THEMATIC ARTICLES: FACETS OF MIGRATION IN AFRICA

Internal Conflicts and Forced Migration in Nigeria: A Historical Perspective

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Abstract. In historical perspective, internal conflicts in Nigeria spanned through three distinct epochs: pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial. The resultant effect of each historical epoch of internal conflicts was forced migration. The major thrust of this paper is the historical analysis of the post-colonial internal conflicts, with major emphasis on the Fourth Republic, and forced migration. It argues that since 1960, the eruption of varying types of violent internal conflicts have exacted a heavy toll on the country's society, polity and economies, hindering her developmental potentials and democratic possibilities. Since the birth of the Fourth Republic in 1999, the Nigerian nation has continued to experience an upsurge of violent conflicts, which have taken terror dimensions, resulting in the killing of many people, large-scale internal population displacement, refugee production, wanton destruction of property, capital flight and so on. For instance, in November 2007, Nigeria was included among the seventeen countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, which were described as the world's most fragile states. The paper, therefore, submits that in order to save the fragility of Nigerian state from collapsing, the adoption of a holistic and pragmatic approach in addressing the growing challenge of internal conflicts in the 21st century is fundamental. It concludes that it will be practically impossible to achieve any meaningful development in a war-torn society.

Keywords: *forced migration, internal conflicts, Nigeria*

Introduction

Nigeria, a country with diverse culture, ethnic groups and religion could be best described as a pluralistic society. The pluralistic nature of Nigerian society has been one of the major problems responsible for unhealthy relationship among different ethnic groups living in it. One of the resultant effects of this development is perennial internal conflicts. Major forms of generalised violent conflicts that have been identified as the main determinants of forced migration in Nigeria since

independence include civil war, ethno-religious, indigene-settler syndrome and political conflicts.

Arguably, forced migration remains one of the worst scourges that have continued to torment mankind. Thus, the socio-political history of Nigeria is marked by forced displacement of people both within and outside the country's boundary. Meanwhile, the causes and consequences of forced displacement of population in the country are differently experienced in time perspective. Most importantly, the forced movement of population in the country since 1960, which was mainly caused by violent conflicts had been accompanied by untold sufferings, hardship, violations of human rights, economic backwardness and had exacted a heavy toll the country's society, polity and economies, robbing her of her developmental potentials and democratic possibilities.

The history of post-independence Nigeria, especially since the birth of the Fourth Republic, has been blighted by virulent conflicts of varying typologies. These conflicts, which have taken different dimensions, durations, scales and intensities triggered as a result of a combination of factors. Arguably, the systematic and overlapping patterns of inequality in the country could serve as breeding grounds for conflict. Adepoju explains that these conflicts find their roots in economic factors.[1] In all, the factors responsible for different typologies of conflicts in Nigeria range from historical animosities and colonial legacies, to ones rooted in the complexity of post-colonial realities, forces of globalisation and global governance and external agencies.

Although there are significant literature on the history of conflicts and its devastating effects in Nigeria, majority of them focus mainly on the period before the birth of the Fourth Republic. Meanwhile, the nature and dimension of violent conflicts and its socio-economic effects since 1999, which was unprecedented has not been adequately interrogated by historians. The various perennial violence conflicts of the 21st century Nigeria, which are associated with ethnicity, religious fundamentalism, economic marginalisation among others do not only constitute major threats to democratic sustainability, but also has made the country to be described as one of the world's most fragile states. Therefore, it is imperative for a historian to establish the nexus between conflicts and forced migration from historical perspective.

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[1] Adepoju, A. 1982. The dimension of the Refugee Problem in Africa. *African Affairs*, Vol.81, No.322, p.24

It is against this backdrop that this paper interrogates the historical trajectory of internal conflicts and forced migration in Nigeria, with major emphasis on the Fourth Republic. The paper is divided into six parts. The first part is introduces the discussion. The second part focuses on conceptual clarification. The third part critically historicises the challenge of conflict and forced migration in Nigeria up to 1999. The fourth section deals with internal conflicts and forced migration since the birth of the Fourth Republic. The fifth part examines the socio-economic effects of internal conflicts and forced migration on Nigeria's development. The last section is the concluding remarks. The methodological approach is historical, thematic and analytical. Sources include primary and secondary materials derived from archival materials, oral interviews and extant literature.

Conceptual clarification

In a discourse of this nature, it is imperative to conceptualize some major concepts that will feature prominently in it. The purpose of conceptualising these major concepts would be to give a clearer understanding of the subject matter of the paper. Major concepts in this paper are conflict, internal conflict, migration and forced migration.

Conflict: There is no doubting the fact that over the years, there has emerged diversity of approaches to "conflict". Therefore, the need to identify an inclusive meaning that conceptually embraces the contributions this paper intends to make in the historiography of conflict in Nigeria is imperative. Conflict, a multi-dimensional phenomenon and an intrinsic, inevitable and integral part of human existence,[2] has been viewed from different standpoints among scholars of conflict studies. Francis argues that conflict means the pursuit of incompatible interests and goals by different groups.[3] According to Avruch cconflict occurs when two related parties (such as individuals, groups, communities, or nation-states) find themselves divided by perceived incompatible interests or goals or in competition

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[2]Albert, I.O.2012. Mapping the Discourse: History, Social Conflict and Conflict Management. Albert, I.O (ed). *A History of Social Conflict and Conflict Management in Nigeria*. A Festschrift for Prof. Biodun Adediran. Ibadan: Institute of African Studies, p.6
[3]Francis, D.J. n.d. Peace and Conflict Studies: An African Overview of Basic Concepts. Best, S.H (ed). *Introduction to Peace and Conflict Studies in West Africa: A Reader*. Ibadan, Spectrum Books Limited, p.6

for control of scarce resources.[4] In all, conflicts refer to incompatible interaction, disputes, disagreements, quarrels, struggles, fights and wars between at least two actors, which may be individuals, groups or societies. For the purpose of this part, one major typology of conflict, we intend to interrogate can be categorised into dysfunctional and functional conflicts. While dysfunctional conflicts (which are the major focus of this paper) are destructive and cause loss of lives and property, forced migration, hunger and starvation and other forms of disruption, functional conflicts are constructive and reflect the differences and variety of human opinions, which exist in any free society.[5] With respect to this paper, dysfunctional conflict can also be referred to as either violent conflict or armed conflict.

