Border Security Issues and Challenges of the Nigeria Customs Service

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Abstract: Regulating migration flows and containing border disputes remain central to border security agencies across the world. The reality, however, is that controlling access to territories and citizens is difficult in the globalised security context, as technology has enabled the increased flow of goods, people and ideas across national boundaries, while global inter-connectedness has increased interactions between people around the world whether for work, sport or entertainment. The paradox lies, therefore, in the increased relevance of the Customs service agency with regard to securing the nation’s borders despite the fact that their position is being challenged by transnational security actors and vulnerabilities as well as numerous inherent weaknesses from within the agency itself. Thus, in order to counter threats both from within and outside a state border, new patterns of security interaction are required. It is on this basis the study not only intend at identifying the major challenges militating against border security in the Nigeria Customs Service but also, to proffer solutions through insightful suggestions and recommendations.

Keywords: Challenges, Border Security, Nigeria Customs Service.

Introduction

Border security has attracted profound attention in many countries. In the United States of America, it is pursued in order to stop illicit smuggling of goods that are prohibited and deemed illegal from entering the United States. The European Union also offers a positive indication of how improved border related trade controls can contribute to both security and economic development (Andrews, 2007). Nigeria has her own share of border security challenges, which are made more complex by poverty, lack of good governance, corruption, chronic armed conflict, armed banditry, porous border security and transnational crimes.

Comparing the indicators from local neighbourhoods, analysts can anticipate crime trends and agencies can take preventive measures to intervene or mitigate the impact of those crimes. It is important to note that the nature and existence of border may likely impede crime prevention, investigation and detection among law enforcement agencies. The Nigeria Customs Service whose statutory function includes, but not limited to the collection of revenue and accounting for same, anti-smuggling operations, security functions and generating statistics for planning and budgetary purposes; combating illegal commercial activities and trade in illicit goods e.g. import of fake and substandard goods, combating infraction on intellectual property rights (IPR), combating illegitimate international trade in endangered species, combating illegal trade in arms and ammunition, combating money laundering, combating trade in illicit drugs, combating illegal trade in cultural artefacts, combating importation of pornographic materials and combating importation of toxic/hazardous substances (Webb Fontaine, 2018). Also, added to this function of the Nigeria Custom Service is the lead Agency role the Service is expected to play in all matters relating to importation, exportation and fiscal policies guidelines of government, thus making the Nigeria Custom Service a lead Agency in the Implementation of the Nigerian Trade Hub (Adams, 2012; Mintah, 2015).

However, the Nigeria Custom Servicemay not be able to effectively carry out these enormous responsibilities if the inherent challenges besetting their border security operations remained too obscured to be adequately addressed. This situation is especially notable considering the porosity of the Nigerian border and a major aspect of their work which is collection of revenue from import and export duties. The Nigeria Customs
Service is saddled with a role which is constantly sabotaged by smugglers hence the need to have credible security mechanisms for preventing smuggling and directly increasing Nigeria’s non-oil revenue. Important issues related to Nigeria Custom Service role in border security include the relevant sources of information needed for border security, inter agency cooperation towards the achievement of Nigerian border security, and adequately manned security system for border security sustainability. These aforementioned conditions seem to have culminated into the growth of extensive and complicated drug trafficking and human trafficking networks and large scale arms trade.

**Statement of the Problem**

The issue of porosity of Nigeria’s borders spanning a total land mass of 923, 768 square kilometres has remained a source of concern over the years (Asiwaju, 2011; Adeola&Fayomi, 2012; Akinyemi, 2013; Onuoha, 2013; Ewetan&Ese, 2014). The porous borders contributed and continued to encourage cross-border crimes, terrorist attacks, drug trafficking, illegal trade such as smuggling of contraband goods like shoes, frozen poultry products, duty non-paid cars and foreign parboiled rice (Akinyemi, 2013; Nwogu, 2013). This situation has also promoted the unrestrained influx of illegal migrants and cross border criminality through her Francophone neighbours, which seemed to be posing serious challenges for Law Enforcement Agencies to contend with. Nigeria shares 773 kilometres boundary with Benin Republic; 1, 690 Kilometres with the Republic of Cameroun; 1, 497 Kilometres with Niger Republic; 85 Kilometres with Chad Republic and with the Republic of Guinea at the Gulf of Guinea (Salifu; 2013). Events at these border regions are crucial and fundamental in defining the nation’s quest for security and socio-economic, cum political development (Asiwaju, 1996).

