

Drug Trafficking and the Threat to Nigeria's National Security

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Abstract

Drug trafficking is an ever mounting international security problem. Governments as well as international organizations such as the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and an array of international donors has made great strides in acknowledging the growing problem of drug trafficking and have implemented practical measures to stem this flow. Despite the efforts of national and international institutions, enormous amounts of drugs are produced, trafficked, consumed throughout the world and narco-corruption now undermines the rule of law and legitimate economic growth necessary for development and stability. Transnational crime syndicates manufacture new psychoactive substances when the governments increase controls over existing drugs. Annual number of drug-related deaths has increased to 250,000 globally. Illicit drug trade proved to be an insidious threat that finances terrorism, instigates corruption, undermines economic development and erodes state authority. One of the most alarming trends that place Nigeria and Nigerians on the radar of policy makers, law enforcement, and researchers alike is the number of new fronts on which the illicit drug trade is growing. Its geographic expansion beyond the relatively confined region of West Africa is now endangering East and Southern Africa. The arrival of new drugs to the region—heroin and Amphetamine-Type Stimulants (ATS, commonly referred to as synthetic drugs)—has been accompanied by the discovery of local manufacturing facilities to process them. Lastly, the growing level of involvement by Nigerians—who initially served as facilitators but now appear to be taking a more

proactive role—raises concerns that a new generation of drug traffickers is rising in the ranks. Nigeria is exposing to massive flows of narcotics as it lies at a strategic location. Despite the seriousness of this problem in the country, it seems not much attention has been given to this problem. Counter-narcotics policy is often subdued by counter-terrorism. Indeed, for many high-level security officials, narcotics threat is as important as its connection with the counter-terrorism campaign of the government. This paper investigates the national security implications of illicit drug trafficking trade for Nigeria.

Key words: Drug trafficking; National security; Nigeria; Security; Narco-terrorism

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INTRODUCTION

The end of the Cold War and globalization may have heralded an end to certain tensions, but among other unanticipated effects it also precipitated a significant increase in the flow of illegal drugs across traditional national boundaries. Many states re-evaluated and shifted their national security policies in accordance with the rising non-state threats. In this context, it is acknowledged that transnational drug cartels pose a serious threat to national; and international security with their tremendous annual turnover, insidious nexus with terrorism and the capability to corrupt government institutions. Concomitantly, drug trafficking has moved from being a mere criminal-justice issue to a national security agenda for many governments. International security literature often projects drugs as a national security challenge for weak states. However, advanced states such as the United

States, United Kingdom and Germany have long been dealing with the drug trafficking and transnational crime as a national security challenge (Morales, 1989; Andreas & Price, 2001; Swanstrom, 2007).

While drugs trafficking is not a new phenomenon, in Nigeria, drug trafficking came into official prominence in 1983-84 following the arrest, trial, conviction and execution of two couriers. Since then, drug trafficking has become a major cause for worry in the country.

Traffickers use legitimate business to camouflage drug operation. Proceeds are often invested in property (Real Estate) and this enables them to launder illicit profits (Barbara, 2007).

The couriers are mostly youths within the age bracket of 18-40 years. According to Alemika 2013, the methods of peddling in drugs varied. Unlike the Colombian, Mexican and Italian mafia who can transport very large quantities of narcotics at a time, the Nigerian syndicate imports smaller quantities at a time using one of the three convenient methods: stuffer and swallow, shotgun or luggage-store. The stuffers and swallows secrete narcotics in their bodily orifices or swallow them wrapped in condoms, for later retrieval. With the shotgun method, several couriers are hired to carry drugs using the same route at the same time (for instance an airplane) without one knowing the other(s). If a narcotics search at the airport finds one of them, the others are likely to proceed without being searched as the attention of the officers is shifted to the suspect. The luggage-store method has several variants. The courier would hide the drugs in his or her luggage and wait to collect it on arrival at the airport. He could use false bottom suit case, soles of shoes, motor spare parts, car tyres, bumps and seats, postal services, foodstuff, etc..

A 2012 report by the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) notes that Nigeria tops the list with the highest trafficking and drug use in West Africa. The report further states that in the last 10 years, West Africa became the new transit hub for cocaine coming from Latin America destined for Europe, with Nigeria's commercial capital Lagos emerging as the most active centre for air trafficking of cocaine. The report notes that close to 50% of Africa's drug couriers arrested in Europe in 2011 were citizens of Nigeria. Nigeria also topped the list of major transit routes of heroin destined for Europe. The report notes that Nigeria features prominently among West African countries that produce and export cannabis to countries in Europe.

In 2013, the UNODC published a threat assessment of transnational organized crime in West Africa. According to the report, Nigerian trafficking groups based in Brazil and elsewhere in South America remain quite active in cocaine trafficking, with these groups importing cocaine through containerized consignments and maritime shipping, air couriers and postal shipments. The report also notes that methamphetamine production in West Africa is a growing concern. The main market for

West African produced methamphetamine is East Asia, and, to a lesser extent, South Africa. The report states that Nigerians have been over-represented in the number of West Africans arrested either in West Africa or in Europe for smuggling heroin.