Internal Conflicts: Although there are various typologies of conflicts, which depend on the criteria in which one intends to use, broadly, conflict can be grouped into two, namely internal and external or inter-state conflicts. While internal conflicts are conflicts that occur within an independent country, external conflicts refer to conflicts between two or more independent countries. External conflict can also be referred to as inter-state conflict. A good example of external conflict is border disputes. Thus, internal conflicts (which range from small-scale low intensity conflicts to large-scale civil war) are of varying types such as armed secessionist rebellion, civil war, intra and internal communal conflicts, ethno-religious, indigene/settler syndrome, chieftaincy and internal boundary/land disputes, coup d'etat and domestic terrorism

Migration: Simply put, migration is the movement of people from one geographical location to another, either on a temporary or permanent basis.[6] It also means the permanent movement of individual or group over a distance changing residence and crossing a specified boundary. It can be categorised into two, namely, internal and external.[7] While internal migration involves movement

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[4]Avrich, 2008. Cited by Rose M. Kadende-Kaiser and Paul J. Kaiser. 2003. Phases of Conflict in Africa. Paper Presented at a workshop on War and Peace in Contemporary Africa organized and hosted by the African Studies Centre at the University of Pennsylvania on January 31, p.1

[5]Adesote, S.A & Omojeje, A.V. 2012. Violence and Internal Population Displacement in Nigeria, 1999-2011. The 2nd Toyin Falola Annual International Conference on Africa and the African Diaspora at Excellence Hotel, Ogba, Lagos, 2nd - 4th July,

[6]Ekong, E. E. 2003. *An Introduction to Rural Sociology*. Uyo, Nigeria: Dove Educational Publishers, p.2

[7]Clark, W.A. 1972. *Travels and Explorations in Yorubaland, 1854-1858*. Ibadan: Ibadan University of Press, p.264

between one Nigerian community and another, external migration refers to the movement between Nigeria and other countries.[8] In all, migration can be voluntary and involuntary. For the purpose of this paper, our major focus is involuntary migration, which is also known as forced migration.

Forced Migration: Forced migration refers to as the mass movement of people caused principally by social and political problems such as armed conflicts, human rights violations, natural or environmental disasters, chemical or nuclear disasters, famine, or development projects.[9] According to the International Organization for Migration forced migration means any person who migrates to escape persecution, conflict, repression, natural and human-made disasters, ecological degradation, or other situations that endanger their lives, freedom or livelihood. Deng and Cohen argue that forced migration is always associated with the threat and/or fear that force people to flee their places of residence in search of security and safety.[10] While Ogwang posits that forced migration can be categorized into three types based on their causal factors such as conflict, development policies and projects, and disasters,[11] Rwamatwara argues that it can be divided into two categories depending on the causes of displacement, namely the one caused by natural disasters and the one caused by violence and/or armed conflict, which can also be known as man-made displacement as well as migration in response to repressive state policies and persecution.[12] Richmond provides the discrepancies between proactive (otherwise known as voluntary) and reactive (also known as involuntary) migration. He classifies migrants in two broad categories, namely, those with agency (choice) and those without agency. According to him, those migrants with little or no agency are known as forced migrants.[13] These

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[8]Osoba, S.O. 1969. The Phenomenon of Labour Migration in the Era of British Colonial Rule: A Neglected Aspect of Nigeria's Social History. *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria,* Vol. iv, No.4, June, pp.515-516

[9]Anthony, G. C. 1999. Africa's Refugee Crisis: State Building in Historical Perspective. *International Migration Review*, Vol.35,No.3, p.117

[10]Deng, F and Cohen, R (Eds.). 1998. *Masses in Flight: The Global Crisis of Internal Displacement*. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, p.3.

[11]Ogwang, T. 2014. Armed Conflicts and Forced Migration in the Great Lakes Region of Africa: Causes and Consequences . *International Journal of Research in Social Sciences*, Vol. 4, No.2, June, p.149

[12]Rwamatwara, E. 2005. Forced migration in Africa: a challenge to development. Stichproben. Wiener Zeitschrift für kritische Afrikastudien Nr.8/2005, 5. Jg., p.174

[13]Richmond, A. 1994. *Global Apartheid*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p.59

forced migrants are also known as refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). For the purpose of this paper, the forced migrants being interrogated are IDPs being displaced by violent or armed internal conflicts.

Historicising the challenge of conflict and forced migration in Nigeria up to 1999: An overview

Violent conflicts and forced population displacement in Nigeria in particular and Africa in general are neither unique nor confined to the 21st century development. In historical perspective violent conflict and forced migration in Nigeria spanned through three distinct epochs, namely, pre-colonial, colonial and post colonial periods. Each historical epoch is marked with its own distinctive causes and consequences. The pre-colonial conflicts were characterised by intra and inter-communal disputes. While some of the conflicts did not lead to forced migration, some others did. Generally, the period between 1500 and 1900 was described by Ayodele as societies under pressure.[14] For example, the quest for slaves between 16th and 18th centuries in order to meet up standards in the European market had been argued among scholars as the origin to conflicts.[15] In the pre-colonial Yorubaland, there were evidences of civil wars and civil disturbances that led to forced migration. For instance, during the second half of the 19th century, Yorubaland was seriously troubled by internal strife and warfare following the fall of Old Oyo Empire. A number of major wars that broke out in Yorubaland during this period included Owu war, Egba-Dahomey, Ibadan-Ijaye and Ekiti-Parapo or Kiriji war. The resultant effects of these civil wars included large scale destruction of towns and villages, property, political instability, insecurity and forced migration. According to Falola and others, some towns (such as Ibadan, Ogbomoso, Osogbo) in Yorubaland in the 19th century emerged or were set up by refugees from Old Oyo Empire.[16]

During the colonial period, the emergence of violent conflicts was as a result of the introduction of instruments of colonial administration, like Native

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[14]Ayodele, .C.O. 1999. *Topics on Economic History of Nigeria*. Ondo: Crofes Computers Press and Publishers, p.2

[15]Olaniyi, R.O.2009. History of Conflicts in Nigeria (PCR 331). National Open University Curriculum. Abuja: National Open University, p.61

[16]Falola, T., Mahadi, A., Uhomoibhi, M., and Anyanwu, U. 1991. *History of Nigeria 3*. Ibadan: Longman Publishers Limited

