

## Revisiting National and Human Security Issues in Africa: The Quagmires and Quandaries

BY

**Omede A. Jolaade (PhD)**

Department of Political Science, University of Ilorin, Kwara State  
medajol@yahoo.com

**Aluko I. Opeyemi**

Department of Political Science, Ajayi Crowther University, Oyo State  
opealukoheavenprogress@gmail.com

**Ngwube Arinze**

Department of Political Science, Federal University Oye-Ekiti, Ekiti State  
ngwube@hotmail.co.uk

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### Abstract

Security issues have become a global concern, as they have constituted a major threat to human existence. The security of lives and property of people is an essential social contract, which the governments in all countries of the world have to ensure. The human security is the holistic security that touches on all spheres of existence. In Africa, like other developing countries, security challenges are prevalent and pervasive. There is hardly any state in Africa where there is no security breakdown from West to East and from North to Southern Africa. It therefore, becomes imperative to explore the opportunities for improving national and human security in Africa. The Relative Deprivation Theory was adopted in this study to explain the trends that constitute the threats. Afrobarometer data were used to analyse the extent of fragility of states in Africa. The study's review found that national insecurity is due to the high level of deprivation of the masses. This study concludes that when relative deprivation reduces insecurity of lives and property would reduce in Africa.

**Keywords:** Development, Insecurity, National Security, Peace and Relative Deprivation

### Introduction

The African continent has for centuries, been exposed to series of contacts with different races such as the Europeans, Americans, and Chinese. The exposure characterized by slave trade, imperialism, colonialism, and the phenomenon of globalization, in recent times, has had tremendous impact on both the psyche of the people and the continent itself. The resultant impact include the continuous drive to interact with

the western world at whatever costs; the pillaging and squandering of the continent's resources – human and material and the attendant asymmetrical relations in trade, unequal exchange in the prices of goods and services leading to dependency and underdevelopment. More important is the history of mental and physical enslavement (slave trade, racism/apartheid) leading to a complex mentality that anything African – colour, values and belief system is inferior to that of the white.

Suffice to say that the period of independence in most African states created a respite for the people and the politics (Bridger, 2015). Political leaders who had earlier made election promises of bread and honey, embarked on series of developmental projects that affected peoples' lives. Committed and disciplined leaders were at the helm of affairs. All over Africa – Kenya, Ghana, Morocco, Egypt, Tanzania, Nigeria, Senegal, Cote D'Ivoire, to mention just a few, progressive people-oriented programmes were the norm. Few years later however, the leaders began to renege on their words. The electorates were marginalized and alienated in the production processes. Leaders became corrupt and intolerant of opposition. Governments were failing to provide adequate basic and social amenities. Industries were abandoned and unemployment soared. Prices of goods and services skyrocketed. Political and structural decay coupled with non-adherence to rules and procedures as well as the denigration of human values/humanity became the order of the day. Peoples' hopes and aspirations were dashed. The consequences were not only massive, but also, presented several security, political, and socio-economic challenges to governments and entire citizenry in Africa. The declining capacity of African states to provide for their citizenry resulted in massive unemployment and poverty, outbreak of diseases, intra and inter communal conflicts, civil wars, violence, armed robberies, quest to get rich at all cost, massive brain-drain, illegal emigration to Europe and America, trafficking in humans and drugs, and so forth (Akwei, 2017).

Africa's problems were exacerbated some decades ago by the cold war between the United States of America (USA) and the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) in the 1970s. The two countries were engaged in a war of proxy in Africa. The continent became a simulated battle – ground where conflicts of varying nature such as marginalization and dissatisfaction among and within groups became transformed into ideological differences of capitalism versus socialism/communism. Both the USA and USSR deployed massive weapons of varying dimensions in a show of force, dominance, influence, and balance of power. Artillery guns, anti-personnel carriers, anti-tanks missile systems, sub-machine guns, and automatic weapons among others, were imported legally (by constituted authorities/states) and illegally (by opposition/rebel groups) into Africa. To aggravate, the palpable situation, the USSR collapsed in the

