

Combating Transnational Crimes and Illegal Entry along Nigeria–Bénin Border: A Blueprint For Nigeria’s National Security

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Abstract

This paper examines the challenges of the porous Nigeria-Benin Republic border and its impact on Nigeria's national security. It notes that over the years, Nigeria has been experiencing an upsurge in the number of illegal, irregular or undocumented immigrants in the country. These were attributed to many factors including porous borders, corruption and inefficient border patrol or monitoring among others. The proximity of Benin Republic to Nigeria along Ogun State axis, especially at the Idi-Iroko border, the second busiest border in South West Nigeria after Seme border in Lagos, has apparently posed a threat to the fragile Nigerian security architecture by the ease with which miscreants and other criminal-minded elements move in and out of both countries. The numerous unofficial escape routes in the area have indeed provided a great impetus to smugglers and human traffickers. The porous nature of these borders in Ogun State and elsewhere has no doubt heightened an upsurge in criminal activities in the country. The study further documents the consequences of these porous borders and multiple illegal entry posts on national security and proffers possible solutions to the lingering problem. The research utilized both print and online sources for its data collection. It concludes that adequate and effective border control mechanisms should be provided along the Nigeria-Benin border at Idi-Iroko. This will go a long way to reduce criminality in the country,

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enhance revenue generation drive and project the nation as a well-organized and responsible one.

Keywords: Ogun State, Bénin, Nigeria, Idi-Iroko, smuggling, transnational crime, national security

Introduction

The Nigeria–Bénin border has been a beehive of transnational crimes in recent times. This is largely due to the porosity of the border especially along the Idi-Iroko axis in Ogun State. The current trend of globalization has reinforced trans-border movements of people, goods and services across the Idi-Iroko border corridor, creating opportunities for criminal elements and undermining effective border control, in a double jeopardy for Nigeria. These developments account for the escalation of illegal and undocumented migrants and transnational criminal activities in these border areas. The challenge is not just about the free flow of migrants along these two-proximate borders, that is novel, but the number of unofficial routes or ungoverned spaces and the unchecked way such cross-border movements occur. This is consistent with the submission of the African Union in 2005 that an estimated 76.3 million people are engaged in both legal and illegal intra-African migratory movements (Okafor & Obiora, 2010).

National boundaries and border towns are generally known as cultural melting pots and security hot spots. These all-important strategic locations are often ignored in terms of security, provision of social infrastructure and development plans in most post-colonial African states. Borderlands are strategic post for cross-border transnational criminal activities such as smuggling, proliferation of small arms and light weapons, human trafficking and illegal migrations to mention just a few. Thus, one of the most significant borderlands in the sub-Saharan region is the contiguous borderlands between Nigeria and Republic of Benin which is the focus of this paper. This international boundary spanning about 700 km long (Blum, 2014).

Republic of Benin's economy greatly depends on the Nigerian economy in cross-border trade both legal and illegal (Golub, 2012). Significantly, the Nigerian borderlands with the Republic of Benin in Ogun State (Idi-Iroko) represent a very significant transport route in West Africa sub-region. Idi-Iroko, a notable border town between Nigeria and Benin is a famous haven for smuggling, human trafficking and all other transnational criminal activities. This border is the second busiest border in the South West of Nigeria, after Seme border in Lagos (Rasaq, 2016). Apart from the notoriety of this region for transnational criminal activities, these borderlands are equally endowed with many ungoverned spaces or un-official escape routes which in time past have aided the escape of some Nigerian human right activists and politicians who fled the country during the despotic military era in Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

The framework for this study is located within two theories; relative autonomy of the state theory and the failed state theory. The state relative autonomy theory is based on the neo-Marxist political economy model. This theory aptly exemplifies the state of detachment of the state in the discharge of its responsibilities as a mediator between the inter-class and intra-class struggles. Consequently, Okeke & Richard posit that "this theory presupposes that in any state or political society, there are two levels of contradiction, namely primary contradiction and secondary contradiction." (Okeke & Richard, 2014) Shedding more light on this, they further elucidate that primary contradiction represents struggle between two opposed classes namely the ruling class and the ruled respectively. On the other hand, the secondary contradiction which is the intra-class struggle depicts the struggles within the different sections of the ruling-class (Okeke & Richard, 2014).