Authority, Native Courts System, Native Treasury and taxation. These instruments of colonial administration contributed immensely to communal and political conflicts. There was hardly any part of Nigeria that was not engulfed in one form of conflict or the other due to the implementation of these colonial instruments. The emergence of strain relations among ethnic groups during the colonial period was facilitated by the implementation of colonial instruments of administration. For example, according Ikime, the relations between Itsekiri and Urhobo, especially towards the end of the 19th century, which before the advent colonial rule was positive especially in commercial and social contacts became strained with the establishment of British administration first in Itsekiriland and later in Urhoboland. He argues that the working of Native Courts system was a major factor that led to ethnic conflicts between the two groups.[17] Other notable scholars who equally supported this argument include J.A Atanda and P.A Igbafe. Both of them observed that major intra and inter-communal conflicts that broke out during colonial rule were due to the implementation of colonial policies of administration.[18] Although majority of the conflicts that occurred during this period did not result in forced migration, evidences showed that some people fled for the safety of their lives.

The post independence Nigeria witnessed several cases of internal conflicts, which ranged from January 15 coup and Counter-coup of July 1966, the Nigerian civil war of 1967-1970 to political, ethno-religious and indigene/Settler conflicts and domestic terrorism/insurgency. Aside the above mentioned major conflicts; there were several intra and internal communal conflicts among different ethnic groups over land/boundary, chieftaincy and so on in different parts of the country. The first major internal conflict that befell the Nigerian State, which led to forced migration, was the January 15 coup and Counter-coup of July 1966. According to Mohammed, the first well established case of refugee production in the post independent Nigeria was facilitated by the first military coup of 15 January, 1966, in which about 2,200 were forced to flee across the Nigeria-Bénin Border to the neighbouring Bénin Republic for security and safety purposes.[19]

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[17]Ikime, O.1965. Itsekiri –Urbobo relations and the Establishment of British rule, 1884 - 1936.Ph.D. Thesis. Department of History. University of Ibadan, Ibadan.

[18]Atanda, J.A 1973. *The New Oyo Empire: Indirect rule and change in Western Nigeria 1894-1934.* London: Longman Groups Limited; Igbafe P.A 1979 *Benin under British Administration: The Impact of Colonial rule on an African kingdom, 1897- 1938. London: Longman group* Limited

[19]Mohammed, S. Z. 1989. Relief services in the Nigerian Civil War. Tamuno, T. N. and Ukapabi, S. C. (eds.). *Nigeria Since Independence.* Ibadan: Longman, p.236

Although these Nigerian refugees were later repatriated back home, it was after intense negotiations with the Government of Benin.
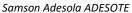
The counter coup of July 1966, which was like a retaliatory move of the January 15 coup was another major internal conflict that broke out in the post colonial period. The conflict degenerated into the mass killings, looting, burning and forced migration between August and September of 1966. Due to the intense of the incident, there was a mass movement of people from the North to the South, particularly to the East and Mid-West. According to Forsyth, over one million displaced persons were evacuated from the North to the South between August and September. Of these figures, there were 12,000 refugee railway employees alone.[20] As observed by Mohammed, the returnees were about 2,300.[21] As argued by Osaghae and others between May and September 1966, thousands of Igbos were massacred in the north, and the resultant effect of this development was the influx of Igbo migrants back into the East. They further argued that more than any other single factor, this deadly act generated popular Igbo support for secession as popularized by late Odumegwu Ojukwu (the then Igbo military governor) during 30-month civil war, which claimed an estimated one million lives, mainly in the ill-fated Biafra.[22]

This was followed by the Nigerian Civil War, 1967-1970. Although the Nigerian Civil war was not the first major conflict that broke out in the post colonial Nigeria, as there were AG crisis of 1962, Census crisis of 1964, the January 15, 1966 coup, among others, it was the first major internal conflict that led to mass forced migration of Nigerian peoples (both internally displaced persons and refugees). We are not interested in the details of the causes and consequences of this event, as they had been thoroughly dealt with in the literature; our point of argument is that it was the first major event in the post colonial period that made Nigeria to be included in the list of refugee production countries in West Africa in the post independence period, occasioned by violent internal conflict and civil strife. Although there were conflicting figures among scholars on the total number of forced migrants (internally displaced persons and refugees) that were affected by

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[20]Forsyth Frederick. 2011. *Emeka.* Abuja: spectrum Books Limited, p.81
[21]Mohammed, op.cit, p.236
[22]Osaghae, E.E and Suberu, R.T. 2005. *A History of Identities, Violence, and Stability in Nigeria*. Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity (CRISE). University of Oxford. WORKING PAPER No. 6, p.18

this thirty months civil war[23], evidences showed that majority of Nigerians in the Mid-West and Eastern regions (from the present day Rivers, Bayelsa, AkwaIbom and Cross River States) were forced to flee to neighbouring countries like Cameroon, Fernando Po (later known as Equatorial Guinea) for safety and security across the Bight of Biafra (now Bight of Bonny).[24] For example, as argued by Ikpe, by the time the civil war eventually broke out in 1967, over 4 million Easterners had returned home from other parts of Nigeria due to tension and bad feelings against them. And majority of these Easterners were the Igbos.[25]

Although between 1970s and 1990s the country witnessed several cases of internal conflicts, not all the violent conflicts led to forceful displacement of people. For example, between 1975 and 1993, the country experienced four major coup d'état (1975; 1983; 1985; and 1993). None of these coups, which were both bloody and bloodless, led to forced migration. Conversely, during this period, there were other several violent conflicts that led to internal population displacement. Majority of these internal conflicts, which were either ethno-religious, ethnic or indigene/settler or identity conflicts, intra and internal communal conflicts included the Maitatsine uprisings of 1980 in Kano, 1982 in Kaduna and Bulumkutu, 1984 in Yola and 1985 in Bauchi;[26] the Kafanchan/Kaduna/Zaria/ Funtua religious riots of March 1987; the Jos crisis of April 1994;[27]. For instance, the Maitatsine uprisings of the 1980s in Northern Nigeria was the first major attempt made by the insurgent group at imposing religious ideology on the Nigerian State since independent. As argued by scholars, aside the Nigerian Civil war, 1967-1970, the Maitatsine uprising was another major internal conflict that not only led to massive killings but also large displacement of population. This was they submitted that the uprising

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[23] Forsyth, F. 1977. The Biafran Story. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books; Kirk-Green, A.H.M. 1971. *Crisis and Conflict in Nigeria: a documentary source book, 1966 – 1970: vol. 2.* London: Oxford University Press; Madiebo, A. 1980. *The Nigerian Revolution and the Biafran War.* Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishers.