Recent events of increasing wave of insurgencies have further heightened anxiety about the efficacy of law enforcement across the country’s borders. As it stands today, no Nigerian border can be described as truly water tight (The Nation, 2017) as the less than eighteen thousand (18,000) workforce of the Nigerian Customs Services, an Agency statutorily charged with responsibilities of anti-smuggling, revenue generation and security functions along Nigeria’s land, air and sea borders are having challenges effectively policing the borders. Nigeria’s poorly patterned borders and the lack of adequate personnel cum logistics to properly man the border have had negative effect on the security of our national frontiers (Adeola&Fayomi, 2012; Akinyemi, 2013; Ewetan&Ese, 2014).

Within a short spate of eight months (precisely January 22, 2017, May 23, 2017, September, 11, 2017 and September 21, 2017) a total of 2, 671 pump action rifles illegally imported into the country were intercepted by the Nigerian Customs Service, alongside other seizures with a total value of N12.7billion (Premium Times, 2018). With government officials accepting that about 1, 479 illegal routes exist in Nigeria (National Daily, 2018) presupposing all manner of illegalities in the forms of illegal migration, drug trafficking, movement of contraband goods and its attendant implication exist at our national frontiers. Security agencies world over relies on both formal and informal information networks that could be converted to Intelligence report to boost their operations. However, in the situation where borders are porous, the need to go beyond the formal information networks and interrogate same alongside the informal information networks, towards securing the borders, becomes imperative.

Also, with the increasing need to improve upon non-oil revenue, the Nigerian Custom Service which is also saddled with the responsibilities of revenue generation has been brought under pressure. This situation is made critical with the recessive economic growth that Nigeria is experiencing, hence, the Nigerian government prefers to spend their way out of recession thereby putting pressure on revenue generating government agencies to generate more money into the coffers of the Federal government. This mission that has been partly handed to the Nigeria Custom Service may not be easily actualized considering the fact that the porosity of the Nigerian border contributes in no small measure to the loss of revenue.

**Objectives of the Study**

Consequently, this study sets to identify the inherent challenges militating against border security agency with specific reference to the Nigeria Customs service. The specific objectives therefore include:

1. To identify the major factors militating against maintaining border security by the Nigeria customs service.
2. To explore the implications of these factors for national security in Nigeria.

**Scope of the Study**

The content scope is limited the various challenges besetting maintaining border security by the Nigeria Custom Service. Thus geographically, the study is limited to Zone A Area Command in the South western Nigeria because the Zone account for about 80% of NCS revenue and it includes:
(a) Badagry/Seme Area command which is one of the busiest land borders in Nigeria in terms of volume of commercial activities across the borders, volume of people traversing the borders and revenue accruing to the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN). In Customs parlance, it is referred to as the Premier Land Border in Nigeria.

(b) Muritala Mohammed International Airport: This Command shares similar affinity/proPERTIES with Badagry/Seme Area Command of the NCS because it is referred to as the Premier Airport into the Nigerian. It also has a very high volume of commercial activities, international passengers, cargoes and generates substantial revenue into the offers’ of the FGN.

The population for the study were basically drawn using purposive sampling technique in which the head of the Customs Intelligence Unit and two (2) customs area comptrollers from Seme and Muritala International Airport respectively were selected as internal participants for the personal interview (PI) session.

**Table 1: Internal Respondents Selected (Interviewees)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positions</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head of the Customs Intelligence Unit (CIU)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area Comptrollers</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Field Survey, 2018.*