This challenging class struggles among the various classes in a state is aptly captured by Marx and Engels in their epochal book, *The Communist Manifesto*, where they opined that "the history of all the hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles" (Marx, 1977). Thus, the advocates

of this model opined that a state can demonstrate either high or low relative autonomy. A state is said to demonstrate high autonomy when the economy becomes highly commercialized to the extent that the ruling class preoccupied themselves with amassing of capital via direct and deliberate exploitation of the working class. In this scenario, the state acts as an unbiased umpire by not actively getting involved in the domestic economy, either by way of involving in production activities or controlling or nationalizing means of production. The state's role here is predominantly regulatory and as unbiased mediator, facilitating harmonious interaction and reconciliation between inter and intra-class relationships. Capitalist states of the Western world appropriately fit into this high relative autonomy by demonstrating and observing an appreciable level of human rights and protection (Ake C. , 1976) (Alavi, 1972).

On the contrary, a state demonstrates low autonomy when the economy is not highly commercialized or capital flow from private sector into the economy is low in a way that the ruling class becomes enmeshed in primeval amassing of capital or wealth through misappropriation of public fund. Thus, the state becomes the main source for capital accumulation. In this situation, the state is an active participant involved in production through nationalization of the main means of production and not just restricting itself to the role of regulatory body alone. Thus, the state becomes enmeshed with compromise, to the extent that it finds it difficult to be above class struggle (Ake, 1985). This circumstance aptly depicts the Nigerian situation as well as other developing states of the world manifesting a low level of autonomy due to low commercialization of the economy or non-availability of private capital in the economy for production. Nigeria, operating as a mixed economy, lacks the intervention or injection of private funds into the economy, invariably creating a leechlike small ruling class (bourgeois) which relies heavily on the state for capital or wealth accumulation.

From this analysis, the Nigerian state has become the main source of uncontrolled amassing of fund by the ruling class (small governing

class), perpetually establishing their supremacy. By implication, the low autonomy of the Nigerian state implies it is engrossed in the class struggle instead of being above it, thereby, resulting in serious struggle for state control primarily to amass wealth, marginalization of everything and neglect of meaningful development for the generality of the masses (Ake, 2001). This development, by implication, has given room for Nigerians particularly the unprivileged class to connive with criminal elements to engage in nefarious activities in order to make out a living for themselves.

According to Robert I. Rotberg, “nation-state fails when they are consumed by internal violence and cease delivering positive political goods to their inhabitants. Their governments lose credibility, and the continuing nature of the particular nation-state itself becomes questionable and illegitimate in the hearts and minds of its citizens” (Rotberg, 2004). In line with the above postulation -a failed state possesses devastated sociopolitical and economic structures. Major features visible in a failed state are weak central government with little or no practical control over all its territory, inability to provide public utilities or essential services, unbridled corrupt practices and criminal activities, refugees and forced migration and serious economic down turn . Anyanwu also shed light on this matter stating that a failed state lacks the capacity to meet the needs and desires of its people (Anyanwu, 2005). The state has failed in the provision of basic essential services such as adequate security, food, health care, electricity, good roads and so on. Without mincing words the Nigerian state aptly fits into this failed state theory considering the increase wave of crime and violence, smuggling, porous borders, unbridled migration of undocumented/illegal migrants, ineptitude attitude of security agents in checkmating and controlling all these in the country and other transnational criminal activities prevalent in Nigeria. Since the Government have failed in its duties and responsibilities of protecting and providing for its citizens the necessities of life, the few wealthy ruling class are preoccupied with accumulation of common wealth and controlling the means of production; consequently, the masses have to devise means-legal or illegal- of caring for themselves.