[24] Orji, K.E and Samuel, N.U. 2013. Nigerian Civil War and Refugee Crisis: The Fate of the Minorities in the Former Eastern Region. *Journal of Humanities and Social Science, Vol.16, Issue 2,* p.47

[25] Ikpe, E.B. 1994. Food and Society in Nigeria: a history of food customs, food economy and cultural change, 1900 – 1989. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, p.96

[26] Adesoji, A. 2010. The Boko Haram Uprising and Islamic Revivalism in Nigeria. *Africa Spectrum*, 45(2),p.96

[27] Ibrahim, O. F. 1997. Religion and Politics: A View from the North, in: Larry Diamond, Anthony Kirk-Greene and Oyeleye Oyediran (eds.), *Transition Without End: Nigerian Politics and Civil Society under Babangida*, Ibadan: Vantage Publishers, pp.512-516

marked the genesis of ferocious conflict and crises in Nigeria.[28]

The above discourse interrogated the historical trajectory of internal conflicts and forced migration from pre-colonial period up till the period before the birth of the Fourth Republic. In spite of the fact that conflict and forced migration could be traced to the pre-colonial period, and which, continued during the colonial and post colonial era, present displacement patterns, especially since the birth of Fourth Republic have several alarming nature and dimensions.

Internal conflicts and forced migration since the Fourth Republic

We are not interested in the details of the process that culminated in the birth of the Fourth Republic as this has been discussed in the literature. Undisputable fact is that the regime of Gen. Abdulsalam Abubakar successfully completed a transition to civilian administration by conducting several elections including the presidential election of April 1999, and thus handed over power to Chief Olusegun Obasanjo (the winner of the Presidential election as declared by Independent Electoral Commission) of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) on May 29, 1999. Hence, the emergence of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo as the third executive president of Nigeria marked the beginning of the Fourth Republic.

Since the return to civilian administration in 1999, the country has been battling with series of violent conflicts across its six geo-political zones. These violent conflicts, which have taken terror dimensions, have not only contributed to national security threat that is capable of disintegrating the country, but also robbing her of her developmental potentials and democratic possibilities. Ever since the birth of the Nigerian State in 1960, this republic recorded the highest forced migration to the extent that she did not only become refugee production country in West Africa, but also in November 2007, she was included among the seventeen countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, described as world's most fragile states.[29] These countries included The countries on this list include Burundi, Chad, Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, the DRC, Liberia, Nigeria, Sudan, Angola,

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[28]For details see Isichei, Elizabeth (1987), The Maitatsine Risings in Nigeria, 1980-1985: A Revolt of the Disinherited, in: *Journal of Religion in Africa*, xvii, 3, 194-208.; Ibrahim, O.F. Op.cit.

[29]Adano, R.W and Daudi, F. 2012. *Links between climate change, conflict and governance in Africa*. Paper No. 234. Published by the Institute for Security Studies, Dakar, Senegal www.issafrica.org, p.5

Ethiopia, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Zimbabwe, Cameroon, Guinea-Bissau and Malawi.[30] One of the major factors responsible for this description was the perennial cases of violent conflicts, which had led to high incidence of forced migration.

Majority of internal conflicts that have bedevilled the Nigerian State since 1999 and which have contributed immensely to forced migration could be classified under ethno-religious, ethnic, political, identity conflicts and insurgency/terrorism. It is imperative to point out here that in interrogating internal conflicts that had resulted in forced migration, efforts would only be made to draw examples from different regions of the country. In other words, the paper would not be able to discuss all the internal conflicts that had broken out in the country since 1999. Aside the fact that the study would be too wide for the paper of this nature, not all the conflicts led to forced migration. The forceful displacement of population since 1999 caused mainly by the identified typologies of conflicts has become an issue of serious concern to many scholars today because of the human tragedy and insecurity associated with it. Among notable conflict-induced displacements during this republic included the activities various ethnic militias such as Ijaw Youth Council (IYC), Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND, the Niger Delta Peoples Volunteer Force (NDPVF), all in the Niger Delta region; Oodua People's Congress (OPC), in South West; Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB); Boko Haram insurgency and other ethno-religious turbulent in the Northern region.

Importantly, although forced migration during this republic was not restricted to a particular region of the country, its rate varies. There is no doubt the fact that the highest rate of forced migration during this republic is noticeable in the Northern region of the country. This development was attributed to various cases of ethno-religious and identity conflicts, and the activities of the dreaded Islamic sect, known as Boko Haram. Of the major internal conflicts in the region, the activities of Boko Haram insurgency constituted the most to forced migration. The details of this will be interrogated later in this paper. Historically, although, the Niger Delta region is said to be first major region to experience violent conflict with the return to civil rule in 1999, she is the second leading region with the highest number of forced migrants in the country during this republic. This ugly incidence is occasioned by activities of the Niger Delta militants, through their various ethnic

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[30] Ibid

militias. In fact, prior to the positive intervention of Yar'Adua/Jonathan in 2009, the region has been variously described by the international community as a dangerous zone. This is because of high rate of militancy in the region, which ranged from bombing, kidnapping to killing.[31]

Although there were several cases of intra and inter-communal conflict in the Niger Delta region, which led to the displacement of people, the major ones were caused different ethnic militias operating in the region. With their terror activities against the Nigerian state and the oil multinational companies operating in their area, through bombing of oil installation, vandalization of pipeline, kidnapping of oil expatriate among others they clashed with the Nigerian forces.[32] One of major violent incidences that occurred in this region and which led to forced migration was the Odi crisis. For example, In February 2000, Nigerian forces stormed Odi, a sleepy village in Bayelsa State. Ostensibly, the troops were on the trail of suspects who had allegedly kidnapped and killed 12 mobile policemen in one of the region's numerous uprisings against offences of ecological devastation and neglect of which transnational oil companies (including Royal Dutch Shell, Exxon Mobil, Texaco, Chevron, Elf and Agip) and the colluding Nigerian government all stood accused. The inability of the troops to apprehend the suspects resulted in the sacking of the entire village.[33] According to Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) Report, 2009, about 60,000 people were said to have been displaced by the crisis.[34] This incidence was said to have marked the highest rate of repressive approach (which had been the hallmark of successive military regimes) by the Nigerian State, under the civilian administration since the Niger Delta agitation began in the post colonial period.[35]