**Table 2: Showing the Number of Administered Questionnaire of the Customs Intelligence Unit (CIU) Officers Distributed on a Command – by – by Command Basis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Area Command</th>
<th>Questionnaire Administered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Apapa</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tincan Island</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Muritala Mohammed Int. Airport</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kirikiri Lighter Terminal</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lilypond</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lagos Industrial</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seme</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ogun</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oyo/Osun</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ondo/Ekiti</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kaduna/Katsina</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Sokoto/Kebbi/Zamfara</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kano/Jigawa</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Niger/Kwara/Kogi</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FCT and CIU HQ Abuja</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Anambra/Ebonyi/Enugu</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Imo/Abia</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PH1 &amp;Bayelsa</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PH2 – Onne</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Edo/Delta</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cross Rivers/AkwaIbom/CFTS</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Bauchi / Gombe</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Borno/Yobe</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adamawa/Taraba</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Benue/Plateau/Nassarawa</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total No of Zones = 4</td>
<td>Total No Area of Commands = 25</td>
<td>Total Administered = 178</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Field Survey, 2018*
Methodology

The study adopts both qualitative and quantitative approach which is based on logical and statistical analysis.

Qualitative Method: The methodology enables the researcher to get to know the social world being studied using both primary and secondary data. Primary sources include oral interview, while secondary sources adopted are in form of books, articles, journals, newsletters, publications from Nigeria Customs Services websites, as well as publications from the websites of other sister agencies. These sources of data are therefore maximized for the purpose of thorough and empirical analyses.

Quantitative Method: This deals with distribution of questionnaires to elicit useful information. Thus, in the course of this study, a total of one hundred and seventy eight (178) copies of questionnaire were distributed to officers in the Head of Customs Intelligence Unit, Nigerian Army, Nigeria Police, Nigeria Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), Immigration Service, National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control and Standard Organisation of Nigeria (SON). However, only one hundred and forty two (142, 80%) copies of the questionnaire distributed were retrieved. Their responses were analysed based on two-scale response of Yes and No.

Literature Review or Conceptual Review

Also for profound analysis, relevant literature were explored and interrogated. It was discovered that various scholars like Adekanye (1998), Babatunde (2009), Wali (2010), Asiwaju (2011), Adeola and Fayomi (2012), Onuoha (2013), Akinyemi (2013), Ewetan and Ese (2014), Odoma (2014), Okereke (2016), Adaramodu (2016) and among many others have attributed the inherent challenges within the border security operations in Nigeria and the Nigeria Customs Service specifically to issues like border porosity, inter-agency rivalry, poorly manned security system and Intelligence sharing weakness.

There is no gainsaying that the issue of border security is dominated by porosity; thus encouraging all sorts of cross border or trans-border criminal activities such as human trafficking, smuggling, drug trafficking, terrorism, arm robbery, money laundering and illicit arms trafficking. It is imperative to note that if a state cannot regulate what passes across its border, it cannot control what happens within it. It is on this basis Akinyemi (2013) argues that one of the main responsibilities of a state is the extent to which it controls its borders especially in the globalization era which has made transnational crimes easier. Consequently, the Boko-Haram attacks, killing, kidnapping and arms smuggling is not surprising, it is basically due to poor border security. No wonder, Scholars such as Stohl and Tuttle (2009), Nte (2011), Sunday, Oji and Okechukwu (2014) had further attributed the problematic issue of border insecurity in Nigeria to the diverse and vast nature of the country and her poor border management system.

Also, Adekanye (1998), Wali (2010), Odoma (2014), Okereke (2016) and Adaramodu (2016) have identified issues like unhealthy inter-agency rivalry and lack of synergy/information sharing which had sowed seeds of mutual distrusts especially in the conduct of inter-agencies operations. When rivalry occurs between agencies, it is described as ‘inter-agency’, e.g. Rivalry between the Customs and the Army or Police, the Army and Navy, Army and Air-force, or Navy and Air-force. Rivalry may also exist between Customs services (single or jointly) or the police or the other internal security agencies. When it occurs within an agency, is known as ‘intra-agency’, rivalry (Omoigui, 2006:11). Although granted unwelcomes inter-agency rivalry is a global phenomenon, this seem to be more entrenched and glaring in Nigeria where gaffers tend to place self-agrandizement ahead of national interest (Adekanye, 1998; Okereke, 2016). A prominent example is the failure of intelligence that characterised the 1st of October, 2010, bombing at the 50 years independence celebration in Abuja, resulting in the death of several persons. Adaramodu (2016) had attributed this failure to the existence of rivalry among the agencies.