1990s and Africa became a destination point for cheap, lightweight and highly mobile weapons with deadly accuracy. Excess weapons in the Russian arsenal like the AK-47 assault rifle, hand grenades, mines, and semi-automatic weapons became readily available to anybody who could afford them by whatever source. The global trade in weapons became declassified with some legal governments and third parties such as defence/weapon contractors, former intelligent officers (spies) and mercenaries having a field day. The proliferation of small and light weapons (SALW) and the consequent use of force as a first resort to solve the political conflicts; upsurge in extremist groups with access to SALW; kidnappings, and armed robberies; general state of insecurity; mutual distrust, political violence, destruction of the environment, as well as the prevalence of personal weapons among the populace plagued the continent at an alarming rate and with a worrisome trend (Fleishman, 2011; Aluko, Abdullahi & Balogun, 2015; Omede, Arinze & Aluko, 2018).

The hydra-headed phenomena of globalization, integration, industrialisation, and technology have, made the world more or less a better place than before. The world is now borderless and more permeable especially with the removal of barriers to trade and movement of people around the world. Living standards in the Northern hemisphere had improved dramatically. In the Southern hemisphere which housed Africa (Asia and Latin America), the case is to the contrary. There are high levels of neglect. People are impoverished, unemployment surged in quantum proportions, and there is a generally high level of insecurity. To remedy the situation, thousands of African youths both male and female are migrating by embarking on illegal and perilous journeys overseas (Aluko, 2019a). This has created a ready market for the trafficking in humans and drugs, fraudulent activities/get rich quick schemes, organised crimes among others. The plethora of issues highlighted in the foregoing paragraphs have raised concerns among scholars and leader with a consensus acknowledgment that the issue of security needs a revision and a re-conceptualisation to include the generality of the people. Any issue that threatened the well-being of the ordinary citizen should be considered as a threat to human security. Consequently, this study therefore, aligns with this perspective and adopts the concept of human security as its conceptual framework for the following discourses.

### **Methodology**

In presenting the discourses on security in Africa, Afrobarometer data round one to seven (2015-2018) was used to analyse the extent of fragility of states in Africa. A time series data from thirty-seven countries in West, East, South, North and Central Africa respectively (Afrobarometer, 2018) were compared based on how often over the past years, if ever, have the country members felt unsafe walking in their neighborhood.

This helps the research to justify the research question of to how intense is the national and human security challenge in Africa and how it can be improved.

### **Conceptual Clarifications**

#### **Revisiting National Security and Human Security Issues in Africa**

The following are the prominent security challenges confronting African States in contemporary times: violence, terrorism, xenophobic attacks, Proliferation of Small and Light Weapons (SALW), human trafficking, environmental issues, and socio-political instability among others. All of these crises are direct offshoot of the relative deprivation of people's basic needs and their relapse into violence as an alternative means to eke out a living. It is important to state that the listing and analysis of the security challenges are in no particular order of preference.

The Relative Deprivation Theory was used in this study to explain the trends that constitute the threats. Relative deprivation theory centres on the assumption that people react contrary to the norms of the society because they suffered deprivation of their basic rights or they could not meet up with a certain target prescribed by the society. They resort to violence by acquiring SALW, ethnic militia, religious war, human trafficking or other inhumane activities to overcome the deprivation. However, by starting with SALW, we wish to give credence to the traditional perception of security from a militaristic perspective. Arms and weapons are means of offense and defence, which nations employ to protect their sovereignty, territorial integrity and all other socio-political values that contribute to the continued survival of the nation. Any other action that undermines the military's ability to discharge its constitutional responsibility and/or break the monopoly of the military's possession of and the use or threat to use arms is considered as a serious breach of national or holistic security.

#### **The Historical Background to Arms Proliferation in Africa**

Virtually all of the weapons found on the continent were shipped to Africa from the USA and USSR during the Cold-War era to fight war of proxy in countries such as Angola, Mozambique. Other western nations on individual basis also seized the opportunity to import arms into Africa to prop up and support regimes experiencing intense opposition and civil conflict in states as Chad, Nigeria, Cameroon, Libya, Uganda, Egypt, Cote D'Ivoire, Algeria, Tunisia, Zimbabwe (Rhodesia), and South Africa (under apartheid).

