

BUILDING A MORE SECURE NIGERIA USING TECHNOLOGY

Nigeria's insecurity ranging from cybercrime to terrorism and kidnapping has been a source of arrant concern to the federal government. The government therefore doing everything within its powers to curb the menace, yet the challenge still persists, threatening lives and property, and several organizations in the private and public sectors of the economy.

The Longman dictionary of contemporary English defined security as things that are done to keep a person, building or country safe from danger or crime. Insecurity in other words is the absence of security to lives and properties. With the advent of technology came security products such as camera, alarm system and tracking device.

The level of insecurity in Nigeria is alarming and in some states it is getting out of control. Many Educational institutions across the country have come under serious attacks since the abduction of chibok girls in 2014. Security experts agree that technology can be used to enhance security. Indeed technology has helped and will continue to assist security agencies in the protection of lives and properties.

Human existence has also been characterized with attempts by man to apply technology to control his environment with a view to improving his material existence. This has resulted in making developments such as the discovery of gun powder and the invention of industrial machines both of which have significant effect on the evolution of nation states and the need to maintain national security of states within the international political system. This has thus made the application of technology a critical factor in the maintenance of national security.

In the past, national security was synonymous with physical security of the state but later expanded to include efforts geared towards improving the material condition of the people. In line with this development, the maintenance of the socio-economic and psychological quality of life of the people has now begun to occupy central position in the security agenda of nations. The shift in emphasis

has, however, not completely eroded the importance of safeguarding the sovereign of the country.

The United States of America (USA), relies in the effective application of Technology to enhance her national security. One of such technological innovations is a new Predictive Screening Project currently being used to derive observable behavior that precedes a suicide bombing attack. Developed by the directorate of science and technology the new device has inbuilt monitors capable of identifying and alerting personnel to indicators of suicide bombing behavior. The potential operational benefit of this new technological innovation is the enhanced ability to interdict Improvised Explosives Devices (IED). This has assisted the Department of Homeland Security in its mission of preventing terrorism, thus enhancing the country's national security.

Nigeria has a number of agencies devoted to promoting the country's technological development. Two of such agencies are the National Office for Technology Acquisition and Promoting (NOTAP) and the National Agency for Science and Engineering infrastructure (NASENI) Both agencies have the goals of moving Nigeria to technological development. However, the efforts of the country to leverage on technology in enhancing her national security have not been encouraging. For instance the Technology Achievement Index ranked Nigeria 66 in its list of marginalized countries in areas of technology creation and diffusion in 2009.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is being used to strengthen security across the globe. There are technological based security solutions government can adopt in the fight against terrorism, banditry, insurgency and other security challenges. Tracking devices have assisted in surveillance and on the spot capture of incidents. Social media, an offshoot of ICT is also a security tool. Nowadays, incidents are captured and reported as they occur. This speeds up investigation and has led to prevention of crimes and prompt arrest of culprits. Media in general creates security awareness for the citizenry. Another security solution worthy of mention is about forensic audit which is becoming popular in the fight against corruption.

I appreciate government's commitment to using technology in tackling security challenges across the country. The decision to link all Memory cards with individual National Identification Number (NIN) is quite commendable. It is hoped that soon kidnapping, vandalism, banditry, cultism and other criminal activity in Nigeria will reduce. Similar directive in the banking sector through the Bank Verification Number (BVN)is helping in checkmating financial crimes, kudos to technology.

The great impact technology is having in tackling insecurity can be boosted if infrastructure like electricity and telecommunication are adequately provided. This will facilitate the deployment of security gadgets especially close circuit camera in strategic locations across the country. The need to also equip all security agencies with needed security devices cannot be over emphasized.

Technology no doubt will enhance security in Nigeria. Government at all levels should prioritize the provision of adequate security equipment to Nigerian armed forces and the Police Force . Technology should also be used for effective training and retraining of the officers. With proper equipment and training, the efficiency of security personnel in the country will be enhanced and Nigeria will be safe.

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