Historical And Cultural Landscape of Ogun –Bénin Borders

The international boundary between the Federal Republic of Nigeria in Ogun State and Benin Republic is about 700 km long. The present border corresponds with the inter-colonial border between Britain and France sphere of influence (territories) that was set up in 1889 (Flynn Donna, 1997). Ogun State is one of the states in southwest of Nigeria which was created in 1976. The state is bordered to the north by Oyo and Osun States, Ondo State to the east, to the south by Lagos State and bordered by the Benin Republic in the west. This western border to Republic of Benin provides Nigeria and Ogun State ample access to the extensive market of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The indigenous people are mainly Yoruba ethnic group which comprises of other sub-groups such as, Olori, Ketu, Anago, Egba, Yewa, Egun, Awori, Ijebu, Remo, Ikale and Ilaje (Ogun State Government, 2017). It has twenty Local Government Areas with four Local Government Areas (Imeko-Afon, Yewa North, Yewa South and Ipokia) proximately bordering Republic of Benin.

Along the borderline between Nigeria and Benin on Ogun State axis, hardly any natural boundaries exist; in the same vein, hardly any exact delineation or demarcations exist. This borderline, in some areas, passes through un-navigable terrain by vehicle and this has made security patrol and surveillance a challenging task. This border region is also dotted with numerous un-official routes or ungoverned spaces, which are constantly being used as transport and trade routes and have posed a great challenge to immigration, custom and other security agents to monitor and control, although many of these routes have been in existence before and during the colonial periods. In addition to this, along these borderlines there are numerous local markets on both sides of the border from one end to the other.

The presence of these local markets has further reinforced the porous nature of the borders and un-official routes facilitating easy cross-border movements, which are the major factors responsible for the thriving network of exchange taking place between the two countries. These local

markets also represent an avenue of contact, interaction and exchange between the rural and urban dwellers from both ends. The four Local Government Areas in Ogun State with international boundaries with Republic of Benin, Ipokia, Yewa North, Yewa South and Imeko-Afon Local Government Areas are contiguous with settlements or villages in Benin, such as Igolo, Ifoyin, kaita, Ohumbe, Ipobe and others. The inhabitants of these contiguous settlements along the two borders share similar cultural and historical affinities. According to Akinjogbin and Ayandele in “Yoruba Up to 1800”; the Old Oyo Empire by the turn of 16th century emerged as a strong kingdom in Yorubaland and after its consolidation, it embarked on imperial expansionist drive and military conquest at the beginning of the seventeenth century. The landmark of this expansionism of Oyo was the conquest of the Kingdom of Dahomey (now Benin Republic) between 1726 and 1730. Furthermore, to lucidly show the cultural affinity between the Yoruba and their Dahomey neighbor they posited thus: “the Aja, who inhabited the Kingdom of Allada, Whydah, Tori, Popo and Dahomey, are a people closely related to the Yoruba in their culture and their historical development” (Ayandele & Akinjobgin, p 134). They further said the Dahomey and others “have a tradition of migrations which connect them with Ketu, and ultimately with Ife.” (Ayandele & Akinjobgin, 1980)

This historical connection between the Yoruba and Dohomey was further reinforced by A. A. Afolayan, that both the Anago people of Idiroko, in Ogun State and their kinsmen in Igolo, Republic of Benin, speak the same language and historically, Igolo was an integral part of the Yoruba ruled by the Anago kingdom, 1752-1757 (Afolayan, 2000). According to Afolayan, in terms of ethnic composition of these border towns the Yoruba made up the majority of the resident population (62.7%), the Anago (24.2%), and Egun (5.7%) (Afolayan, 2000). Both the Anago and Egun are subgroups of the Yoruba ethnic group residing in Republic of Benin. Although, there are other minority ethnic groups who have also migrated in recent time to take up residence here, both from within Nigeria and people from within the West Africa sub-region.