Drug trafficking and drug addiction are both growing problems in Nigeria and the rate is increasing day by day. Especially its rise is among young people and women. The threat of drug trafficking has been identified globally and especially in Nigeria and it is a major destabilizing factor in the security parameter. Poverty, illiteracy, corruption, weak institutions/law enforcement agencies and the lack of funding for enforcement agencies contribute towards increasing trends of drug trafficking in Nigeria. It is therefore urgent to evaluate the nature and extent of the impact of drug trafficking to the national security of Nigeria.

1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Globalization has expanded economic opportunities for many citizens of the globe. For the majority of these people, the increased prospects enhance their economic plights. Regrettably, increased economic prosperity has not led to a greater life for every individual. Organized crime organizations, including terroristic groups, use these opportunities to traffic narcotics and deny basic human rights to other individuals. Although narcotic trafficking is not a new phenomenon, the increased worldwide competition has intensified the demand for cheaper goods and services.

This demand has increased the need for the supply of lower labor costs and service providers. Illegal drugs are marketable in every corner of the world. With a constant and continually growing demand, drugs are one of the most reliable sources of income. The international narcotics industry also represents a lucrative and problematic illegal endeavor. The estimates of incomes from these activities also vary greatly and ranges from 100 billion to more than one trillion dollars per year (U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, 2011, p.3). While the role of drugs funding terrorism is contradictory to Islamic tenets, the unlimited source of profits highlights special justifications. Greed, corruption, hypocrisy, and willful blindness among bankers, financial institutions, and to some extent lawmakers and law enforcement all over the world have made the enormous profits easy to launder and hide. Conducting terrorist attacks, even on a small scale, take large amounts of financial backing. Terrorists do not file tax returns on their activities, however, it is estimated that it cost as much as a half million dollars to conduct the 9/11 attacks. Standard operating costs for these organizations can include training, intelligence collection, travel, and recruitment that would require a budget of over 30 million dollars per year (Ibid., p.31). Current international policies

have crippled the ability for donations to the groups and these entities now require untraceable funding. The illicit criminal activities of drug trafficking provides the substantial amounts of untraceable financing needed. This research study focused on the impact of drug trafficking on Nigeria's national security.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Drug trafficking has been a tangible source of revenue for organized crime throughout the past few decades. The violence, sociological, economic, and social damage caused by the actions of drug trafficking organizations (DTO's) is momentous. Drug trafficking is carried out by transnational criminal networks that are profit-oriented non-state actors. The nature of the threat is elusive, persistent and highly responsive to the security measures of the governments. The states confront an insidious challenge that erodes the societies from within rather fighting against distinct external military threats. It is hard to adopt the premises of classical theories of International Relations as an analytical framework for studies of transnational crime threat. It is obvious that analysis of drug-driven security challenges necessitates a more complex theoretical framework. As an advocate of widening Barry Buzan (1991) acknowledged military issues as a subfield of strategic security studies and asserted that traditional realist frameworks can no longer handle more sophisticated and broadened security issues in international politics. For him, multi-polarization, blurring of the center-periphery line, demise of ideological confrontation, irrelevance of the Cold-War military alliances, strengthening of international community and emergence of non-state threats complicates the agendas of security policy makers. In this context, he presented a promising framework that can be adapted to broader issues of national security (Buzan, 1991a & 1991b; Buzan, Waewer, & Wilde, 1998). Buzan (1991a) asserted that "the national security problem in which individuals, states and the system all play part, and in which economic social and environmental factors are as important as political and military ones" (p.368). In this context, Buzan, Waewer and Wilde (1998) laid out a more comprehensive and coherent analytical framework of national security that addresses political, and coherent analytical framework of national security that addresses political, military, economic, social and environmental aspects. In their epistemological methodology each component of security is intricately related to others and none of these pillars can individually address the national security dilemma. In contrast to the statist realist perspective, Buzan Waewer and Wilde asserted that non-state actors such as transnational crime groups and terrorist organizations should be perceived as other key issues in international security discourse. Several scholars adopted broader security frameworks to analyze transnational crime.

Phil Williams operationalized the organized crime and national security under four categories: threats against the territorial integrity, threats against the "system of rules", threats against the "institutions" and the threat against the "people" (Williams, 1994). Williams postulated that the transnational criminal networks can "challenge the state monopoly of coercive power", "replace the rule of violence", "intimidate judiciary and law enforcement" and "threaten business" (Williams, 2007). Louise Shelley (1995) developed a four dimensional frameworks in her analysis of transnational drug trafficking. For Shelley, drug networks; (i) undermine rule of law and state legitimacy, (ii) instigate corruption, (iii) disrupt economic development and financial stability, (iv) generate pervasive drug dependency that casts enormous social costs. Engwal (2005) adopted Buzan's framework and asserted that drug networks' national security challenges can be analyzed in three respects; (i) financing of separatist terrorist organizations, (ii) socio-economic hazards of drug abuse, and (iii) facilitation of corruption in state institutes.

This study adopts an integrated framework that combines the analytical approaches of Barry Buzan, Phil Williams and Louise Shelley.

