

Corruption, Terrorism and Wars:

Legal strategies to combat corruption and terrorism for enhanced security and economic stability, frameworks addressing the impact of wars on sustainable development and military resilience

NIGERIA AS A CASE STUDY

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SESSION DETAILS

Session No. 4 — Human Rights

DATE

Tuesday, 22 September 2026

TIME

11:00 am – 12:30 pm

VENUE

Hotel Odjo d'Agua

1

Introduction

Insecurity, terrorism and corruption in a changing world order

A world less secure

- Insecurity is rising globally — war is becoming the norm, not the exception.
- The end of the Cold War was expected to deliver peace and stability. It did not.
- Wars in Ukraine, the Middle East and the Sahel have shattered that expectation.
- Terrorism is now used deliberately to instil fear in populations.
- Tendency to blame only those in power, but corruption is in different ways and on different forms further eroding developmental efforts.
- Corruption, in all its forms, has worsened an already bad situation.

THE TURNING POINT

**11 Sept
2001**

The Al-Qaeda attack on the United States on 11 September 2001 redefined the dynamics of wars and conflicts globally.

Corruption is not only in high places

The tendency is to blame only those in power — but everyday conduct erodes development just as surely.

1

Abuse of entrusted power

Bribery, dishonest enrichment and abuse of office, criminalised under Nigeria's anti-corruption legislation.

2

Salary for work not done

A security agent who fails to report at his duty post yet collects his salary has engaged in corruption.

3

Silence in the face of crime

Witnessing a crime and failing to report it because the perpetrator is a friend is equally corruption.

Conflict has a global price tag

- These issues produce negative effects on economic stability and sustainable development.
- They also feed conflict and wars — and as dialogue becomes extinct, conflicts become unending.
- Prolonged wars serve no purpose: government effort is sapped, the economy suffers, citizens are traumatised.
- No region is insulated. Hostilities involving the USA, Israel and Iran have worsened security in the Middle East.
- Fuel prices have risen astronomically, driving up transport, food and the cost of living everywhere.

Economy

Cost of living and production rise worldwide

Governance

Scarce resources diverted from development to security

Nigeria is not an exception

350,000+

Deaths attributed to Boko Haram and ISWAP in the North East (UNDP)

35,000

Direct deaths — the remaining 314,000 were indirect

3 million+

People displaced by the conflict

- Corruption has become a cancerous practice affecting all facets of the system.
- Evident in the ongoing investigation of the illegal and unlawful agency Presidential Foreign Intervention Promotion Council (PFIPC) led by Adeniyi Adeyemi, and in the huge scale of recoveries from both private and public figures by the EFCC and ICPC.
- Since the commencement of the current democratic dispensation in 1999, conflict has risen steadily in Nigeria — no part of the country is immune.
- The Indigenous People of Biafra operates in the South East, while bandits and kidnappers ravage other geo-political zones.

The imperative: a concerted effort

Nigeria has the laws, policies and strategies — yet insecurity keeps rising. Effort must now be directed at five outcomes:

**1 Enhance
resilience**

Of the military and all security and law-enforcement agencies

**2 Stop ongoing
conflict**

Bring current conflicts and wars to a close

**3 Prevent new
conflict**

Address drivers before they escalate

**4 Contain the
fallout**

Terrorism and the corruption that sustains it

So that economic stabilisation and sustainable development can take place.

2

Conceptual Clarification

Seven concepts to be clarified

Strategy

Corruption

Terrorism

**War /
conflict**

**National
security**

**Economic
stability**

**Sustainable
development**

3

The Contemporary Situation in Nigeria

From democratic hope to permanent deployment

1999

Democracy adopted

Expected to usher in cooperation, peace and security



2003

Niger Delta crisis

Violence in Delta State over the relocation of an LG headquarters; militancy takes hold



2000s

Plateau State

Developments elsewhere, notably Plateau, lead to military deployment



2009

Boko Haram

Terrorism emerges; the military has not returned to barracks since

Each of the six geo-political zones now carries both generic and unique security challenges.

Security and development are inseparable

- Corruption compounds the problem: funds meant for development are diverted into solving security challenges.
- Robert McNamara, former US Secretary of Defense, observed that security and development stand in direct relationship.
- A nation cannot have one without the other.
- Sustainable development therefore depends on a military and security sector with the capacity and resilience to hold an enabling environment.



A nation cannot provide or have security without development, or development without security.