In the South West Nigeria, majority of violent conflicts that took in the region during this period were internal communal conflicts over land/boundary, chieftaincy, political and economic domination. Notable examples of these conflicts were Ijaw-Ilaje crisis (1999-2003), Owo Chieftaincy dispute (2000), all in Ondo

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[31]Ajayi, A.I & Adesote, S.A. 2013. The Gains and Pains of the Amnesty Programme in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria, 2007-2012: A Preliminary Assessment. *Journal of Asian and African Studies,* Vol 48, No.4, p.515
[32]Ibid
[33]Ibid
[34] (IDMC Report, 2009, Retrieved from www.internal-displacement.org)
[35] Adebanwi W. 2001. Nigeria: Shell of a state. *Dollars and Sense Magazine*, July/August., p.4

State; Irawo community rivalry (2004), Ife-Modadeke crisis (2000), in Osun State and so on. Although the conflicts led to killing and displacement of people, they were not massive. Equally significant was the activities of the OPC in the South West region. OPC remained an armed, organised and ethnically based mass movement, which its activities since the genesis of this republic had become a major threat to Nigerian security like other ethnic militias. However, its operations quite differed from that of Boko Haram insurgents and Niger Delta militants. In spite of that, evidences showed that the militia since 1999 had engaged in series of violent activities which had threaten the unity of the country. For example, the group was actively involved in the ethnic clash that occurred in Sagamu in Ogun State on 17 July, 1999. The skirmish was said to have been precipitated by the death of a Hausa woman, who was said to have flouted the order restricting women from coming out of their homes during specific hours of the night during the annual Oro festival. It was reported that over 50 people died in the course of the violent clash.[36]

It is significant to point here that the highest rate of forced migration caused mainly by internal conflicts of varying typologies could be noticed in the Northern region of Nigeria. Between 2000 and 2015, the Northern region was engulfed in a series of violent conflicts which ranged from ethnic, religious, ethno-religious to insurgency. The resulted effects of this menace were massive killings and forced migration. Among major states in the region where these typologies of violent had erupted during this republic were Taraba, Zamfara, Kano, Kaduna, Nassarawa, Benue, Borno, Yobe, Gombe, Adamawa, Plateau and so on. For instance, while, inter-ethnic violence/identity conflict erupted in Taraba and the north-central states of Plateau, Nasarawa, Benue; ethno-religious violence broke out in some states like Kaduna, Zamfara and Kano. The North Eastern States of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa are major states, where the campaigns of terror of Boko Haram insurgency have been well pronounced. For example, in Kaduna state, the imposition of sharia law led to a series of uprisings and violent clashes in February 2000 between Christians and Muslims in the city of Kaduna. Many Igbo, who were generally Christian, were killed. For safety reasons, thousands of

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[36]Fadile, B. 2012. Insurgency in Nigeria: The Odua People's Congress Example. Obafemi, O & Galadima, H (eds) *Complex Insurgencies in Nigeria.* Proceedings of the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies, Kuru, Jos, p.22

Christians and Muslims were forced move to less troubled areas of the north.[37] Ethno-religious violence equally broke out in Jos, Plateau State in 2001. According to Best and Rakodi' report, in 2001, religious clashes erupted in Jos between the largely Muslim north and Christian south. The violent conflict led to the killing of more than 1,000 people and the displacement of thousands.[38] According to Blench, many of the displaced persons settled either temporary or permanently some camps in Bauchi state.[39]

Another identifiable major internal conflict in Northern Nigeria that led to forced migration during this period was communal conflicts. This major type of inter ethnic communal conflict which centred on the issues of land/ boundary, indigene/settler syndrome was noticed in Adamawa, Gombe, Plateau, Taraba, Benue and Nassarawa states between 2000 and 2014. For instance, Dunmoye, in his survey of conflicts in Nigeria with particular reference to the Middle Belt Zone observed that: *"a major factor of communal conflicts in the zone is land or boundary disputes.*[40] For example, a series of clashes over farmland occurred in Adamawa and Gombe States between 2000 and 2004 and led to the displacement of over 20,000 and 3,700 people respectively.[41] Also, the renewed violence in Plateau State over indigenes/settlers issue led to the declaration of a state of emergency in the state by the then former President of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo. According to former President Olusegun Obasanjo, the justification for the declaration of state of emergency in Plateau State under Governor Joshua Dariye in 2004 was as a result of communal conflict over land and boundary which led to the killing and the displacement of many people.[42] He also emphasized that:

[37]Human Right Watch . 2013, May 1. Nigeria: Massive Destruction, Deaths from Military raid. Satellite images, witness accounts raise concerns of cover-up

[38]Best, S. G., and Rakodi, C., 2011, Violent Conflict and Its Aftermath in Jos and Kano, Nigeria: What Is the Role of Religion?

[39]Blench, R., 6 September 2003, DFID Position Paper: Migration, 'The City Is Our Farm.

[40]Dunmoye, R. A. 2003. General Survey of Conflicts in the Middle Belt Zone. Africa Peace Review Special Edition, *Journal of Centre for Peace Research and Conflict*, National War College, Abuja, Nigeria.