3. THE CONCEPT OF NATIONAL SECURITY

The international system based on state authority has undergone sea changes. Sovereignty as restricted jurisdiction over a piece of territory is no more to be seen anywhere. Along with this, the notion of security is also undergoing transformation (Aliu, 2004). Traditional security alerts securing state territory exclusively from any outside interference, the most important being from military threats by foreign states. National interest was cleared as national security interest. There was a compact division or separation between domestic and non-domestic issues.

The nature of the threats and security discourses are often changing, and dynamic security pattern has disappeared from the state security and military designs. In this new environment of security and in particular in the light of changing global realities observed at the end of the Cold War, globalization, global violence and climate change around the world, are needed to be defined as non-traditional security threats in an inclusive manner. However, increasingly used in education and political practice, the concept is still far from being commonly accepted, or being authority in political science. While the realm of traditional security concerns is quite accurate and ardently protected, no agreement exists as to what non-traditional security is and what it includes and what remains prohibited. However, according to Mely Caballero Anthony, Non-traditional security threats may be termed as challenges to the survival and well-being of peoples and states that arise first and lead out of

nonmilitary sources, such as climate change, cross-border environmental dreadful conditions and resource depletion, transferable diseases, natural disasters, uneven migration, food shortages, people smuggling, drug trafficking, and other forms of transnational crime.

Generally, security has to do with freedom from danger, or with threats to a nation's stability to protect and develop itself, promote its cherished values and legitimate interest and enhance the well-being of its people (Imobighe: ND). National Security entails the ability of Nigeria to advance her interests and objectives, to contain instability, control crime, eliminate corruption, improve the welfare, and quality of life of every citizen (Obasanjo, 1999). Among the core issues of national security are law and order. National security has also been defined as the "aggregate of the security interest of all individuals, communities, ethnic groups, political entities and institutions which inhabit the territory of Nigeria". In his interpretation of the aforesaid definition, Mohammed (2006) concludes that:

National Security from any perspective is about safeguarding the interests of the citizenry and providing the type of atmosphere that is free of threats that could inhibit the pursuit of the good of all. It is about the processes and measures required to preserve law and order.

National security will be defined as the situation of freedom from harmful threats to a given state. This includes freedom from military attack or coercion, from internal subversion, and freedom from the erosion of the political, economic and social values, which are essential to the quality of life, national security is hereby use to be synonymous with state security.

The state is defined here as a complex socio-political sovereign entity that includes a territory, governing institutions, and a population. This conception of state draws on Buzan's definition of states: "territorially defined socio-political entities. They represent human collectivities in which governing institutions and societies are interwoven within a bounded territory [...] this nexus of territory, government and society is what constitutes the state." In that sense the definition of state used here resembles the classic legal definition stated in the 1933 Montevideo Convention on Rights and Duties of States. That is: a permanent population, a defined territory with a government capable of maintaining effective control over its territory and of concluding international relations with other states. The term "**national security**" refers then to the security of the state, and more specifically, to the absence of threats to the main attributes of a state, namely:

- (i) The "idea of the state" or the degree of recognition and identification of the population with their state.
- (ii) The physical base of the state (the population and the territory).
- (iii) The institutional expression of the state. That is the government and the political regime of a state or, as stated by Barry Buzan, "the entire machinery of government,

including its executive, legislative, administrative and judicial, and the laws, procedures and norms by which they operate"

(iv) Sovereignty in terms of "self-government [and] denial of any higher political authority, and the claiming by the state of supreme decision-making authority both within its territory and over its citizens..."

A matter of national security implies then a threat to any of these state attributes. These elements can be discussed as objects of security in their own right (they can be threatened individually), and at the same time the interaction between them determines the national security problematique. If one of them is harmed the other three will become more susceptible to threats. A government is necessary in order to grant the security of the population against internal or external threats. If the capacity of the institutional component of the state is constrained by either limited internal or external threats or, even worse, if the institutions of the state collapse because of internal or external threats, the integrity of the population, the territory, and sovereignty of the state will be more susceptible to threat. At the same time, a healthy and productive population as well as a productive territory are necessary in order to grant the economic viability of a state as a whole and to assure that the state will be able to extract resources for the implementation of policies.

The security environment refers to the pattern of interaction of nation states within an anarchical framework (characterized by the absence of a centralized form of political structure), with special emphasis on their interaction with dominant or hegemonic powers (in terms of their military capabilities and their degree of political influence in the region).

Threat is defined as a danger to the attributes of the state; this potential or actual danger means that there exists "an indication of something undesirable coming..." because of an actor or a process that is a "likely cause of harm...This threat can be overt in the sense that real harm is being done, or latent if harm has not yet manifested. Threats can be specific or diffuse depending on what is posing them. Specific threats "have a clear focus and source," that is they are posed by a particular state or non-state actor, object, or policy. For example: The Medellín Cartel is an identifiable non-state actor as are the Shining Path or the ELN or the FARC guerrilla movements in Peru and Colombia. "Cocaine" or "heroin" or "drugs" are objects that can pose a threat. Militarized enforcement is a policy that can pose a threat to neighboring countries because of its spillover consequences, and illicit drug production as a policy by a corrupt government is also a threat. More clear examples of specific threats are: Germany in the case of France during the late nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, the U.S. and Soviet arsenals during the Cold War for one another (and for the all the other states of the world). Diffuse threats arise from processes, rather than from a particular

actor, object, or policy. As argued by Barry Buzan, “Thus the spread of communism (or capitalism), nuclear proliferation (both weapons and civil power technology), terrorism, economic depressions and the green house effect are all examples of broad processes which are frequently identified as threats.”