The collapse of the Cold War led to another round of weapon influx as officials of the former USSR (now Russia) and manufacturers partook in the sales of surplus cold war weapons at the international arms market and at a ridiculously cheap price. In addition,

the crop of military-contractor-corporate mercenaries who acted as intermediaries between arms industries in the West and government/ insurgent groups in Africa (Fleishman in, Africa Renewal, 2011). Consequently, the quantity of weapons that proliferated in Africa were overwhelming. Available data revealed that out of the 640 million SALW circulating worldwide, 100 million are found in Africa while about 30 million are available in sub-Saharan Africa and 8 million in West Africa. In terms of accessibility, same data showed that civilians (in Africa) own 59% of the SALW; 38% by the armed forces; 2.8% by the Police and 0.2% by armed groups (allafrica.com, 2018; The Guardian, 2017; Aluko, 2017a).

The pervasiveness of SALW could also be attributed to the poor nature of physical security and stockpile management system; complicity of government officials through diversion of legally acquired weapons into illicit markets; and porosity of African borders (Aremu et al, 2018). The combination of these factors accounts for the creation of multiple points of entry (PoE) of illicit SALW into different parts of the Continent. Ghana and Cote D'Ivoire for instance are, PoEs into West Africa due to weakened regulatory systems in the sub-region; Sudan serves as PoE into East Africa while Mali's notoriety as PoE into North African countries with tighter regulatory systems is highly acknowledged (issaafrica.org, n.d).

### **Proliferation of Small and Light Weapons (SALW)**

Arms proliferation and trade in SALW though a global issue, remains one of the major security challenges confronting African nations in contemporary times. The availability of cash and mineral resources like diamond and crude oil has made the proliferation of SALW a recurring decimal in Africa (US Department of State: Bureau for Political-Military Affairs, 2011; Aluko, (2017b). The availability of resources coupled with the quest to purchase and utilize arms account in large measure to the recourse to use arms to settle conflicts as the first, rather than the last resort. It is therefore, the reason for the incessant and high rate of armed conflicts like civil wars and insurgencies, communal clashes, combined with political and general culture of violence on the continent.

SALW are conventional weapons that are lightweight, mobile/portable and flexible weapons and ammunitions that are cheap, accessible, accurate, efficient, and deadly. They include rocket-propelled grenade (RPGs), assault weapons (ASW) such as the AK-47 assault rifle that is highly coveted for its simplicity and firepower. Other SALW according to the ECOWAS 2006 Convention on SALW, their ammunitions and related materials include (The Guardian, 2017):

Arms destined for personal use such as firearms, exploding bombs, an incendiary bomb or gas bomb, a grenade, a rocket launcher, missile/missile system or a

mine, revolvers, pistols with automatic loading, rifles, carbines, machine guns, assault rifles, and light - machine guns among others.

Most of the SALW are becoming sources of concern to the entire international community because they are outside government control; are illicitly and, increasingly imported daily in quantum proportions into Africa. This phenomenon is what made a former UN secretary general Kofi Annan to describe SALW as "the weapons of choice for the killers of our time (Fleishman in, African Renewal, 2011).

### **Consequences of Security Challenges in Nigeria**

Small and light weapons have become rampant in Africa and have led the collapse of states' authority and virtual breakdown of law and order. This is why the US government in 2001 estimated that SALW are fuelling conflicts in twenty-two (22) African countries that have eliminated over seven (7) to eight (8) million people. It has also created a landscape of never ending cycle of violence that presents a continuous risk of a war of attrition that frequently outlast peace agreements which more often than not, resurfaced in post conflict period (Fleishman in, Africa Renewal, 2011). Countries where these instances are replicated include among others Sierra Leone, South-Sudan, Somalia (Mogadishu), Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and Nigeria's Niger Delta.

In our view, possession of SALW promotes rising rate of criminality and a culture of violence in which gun ownership becomes a status symbol – power to intimidate, influence and induce change behaviour in addition to using guns as the first source of reference to settle political, communal, and personal disputes. Moreover, the proliferation of SALW has led to series of conflicts (political and socio-economic). In addition, it leads to the upsurge in insurgent groups like extremist Islamic militants, rebel, militant groups and gangs fighting economic marginalisation, social alienation, and political exclusion. The impact of the conflicts and use of arms by the various groups are detrimental to peace and sustainable development of Africa. Adverse outcomes include indiscriminate killings (lost generations of Africans), plundering of resources, destruction of properties, kidnapping and hostage taking, economic dislocation and plummeting economic prosperity (Africa's lost decade), violation of human rights, displacement of people, sexual assault and rape, instability, and insecurity.