Apparently, the homogeneity of culture and historical background

of the people along the two borderlines played a formidable role in the pattern of cross-border dynamics over the years and up to the present time. Although references on boundary studies are abound (Asiwaju & Mosselman, 1997), at the same time, it will not be out of place to shed some light briefly on this so that a full grasp of the knowledge of the dynamics of cross border movements can be understood. Okorn and Ndum (2020), provide a background to transnational organized crime in Mfum border of Nigeria. They carefully, examine the causes and effects of trans-border crime in Mfum border area – a border town between Nigeria and Cameroon. Their finding reveal that the deplorable living conditions of the people living in this border town, was a leading factor that encouraged the people to engage in various illicit business activities (Okorn & Ndum, 2020). Professor Asiwaju, in his inaugural lecture (Asiwaju A. , 1990), asserted that African boundaries were basically a false creation of colonization, which emerged from the numerous agreements and exchange of notes among the various colonial powers; predominately Britain, France, Germany and Portugal. According to him, these colonial boundaries were super imposed on the existing empires in an irrational manner, which eventually led to the partitioning of the former uniform sociocultural groups into different and new separate political entities. This apparently has given credence to the reason why the Yoruba, for example are found today on both sides of the boundaries of Nigeria and Republic of Benin.

Transnational Informal Trading Activities along Ogun–Bénin Corridor

Economic activities along the Ogun State-Benin corridor is at the intersection of formality and shadowy. Shadow economic activities are characterized by such variants as informality, illegality and criminality. While informality and illegality may not necessarily be criminal, they are usually hidden and undocumented, and the corridor is notorious for this tripod of shadowy which manifests in dishonest or economic sabotage targeted at both the state and consumers; smuggling both good and fake products form Benin Republic as an “entreport” state (Golub, 2012);

maneuvering of overseas bank account to get funds through fraudulent means and evasion of custom duties. Smuggling of goods such as ivory, petroleum products, second hand clothes and shoes, chemicals, foods and agricultural products and human trafficking are common along the Ogun State-Republic of Benin borders, which is also a common sight in the borders across West Africa sub-region. Both men and women, and in some occasion rebels and transnational syndicates entangled in civil wars in the sub-region also participate in smuggling of these items. All these are some of the illegal and economic crimes undermining the socioeconomic and security of the Nigerian State. This challenge is further reinforced by the proximity of villages straddled along the two borders, porous borders and myriads of un-official routes or ungoverned spaces. In addition to these, Nigeria's high level of protectionism over her economy, badly managed ports, and currency controls gives a welcoming hand to smuggling and other heinous activities along this corridor.

Informal cross border trade has for long played a crucial role in Republic of Benin economy. Republic of Benin, a predominantly import and re-export dependent economy with a population of nine million people, imports goods from abroad (Europe, and Asia) and then export them into Nigerian markets through both legal and illegal means along the Ogun State-Republic of Benin border. This informal trade usually starts in the form of individuals or group of traders- both men and women- smuggling goods across the borders, in conjunction with transnational syndicates who are involved in trafficking of drugs, human beings, small arms and light arms as a means of livelihood (Addo, 2006). The absence of natural boundaries and presence of numerous un-official routes are important contributory factors promoting contraband activities along these borders. Informal cross-border trade constitutes an estimated 75% of Republic of Benin's GDP, while Nigeria's informal trade is estimated to be about 20% of its GDP and this includes trades with all her neighbouring countries especially, Niger and Cameroon (Afrika & Ajumbo, 2012). To be specific, Nigeria formally account for only about 5% of Benin's export (Golub, 2012). By this figure, it is apparent that Republic of Benin as an import

and re-export dependent economy rely so much on its informal trade with Nigeria and the openness of the Nigerian (illegal) market. Consequently, whenever the Nigerian border is closed, Republic of Benin's economy will go into comatose. The Idiroko-Republic of Benin border is a haven for smuggling of goods into Nigeria, in the process of smuggling goods across the border; traders usually either bribe security agents or go through the un-official routes. Thus, as a way of institutionalizing this trade and as a way of gaining access to Nigeria's economy, Republic of Benin deliberately lowers its import barriers thereby making informal trade lucrative in such a way that after paying import duties in Benin it is still profitable to smuggle those items to Nigeria (WorldBank, 2009).