Drug trafficking, then, is an economic process that can threaten the state to vary degrees, and can reach the proportions of a national security issue. A threat becomes a national security issue depending on the intensity with which the threat operates in relation to the particular vulnerabilities of a given state and also (but not necessarily) according to the beliefs of the policy makers of a state over a given time period. This means that, the fact that policy makers are not assessing a threat does not necessarily mean that the threat does not exist. Assessment by policy makers is a sufficient—but not necessary—condition for a threat to exist within the framework of this study. The intensity of a threat can be higher or lower depending on several factors:

- (i) its nearness in space;
- (ii) its nearness in time;
- (iii) the probability that a given latent threat could become an overt threat;
- (iv) the weight of its consequences;
- (v) and whether or not the threats are amplified by historical dimensions or circumstances. Depending on each particular case, the more intense a threat the more likely it will be defined as a national security issue. According to their intensity, threats can then be typified as low intensity threats, high intensity threats and lethal threats (when they put into question the existence of one or all of the attributes of the state).

4. DRUGS AND NIGERIA

Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa with a population of about 160 million people. The country has nearly four hundred (400) ethnic groups. The country is the hub of economic activities in the Gulf of Guinea. Christianity and Islam are the dominant religions. Nigeria gained independence in 1960 from Britain. Nigeria shares land borders that extend up to 770 kilometers with the Republic of Benin to the west, around 1,500 kilometers with the Republic of Niger to the north, 1,700 kilometers with Cameroun to the east, 90 kilometers with Chad to the north-east, and 850 kilometers of maritime border with the Atlantic Ocean to the south. Effective policing of these borders has been severally questioned. These borders are very difficult to secure. The lagoons, creeks and rivers are sometimes used by criminals in speed boats to facilitate cross-border crimes, which range from narcotics/drugs trafficking to human trafficking, firearms trafficking, smuggling (including car theft), armed robbery, oil bunkering and money laundering. Drug trafficking is a widespread form of organized criminal enterprise in

Nigeria and its neighboring countries in the Gulf of Guinea. A recent report by the UN Security Council stated that Cotonou port in Benin is being used by drug couriers for transshipment of large quantities of cocaine and heroin from South America to Europe. For instance in April and June 2011, security agencies seized a shipment of 200 kg of heroin and 450 kg of cocaine respectively in the port (Mosses in Alemika, 2013). The UNODC also reports that 200 kg of heroin and 500 kg of cocaine destined for Benin were seized in Pakistan and Colombia in April and May 2011, respectively. There is also a booming trade in cannabis, which unlike heroin and cocaine is produced in West Africa. Amphetamine Type stimulants (ATS) originating in Nigeria and Asia are also widely trafficked and consumed in Benin (Alemika, 2013).

According to Mosses Uko (2013), in Nigeria, drug trafficking came into official prominence in 1983-84 following the arrest, trial, conviction and execution of two couriers. Since then, drug trafficking has become a major cause for worry in the country. Neither heroin nor cocaine (the two most popular narcotic drugs) is produced in Nigeria. Nigerian therefore exists as a transit route to other parts of the world. Unlike the Colombian, Mexican and Italian mafia who can transport very large quantities of narcotics at a time, the Nigerian syndicate imports smaller quantities at a time using one of the three convenient methods: stuffer and swallow, shotgun or luggage-store. The stuffers and swallows secrete narcotics in their bodily orifices or swallow them wrapped in condoms, for later retrieval. With the shotgun method, several couriers are hired to carry drugs using the same route at the same time (for instance an airplane) without one knowing the other(s). If a narcotics search at the airport finds one of them, the others are likely to proceed without being searched as the attention of the officers is shifted to the suspect. The luggage-store method has several variants. The courier would hide the drugs in his or her luggage and wait to collect it on arrival at the airport. He could use false bottom suit case, soles of shoes, motor spare parts, car tyres, bumps and seats, postal services, foodstuff, etc.. According to UNODC analysis of 1,400 as contained in Alemika 2013 detected cocaine couriers on flights originating in West Africa between 2006 and 2008, 57% of the couriers were Nigerians, and were couriering drugs from every country in West Africa except Guinea-Bissau. In Nigeria traffickers use mostly the Lagos/Kano/Abuja international airports via London, New York, Amsterdam and Frankfurt. Apart from air courier, most of the cocaine routing through West Africa come across the Atlantic Ocean into the Bight of Benin and then routed to Togo, Benin, Ghana and Nigeria. Alternatively, traffickers had used Guinea Bissau and Conakry as well as Sierra Leone and Mauritania as additional air destinations. The drugs (especially cocaine) could arrive in cargo ship and then offloaded into smaller vessel for distribution along the West African coast.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DRUGS TRAFFICKING ON NIGERIA'S NATIONAL SECURITY

Drugs trafficking and other transnational organized crime (TOC) poses a significant and growing threat to national and international security, with dire implications for public safety, public health, democratic institutions, and economic stability across the globe. Not only are criminal networks expanding, but they also are diversifying their activities, resulting in the convergence of threats that were once distinct and today have explosive and destabilizing effects.