### **Terrorism: Islamic Extremism and Militant Groups**

One of the major consequences of the spread of SALW in Africa is the resort to the use of force and violence as the first point of departure in expressing grievances and settling conflicts among various groups. The use of violence by extremist militant groups in redressing cases of economic marginalisation and in foisting new religious ideological

orientations especially Islam, have led to tagging the groups as terrorist groups. They have adopted violent and terror tactics and strategies aimed to instil fear and horror in the general populace (Aluko, 2018).

Just as we have the incidence of arms proliferation (light and small weapons), in the continent, so have the terrorist groups multiplied in number and are prevalent in several countries in the Eastern, Western, and Northern Africa. What is more, the various groups' alliance with extremist groups such as the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria/Levant (ISIS/ISIL) and Al-Qaeda in the Middle East is well known. Coupled with this is the on-going alliance of convenience to collaborate and synchronize efforts among three major groups (Al Shabab, Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and Boko Haram) to share tactics and bombing techniques particularly in the making of IED's (New York Times, 2015; Omede, Okoroafor, Ngwube and Aluko, 2018) in order to trigger considerable trepidation on their victims. This is why the horror and devastation unleashed by the group are so damaging and have become a source of concern to the entire international community. To give us a sense of the magnitude of terrorism in Africa, a listing of some of the prominent groups will suffice (bbc.com, 2013; us-state.gov and africacenter.org, 2017; Aluko, 2019b):

- Al-Shabab: A Somali jihadist group with area of operation in Southern and Central Somali, which emerged from the Union of Islamic Courts in 2006.
- Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM): Came to existence in 2005 when it changed its name from the 'Algerian Salafi Group for Call and Combat (GSPC)'. Area of operation is Algeria and Mali. There are two splinter Jihadist groups from AQIM. They are the Masked Men Battalion (2013) and the Movement for Monotheism and Jihad in West Africa - MUJAO (2011) but came to prominence in 2012, which later combined to form El-Mourabitoun (Signed in Blood). The aim is to promote and establish Sharia in West Africa. Areas of Operation are across the Sahel region of Northern Africa consisting of Niger, Algeria, Northern Mali and Burkina Faso. In fact, most of the members are Arabs from Niger, Mali and Mauritania.
- Boko Haram (Western Education is Forbidden) whose original name is Jama'atu ehlis Sunna Liddawati wal- Jihad came into prominence in 2009. The group is committed to the Prophet Mohammed's (SAW) teaching of Jihad. It has a splinter group known as the Ansar-al-Muslimin in the Lands of the Black (JAMBS), also known as the Vanguard for the Protection of Blacks in West Africa (ANSARA). Both groups operate in the Lake Chad Basin Region comprising Nigeria, Chad, Niger, and Cameroon.
- Other notable groups include: Ajnad Misr - Soldiers of Egypt; Al-I-Hihad Al-Islamia - AIAI - operating in the Ogden region of Ethiopia and Somali; Ansar al-Sharia - AAS- operating all across Northern Africa since 2011; and a host of

others including: ISIS in West Africa (2018), in Libya Branch (2016) and Greater Sahara (2018); Jamat Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimin - JNIM (2015), and the Moroccan Islamic Combatant group - 2013 (United States Government, 2018). El-Mcurabitoun (Signed in Blood) carried out attacks in Niger in 2013 and was responsible for the siege at the Amena Gas Plant in Algiers.

It is important to mention that all the groups have been involved in the act of terror in their respective areas of operation. Al Shabab for instance has been involved in bombings in Somalia, Kenya (October 2013 attack at a shopping mall in which about 67 people lost their lives) and Uganda 2010 attacks with 76 fatalities (bbc.com, 2013). Boko Haram is renowned for the series of bombings of churches, mosques, markets, several military installations, the US embassy, kidnappings (Chibok and Dapchi schoolgirls) and so forth.