Informal cross-border trade could be said to have both negative and positive dimension. From one point of view since the idea of nationality is a secondary issue to clan or ethnic solidarity, most especially among Africans and in specific West African sub-region; informal trading activities is a form of bonding or solidarity between people separated by artificial colonial boundaries. This solidarity is often seen in the way villages straddled along the borders provides a haven for smugglers. It could also be viewed from the standpoint of entrepreneurial vitality which provides a sustainable income for the people who have been economically marginalized and neglected by the government on both sides of the borders. From another perspective, however, evasion of custom duties through smuggling activities deprived the country of valuable revenue from import. Indirectly, this has contributed in no small way in weakening state or public institutions and state legitimacy. Thus, the state lacks the financial muscle to provide security agencies with adequate personnel and equipment to mount surveillances and police the borders as expected. In tandem with this, informal trading activities is smuggling and proliferation of small and light arms into Nigeria, thereby, creating grave consequences of insecurity in Nigeria.

Trans-Border Movements, Illegal Migrants and Porous Borders

The dynamism and nature of cross-border movements can be situated within the frame of globalization and its impact on states sovereignty and national boundaries. Accelerated international commerce has in no small measure enhanced easy and massive cross border movement across national boundaries. In the same way, ECOWAS' protocol on free movements of persons also has encouraged cross border movement among member states. However, globalization as it were, has in no small way, made void the existence of national borders and their guiding regulatory laws in such a way that many countries of the world can hardly boast of having absolute control of movements across their national borders (Duvell, 2003).

With globalization aiding free flow of cross-border movement, criminal elements have adequate opportunity to carry out their heinous crime. It is quite worrisome that Nigeria has been experiencing an upsurge in the number of illegal/undocumented migrants in recent years. This occurrence has been attributed to porous border posts and numerous illegal routes or ungoverned spaces along this corridor. This entire has in no small way heightened the number of illegal migrants in the country thereby, making possible the potential spread of criminal activities, small and light arms proliferation and insecurity in the country. These illegal/undocumented migrants leverage on the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) treaty which allows free entry and exit of goods and human beings. This has made possible free entry and exit among Nigerians and other foreigners, particularly Beninese, Togolese, Ghanaians and other citizens of West African countries along this corridor on daily basis. Afolayan, vividly captured the patterns of trans-border movements in his work when he stated that, "trans-border movement is not a single process of a once and for all activity, but a 'form' of migration in its own right, with distinct features. Movements across a border may comprise normal everyday movement and conventional migration - which could be regarded as being both internal and international. Some aspects of the

uniqueness of this form of migration are its spontaneity, the complexity of its pattern and the categories of the movers. Its spontaneity is evident from its almost impulsive and repetitious manner of occurrence. The complexity of its pattern stems from the fact that the same sociocultural group is found on both sides of the border.” (Afolayan, 2000)

Along Ogun State-Republic of Benin corridor, migrations can be categorized into two main distinctive groups. These are “transients and migrants” (Afolayan, 2000); comprising of travelers, visitors, frontier workers and permanent migrants, all demonstrating differences in length of stay at their terminus. In terms of population in these border towns, Nigerians constitute the majority of the resident population 95.3%, Beninese 3.5%, while the remaining population residents are from other West African countries. Among border crossers or migrants that are from Nigeria to Benin Republic vis-à-vis Benin Republic to Nigeria, Nigerians constitute 71.9%, Benin migrants 13.9%, Ghana 4.8%, Togo 2.6% and Ivory Coast 2.6% (Afolayan, 2000).