Robert McNamara, The Essence of Security

4

Legal and Policy Provisions for National Security

The Constitution is the apex document on security and development in Nigeria

The 1999 Constitution (as amended) governs both security and development in Nigeria.

Section 14(2-b)

Security and welfare of the people is the primary purpose of government

Section 15

The national motto — Unity, Faith, Peace and Progress — and peaceful co-existence for development

Sections 33–43

Fundamental rights for all citizens

Section 45

Those rights may be restricted in the public interest and for the security of others

Chapter 1 establishes the three arms of government and their performance of these duties.

Statutes, policies and strategies in force

All security agencies have 'Acts' guiding them, including:

- Armed Forces Act
- Nigeria Police Act
- Nigeria Security Agencies Act
- Terrorism Prevention Act 2011
- Laws of the Federation, including miscellaneous offences

POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

2016

National Counter Terrorism Strategy (NACTEST), revised

2017

Joint Defence Doctrine; National Defence Policy

2019

National Security Strategy

2021

National Cyber Security Policy and Strategy

Institutions and international cooperation

- Government has established ministries, departments and agencies dedicated to corruption, security and terrorism.
- Terrorism-financing work is coordinated with regional and global bodies — FATF, ECOWAS and GIABA — through the NFIU, EFCC and ICPC.
- Drug abuse among young people is a related driver; the NDLEA works with UNODC and other partners.

NFIU

Financial
intelligence

EFCC

Economic crimes

ICPC

Public sector
corruption

NDLEA

Narcotics control

The nexus: corruption, terrorism and armed conflict

- Corruption distorts the allocation and use of public resources — including funds meant for defence, intelligence and policing.
- The OECD notes that defence procurement is especially exposed: high contract values, technical complexity, urgency, and limits on transparency.
- Oversight must therefore reconcile legitimate confidentiality with the ability to detect fraud, conflicts of interest and inflated contracts.

FOUR PROCUREMENT RISK FACTORS

- 1 High contract value
- 2 Technical complexity
- 3 Urgency of acquisition
- 4 Restricted transparency

Turning intelligence into enforceable outcomes

- Effectiveness depends on converting intelligence into admissible evidence and judicial outcomes.
- Priorities: specialised financial investigation, digital evidence, beneficial ownership, forensic accounting and cross-border cooperation.
- Asset recovery is central — stripping the economic benefit weakens the incentive to offend.
- Enforcement requires coordination across anti-corruption bodies, the NFIU, police, intelligence, the military, prosecutors and the courts.

37 of 40

FATF recommendations rated Compliant or Largely Compliant (FATF/GIABA, 2024)

Grey List

Nigeria exited the FATF Grey List in late 2025 — institutional development must continue

5

Challenges to Efforts on National Security

CHALLENGES

Seven persistent challenges

1

Citizen apathy

Non-involvement of the public in national security

2

Overlapping Acts

Uncoordinated mandates producing negative competition

3

Weak sanctioning

Poor or lack of sanctioning of offenders encourages impunity

4

Poor coordination

Security efforts are not harmonised across agencies

5

Problems over people

Emphasis on problems rather than people

6

Underused technology

AI and data tools remain largely untapped

7

International anarchy

No effective authority above the state system

6

The Way Forward

Strategies for national security attainment

Strategies 1 – 4

1 Whole-of-society approach

Every MDA, public and private entities, group and individual must be involved in national security.

2 Review of security agencies acts

The National Assembly and Ministry of Justice should close gaps, delineate responsibility and end negative competition.

3 Reward and sanction regimes

Established by all MDAs, with the judiciary trying cases fairly, promptly and firmly to reduce impunity.

4 Effective coordination

An office such as the NSA must be empowered to coordinate all security agencies and keep them proactive.

Strategies 5 – 8

5

Security awareness and education

Reach every citizen through schools, religious and social organisations, using local government as the grassroots instrument.

6

People-centric management

Efforts must centre on people, not the adversary — Rupert Smith's paradigm shift, where people are target, object and opposition.

7

Use of technology

Led by the ministries of education and of science and technology, with security agencies and the private sector.

8

Active regional and global membership

The Presidency and the ministries of Foreign Affairs and Justice should secure maximum advantage from relevant bodies.

IN CLOSING

Security is the precondition for development

- 1 Corruption, terrorism and war reinforce one another.
- 2 Nigeria's legal framework is sound; enforcement and coordination are not.
- 3 Resilience, accountability and citizen involvement must advance together.

Thank you.

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