The terror unleashed by the terrorist groups is manifested in the indiscriminate killings of innocent civilians through incessant suicide bombings with Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), deliberate attacks on civil infrastructure and military installations, coupled with the kidnappings of men, women, girls, children, abductions and forceful recruitment of children, sexual slavery, sexual violence, and the decimation of entire communities. In addition, the groups mete out punishment based on Islamic injunction and Sharia law. Reprimands such as stoning of adulterers, amputations of hands of thieves, banning radio stations from playing Western music and stopping football viewing centres from airing foreign league matches are common (bbc.com, 2013). The use of terror tactics creates an accompanying humanitarian disaster characterized by inaccessibility to food and shortage of basic needs like shelter and clothing, an unprecedented rise in the level of internally displaced persons as well as an increase in the flow of local populace seeking refuge across state boundaries.

These actions have contributed immensely to the heightened state of insecurity and, are indeed serious security threats to the stability and human development on the continent. The resultant horrific hardship caused by the terrorists' destructive capabilities endangers the territorial integrity and the continued survival of most African nations. Conclusively, one can infer that African Terrorist Groups (ATG) continue to pose serious security challenges because they capitalize on chaos and political instability (Mali in 2012 and the on-going civil strife in Libya) within a state to carry out their war of attrition. In particular, the groups exploit the recurring crisis of governance, playing on grievances and frustration engendered by policies of economic alienation and the ensuing weakening of state authority and political decay in most African states (African Centre for Strategic Studies, 2015).



## Human Trafficking (HT)

Human trafficking is simply the illicit trade in men, women, and children. It is a phenomenon as old as slavery. It is a contemporary slave trade and an elongation of the Atlantic slave trade that involves the arrangement, movement, and selling of different categories of human beings into servitude through the threat and use of violence and deprivation (Kapstein, 2006). Article 3, of the Protocol to the Prevention, Suppression and Punishment of Trafficking in People (The United Nations office on Drugs and Crimes - UNODC) defines trafficking in persons as:

The abuse of power of a person or of position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person, having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation such as prostitution, sexual slavery, forced labour or services, servitude or the removal of organs.

Human Trafficking is regarded as a universal concern because it is prevalent in many countries with the trend spanning the entire global system. The phenomenon of emigration and the consequent lucrative albeit illicit trading in people is one of the serious challenges confronting African States in Contemporary times. Indeed, human trafficking is part of an illegal industry that generates billions of dollars in profit annually (UNDOC, 2015). Human trafficking is regarded as a crime against humanity because it involves the recruitment, harbouring, receiving, transporting/ transferring, provision or obtaining of a person for forced labour or services, through the use of force, fraud or coercion for the purpose of exploiting them and subjection to involuntary servitude, espionage, debt, bondage, or slavery (TVPA, 2017; Akwei, 2017).

In recent times, many able-bodied African men, youths, girls in their prime and women accompanied by their children undertake illicit and perilous journeys across land borders, through the Sahara Desert and across the Mediterranean Sea to seek greener pasture in the North. The reasons are not far-fetched. Bad governance and failed administrations coupled with uncertain future occasioned by massive unemployment; violence engendered by small and light arms proliferation; insecurity and political instability account for the rising tide and unprecedented quest to check out of Africa by hook or, by crook. In addition, many of the migrants are unskilled and the receiving countries in the West have imposed stringent restrictions regarding these set of people. To avoid the regulations, many have chosen to go through arduous methods of land and sea - a journey that involves illicit crossing of the borders of several African countries. To fill the vacuum of easy access, facilitate their movement and ensure their arrival at the pre-determined destination, certain groups of people have created an illegal migration networks behind which hides an appalling and mafia like traffic (Mutume, 2006). The network capitalises on the ceaseless stream of refugees and asylum seekers to traffic not only in humans, but also in body parts, drugs, and weapons.

