources we cited from the aforementioned scholars, insecurity is the feeling of fear or anxiety brought on by a real or perceived lack of protection. It also alludes to insufficient or non-existent safety from harm. The most obvious type of insecurity, which is reflected in all of these definitions, is physical insecurity, which also contributes to a host of other types of insecurity, including social

and economic security. This essay defines insecurity as the state's weak or inadequate economic, military, and/or human resource development conditions combined with external or internal forces or interests that jeopardize the state's human and national security.

Restructuring

Restructuring has become a new dimension in Nigerian politics, with both political and non-political figures promoting their interpretations of the term, which until recently was frowned upon by many public figures. However, what exactly is the concept of restructuring? Understandably, different political figures view the concept of restructuring from different perspectives, given that some believe Nigeria is currently a federation. The idea of restructuring has been coined by a number of individuals, including democracy activists, former Vice President Atiku Abubakar, and General Ibrahim Babangida.

Restructuring is the process of changing the status quo or current system to improve its effectiveness. In the Nigerian context, restructuring is understood as a continuous campaign and agitation for the political restructuring of the country's government, in addition to other elements necessary for constitutional amendment. Restructuring also means a return to federalism with autonomous, self-sufficient federal units capable of building infrastructure, implementing other projects, and providing basic services such as health and education without central government interference. In this sense, restructuring is an act of changing the quality and effectiveness of the institutions that make up Nigeria's political system and redefining their relationships to ensure the resilience of society and the state. According to A.E. Palli (2021), restructuring implies a restructuring of all aspects of Nigerian politics. According to the definitions above, restructuring implies that Nigerian states should be legally allowed to control and own their own resources, as well as plan and implement development within their borders without central government interference. The demand for immediate restructuring of Nigeria now means a request for a review of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. It refers to the devolution of powers to the federal government, in which the federal government retains control over defense and foreign policy while granting states greater powers. This is a tactic designed to bring the government as close as possible to the people (Egwim 2026).

Former vice president and 2015 All Progressives Congress (APC) presidential candidate; PDP presidential candidate in 2019 and 2023 Atiku Abubakar held the following opinions: Without a doubt, when you remove Abuja's federation allocations, many of our states are not viable now and were never viable in the first place. To make them work in the altered federal system, we must come up with innovative solutions. We can assemble a group of impartial specialists to offer alternative suggestions. All things considered, though, we need to give states more autonomy over their use of federal funds and authority and less emphasis on the federal government's provision of state funding. To continue, we must resume production and tax collection our governments in a more transparent, accountable, and sustainable manner.

From the explanation of Nigeria's restructuring concept above, we can easily comprehend how it calls for true federalism. A system that functions on the shared

responsibility of its constituent units with a central core that unites them all is referred to as true federalism.

Every region or unit is supposed to manage its own affairs, generate wealth through resource exploitation and management, and fulfill certain obligations to the federal and central government. In terms of economy, the units need to be separate and autonomous, but in terms of the military, there is room for negotiation. True federalism in practice covers more ground than just budgetary matters; it permeates all facets of state governance. The only way to achieve true federalism is to strictly follow the provisions of the constitution. True federalism is primarily characterized by constitutionalism.

In the context of reconstruction, retired General Ibrahim Babangida also strongly advocated for decentralization of powers¹, with more responsibilities devolved to the states and the federal government responsible for overseeing foreign policy, defense, and the economy. This means implementing new ideas that will strengthen Nigeria's national identity, also at the constitutional level (Ikpebe, Boykin, Osei-Kojo and Peters 2026). Decentralization of powers and restructuring will certainly not offer all the solutions. It will be helpful to shift our perspective in response to our developmental obstacles, developing new concepts and projects that justify the existence of our union. Nigerians share a common belief in unity in a diverse society, as evidenced by talk of national restructuring (Momoh and Adejumobi 2017). However, without strengthening public institutions and local government, it is impossible to enhance the functioning of dialogue and partnership among various institutions. Initial concerns about abuses by state governors against state police officers should be mitigated as citizens become more willing and confident to challenge authority. Nigeria's political leadership is striving to foster concerted efforts to steer the country toward development and progress, as a people with a shared destiny and common purpose must make decisions for the benefit of future generations.

The Crucial Questions for Nigerian Restructuring

While the calls and agitations for restructuring the Nigerian state have many and varied causes, there are also important questions requiring critical and technical answers regarding the restructuring program. These questions primarily concern what is being restructured and touch upon the legal status of the restructuring, as well as its scope and boundaries in the following dimensions:

- Nigeria's geographical location?
- What about the politics?
- The Individuals?
- The system of states?
- Who plans, leads, or oversees the reorganization?
- Who, what, and where will be represented by?
- What is the representational technique?