This unbridled migration movement and porous border has posed a great challenge to Nigerian security system. The Ogun State Comptroller of Immigration officially identified forty-eight illegal routes used by illegal/undocumented migrants and smugglers in the State (Ugwuede, 2016). Among these migrants, only 26.1% used the official border post while majority of border crossers used Idi-Iroko which is about 70.7% and Ajegunle about 98.8% used illegal or unofficial routes (Afolayan, 2000). All these area great challenge to Nigerian security agents.

Transnational Crimes as National Security Threats in Nigeria: The Way Forward

Security of life and property in any society is synonymous with socioeconomic development and political stability. The activities of transnational criminals and waves of crime have grown in leaps and bounds in Nigeria. This development apparently has made national security threat a major issue for the Nigerian government which in response to this, allocated huge amount of the national budget to security.

In addition to the above mention measure taken by the government in her effort in curbing the menace of insecurity in Nigeria, the government has gone ahead in criminalization of terrorism by passing the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2011, intensifying of physical security measures around the country targeted at deterring possible attacks, training and retraining of security agents, provision of security gadgets and the rest. However, despite all these efforts by the Nigerian government in conjunction with other international organization to curb the menace of terrorism and transnational organized crime, their cross-border activities still pose a great threat to political stability in Nigeria and the sub-region.

However, it is imperative to understand that this security challenge is not peculiar to Nigeria alone, rather it is an issue affecting many countries in the West African sub-region; but the difference is the degree at which this menace has impacted on the national security and political stability of member states, varies from one country to the other. This increase in the activities of transnational organized crimes are carried out simultaneously by criminal syndicates, as there is measurable increase in commitment of ECOWAS leaders in their obligation towards free or unhindered passage of persons and goods among ECOWAS members designed to stimulate growth, development and stability in the sub-region (De Andres, 2008).

As earlier mentioned, transnational crime is not new in West African sub-region; rather this has been in existence since the early 1960s, but later assumed a bigger dimension in the 1990s, especially with the outbreak of the Liberian civil war, which led to smuggling of small and light weapons and engagement of mercenaries (Addo, 2006). Several of these arms are mass-produced locally, some are brought into the West African sub-region by criminal syndicates. According to Addo, "...in 2002 and 2003 for example, Cote d'Ivoire allegedly received several deliveries of military equipment, while Liberia received 49 deliveries in 2002 and 25 deliveries in 2003". (Addo, 2006) (UNODC, 2005). On the other hand, Ghana, Mali, Sierra Leone and Nigeria, have thriving locally manufacturing arms industries (UNODC, 2005). In the West African sub-region, arms are smuggled into Nigeria by crime syndicates from Ghana through Togo, and

Republic of Benin via the Ogun State-Benin corridor and these are used for armed robbery, kidnapping and other criminal activities (Addo, 2006). In 2002 the Nigerian Custom Service was reported to have seized small arms and ammunition worth more than ₦4.3 billion (US \$34.1 million) at the point of entry into Nigeria. This scenario represents just a small fraction of arms trafficking network going on in this corridor of Nigerian border with Benin Republic.

Transnational crimes along the Ogun State-Republic of Benin corridor are numerous and alarming. These include arm banditries, smuggling of small and light arms, human and drug trafficking and smuggling of other goods. Usually, when these crimes are carried out in Nigeria, these criminal elements often retreat to Benin or other neighbouring countries to escape prosecution. As earlier discussed in this paper, the porous nature of the two borders, numerous illegal/unofficial and weak institution or administration of government on both ends (Nigeria-Republic of Benin) have been a great impetus facilitating transnational crime between both countries. Also, criminal elements used the platform of the ECOWAS' protocol which allows free passage of people and goods to perpetrate their criminal activities. The effect of these can be noticed in the increase in the wave of crime and criminal activities in the border towns and in the big cities, and by extension undermining Nigeria's national security. Transnational criminal activities between Nigeria and Republic of Benin came to its height in 2003, with a high-profile criminal case involving an international robbery syndicate led by Hamani Tijani, which brought about closure of the Nigerian borders both in Lagos and Ogun State (Adeola G. L. and Fayomi O., 2012).