Inter-agency rivalry constitutes an inherent challenge of inter-agency cooperation along border post in Nigeria. According to Omogui (2006:66), agency rivalry is a state of competition, contention or emulation that exist within and between agencies for something of perceived value to the contending interest. This could be tangible or intangible recognition and other perceived ‘benefits to self-esteem’ which can be positive (good natured) or negative (associated with injurious consequence, for instance the inability to cooperate optimally in support of national defence and security objective). Bagdanos (2004) and Adekanye (1998) contends that rivalry could be due to differing individual perspectives, new strategic concept, powerful functional and regional orientations, and technological initiatives, with each having differing force structure implications.

Musa (2013) has explained that a country border management system becomes poor and ineffective when it encompasses the problem of inadequate personnel, patrol vehicles, surveillance helicopters and equipments as well as neglect or non-functioning of intelligence services. All these no doubt constitute basic features of Nigeria’s major borders and waterways. For instance, J. M. Hazen and J. Horner (2007) while
The study adopts complex adaptive system and complexity theory as the theoretical framework for this research work. The theory is about 30 years old since inception, having being established by physicists, economists and others studying complexity at the SantaFe Institute in New Mexico, USA sometimes around 1987. Four of its major theorists are Murray Gell-Mann, John H. Holland, W. Brian Arthur and Simon A. Levin.

Complex Adaptive system (CAS) could be defined as “a regularly interacting and interdependent group of parts, items, or people that form a unified whole with the purpose of establishing a goal” (Beerel, 2009), while a complex system is a large network of relatively simple components with no central control, in which emergent complex behaviour is exhibited (Mitchell, 2006). A complex adaptive system is a group of simple parts, items, or people that interact; and collectively influence the behaviour of the larger system, behaviour of which is irreducible to parts (Brownlee, 2007). Borders can be likened to a CAS because they are more than clear delineating lines separating countries. They serve as corridors, frontiers, areas, religious and political interfaces. They influence foreign relations, reflect values and fears, and also serve as economic hubs of any nation across the world. These relationships and dynamics create the complexity that a border showcases.

The term complex adaptive system epitomizes the fact that a perfect understanding of the individual parts does not automatically convey a perfect understanding of the whole systems behaviour. Mention must however be made that CAS is not a single theory as it encompasses more than one theoretical framework, seeking the answers to some fundamental questions about, living, biological, industrial, economic, social and political systems. Complex adaptive systems are characterized by a high degree of adaptive capacity, giving them resilience in the face of perturbation.

Complex adaptive systems provide feedback loops which are quite important in analysis between agents. This is quite important in classifying borders as CAS in view of the capabilities to continuously give feedbacks. CAS are quite critical to comprehending the dynamics of interdependencies, relationship, and identification of effective performance measures that Borders portends. Issues of immigration, trade, crime, terrorism, drug trafficking, drug trafficking and enforcement behaviours are created and reinforced by system dynamics that CAS offers. What, where, when and how do social, economic, political, cultural or religious factors affect borders? How do these behaviours change overtime and space? These questions reflect system thinking and such answers can be used in developing patterns which makes sense. Moreover, fluctuations, changes and responses from the Borders as a system can be understood not to come from mechanistic processes, but from learned human behaviors and individual differences of border threats, identities, perceived fairness to policies, quality of information and desired security levels.
In summary, Complex Adaptive Systems and complexity theory is still at an emerging stage, however, this tools and concepts continue to develop rapidly and there is optimism over its ability to provide new insights into the fundamental questions facing humanity especially with regard to border security challenges.

Discussion of Findings

The following findings are based on the stipulated objectives of the study. Thus, both qualitative and quantitative methods in form of oral interviews, questionnaire, books, journal articles, magazines, and newspapers were used. For the purpose of demystification, the findings will be examined under two major subheadings, namely: Major challenges besetting border security operations of the NCS; and its Implications for maintaining national security in Nigeria.