From a political point of view, drugs traffickers have hijacked the entire policy and political processes of governments and states in West Africa including Nigeria, and also institutionalized criminality in the conduct of public affairs which plays itself out in terms of the way in which the cartels, as a powerful, well-financed and highly organized special interest group, takeover policy-making through their proxies, and sponsor political advocates and protectors whose day-to-day dealings effectively put criminal interests ahead and above all other interests. The most evident expression of this hijacking of policy and politics by drug cartels is their successful penetration of political parties and security institutions. Guinea Bissau stands out again in West Africa but references have also been made to examples of institutional infiltration, if not outright hijack, in Mali and Ghana.

Another consequence of drugs trafficking in the country is the erosion of human capital. Human capital is a major component of national power (Buzan, 1991). Corrosion of human capital has been projected as a principal threat to the future of the state. In the traditional sense, wars have been the principal causes of the erosion of human capital. For Buzan, however, there are alternative threats such as drugs and terrorism that turned out to be much more deadly than interstate wars. The consequences of illicit drug use human capital are widespread, causing permanent physical and emotional damage to users and negatively impacting their families, coworkers, and many others with whom they have contact. Drug use negatively impacts a user's health, often leading to sickness and disease. In many cases, users die prematurely from drug overdoses or other drug-associated illnesses. Some users are parents, whose deaths leave their children in the care of relatives or in foster care. According to the UNODC cited in Behsat 2014, nearly 250,000 people lose their lives due to drug consumption (UNODC, 2012). U.S. government has been dealing with drugs as a principal national security threat as the drug related deaths exceed 38,000 per year (Jones, Mack, & Paulozzi, 2010). Majority of the existing literature in Nigeria, however, perceived the drug abuse as social, criminal and health problem rather than a national security

threat. Studies revealed that intensive international drug trafficking increased the availability of drugs in the country. Many government reports and individual studies indicate that heroin, cocaine, ecstasy, amphetamine and cannabis have become widely available especially in metropolitan cities (KOM, 2012). Several experts stated that transnational drug networks began to target domestic markets in addition to exploitation of Nigeria as a transition route.

Nigeria is no longer just a transit route for hard drugs but also a final destination. 2012 World Drug Report (WDR) highlights the association of drug users with acquisitive crime as well as behavioral challenges including aggression or violence. While the above revelations question the nature, effectiveness and resilience of the existing legal and institutional framework for responding to drug trafficking in Nigeria in particular and West Africa generally, the emerging drug consumption levels in the country and the sub-region suggests the potential impact of drugs on human security in West Africa (Wabala, 2013).

In Nigerian culture drug consumption is a humiliation that leads to isolation in society. Family members pay special attention not to reveal the drug addiction, which can lead to unemployment and stigmatization among the peers. Most of the respondents do not report the truth to the drug addiction surveys. Many of the interviewed experts reported that the actual number of drug abusers is significantly higher than official government reports. Drug related deaths are a clear indicator of erosion of human capital. **Individuals who become dependent on or addicted to trafficked substances could suffer from social, physical and psychiatric complications with resultant untoward effects on themselves, their families, their work, their communities and the nation at large.** According to TUBIM a total of 365 people lost their lives as a result of direct and indirect effects of drug consumption in 2011 (TUBIM, 2012). For TUBIM, the number of drug-related deaths increased by 163% over the past five years. Even though the death rates are relatively low in Nigeria in comparison with the United States and Europe, its growth rate is alarming. Almost all interviewed experts reported that the existing official data underestimates the scale of drug induced fatality. As there is no integrated data collection system, the information on drug-related deaths is collected via special requests to the hospitals. Many of the hospital administrations do not reply to the questionnaires. Moreover, there is no reliable data on traffic and job accidents occurred under the influence of drugs.

Drugs are also a threat to the economic development of Nigeria. Economic development is a principal agenda in national security council's throughout the world. For Buzan (1991a), economic strength ensures purchase of weapons, equipment and recruitment of law enforcement

and military staff. Moreover, strategic power projections of the states rely on the sustainable economic backup. As in the cases of Afghanistan and Guinea Bissau, the states often fail to provide security to its citizens when there is lack of economic resources. Underpaid law enforcement and military officers often fight for the drug lords rather than their governments (Williams & Felhab-Brown, 2012).

Intensive flow of narcotics generated significant amounts of dirty money in Nigeria economy. The total retail value of the seized drugs is around \$1.1 billion for heroin, \$1.2 billion for cannabis, \$44 million for cocaine and \$110 million for the ATS (Ekici, 2013b). At first glance, it might be argued that the drug trade bolsters financial reserves, generates capital and creates employment, which accrues to overall economic growth. In reality however, drug money has no significant macroeconomic push effect and makes no meaningful contribution to the prosperity of the Nigerian community. High-risk high-gain nature of the illicit drug business hinders sustainable input into productive sectors of the national economy. Drug production and trafficking undermine export oriented sectors and currency stability. Illicit drug economy can have direct and indirect costs on the nations. Field investigations revealed that it undermines economic development and financial stability in the country.