[41]Adesote**, S.A** & Omojeje, A.V. 2012. Violence and Internal Population Displacement in Nigeria, 1999-2011. The 2nd Toyin Falola Annual International Conference on Africa and the African Diaspora at Excellence Hotel, Ogba, Lagos, 2nd - 4th July, 2012

[42]Obasanjo, O. 2004. Text of Broadcast to the Nation on the Declaration of a State of Emergency in Plateau State," on Tuesday May 18, 2004. in Daily Trust newspaper, Abuja, Wednesday, May 19,

Violence has reached unprecedented levels and hundreds have been killed with much more wounded or displaced from their homes on account of their ethnic or religious identification. Schooling for children has been disrupted and interrupted; businesses have lost billions of naira and property worth much more destroyed.[43]

Fundamentally, of the major internal conflicts that had occurred in Northern Nigeria since the birth of the Fourth Republic, the Boko Haram insurgency, which took terror dimension in 2009 was said to have produced the highest rate [f forced migrants. Here, we are not interested in the details of the activities of the insurgent group. Our argument here is that since the death of its former spiritual leader, Yusuf Muhammad on 30th July, 2009 in Police custody, fundamentalist Islamic militant group/sect had begun to unleash systematic attacks on the Nigerian State in general. Although the campaigns of terror of the insurgent groups had been felt in major states in Northern region like Niger, Kaduna, Kano, Plateau, Nassarawa and Kogi, they were majorly pronounced in the North Eastern region of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa with little presence in Gombe, and Bauchi. There is conflicting figures on the total number of people that had been displaced following the terror activities of the Boko Haram insurgents since 2009. In spite of this, there are available secondary sources that gave different figures as evidences of massive displacement of people, caused by the menace of Boko Haram insurgency. According to some Northern Youths under the aegis of Arewa Youth Forum on Monday 17, March, 2014, about 100,000 people, who fled from the carnage had become refugees in Cameroun, Chad and Niger.[44] On Wednesday 19 March, 2014, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) revealed that 57,000 Nigerians fled from areas affected by the insurgency and took refuge in Cameroun and Chad, Niger, while about half a million people had been internally displaced.[45] The spokesperson for the commission, Adrian Edward told the reporters in Geneva that of the 57,000 people, 17,000 registered as Nigerians while the rest were nationals from neighbouring countries who had lived in Nigeria for ages.[46] Also, UNHCR in May 2014 said that Cameroun and Niger were the host countries of about 39,000 and 50, 000 Nigerian refugees respectively, who were forced to take refuge outside the borders of the country since the beginning of the

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[43]Ibid
[44]The News, 24 March, 2014, Vol.42, No.11, p.15
[45] The News, 24 March, 2014, Vol.42, No.11, p.16
[46] The News, 24 March, 2014, Vol.42, No.11, p.16

Boko Haram insurgency.[47] The total number of Nigerian refugees in these countries were put in comparison to those there were internally displaced by UNHCR, estimated to be about 645,000.[48]

The socio-economic impact of internal conflicts and forced migration in Nigeria

Having examined the historical trajectory of internal conflicts and forced migration in Nigeria, it is imperative to have a glimpse of its socio-economic and political impact on Nigeria's development. In this section, attempt is not made at exhausting all the impact of internal conflicts and forced migration on Nigeria's development, as this would be practically impossible for the research of this nature. The paper will only interrogate a few of these consequences. Fundamentally, evidences from the literature reveal that the consequences of different typologies of internal conflicts and forced migration on socio-economic and political development of a war-torn country remain unprecedented. Although these consequences may be said to be varied and far reaching, and depending on the issues involved and how long it lasted, no doubt, they are inimical to development. This was why Rodger Blench argues that conflicts are antithetical to economic development. Therefore, these negative effects of these conflicts and forced migration could be seen from four major angles, namely those displaced, the sending and the receiving areas and the socio-cultural cohesion of Nigerian society.

One of the immediate impacts of violent conflict sand forced migration on Nigeria's development is frequent disruption of effective trade relations. Both intra and inter-trade relations in the country has been affected by violent conflicts and migration. Conflicts and forced migration were usually accompanied by disruption of trading activities, markets, closure of businesses and so on. Although there are no data on number of businesses that collapsed, evidences show that there cannot be meaningful trade relations during violent conflicts. For instance, in 2002, the Jos Main Market was burnt in a mysterious inferno. This incident paralysed the whole economic activities for several months. Also, the initial positive inter-trade relations between the South and the North were negatively deteriorated following series of attacks on the former by the latter occasioned by ethno-religious conflicts and

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[47]The News, 26 May, 2014, vol.42, No.20, p.13
[48]The News, 26 May, 2014, vol.42, No.20, p.13

Boko Haram insurgency. For instance, the latter before now produced staple foods as beans, livestock/meats (beef), peanuts, yams, tomatoes, pepper and onions and were exchanged same in trade with the former, who in turn supplies such commodities as palm oil and gari. These symbiotic economic relations were negatively affected by frequent ethno-religious conflicts which broke out in places like Kano and Kaduna as well as current Boko Haram insurgency in North-Eastern part. For example, since the commencement of the Boko Haram insurrection, many of the Yoruba traders (especially from Ibadan) who went to buy livestock were on many occasions massacred by this dreaded sect, who laid ambushed for them. Besides, the attacks on these farmers, who produce beans, onions, pepper, maize, rice, livestock and catfish in the Lake Chad area for consumption of the Southerners, by the sect, have equally forced majority of them to flee, thus, paralyzing economic activities.[49]

The implication of conflicts as well as current insurgency in the North-Eastern Nigeria on the region's economy and investment in particular and Nigeria in general cannot be overemphasised. There is no doubt the fact that intense conflicts drive away foreign direct investments because many foreign investors prefer investing their funds to less risky and more politically stable countries than in war-ton countries. Also Murdoch & Sandler argue that battles and guerrilla activities destroy private and social capital and as well inhibit market exchanges.[50] For instance, prior to the introduction of Amnesty Programme for the Niger Delta militants, there nefarious activities such as kidnapping of expatriates, nationals; bombing of oil installations among others made the foreign investors at that time to describe Niger Delta region as a dangerous place to invest. The militant activities of the various ethnic militias in the region at that time almost crippled Nigerian economy of which crude oil is her major source of revenue. In fact, the situation was aptly captured in the Tell cover story of 20 August 2012 where it was observed that:

> The ex-militants had demonstrated enough capacity to cripple Nigeria's oil production when they reduced crude oil production from 2.4 million barrels daily

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[49] Oluba, M. 2014. The Nigerian Military and the Fangs of Boko Haram. *The Fronteira Post*, Vol.10, July, p.4

[50] Murdoch, J.C. and Sandler, T. 2002. Economic Growth, Civil Wars and Spatial Spillovers. The Journal of Conflict Resolution. 46 (1), p.91

(mb/d) to about 700,000 mb/d. That reality forced the federal government to resort to the Amnesty programme. Today, oil production is over 2.6 mb/d.[51]