Major Challenges Besetting Border Security Operations of the NCS

In the course of the research, it was discovered through oral interviews (as indicated in table 1 and table 2 below) that the major challenges militating against maintaining border security in the Nigeria Customs Service are: Lack of border demarcation between Nigeria and neighbouring countries, Nigerian government abandonment of border communities, threats of Boko Haram, inadequate resources and political interference.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Porosity of border</td>
<td>121(85.2%)</td>
<td>21(14.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate Manpower</td>
<td>68(47.9%)</td>
<td>74(52.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate Equipment</td>
<td>88(62%)</td>
<td>54(38%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Intelligence</td>
<td>77(54.2%)</td>
<td>65(45.8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The challenges mostly faced by the Nigeria Customs Service as indicated in table 3 and figure 1 were: porosity of the border (n= 121, 85.2 per cent), inadequate equipment (n= 88, 62 per cent). The qualitative aspect of the study also corroborates these by pointing out lack of border demarcation between Nigeria and neighbouring countries, and inadequate resources as bane of maintaining border security by the Nigeria Customs Service.

The study has identified porosity of the border as the most palpable factor militating against maintaining a secure border by the Nigeria customs service. Probably this was why the Nigerian Federal Government sometimes in 2013 contemplated entering into private public partnership for border patrol across the Nigerian land borders (Asiwaju, 2013). This policy contemplation was to embark on a systematic fencing – in of Nigeria vis-à-vis her neighbours, notably, Benin and Niger in ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States), and Cameroun and Chad in ECCAS (Economic Community of Central African States), two of African Union’s five principal pillar Regional Economic Communities. This action was a compelling reminder of the ambitious effort of the FGN in 2001 for a systematic fencing of Nigeria’s land borders of over four thousand (4000) Kilometers, approximately 1000km with Benin; roughly 1500km with Niger; almost 100 with Chad; and about 2000 with Cameroun. The argument was that, had all the preceding Federal Administration considered the option earlier, the fencing and walling option would have been accomplished and all cross border security challenges would have become a forgotten issue. However, this is a fundamental mismatch with the inherently social structural nature of cross – border flows and exchange which is demonstrated by the complex adaptive system theorists, to which borders has been categorized as complex adaptive systems by the researcher, because they collectively influence the behaviour of the larger system, however, such behaviour are irreducible to parts (Brownlee, 2007). As a result, treating the behaviour of its parts, does not necessarily solve the problem. Consequently, fencing the entire landscape bordering the country in my own view, will not in any way solve the problem at hand. Indeed, this project may likely end up creating fresh problems of greater magnitude and intensity than what is being experienced around the borders.

The question now remains, how can the problem of porosity of the Nigerian Borders identified as the most palpable factor militating agent border security, be addressed? In my view, I think addressing this problem lies in imbibing the tenets of complex adaptive system (CAS) and complexity theory. CAS are quite critical to comprehending the dynamics of interdependencies, relationship, and identification of effective performance
measures that Borders portends. Border Agencies should be assertive in enforcing the fiscal policies of government and at the same time cooperative and collaborating with the stakeholders around the border areas via a sustainable border – community relationship. As was noted in my literature review, a nation state that cannot regulate what passes its border, cannot equally control what happens within it. Rather than completely sealing or walling off the nations’ borders, it is better to reposition the Nigerian Customs Service via provision of the requisite tools by the Federal Government, to enable the Service perform its statutory functions in line with international best practices. It was on this basis that Sagir (2013) argues that the vastness of the nation’s borders in the face of challenges brings to fore the need for a rethink on the management and security of the Nigeria’s borders and seaports without which an effective fight against insurgency, arms trafficking and proliferation will remain an optical illusion. He argues further that the need for innovative technology and sound intelligence platforms for border agencies remains a panacea to this problem.

Indeed, the findings of this study are to the benefit of society considering the fact that border security is very key to the development of most countries economically, socially, politically and in all other ramifications. As mentioned earlier, a country that cannot control what passes through her borders cannot equally control what goes on within the country. Similarly, the study of border security challenges will also benefit government as regards knowing the strength and weakness inherent in the security operations of the NCS. The greater demand for information exchange and sharing by law enforcement agencies especially the NCS justifies the need for more secured borders which is targeted at warding off terrorism influx from the borders/neighbouring countries, drug trafficking, illegal migration, human trafficking and most importantly, smuggling and revenue leakages through the nations’ borders. Consequently, applying the recommendations proffered from the findings of this study, will ultimately result in stronger, more secured and more effective borders for the nation at large. Moreover, the need to replicate the study through a research on a different agency of government, global environment or a different country is also feasible. This only requires domesticating the methodology to suit the social milieu in question.