¹ Daily Trust. 2020. "8 things IBB said in his exclusive interview with Daily Trust." February 16, 2020. Accessed August 12, 2025. <https://dailytrust.com/listicles-8-things-ibb-said-in-his-exclusive-interview-with-daily-trust/>.

- Regarding the Nigerian Constitution and its provisions regarding the creation, repeal, and amendment of laws, is the restructuring constitutional or unconstitutional?

What is the formula for state, zone, region, and ethnic nationality representation? What will the restructuring's terms of reference be? Whose constitutional authority is it to revise or alter the laws of Nigeria? Unavoidably, these are questions that must have clear, constitutionally supported answers in order to restructure in a way that is legally and politically binding on the Nigerian government and its people (Amaechi and Muoh 2017; Titus and Ogundiya 2025; Fashagba 2015).

This is also due to the delicate restructuring process and the intricate nature of the Nigerian state and societies, which are diverse in terms of their backgrounds, experiences, directions, civilizations, and worldviews, as well as their socio-political, economic, and geo-religious orientations. Nevertheless, the following were noted by this study as being crucial to restructuring Nigeria.

Transformation of political institutions and the regime system

Nigeria was a state with three regions at the time of its independence: the North, West, and East, as well as the Federal Capital Territory of Lagos. In the Nigerian Central Government, which operated under a parliamentary system, the political parties that had the support of the majority formed an alliance to ensure that the President of Nigeria and the ceremonial head of state, the Prime Minister, would both lead the government.

Simultaneously, the political parties that received less support from the public formed an alliance in order to establish the Shadow Government, which is the position of Leader of Opposition. Similar to the British Parliamentary system, it was expected of the Opposition to keep the Government on its toes in order for it to function well. But in the process, intolerance and their persecution were brought about by a lack of tolerance and a fear that the opposition would overthrow the government. In the end, as the different actors fought for position among themselves, the country was left in even greater political turmoil.

Historically, the ethnopolitical conflict in Southern Nigeria has been viewed as part of a nationwide struggle between large and small ethnopolitical groups. The first attempts to understand it were undertaken by colonial scholars in the context of constructing a system of political governance, and later by Nigerian scholars conducting research in independent Nigeria and beyond. Their work focused primarily on the factor of ethnicity, the problem of ethnic minorities and ethnic representation, and the study of the 'colonial legacy' that led to the artificiality of administrative-territorial entities and the uneven development of the country. Since the late 1990s, when ideas about the economic determinism of various types of intra-state conflicts gained popularity in academic circles, and with the onset of armed conflicts in oil-producing regions, European and African scholars have attempted to rethink the nature of the ethnopolitical confrontation in Southern Nigeria, using theories of the oil burden, economic wars, and so on. However, these theories also do not fully reveal the nature of the ethnopolitical conflict in Nigeria.

The transformation of political institutions and the authoritarian regime in Nigeria have deep historical roots. The old traditional method of governance was based on tribal relations and religious cults. These formed the basis of non-state forms of power—chiefdoms. With increasing property differentiation within communities, the emergence of privileged groups, and the usurpation of power by tribal rulers, the process of forming traditional authoritarian regimes in the country began. In the initial stages of social development in Nigeria, collectivist traditions were characteristic of ensuring the livelihood of community members. However, these same traditions formed the roots of authoritarian, anti-democratic tendencies, which later, with the emergence of African statehood, gave rise to dictatorial authoritarian rule.

An analysis of military dictatorial regimes, regardless of Nigeria's social orientation, shows that military coups and the establishment of military regimes were made possible by the unquestioning submission of the masses to the will of the military dictators who ruled the country. Over the past decades, they have brought neither democracy nor prosperity to the country, but have instead deepened the economic and political crises. Thus, all groups of the population, with the exception of the dominant military-civilian oligarchy, have become political targets.

The diversity of military-dictatorial regimes that has characterized modern Nigeria's political life over the past three decades can be described as transitional, hybrid, and mixed authoritarian regimes of various orientations—reactionary, conservative, and liberal. At all stages of their development, a strong authoritarian influence was observed in the political system of Nigerian society.