Firstly, drug generated money is infiltrated out of the pockets of Nigerian taxpayers and transferred to transnational criminal networks. The money is never taxed and used for sustainable investments. Organized crime syndicates exploit the money to purchase additional drugs, weapons and shell companies. On many occasions, drug money is invested in off-shore banks, casinos and hotels in Cyprus, Switzerland, Iraq, UAE and Central Asia (Yetim, 2000). Drug money is mostly untraceable, as it transferred through Havala system, mainly by means of jewelers and exchange shops. Astute traffickers never buy properties on their names. Real estates, cars and land are registered on one of the relatives. A significant portion of the money has been spent for hiring gunmen, concealment makers, couriers and new vehicles for transportation. Major drug traffickers have a common concealment makers, couriers and new vehicles for transportation. Major drug traffickers have a common tendency of buying luxury goods such as gold watches, weapons and expensive cars. This creates inflation in the districts where there is intensive drug trade.

Secondly, drug trade generates an unrestrained and large black market. The uncontrolled and untaxed money downgrades financial stability.

Thirdly, drug consumption erodes productivity of the labor force. Premature mortality, illness, injury leading to incapacitation, and imprisonment all serve to directly reduce national productivity. Public financial resources

expended in the areas of health care and criminal justice as a result of illegal drug trafficking and use are resources that would otherwise be available for other policy initiatives.

There is a great loss of productivity associated with drug-related premature mortality. In 2005, 26,858 deaths were unintentional or undetermined-intent poisonings; in 2004, 95% of these poisonings were caused by drugs. Although it is difficult to place a dollar value on a human life, a rough calculation of lost productivity can be made based on the present discounted value of a person's lifetime earnings.

There are also health-related productivity losses. An individual who enters a residential drug treatment program or is admitted to a hospital for drug treatment becomes incapacitated and is removed from the labor force. According to TEDS data, there were approximately 1.8 million admissions to state-licensed treatment facilities for illicit drug dependence or abuse in 2007. Productivity losses in this area alone are enormous. Health-related productivity losses are higher still when lost productivity associated with drug-related hospital admissions (including victims of drug-related crimes) is included.

The approximately one-quarter of offenders in state and local correctional facilities and more than half of offenders in federal facilities incarcerated on drug-related charges represent an estimated 620,000 individuals who are not in the workforce. The cost of their incarceration therefore has two components: keeping them behind bars and the results of their nonproductivity while they are there.

Thus, there is productivity lost to drug-related unemployment and drug-related absenteeism. According to the 2008 NSDUH, 19.6% of unemployed adults may be defined as current users of illicit drugs. Based on population estimates from the same study, this translates into approximately 1.8 million unemployed individuals who were current drug abusers. Further, approximately 8% of individuals employed full time and 10.2% of individuals employed part-time were current users of illicit drugs. Individuals who are employed but have chronic absenteeism resulting from illicit drug use also accrue substantial lost productivity.

Fourthly, illicit drug markets generate economic employment for approximately 300,000 people, who have no insurance and job security. Over the long term, bulk of the drug users turn into street dealers to maintain their habits. Government statistics indicate that even larger numbers of people are trapped in perpetual drug related recruitment. Once the young adults are convicted of drug-related crimes, it becomes highly unlikely for them to get employment in the public sector. Drug addicts and traffickers are the last choice for recruiters even in the private sector. Once the drug traffickers professionalize in the sector, they become "path dependent", either for

the reason of being unable to get re-employed in the licit economy or for the reason of their expertise in the illicit trade. They build all professional relationship with drug suppliers, transporters, concealment makers and distributors. Another factor is the contempt of the money generated in the legal sector. A professionalized drug dealer earns millions of dollars in a year, which is extremely higher than they could earn in a "blue collar" job. Monthly salaries of average workers range between \$500 and \$2,000 dollars. The sharp contrast between the licit and illicit income is a primary incentive for recidivism, which undermines the productive workforce of the Nigerian community. Fifth, drug enforcement, correction and treatment inflict significant economic burdens on the government. The sharp increase in consumption and trafficking indicates that the drug threat will inflict even higher economic costs to the Nigerian state.

Drugs trafficking also caused Drug Driven Corruption. Well-functioning institutions are key elements of the national security system (Buzan, 1991b). States enact necessary legislations to define the functions of security officials. National legislations aim to prevent corruption, which undermines states' response to security challenges. International drug trade generates enormous amounts of money that appeals to underpaid law enforcement and military officers across the globe. International literature often reports prevalent drug driven corruption in Afghanistan, Central Asia, Russia, Latin America and Africa (West, 2006; Thachuk, 2005). Corrupt government officials can provide a safe-haven to major drug traffickers. Criminal networks may infiltrate into state institutions and even capture the chain of command (Williams, 2007). As Phil Williams put it, drug driven corruption undermines the legitimacy of the governments, the respect for rule of law and fair distribution of wealth among the citizens.