The issue of corruption needs to be mentioned here as a way of addressing the security challenges and border policing in Nigeria. Corruption is very pervasive in Nigeria, most especially among government officials and especially among security agents. As part of security threat to the nation, border officials are enmeshed in bribery and corrupt practices, swindling unsuspected travellers for stamping of their passport and colluding with smugglers by giving them a free passage way after money

might have exchanged hands. These corrupt practices by security agents, at the border posts, may largely explain why migrants seek alternative routes rather than main point of entry in and out of the country.

No doubt the Nigerian Government and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), with the support of international organizations have been working assiduously to ensure reduced cross-border criminal activities along Ogun State-Republic of Benin border, as well as in other borders in the sub-region. But all the efforts seem not to be yielding significant result at bringing it to its barest minimum. Thus, the rampant case of armed banditry, smuggling of small and light arms, drugs and human trafficking to mention but few, requires a proactive and effective response to the various categories of crime prevalent along Ogun State-Republic of Benin corridor and the rest of the sub-region.

For an effective response in arresting the security challenge in Nigeria, there must be concerted efforts both at the national level with all government security agencies, non-governmental Organization and at the sub-regional level to curb this security challenge. The Nigerian Immigration officers and other government security agencies need to be alive to their responsibilities in securing the borders. A lot of intelligent services need to be deployed for information gathering. The deployment of technology for effective surveillance and monitoring of the border posts and the numerous illegal routes is sacrosanct for effective security measure. There is need for cooperation between Nigeria and transit countries in the sub-region for joint borders patrol, backed up by sophisticated radar system that could detect crime syndicates and illegal migrants some miles away and tip off the security agencies. The aim is to arrest illegal or undocumented migrants and criminal elements as they get close to the borders. Government should ensure proper funding of the various security agents, which includes proper remuneration and equipping them with modern weapons for effective policing in line with best practices in other advance clime.

Many of our communities including border towns are under-policed thus; decentralization of the police system can help to address this. Also

the present template whereby, security agents, in particular the police, in large numbers are deployed to guide private individuals and organizations, and leaving the masses at the mercy of criminals need to be address.

On the part of the Nigerian and Republic of Benin governments, there is need for both governments to develop the border communities and to ensure that the presence of government is felt by the people of these border communities. This is so because these border communities on both sides are often neglected in terms of adequate infrastructural facilities, such as schools and good roads. These are necessary, so that the people living in the border communities will not have to cross either to the Nigerian or Bénin side to access these amenities and to enhance security control of the borders. When these communities are well provided for in terms of security and adequate infrastructure, they could act as sources of intelligence tip-off for security agents, giving them valuable information about criminal activities along this corridor.

Conclusion

Transnational crime, illegal migrations and porous borders, along Ogun State-Republic of Benin borders have significantly undermined national security architecture in Nigeria. Realizing this challenge and the danger posed by transnational crime and illegal migrants on Nigerian security, the implementation of serious security measures towards effective regulation of cross-border movements are needful for safeguarding peace and stability, as well as for promoting relevant political and socioeconomic development needed for integrating the sub-regional economies. Such security measures could engender a boom in cross-border movements of goods and services, across Nigeria and in West Africa subregion.

Recommendations

Thus, arising from the various issues discussed in this paper the following policy options are needful.

1. The employment of modern technology and sophisticated security equipment such as; alarm system, deployment of drones across the

borders and advance lasers to combat crime and criminal elements should be prioritized by the government.

2. Government should build the capacity of all security personnel in training, retraining and equipping them with modern day weapon in line with global best practice.
3. Deployment of modern equipment to capture the biometric data of all migrant across the land borders.

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