Military-dictatorial regimes in Nigeria were characterized by political, economic, and social instability, violence, coups d'état, religious and interethnic tensions, wars, an arms race, the growing political role of the army in society, and corruption. In examining military dictatorships and the stages of their development, we encountered another equally complex issue: the role of the army in the country's socio-political development. We found that this role is far from straightforward. The purpose of the army and its role in Nigeria changed at different stages of the national liberation struggle. Thus, while addressing the dual national objective of eliminating the colonial system and achieving political independence, a process of consolidation of various ethnic groups was underway. At that moment, the army was at the center of events, not only bringing all peoples and tribes together by setting a common goal but also serving as an important tool in the fight against tribalism and interethnic strife.

Similar to this, the government has tried to impose price controls on export and retail sales in an effort to discourage hoarding and price increases. Significant efforts have also been made to reduce access to foreign exchange in order to strengthen the country's reserves and economy and to create room for the naira's value to increase on the global market. Ultimately, the period of austerity measures during the second republic demonstrated that Nigeria lacked the political will, independence, and selflessness necessary to maintain the economy and find the necessary resources to make it function, regardless of the global superpowers.

This is the reason Nigeria's economic standing keeps declining as a result of the country's borrowing to fund its government and implement public policies to the extent of taking up loans from the IMF and World Bank and implementing structural

adjustment plans during the Babangida administration, which ultimately altered the direction of the country's economy by selling off public assets and defragmenting the market.

At the time, Nigerian military leaders and their civilian allies launched a number of public policies intended to advance equity and development initiatives in order to open up Nigeria and carry out development projects. Certain topics covered in the public service and education systems resulted in the quota system's introduction and the merit system's collapse via the use of federal character principles, with its resulting in a decline in the quality of public spaces, a rise in incompetence, waste, and a progressive reduction in the scope of putting national development plans into action because of a lack of knowledge and strong national politics surrounding social services and infrastructure (Mariotti and Meacci 2026).

Terrorist attacks have emerged as a contemporary threat and challenge to the normalization and stability of Nigerian society, occurring in the northern region, primarily in Borno and Adamawa states. These attacks subsequently spread to many parts of the northeast, where the rise of Boko Haram militants (Hassan and Olugbuo 2016), seeking to establish Sharia law, reject all forms of Western influence and education, and establish an Islamic state and traditions under a dictatorship, has led to the deaths and displacement of millions of people. The emergence of conflicts with Boko Haram in the northeast has weakened the armed forces and resulted in numerous casualties in attempts to end the insurgency or broker an elusive ceasefire (Onapajo 2026).

It is important to note that the terrorist group's access to weapons and firepower is financed by unidentified sponsors from neighboring states, Nigerian government officials, and other international organizations or foreign powers interested in either political instability or the division of Nigeria, thereby reducing the likelihood of sustainable development and creating a safe haven in West Africa.

Stories of untold suffering and bloodshed remain prevalent in the northern region due to the difficulties the Nigerian state faces in obtaining weapons from the United States and other Western countries to combat conflicts related to Boko Haram (Botha 2021). Following the escalation of terrorist attacks in the northeast and the closure of Nigeria's borders in 2017, a wave of banditry, kidnappings, and armed attacks in the northern territories spread to the northwest and north-central parts of the country by armed groups and bandits.

Unity, the Nigerian State, and Reality

A comparative analysis of the history of colonialism, including Nigeria's pre-colonial and colonial periods, provides an assessment of national unity in any attempt to restructure the country. The restructuring of the geo-ethnic and political structures of various peoples, as well as the involuntary reorganization of former African states, caliphates, kingdoms, empires, and mini-states, ultimately leading to the formation of colonial and post-colonial ethnic and religious identities of states and societies, can be primarily attributed to colonialism.

Furthermore, by disrupting the natural form and process of evolution and homogenization, the colonial policy of "divide and rule" in Nigeria had a detrimental

effect on the diverse peoples who had been united, while various ethno-religious and geo-regional groups became even more distant from one another. The legacy of colonialism creates a number of problems and tensions between various ethnic groups in post-colonial Nigeria. Therefore, modern Nigerian society is forced to bear the burden of a difficult history, like other colonized African states.

Thus, something that benefited British political, economic, and imperial interests has become an issue for Nigeria that has been unsolvable for more than a century (Titus and Ogundiya 2025).

National identity and attachment arise from a sense of a particular political and social coexistence, such as proficiency in and/or affiliation with a particular language, adherence to a particular religion, birth into a particular family or community, descent from particular historical circumstances, or possession of important information on a given issue, adding one's own interpretations or meanings based on kinship, speech, customs and traditions, religious viewpoint, place of residence, historical background, and appearance. Due to the interaction of numerous elements, including historical, religious, social, political, economic, and regional, these innate attachments have supplanted national loyalty in Nigeria and negatively impacted the country's unity.