The African continent has the highest rate of prevalence in human trafficking with an estimated 6.25 million individuals enslaved in one form or the other. This figure accounts for 13.6% of the total global population of modern slavery (Global Slavery Index, 2018; ASEC News, 2018). Trafficking in people for exploitation such as child sex tourism, commercial sex workers and domestic workers, servitude and forced labour, forced marriage, debt bondage, child labourers and child soldiers, are common. Many victims are from countries with the highest rates of slavery in sub-Saharan Africa such as Eritrea, Somali, Sudan, South Sudan, Mauritania, Burundi, and Central African Republic. However, Nigeria and the Democratic Republic Congo (DRC) had the highest absolute number and they accounted for one-quarter (1/4) that is, 26.3% of all victims in the region (Global Slavery Index, 2018). Other countries with high rates of human trafficking include Zambia (17 on global ranking), Malawi (17), Lesotho (17), Tanzania (19), Uganda (20), Cameroon (20), Nigeria (23), Kenya (31) and Ghana (34) (Global Slavery Index, 2018).

Available statistics further show that human trafficking constitutes the third largest crime and generates the third largest source of income in the world. The estimated annual profits made by criminal networks are US\$31.6 billion. Of this amount, US\$1.6 billion – 5% is generated in sub-Saharan Africa while, Northern Africa and the Middle East raked in US\$1,5 billion – 4.7% (United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Trafficking - UN.Gift 2018). Data on human trafficking show that an estimated 2.5 million people are in forced labour worldwide and of these, 130,000 – 5.2% are in sub-Saharan Africa while 230,000 people – 9.2% are in the Middle East and Northern Africa (United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Trafficking – UN.Gift, 2018).

Libya is considered as the main departure point for those emigrating through the sea from West Africa with more than 600,000 migrants estimated to have crossed the Mediterranean to Italy in the past four years (Bhalla, 2018). Hence, trafficking and smuggling networks thrive in Libya because of the current political turmoil and armed conflict which enables the network groups engage in multiple activities such as weapons, drugs, fuel and human trafficking. Thousands of Nigerians are victims of Human traffickers; evidence abound to show that there is a high level of smuggling and human trafficking conducted by criminal network involving Nigerians and other West African nationals (UNODC, nd.).

Obviously, the security challenges of human trafficking are enormous and therefore portend danger for the Continent. Human trafficking jeopardises public safety and national security. It deprives human beings of their freedom and self-esteem. It is an impediment to development and human security as well as to the efficacy of the rule

of law as traffickers violate national laws and their victims' fundamental human rights with impunity. They also deplete human and natural resources in addition to trading in arms to fester violence thereby heating up the already volatile political landscape of the several countries on the continent.

More importantly, criminals are exploiting the astronomical passage of migrants in the region (as exit, transit or source), to trafficking in a wide range of products such as drugs cocaine, cigarettes, weapons and ammunitions, counterfeit medicines, toxic waste (e-waste), oil and natural resources like hardwood, diamonds and ivory. Human trafficking poses both direct and indirect threats to national and international security through festering corruption, and unregulated migrations. Corrupt government officials employ loopholes to enrich themselves and thus, affect negatively on the State's ability to enforce law at all levels. Again, terrorists' networks profit from human trafficking because it provides a consistent and reliable source of funding and grant easy access across border (Greydynamics.com, 2018).

#### **Xenophobia Attacks in Africa: The Case of South Africa**

Xenophobia is derived from the Greek words Xenos (foreign) and phobos (fear or hatred). Hence, it means hatred or fear of strangers (Chengu, 2015). For Petros Airhihenbuwa Simbayi and Brown (2006, p.74) "Xenophobia is prejudice or an unjust treatment towards others who are considered to be foreigners to the community, society or the national identity". However, in the South African context, Xenophobia attack does not only involve fear of foreign citizens; it includes among other things: looting, destruction of property, vandalism, hostility, and abuse often leading to death especially towards black African countries and in rare cases the Chinese, Somalis, Pakistanis, Bangladesh (HSRC, 2008, p.5).

It has its historical roots since 1994. Foreign nationals have suffered rejection and denial of acceptance mostly because of their citizenship. Makwerekwere as they are often called has given some people ideological entrenchment at different times, especially children in school who have received distinct behaviour and anti-foreign sentiment (Bridger, 2015). Some people are of the view that the influx of foreigners into the country had led to an upsurge in crime rate, drug abuse and drug trafficking, unemployment, and other societal ills (Zuberi and Sibanda, 2014; Kindon and Knight, 2007; Adeagbo, 2013). However, the former South African President, Thabo Mbeki warned that it is fundamentally wrong and unacceptable that we should treat people who come to us as friends as though they are our enemies. We should not forget that the same people welcome us to their countries when many of us went into exile because of the brutality of the apartheid system (Mbeki, 2001, pp.30-31). Despite the plea for

accommodation and tolerance by the government, it has not stopped the episodically act of violence against foreigners (Crush and Ramachandran, 2014).