Implications for National Security

Odoma Samuel (2014) has examined superiority struggles and inter agency feud as a factor of border insecurity in Nigeria. He argues that the problem of violence in Nigeria has become more worrisome as the security operatives whose duty it is to maintain peace, detect and suppress crimes have themselves become engulfed in violent conflicts, thereby giving criminals opportunity to unleash terror on the citizenry with impunity. Other consequences include loss of confidence and respect of the citizenry as well as lack of civil cooperation that these forces need to succeed in crime control.

More so, the vastness of Nigeria’s borders further instigates many challenges besetting border security in Nigeria, which (as could be observed from the foregoing arguments) could be attributed to many factors. One of the prominent issue is poor border management. Border management, according to Olanrewaju (2015), means the procedures applied to persons and objects crossing the border to ensure that they comply with laws. It also means how different agencies are organized and how they fit into a unified concept of border management. Finally, it means how the physical infrastructure that accommodates the agencies is designed and managed. Thus, effective border management means ensuring that; one, everyone and everything that crosses the border is compliant with the laws, regulations, and procedures of the country; two, users are encourage to comply; and three, offenders are identified and stopped. These three things must be done without disrupting legitimate trade or causing unacceptable queues, delays at the border, or bottlenecks in the adjacent country (or within the country itself) (Olanrewaju, 2015).

Similarly, Cavelty and Mauer (2009) have explained that the new spectrum of threats especially due to globalisation is dominated by three interrelated characteristics, namely: complexity, uncertainty and a diminishing impact of geographical space. According to them, “increased complexity increases uncertainty. Increased uncertainty increases the demand for information” (Cavelty and Mauer, 2009:126). As the importance of national borders become challenged and the compression of space and time opens opportunities and vulnerabilities for the global security order, security actors are challenged to evolve to remain relevant to this new global security paradigm. Recognising that modern threats are frequently not geographically bounded, Gijs de Vries, the former EU Counter-terrorism Coordinator, noted that, in order to combat this threat, “national agencies must work across borders to be effective” (Melady and Hilsher, 2008:13).

Conclusion

By and large, the porosity of Nigeria borders and the transnational nature of security threats in the modern climate considerably necessitate the need for changes in the way that the NCS operate. By implication, definitions of threats and vulnerabilities must determine the agenda of the Nigeria Customs Service. In other words, the nature of transnational security threats, such as terrorism, mercenaries, small arms proliferation, drug
smuggling and organised crime, as well as border porosity means that the security risk operates in and manifests from various locations despite national boundaries involving actors of various nationalities. Nigeria Customs officers therefore must have it in mind that they are monitoring threats to their national security interests and homelands that are far more diverse, complex, interconnected and dynamic than ever before (George, 2007). This further suggests that the individual actions of single government or customs service may prove ineffective in detecting, deterring or preventing insecurity except our security system sufficiently blend in with the dynamic nature of these threats.

**Recommendations**

In spite of the numerous challenges of border security examined in this study, there are solutions through cogent suggestions and recommendations which are as follows:

- The NCS should be given adequate material and human resources in order to cope with the difficult Nigerian terrain and vastness. This will further enhance the capabilities of the NCS to perform its statutory roles. Aside the provision of patrol vehicles, arms and ammunition and enhanced welfare for the officers and men, other essential working tools like scanners and non-intrusive devices for cargo examination which have since broken down at the nations’ ports should be provided as a matter of necessity
- Effective utilization or application of basic or essential elements of security, which include timely procurement of security intelligence, prompt identification of threats to both internal and national security with its attendant pro-active security arrangement, threat assessment, statement of aims/objectives of national security objectives and programmes’ planning to be in line with the objectives of national security.
- Security liaison, and networking with other sister security departments towards achieving the national security objectives. This is equally important so as to fill intelligence gaps, minimize costs of intelligence collection, and establish diplomatic relations among states.
- Security agencies must always advise government based on the situation on ground for the overall improvement of security measures and adequate funding.
- Adequate training, incentives and equipment for the grooming of efficient and less compromising custom and most active intelligence Service.

**References**


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