Regardless of a person's status in a given country, they form a greater attachment and loyalty to their indigenous group than to the nation itself. This demonstrates how deeply ingrained primordial tendencies are in Nigerian culture and how they influence all aspects of national life. However, some political elites and leaders express this attachment out of fear that their ethnoregional groups might approve or dissuade them, rather than because they believe it will yield any positive results, lamenting their inability to articulate their ethnoregional grievances.

Since colonialism, maintaining Nigeria's unity has posed a significant obstacle for both nationalists and ordinary Nigerians. In this context, Nigeria's problem is that it is completely mired in an identity crisis, which explains this. The nature of colonial conquest and the forced unification of diverse peoples, nations, states, political parties, and geo-ethnic groups are the primary causes of this identity crisis. As a result, Nigerians, for example, do not see or consider each other as true fellow citizens of Nigeria, but rather as "old-timers" and "sworn enemies." It is therefore unsurprising that they face such obstacles. But the main common problem is the inability to establish stable unity for over a century.

Many political events, especially since 1966, have marred the process of national unity and integration in Nigeria. While some federating units grew tired and bored of the union, others still believed that the union must be maintained at all costs. The apparent trajectory of the Nigerian polity reflects the federation's inability to even address the fundamental problems that unite and bind people together, despite the fact that the path to statehood and federalism is an endless one, marked by mistakes, lessons learned, and corrections. Nigerians continue to debate whether to remain within the Nigerian federation or leave it, even after more than a century of unification. The previous violent attempt by the Biafrans, which was suppressed, would have seemed like just one of many, had it not been for the power and authority of the Nigerian government, which used force and put an end to any acts or threats of treason and secession by the Nigerian state.

Nigerian society has transformed from traditional to pluralistic since independence

Since independence, Nigerian society has transformed from traditional to pluralistic, characterized by a diversity of socioeconomic structures, a symbiosis of archaic economic forms with modern types and innovations, which is evident in the functioning of sociopolitical structures.

The ethnoregional stratification of the Nigerian federation has a significant impact on the country's political landscape, leading to political instability and resulting in military coups.

The country is experiencing a contradictory interaction between local and European social structures. A key component of the political process is the struggle for power between ethnopolitical clans and the highest state bureaucracy, both civil and military.

The period of military rule demonstrated that party politicians were not completely ousted from power relations but remained a key group within the political ruling class, forming part of the military administration and functioning within various political associations. During the military regimes, the political clan system continued to exist, closely linked to traditional chieftains, the bureaucratic elite, the merchant and business classes, and the press. Political clans exerted significant pressure on the military, ensuring their essential mass support. Political tensions in the country stem from the federal structure, which consolidated control of state power for northern clans in the early years of independence. The issue of maintaining the country's federal structure is the dominant theme in political life.

A crucial feature of Nigerian society is its ethnopolitical polarization, which manifests itself in the emergence and activities of political parties.

Nigerian political parties are elite in nature, supported by a small group of entrepreneurs, the upper echelons of the civil and military bureaucracy, traditional rulers, and university intellectuals. Essentially, parties are coalitions of various political forces formed within states and often united at the federal level, as they are ethnoregional and clan-based. Mass support during election campaigns is also largely ethnoregional.

Parties lack a clear structure and formal membership. Political platforms are declarative in nature and designed to attract various categories of voters – from large businessmen to ordinary urban and rural residents. Parties are led by prominent political leaders, often descended from traditional nobility of ethnoregional origin. During the period of civilian rule, the leading trend in the political process was the establishment of the People's Democratic Party as the ruling political force.

Political consolidation of Nigerian society is possible with a significant improvement in the well-being of the population, the adoption of effective measures to prevent ethnoreligious confrontation, and the further improvement of the federal system within the framework of modern constitutionalism. In a context of ethnopolitical pluralism, the challenges of developing effective means and methods for political stabilization, reducing conflict, and resolving complex socioeconomic contradictions are becoming increasingly pressing.

Building and establishing a democratic society in Nigeria will take time, as the country's political system continues to retain characteristics inherited from

authoritarian regimes that held power for many years, and power, as before, depends on the support of certain ethnopolitical groups.

The path to democratic change in Nigeria is fraught with many difficulties and will be long and difficult. The process of democratization of society, not the political regime, is particularly important here. This means political participation by broad sections of the population and the redistribution of wealth within society, not just the reform of political institutions.