### **Environmental Issues in Africa**

Environmental issues in Africa are caused by anthropogenic effects on African natural environment and have major impacts on humans. The issues range from problems with access to safe water to population explosion and fauna depletion. These issues are linked to over-population in Africa as well on a global scale. Nearly all of Africa's environmental problems are geographically variable and human induced not necessarily by Africans (Duncan, et al, 2008). The increase in the rate of felling trees and the decrease in forest areas are the main issues of African continent. Over 90% of Africa's population requires wood for fuel and other domestic uses resulting in uncontrolled clearing of forests and the conversion of land into agriculture.

The rate of illegal logging is the main cause of deforestation. It varies from country to country in Africa. The rate is about 50% in Cameroon and 80% in Liberia. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, deforestation is principally caused by the needs of the citizenry including unverified logging and mining. In Ethiopia, the main cause is the country's growing population, which induces an increase in agriculture, livestock production, and fuel wood. In Madagascar, forest loss is partly caused by citizens using slash and burn techniques after independence from the French. Nigeria has the highest rate of deforestation of primary forests (Okeke, 2018). Deforestation in Nigeria is caused by logging, subsistence agriculture, and the collection of wood for fuel. It has wiped out nearly 90% of Africa's forest.

Nigeria has recorded 4% forest loss annually, which is considered as the highest globally (Okeke, 2018). Deforestation from extant literature lowers the chances of rainfall. Countries like Ethiopia has experienced famine and droughts because of this. Ninety-eight percent of Ethiopia's forests have disappeared over the last 50 years. Within 43 years, Kenya's forest coverage decreased from about 10% to 1.7%. Deforestation in Madagascar has also led to desertification, soil loss, and water source degradation, resulting in the country's inability to provide necessary resources for its growing population. In the last five years, Nigeria lost nearly half of its primary forests. Deforestation is an issue, and forests are important in Africa, as populations have relied heavily on them to provide basic needs. Woods are used for shelter, clothing, agricultural elements, and many more. Woodland supplies are also used to create medicines and a wide variety of food. Wood is crucial for economic gain in Africa, especially in developing countries. Forests also help the environment. It is estimated that the green belt of Africa contains over 1.5 million species. Without the forest habitat to protect the

species, the populations are at risk. The livelihoods of millions of people and species are at risk with deforestation. The act is a domino effect that affects multiple aspects of a community, ecosystem, and economy (Hillstrom, etal, 2003).

### Desk Data Illustration of Security Challenges in Africa

Table 1: How often felt unsafe walking in neighborhood

Category	Total	Round R5-2015	R6-2016	R7-2018
Country -	Total			
Never	61.4%	60.4%	62.4%	61.3%
Just once or twice	12.3%	12.4%	12.5%	11.7%
Several times	13.2%	13.2%	12.8%	13.8%
Many times	7.7%	8.6%	7.0%	7.3%
Always	5.3%	5.2%	5.1%	5.8%

Source: <http://www.afrobarometer.org/online-data-analysis/analyse-online>

### How often felt unsafe walking in neighborhood

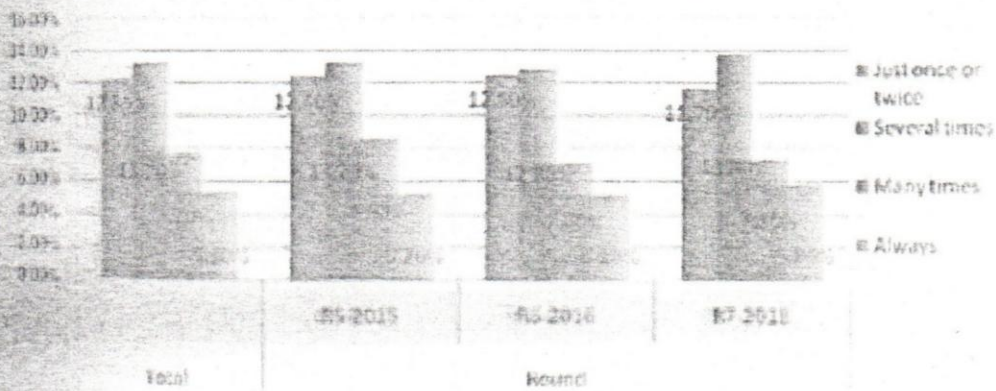


Figure I: showing the level of human security rate in thirty-seven countries in Africa