Corruption and cooptation of government officials and public office holders by outrightly buying their services for a handsome fee or offering them shareholder stakes in the proceeds of the criminal trade in drugs, thereby making the abuse of office and power a systematized, integral part of the mode of functioning of government. In this way, drug trafficking and high-level corruption become two sides of the same coin. Examples abound in daily news reports of law and security officials being bribed at different stages of the drugs trade in order to buy their silence, acquiescence, and/or complicity. In Nigeria, for example, in 2005, Mr. Bello Lafiaji, the head of the country's drug law enforcement agency was dismissed by the then President, Olusegun Obasanjo, along with one of his closest aides on account of allegations of corruption and abuse of office. Also in Nigeria, a cartel of drug law enforcement officials reportedly facilitated the release of some 197 drug convicts from prison between 2005

and 2006. Similar reports of corruption among drug law enforcement officials have been made in several other countries including Ghana, Guinea (Conakry), and Sierra Leone, with the Gambia being the most recent.

Drug lords and people in drug trade bribe politicians and police officers with hefty ransom for securing their trade. Traffickers try to corrupt or intimidate officials for removing blocks in the drug transit and often have private armies. Judges, public officials and even police officers are lured into the trap of corruption because of the illicit drug trade. Honest officials initiating courageous campaigns against the drug traffic are often killed or kidnapped. During a briefing to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) in July 2012, Mr. Yury Fedotov, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), expressed concern about drugs and crime in West Africa. According to Fedotov, some 30 tons of cocaine and almost 400 kg of heroin were trafficked through West Africa in 2011, and methamphetamine laboratories had been discovered in the sub-region (Skelton, 2013). The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) for its part acknowledged that, "...drug trafficking is an enemy of the state and the rule of law, existing as a parallel power that rivals the legal system and we are compelled to fight it" (ECOWAS, 2009; UNSC, 2009; UNSC, 2012).

As significant amounts of drugs are transported over Nigeria, drug money has a potential to corrupt government officials. Obviously the organized crime groups will share this money with many people who are facilitating their activities (Ince, 2002).

The seizures and arrests in several West African countries have shed light on how the work of trafficking networks is facilitated by a range of actors, including businessmen, politicians, members of the security forces and the judiciary, clergymen, traditional leaders and youth (Aning & Amedzrator, 2013). In addition to the general physical and social conditions in West Africa such as porous borders, weak institutions, corruption and political patronage, poverty and ethnic identities, traffickers easily connect with local leaders and are able to establish and operate informal social networks, allowing them to avoid detection by the formal security apparatus (Lacher, 2012). In some cases, the formal security apparatus also provides cover for traffickers.

For example, high level elected officials and security personnel were found to be involved in a range of cocaine and heroin trafficking seizures in the late 2000s, indicating that both formal and traditional governance and security systems of many West African countries including Nigeria, are at risk from international drug trafficking *cartels* (Aning, 2010).

In September 2012, five Ghanaian police officers were arrested for their role in the transport of 1.5 tons of cannabis (valued at £4.3 million) to the United Kingdom. In other cases, drug trafficking incidents have served to

bolster the legitimacy of formal and traditional leaders involved in drug trafficking. The reinvestment of drug-related proceeds in the community not only provides them with significant social and political capital, but much needed support and services in areas where the government has been markedly absent. The latter can be of particular incidence at the local level, where government services and resources are limited and citizens seek to sustain themselves through whatever means possible.

There is extensive evidence of “drug-corruption” among government officials and employees from numerous countries. In Afghanistan, the illicit opium industry has been found to be “a massive source of corruption [that] undermines public institutions” (Byrd & Buddenberg, 2006,).

Antonio Maria Costa, the United Nations anti-drug chief, reports that in Afghanistan police chiefs, governors, and various other government officials are profiting from the opium trade (Barker, 2006). Similarly, in Brazil, Arias (2006) documents the insidious ways that drug corruption “progressively undermines the rule of law, leads to higher levels of human rights abuses, and can pose profound challenges to democracy.” Drug corruption was rampant in Colombia during the height of Pablo Escobar’s rule as a key figure in the illicit cocaine trade during the 1980s. In dealing with officials, Escobar implemented an approach he called **placa oplomo** (silver or lead) in which government representatives were given a choice between accepting a bribe and facing assassination (Singer, 2007). A particularly well-documented case of drug-related corruption is found in the Bahamas in the period from 1978 to 1982. During these years, the Colombian cocaine trafficker, Carlos Lehder, a confederate of Escobar, based his operation on a small Bahamian island called Norman’s Cay, replicating thereby a role the Bahamas played in illegal rum running during Prohibition in the U.S. Lehder developed close relations with members of the Bahamian government, and, in exchange for a considerable amount of money they provided him with protection to coordinate his vast drug business (Frontline, 2000). In 1984, a Bahamian Commission of Inquiry issued a 500-page report that revealed the extent of government drug-corruption. According to Kendal Issacs, a leader of the Bahamian Free National Movement party, “The greatest shocks we have had to suffer in 1984 have been the twin revelations of epidemic drug use among our people, and the incredible corruption in the PLP [Progressive Liberal Party] as a government and as a party” (quoted in Smith, 2006). The Commission of Inquiry’s review of the Prime Minister’s personal finances found that he spent eight times his reported income for the period from 1977 to 1984. In the Commission report, a cabinet minister, senior police officers, and high level officers in the Royal Bahamas Defense Force were exposed as having taken bribes from Lehder and a number of prominent lawyers were found to be the go-betweens in bribing public