Nigeria's Restructuring Challenges

The issue of restructuring has drawn criticism from numerous opponents who believe it lacks value and has become a powerful source of unrest for various stakeholders. In other words, there are a number of obstacles to the need for restructuring, including:

- The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, as amended, has extremely strict, inflexible, and lengthy procedures for any changes. Restructuring in Nigeria is seriously hampered by the complexity of amending the Constitution. The restructuring process itself involves careful scrutiny of constitutional amendments, which must undergo a rigorous and rigorous process.
- An additional obstacle to advancing the idea of restructuring in Nigeria is that the topic is not clearly defined for both supporters and opponents to understand. Many members of the elite, particularly those opposed to restructuring, misunderstand it and, therefore, misinterpret its meaning. Furthermore, most supporters of restructuring do not understand its significance, making it difficult to convey this information to opponents. 3. The idea of dividing Nigeria into several republics raises concerns. Many in Nigeria fear that restructuring the country could lead to its further fragmentation into numerous autonomous regions.
- Most proponents of restructuring base their calls for change on inequalities in the federal government, its structure, and the distribution of resources. This argument consistently serves as a reference point for most opponents of the restructuring movement, as they believe the constitution is sufficiently clear on a number of issues.
- The demand for Nigeria's reorganization has drawn criticism from economists, who claim that proponents are hiding personal interests that could fragment the country.
- According to some residents, calls for restructuring inadvertently promote secession and regionalism among many marginalized regions. It has been argued that these agitators advocated division rather than unity in diversity. This means that the restructuring movement has threatened the very foundations of the Nigerian nation.

Nigeria's Security Issues

The mechanism of public administration in Nigeria is based on a synthesis of individual principles and institutions of traditional and new forms of government

organization, conditioned by the preservation of many features of the communal organization of the region's social and economic space while simultaneously evolving in line with global trends.

The intertwining of these circumstances gives political and socioeconomic processes in Nigerian society an undulating (and often explosive) nature, as evidenced by the numerous military coups carried out on the continent since its independence.

The history of Nigeria, where, after achieving political independence in 1960, military regimes prevailed, is one of the most striking examples of this type. Characteristics of military rule included the concentration of power in the hands of the head of state and the absence of democratic freedoms. A distinctive feature of these regimes was the irreconcilable nature of the relationship between the government and the opposition, often suppressing any kind of dissent through extremely brutal methods. The military's rise to power was determined by Nigeria's economic backwardness and religious and ethno-confessional contradictions. Parliamentary institutions in the country lacked solid political roots, but merely copied the English or American models of civil government. Amid economic decline and devastation, the army, armed with the physical, material means of violence—that is, weapons—came to power. It became the dominant political force.

The structure of military governments reflected the political mechanism of power, with the regime leader, in this case a military man, controlling all branches of government. He headed the legislative and executive councils, through which he implemented domestic and foreign policy. Legislative bodies had the power to pass laws, but only with the approval of the head of state. Ministers were also under the president's control. The activities of the highest authorities were formal in nature, as real power rested in the hands of the head of state and his entourage. The monopolization of political power by the military typically led to the strengthening of conservative, and in some cases reactionary, tendencies.

In the formation of government bodies, the ethno-confessional factor came to the fore. This manifested itself in the organization of public administration at both the federal and regional levels, influencing policymaking and the implementation of specific socio-economic and cultural measures. Rivalry between the Muslim north and the Christian south was reflected in the composition of governments.

Since gaining its independence, Nigeria has battled many types of insecurity as a nation. Particularly in the last few years, this has gotten worse recently. Several noteworthy security issues that have plagued the Nigerian state recently include:

1. **Boko Haram:** Founded in 2009, this militant Islamist group has caused instability in the northeastern region of Nigeria. Due to their actions, a large number of people now live in camps for internally displaced people, and more than 2.5 million people have left their ancestral homes to seek safety elsewhere. The Boko Haram group had been involved in property destruction, kidnapping, and ambush attacks against both civilians and military personnel.

2. **An Islamic movement in Nigeria** (Adeakin and Gray 2019) that is in conflict with the Nigerian federal government. This group's actions have led to clashes with government security forces, resulting in numerous deaths and property destruction.

Since the arrest of the group's leader in 2015, the security threat has increased significantly.