The growing insurgent activities in the Northern Nigeria have had negative effect on the economy of the region. Currently, the International organisations and rating agencies are counting the costs of Nigerian insecurity on foreign investment. For example, the World Investment Report (WIR) of the United Nations Conference Trade and Development (UNCTAD) indicated that the Nigerian domestic economy has lost a whopping six billion dollars (about N1.33 trillion) in 2011 as a result of Boko Haram attacks. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) owing to the problem. The report indicates that, FDI revenue to Nigeria fell to $6.1 billion (N933.3 billion) in 2010, with close to a 30 percent from the $8.65 billion (N1.33 trillion) in 2009. The report also revealed that the sharp decline of FDI to the country was compounded in the aftermath of the global financial crisis.[52] According to Oluba, if the lost figure in 2011 was to be extrapolated by 15%, then Nigeria would have lost N2 trillion by end of 2014. Meanwhile, the estimate does not cover the cost of either human lives lost or greatly incapacitated, which can never be accurately estimated.[53]

The effect of violent conflict on the growth and development of tourism industry in the Northern Nigeria cannot be overemphasized. In fact, tourism is a major industrial sector that contributes to the socio-economic development of a nation. One major challenge to the development of this industry is perennial problem of internal security. The growing challenge of Boko Haram insurgency in Northern Nigeria had negatively affected tourism industry in Kano and Jos Plateau. For example, since 20 January, 2012 onslaught attack of Boko Haram on the metropolitan city of Kano, a major commercial centre in the North and Nigeria, virtually everyone has been living in fear and jeopardy. Although there several conflicting arguments to the issue of the cancellation of the Durbar Festival in Kano, which used to attract local and international tourists in April, 2012, security issue was a contributory factor. The Kano state government lost huge revenue from this singular decision.[54] Also, though Jos Plateau has been in news of ethno-religious crisis before the advent of Boko Haram, she equally had her share in the nefarious activities of the sect. Jos Plateau, has noted for its tourism potentials,

[51]Tell, 2012:54
[52]Renee Home. 2012. Insecurity in Nigeria. A Bad Signals to Investors. London, 16 March
[53] Oluba, Op.cit, p.4
[54]ThisDay, 20th August, 2012: How Boko Haram Activities Destroy Economy of North

which have contributed to the national economy. The area, which hitherto has been regularly advertised as the "Home of peace and tourism" because its picturesque sceneries is now seen as no go area for tourists as destination owing to rising spate of violence. Majority of destination marketers and operators now prefer to take their clients to destination with relative peace especially Abuja instead of retaining them in Jos. While some hotels were said to be recording slightly above 20% occupying rate, some were said to have closed down. Besides, the Jos museums, Jos wildlife and Amusement park no longer witness visitors trooping like before.[55]

One of the main global issues today is the ever-increasing number of refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs) in war-ton countries in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular. As Cohen and Deng put it, "large numbers of persons are regularly turned into 'refugees' and forced into a life of destitution and indignity".[56] Also, Thyne observes that civil conflicts disrupt society by causing massive flights of refugees, devastating countries' economies and interrupting social programmes.[57] Generally, Africa has been described as the continent that has the highest level of internal displacement in the world and some of the largest refugee flows, caused mainly be violent conflicts of different types. Although countries such as Sudan, Angola, the DRC and Congo Brazzaville were initially accounted for the majority of this increase especially between 1999 and early 2000s Nigeria joined the league during this republic owing to several cases of ethno-religious violence, insurgent activities of the Niger Delta militants and most significantly that of the current Boko Haram insurgency.

For example, following the intense campaign of terror of Boko Haram, which began in 2009, owing to the killing of their leader, Yusuf Muhammed and sudden emergence of Abubakar Shekau as the new leader of the sect in September, 2010, more deadlier attacks have been unleashed on the Nigerian state in general and North-Eastern Nigeria in particular. The resultant effects of these attacks were high incidence of internal population displacement and refugees. Today, the growing insurgency in North-Eastern Nigeria has included Nigeria among the list of refugee producing countries in West Africa. While some Nigerians who

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[55]Ibid

[56]Deng, Francis and R. Cohen. (Eds.). 1998. *Masses in Flight: The Global Crisis of Internal Displacement*. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, p.1

[57]Thyne, C.L. 2006. Cheap Signals with Costly Consequences: The Effect of Interstate Relations on Civil War. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol.50, No.6, p.938

were displaced from this region of Nigeria took refuge in neighbouring states like Kano, Kaduna, Bauchi etc, others who were mostly Southerners return to the South. Besides, some equally fled the shore of Nigeria and became refugees in neighbouring countries like Cameroun, Niger and Chad. According to the UNHCR report in May 2014, Cameroun and Niger were the host countries of about 39,000 and 50, 000 Nigerian refugees respectively, who were forced to take refuge outside the borders of the country since the beginning of the Boko Haram insurgency.[58] The head of National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced – Hajiya Hadiza Kangiwa estimated at the sensitization rally to commemorate 2013 World Refugees' Day that Nigeria currently has 4.4 million internally displaced people,[59]

Human tragedy or civilian casualties is another major impact of perennial internal conflicts in Nigeria. The main elements of human tragedy caused by violent conflicts are sufferings, breakdown of family, psychological trauma, human right violations/abuses, unemployment in camps and loss of millions of people, mostly civilians. Thyne for instance observes that over the past 50 years, civil conflicts have caused more than 16 million deaths.[60] Ghobarah and others also opine that the direct and immediate casualties from civil wars are only a tip of the iceberg compared with their long term consequences for human misery.[61] Although there is no accurate total figures of deaths occasioned by all the conflicts that had broken out since Nigeria got her independence up to date, there were rough estimates of causalities with regards to some major incidents that occurred in the country during this period. Generally, since 1960 over eight million people have died either directly or indirectly as a result of war in Africa, of whom five and a half million were civilians.[62]. It is undeniable fact, that a considerable number of people died either in combat or other war related causes. On the 30 months Nigerian civil war, there were conflicting statistics of total lives that were lost. With respect to the Nigerian Civil war, Saro-Wiwa estimated that about thirty thousand, which were over ten percent of the total population of Ogoni people, was lost to the Biafran