From the data above, it is observed that security challenge in Africa is a reoccurring decimal with a constant effect across the countries over a period of years. The data show that a large percentage of the people with the average percentage of 13.2% from 2015 to 2018 in all countries in Africa opined that they often walk unsafe in their

neighbourhood severally. This implies that the security of lives and properties are constantly in jeopardy. Aluko (2016; 2019b) supported this claim when he opined that the security challenges have become a culture of violence in the society.

At many times frequency of insecurity as indicated in the Afrobarometer data, about 8% of the people across Africa opined that they often walk unsafe in their neighbourhood many times. This is a very dangerous indication of the presence of SALW proliferation in Africa that informed rapid or indiscriminate violence in Africa. Aluko, Isiaq and Aremu (2018) referred to the proliferation and dimensions of violence as paradoxical to the growth and stability in Africa. At the always level of frequency of insecurity in Africa, an average of about 5% of the people across Africa is walk unsafe in their neighbourhood.

The trend of insecurity in Africa is moving from low ebb to a higher rate of daily uncontrollable crime and insecurity in terms of violence, kidnapping, terrorism, domestic violence, internal insurrections, external aggression and general human security challenges. This calls for urgent attention from the government and private stakeholders to break the cycle of violence and the reoccurring decimal of crime in Africa society (Aluko, 2017b). The problems of insecurity and poverty are factors that relative deprivation rides upon for expansion and continuous reoccurring in the community. There is a need to have an African continent that is good and secure for all.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

All of the security threats and challenges are caused by the deprivation of the people of their basic needs and right. Ordinarily, a citizen will not take up arms against his nativity to eke a living or else there is a malfunctioning or deprivation of his basic right consistently for a period. These make them to seek alternative means of survival and livelihood. Relative deprivation theory is use in this study to explain the trends that constitute the threats. The armed conflict, the xenophobic attack, the human trafficking, environmental degradation, terrorism attacks and other insurgencies and insurrections are carried out by citizens whose rights were deprived over a period of time. Most of the roots and causes of these issues were not addressed over time, thus, they degenerated into the decay of socio-political structure of the community and human security challenges. Therefore, there is the need to correct the historical neglect that had degenerated into several forms of national insecurities. However, this plethora of problems will continue in Africa if the primary cause, which is the relative deprivation of the concerned people by the government, is not addressed effectively. More dimensions of national insecurity challenges may become evident. Therefore, rapid responses to the threat of the insecurities are of utmost need. These are in forms of political palliatives, social policies, and economic friendly proactive steps.

The above mentioned policy actions are what the government at all levels can take up to prevent the manifestation of the tragedy of insecurities in our neighbourhoods. These challenges can be resolved whenever the root causes of these relative deprivations are address by the government at all levels. Some measures that can reduce relative deprivation as a source of national insecurity in Africa include socio-political and economic remedy to poverty and equitable distribution of national wealth across all regions among other. The spill over effect of insecurity can also be minimised whenever the people allows the government to mop-up the lacuna in the political system which gives some group of people political advantage to become rich at the expense of the entire country. The government should remove other obstacle to human rights and growth of individual such as dictatorship regimes or non-democratic regimes that suspend the fundamental human rights of the people are essential.

The aforementioned policies are as well essential to curb the menaces of relative deprivation of the people in Africa. The liberalization of the media to exercise freedom of speech and communications, they will serve as a deterrent to the government and make the people aerate the deeds of the government and the plight of the people. The international communities such as the United Nation, the North Atlantic Trade Organization (NATO), and other Western nations should not just give financial aid to Africa but as well monitor from the people's perspectives what the resources were used for and how it helped the people. This will check the arbitrary wasteful spending of many African governments and thus enrich the economy, growth and development of the people.

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