3. Electoral Violence: Since 1999, Nigeria's electoral process has been marred by violence in one way or another. For example, the October 2019 general elections were marked by numerous incidents of election-related violence. According to the Nigerian Center for Civil Society Research (NCSSR) (Sule, Sambo, Ahmed and Yusuf 2021), approximately 626 people were killed nationwide in the six months from October 2018 to October 2019, with the highest death toll recorded in the North-West region.

4. Communal Conflicts: In Nigeria, the number of conflicts between communities that share boundaries has been on the rise. The conflicts cut across boundaries between communities in various states, local governments, and the same local government. Conflicts are often caused by the existence of mineral resources. This has deteriorated into major disputes and risks to the country's security.

5. Clashes between farmers and herders: The conflict between sedentary farmers and nomadic herders, which was particularly noticeable in Nigeria's middle belt, has now expanded to other regions of the country. Christians from Tiv, Jukun, Hausa, and other tribes make up the majority of the farmers, while Muslims from the Fulani tribe make up the nomadic herders. Most people had viewed their conflicts through the lens of either ethnicity or religion. There has always been dispute over how the herders move their livestock between the sedentary farmers' farms and their crops are either eaten by the animals or destroyed. Significant loss of life, property, and other resources has resulted from this. The current trend of conflicts between farmers and herders poses a serious threat to national security.

6. Kidnapping: In recent years, kidnappings for ransom have become extremely common throughout Nigeria. One of the main security risks that still exists in Nigeria is this one. Nigeria has several documented cases of kidnapping. The abduction is typically connected to the herdsman.

7. Herdsmen occupying Southern forests: The security of Nigeria is once again gravely threatened by this. It has been noted that herders from the northern region of Nigeria have recently brought their livestock to the southern region of the country to live in the forests. They construct their homes, drive out the forest owners, and start a colony of cattle. The men who used to own the forests are abducted, and they rape the women. Conflicts arise between the herdsman who have invaded the forest owners' territory and themselves.

Conclusion and discussion

The security of the continent's countries, particularly Nigeria, is challenged on a number of fronts, including the inability to feed themselves, ensure economic growth and decent living conditions for the majority of the population, and protect themselves from external aggression and internal conflict. All of this is exacerbated by an underdeveloped scientific and technological base, as well as inadequate governance. Despite the country's abundant natural resources, they are either underutilized or controlled by international economic actors who are primarily concerned with their own financial well-being rather than the well-being of local residents. Globalization brings with it problems such as the illegal exploitation of human and natural resources,

unrestrained by any international norms, the infiltration and active activity of international organized crime groups, amidst weak legal protections for citizens and pervasive corruption, which also poses a major threat to Nigeria's national security.

The study provides a thorough and critical examination of the definition of restructuring, as well as its advantages and disadvantages. It also examines the definition, benefits, and challenges of national security in more detail. The study identifies the interrelationships between Nigeria's external relations, national security, and restructuring. The study found that numerous types of instability pose a serious threat to Nigeria as a state. According to the study, unless the security situation improves, Nigeria's survival as a nation cannot be guaranteed. The report also notes that Nigeria's insensitivity to security issues has led to excessive control and management in this area. The study further states that calls for restructuring have been prompted by the recent wave of instability affecting all regions of Nigeria. The study notes that the recent wave of instability in Nigeria has impacted its interactions with the outside world. The article concludes that restructuring Nigeria will help reduce the country's current wave of instability, strengthening its strong ties with the outside world and enabling it to achieve development in a variety of ways.

Based on the issues discussed in this article, the following questions will be proposed as one aspect of addressing the challenges associated with restructuring Nigeria. These questions arise because some groups feel marginalized and insecure, or see no opportunities for development in their communities or neighborhoods. In this context, I recommend considering the following aspects:

- Nigerians must support restructuring if we view it from a development perspective, as a means of achieving national security and managing instability, and not as a sentimental issue arising from regional, ethnic, or religious differences.
- Nigeria's political elite must demonstrate a sincere desire to address the country's unemployment, poverty, and instability.
- Experts and other knowledgeable individuals who understand the concept of restructuring must educate the general public about it to reduce hostility towards restructuring.
- Nigeria must undergo a comprehensive restructuring that addresses issues related to politics, the economy, and security, among other things.
- Another method of amending the Constitution is through restructuring Nigeria; therefore, to ensure a satisfactory outcome of this process, it is necessary to consult with all sections of the country's population to develop an acceptable model that will help set the country on the right path of development.

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Ethics Statement

The author confirms that this study was conducted in accordance with the Journal's Research Ethics and Integrity Statement and that all ethical requirements applicable to the study have been fulfilled.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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