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[58]The News, 26 May, 2014, vol.42, No.20, p.13
[59]News Agency of Nigeria, 2013
[60]Thyne, C.L. 2006. Cheap Signals with Costly Consequences: The Effect of Interstate Relations on Civil War. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol.50, No.6,p.937
[61]Ghobarah, H.A., Huth, P. and Russett, B. 2003. Civil Wars Kill and Maim People–Long After the Shooting Stops. *The American Political Science Review*, Vol.97, No.2, pp.189-202
[62]The causes of conflict in Africa – consultation document. 2001. Department for International Development (DFID), London

onslaught.[63] On the general overview, a number literature, without specific figure argue that perhaps up to one million lives may have been lost from deaths resulting from combat, starvation, hardship, snake bites, disease or even shock.[64]

Another major incidence that has claimed thousands of lives like the Nigerian Civil War is the Boko Haram insurgency. Available statistics on the number of deaths lost to Boko Haram insurgency between 2009 and 2015 is highly controversial. Based on the research of Akpan and others, the insurgent activities of the dreaded sect between 2002 and 2013 had claimed over 10,000 people (including women and children). They equally said that the official reports put the death toll at 8,000 plus.[65] The former President, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan told the UN Security Council in New York, United States on Wednesday 24 September, 2014 that: "over the past five years, we have been, and still confronting threats posed by Boko Haram….The costs are high: over 13,000 people have been killed, whole communities razed, and hundreds of persons kidnapped in the North-East zone by Boko Haram insurgents". This claim was widely reported by the Nigerian press with different captions.[66] Since the emergence of new government on 29 May, 2015, a number of conflicting figures on deaths caused by activities of the sect have also been widely recorded in the several national newspapers with different captions. For example, while Vanguard reported that about 444 deaths were documented between 29 May and July, 2015,[67] ThisDay gave a total of 406 during the same period.[68]

Loss of infrastructure and other social services is another impact. Violent conflicts have seriously damaged Nigeria's infrastructure. Roads, rail, ports, electricity, water supply, sewers and telecommunications have all been affected by

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[63]Saro-wiwa Ken (1989).*On a Darkling plain. An account of the Nigerian Civil War.* Port Harcourt: Saros International Publishers, p.199

[64]Igbokwe, J. 1995. *Igbos: Twenty Five Years After Biafra*. Lagos: Advent Communication; Balogun, O. 1973. *The Tragic Years: Nigeria in crisis, 1966 – 1970*, Benin City: Ethiope Publishing Corporation.; Akpan, N. U. 1989. The Position and Role of Nigeria''s Ethnic Minorities in War and Peace. Tamuno, T. N. and Ukpabi, S.C. (eds.) *Nigeria Since Independence the First 25 years Volume VI the Civil War years*. Ibadan: Heinenamm Educational Books (Nigeria) Ltd

[65]Akpan, F, Ekanem, O and Olofu-Adeoye, A. 2014. Boko Haram Insurgency and the Counter-Terrorism Policy in Nigeria. *Canadian Social Science*, Vol. 10, No. 2, p.151

[66]Premium Times, September 26, 2014: Boko Haram has killed 13,000 Nigerian-Jonathan; Daily Trust Sept 25, 2014: Over 13,000 killed in Boko Haram crisis-Jonathan

[67]Vanguard 12, July, 2015: 444 deaths in 39 days: Boko Haram, more daring, more heartless,p.1

[68]ThisDay 4 July, 2015: In Buhari's 36 Days, Boko Haram Kills 406 Nigerians, p.1

different typologies of conflicts across the country. During war there has been a dearth of investment in and maintenance of infrastructure. This loss has both an immediate and a long term impact on the country's economies. While in immediate terms, it increases impoverishment, in the long term, the cost of rebuilding them is enormous. Also, several cases of violent activities in the have led to the destruction of some basic social infrastructure like schools and health centres. Health care services have also collapsed as doctors, nurses and pharmacists flee for their lives from brutal violence. For example, following the incident in Baga, Borno state in April 2013, an estimated 2,275 homes were said to have been destroyed in fires, and a further 125 severely damaged according to satellite images released by Human Right Watch.[69] Owing to the kidnapping of over 200 Chibok girls in Government Secondary School in Chibok in April, 2014, a number schools were closed down. While Akpan and others also observed that property worth 40 million dollars had been destroyed the insurgent activities since 2002, official report put it at over 100 million dollars.[70]

Furthermore, another major challenge created by perennial internal conflicts is the problem of reconstruction. This is perhaps the most debilitating impact of civil wars and conflicts on Africa's development in general and Nigeria in particular. All countries coming out of conflict face major challenges of reconstruction in order to avoid a recurrence to violence. Notably, during violent conflicts, infrastructural facilities are wantonly destroyed while loyalty, patriotism and mutual relations are broken between different ethnic groups. For instance, while broken relationships are very difficult to restore, the replacement of destroyed facilities will be enormous. This was why the then Borno state Commissioner of Information, Mr. Inuwa Bwala, said that "it would take the state 20 years to recover from the current predicament it has found itself".[71] It is worthy of note that this amounts to a total waste of material resources and unnecessary dissipation of energy on unproductive ventures. This has been the general trend of events in African continent and which has been a factor retarding its growth and development.[72]

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[69]Human Right Watch . 2013, May 1. Nigeria: Massive Destruction, Deaths from Military raid. Satellite images, witness accounts raise concerns of cover-up
[70]Akpan, F, Ekanem, O and Olofu-Adeoye, A. 2014. Boko Haram Insurgency and the Counter-Terrorism Policy in Nigeria. *Canadian Social Science*, Vol. 10, No. 2, p.15`
[71]ThisDay 20 April, 2012, p.1
[72]Ghobarah, H.A., Huth, P. and Russett, B. 2003. Civil Wars Kill and Maim People–Long After the Shooting Stops. *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 97, No.2, p.7

Concluding Remarks

This paper has historicised the magnitude of the phenomenon of varying typologies of internal conflicts and forced migration on Nigeria's socio-economic development. It traced its historical trajectory and its manifestation, intensity and atrocity in time perspectives across the present six geo-political zones. It argues that though there is no geo-political zone in the country that has not recorded one form of internal conflict or the other, their intensity and gravity on the socioeconomic development of Nigeria varies. The negative effect of internal conflicts and forced migration on socio-economic development of Nigeria in terms of refugee problem, forced displacement of innocent, loss of infrastructure, human tragedy, and flight of capital among others were critically analysed. It argues that meaningful sustainable development cannot occur in a war-torn society. Therefore, it submits that the promotion of good governance as well as the adoption of a holistic and pragmatic approach is fundamental in containing the growing challenge of internal conflicts in the country.

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