officials (Commission of Inquiry, 1984). As a result of the use of the Bahamas for cocaine reshipment, a significant drug problem developed on the island nation, as did a rising crime rate. These problems were fuelled as well by a high rate of unemployment, especially among teenagers and young adults. In 1986, the Bahamas National Task Force against Drugs reported that domestic drug use and addiction had reached epidemic proportions (Neville & Clark, 1985).

While corruption in the Bahamas was extensive, significant levels of drug-related corruption have been described in other developing countries. Notably, not all of the corruption is the result of trafficking of illicit drugs, but involves legally manufactured drugs as well. In 1995, for example, distributors for Philip Morris cigarettes were indicted for laundering \$40 million in what the government called a “black market peso” operation involving purchase of Philip Morris products for illegal sale in Colombia. Five years later, when Philip Morris was sued by a group of Colombian tax collectors who accused the company of involvement in cigarette smuggling and drug money laundering, the company, without admitting to wrong doing, agreed to prevent its products from entering the black market or being used in money laundering (Zill & Bergman, 2001).

Nigeria and other West African countries are typically portrayed as being especially vulnerable. Surveys in Nigeria and Senegal in 2007 indicated about 40% of the population paid a bribe that year to obtain services from their governments. In the same survey, Ghana and Nigeria rated the police as the most corrupt sector of society, while in Senegal they were a close second to political parties. The ability of drug traffickers to fuel this corruption is linked to the amount of money they are making off the trade. Operating in this way, traffickers can reshape relationships between and among political and security actors, the citizenry, and the business community within and beyond borders. The infiltration and potential weakening of military, police and customs and border agencies of criminal organizations in countries across West Africa are a real threat. Easy access to drug money (and other forms of organized criminal activity) can place additional pressures on vulnerable political systems and increase the risk of polarization and violence around electoral contests.

Another security threats arising from the growing incidence of drug trafficking in Nigeria and the West Africa sub-region stems from the ability of criminal networks and illicit funding to infiltrate security and government agencies, transform or influence the motivations of its members, reorient objectives towards the spoils of drug trafficking activity thus influencing questions of state legitimacy and the legitimacy of democratic processes. The question of who elected officials are beholden to—governments, electoral constituencies, criminal organizations or even terrorist

groups—is becoming increasingly important, not least because an important threat posed by drug trafficking is its ability to reshape relational dynamics between and among political and security actors, the citizenry, and the business community within and beyond borders (Cockayne, 2012).

Intensive international drug trafficking undermines law and order in many parts of the world. In Mexico, drug cartels are accountable for the massacre of between 50,000 and 70,000 people since 2006 (Courtney, 2013). Similar problems appeared in Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, Nigeria and Afghanistan, the countries that all face massive flow of drugs. Drug trade also created colossal public order problems in the advanced consumption markets. For instance, in the United States, drug traffickers and users often engage in murder, violence, robbery, prostitution and extortion (Bernett & Holloway, 2007). Even though there are abundant academic works in the West on drug-crime relationship, interest of the Nigerian scholars on the subject is relatively new. Nigeria has never experienced a militarized organized crime that could create general instability. However, the intensive flow of narcotics generated significant law and order problems in certain locations of the country.

CONCLUSION

Drug trafficking is a non-traditional security intimidation which has the potential to revamp itself into a more lethal opus by integration with the terrorism. It poses a momentous threat to the world community at two levels; first, by targeting the human resource of a country (especially youth) it paralyses the state and prevents it from realizing its actual potential; second, by financing the acts of terrorism with the similar money earned circuitously from the targeted state. Nigeria's geographic locality in the expanse has made it susceptible to drug trafficking and a considerable quantity of drug still trafficked to the regional and international markets via assorted routes within the country. Nigeria has emerged as a major drug trafficking hub. Nigerians are over-represented among Africans arrested for transporting drugs across international borders. In the last decade, Nigeria became a main transit country for cocaine being transported from Latin America to Europe. In addition, the production of methamphetamine in Nigeria and its export is a growing concern. This paper indicated that transnational organized crime groups are insidious threats that strike the Nigerian community and undermine Nigeria's power as a nation. This paper presented that drug trafficking has broader national security implications. Apart from financing terrorism, drug trafficking undermines human capital, economic development, government authority and casts debilitating costs on Nigerian community. Even though drug trafficking is often perceived as a "soft" threat, it can undermine the states' ability to fight against "hard"

military security challenges. Along with the conventional threats, Nigerian Government should place more emphasis on the increasing drug consumption and trafficking. Internal crime fare should be perceived as serious as an external warfare. Failure by the government to respond to the drugs problem will exacerbate the volume of threat to an unprecedented level. Government should develop new partnerships with the relevant states to counter the drug problem.

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