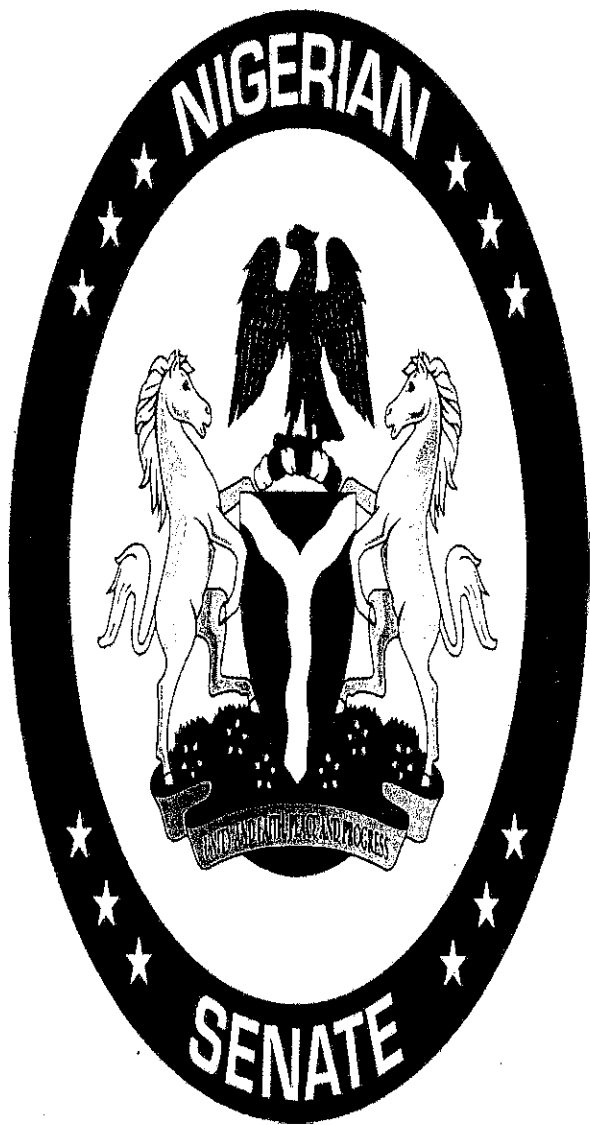


**AD-HOC COMMITTEE ON THE REVIEW OF THE
CURRENT SECURITY INFRASTRUCTURE IN
NIGERIA.**



Report of the Committee's Visit to Benue State

12th to 14th January, 2018

Ad-hoc Committee on the Review of the Current Security Infrastructure in Nigeria

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1.0 Introduction.

The Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria at its sittings on the 22nd, 23rd November 2017, debated three motions/matters of urgent public importance on the apparent collapse of the nation's security architecture and infrastructure, and subsequently constituted an Ad-Hoc Committee to review the same in consultation with the Security Agencies, and to suggest appropriate way forward as well as the short and long term solution to the identified problems.

2.0 Membership of the Ad-hoc Committee.

The Senate President named the following Distinguished Senators as Chairman and Members of the Ad-hoc Committee;

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|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Senator Ahmad I. Lawan | -Senate Leader/Chairman |
| 2. Senator Yahaya A. Abdullahi | -Member |
| 3. Senator Emmanuel Paulker | -Member |
| 4. Senator Joshua M. Lidani | -Member |
| 5. Senator Abubakar Kyari | -Member |
| 6. Senator Barnabas A.I. Gemade | -Member |
| 7. Senator Abdullahi Adamu | -Member |
| 8. Senator Olusola Adeyeye | -Member |

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------|
| 9. Senator Biodun Olujimi | -Member |
| 10. Senator Samuel O. Egwu | -Member |
| 11. Senator Ehinnaya Abaribe | -Member |
| 12. Senator Rose O. Oko | -Member |
| 13. Senator Magnus Abe | -Member |

Secretariat:

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| Dr. Prince Yomi Omogbehin | -Clerk |
| Hassan Ibrahim | -Committee Staff |
| Fredrick Odey | -Committee Staff |

3.0 Inauguration of the Committee

The committee was formally inaugurated by the Senate President on Thursday, 30th November, 2017. Thereafter, the Senate went on recess.

4.0 Herdsmen/Farmers clashes in villages and communities of Benue State

Following the unfortunate and unacceptable event that occurred in Benue State between Sunday, 31st December, 2017 and Tuesday, 2nd January, 2018, the Committee was directed by the Senate President to resume immediately and undertake an assessment visit, and commiserate with the Government and the people of Benue state and report the situation to Senate in plenary on Tuesday, 16th January, 2018.

The Committee is also to interact with various stakeholders with a view to identifying the immediate and remote causes

of the crisis and make recommendation to the Senate for further legislative actions. On this particular assignment the Committee co-opted Distinguished Senator George Akume and Distinguished Senator Abu Ibrahim who made Some critical contributions, being Chairmen of Senate Committees on the Army and Police, respectively.

The Committee arrived Makurdi on Friday, 12th January, 2018 and undertook the following interactions.

4.1 Courtesy visit to the Tor Tiv, Chairman of Benue State Council of Traditional rulers

The Committee paid a courtesy call on the Chairman of Benue State Council of Traditional rulers, His Majesty, Professor James Ayaatse, the Tor Tiv to condole him over the loss of lives and properties during and after the unfortunate incident.

The leader of the delegation and Chairman of the Ad-hoc Committee, Senator Ahmad I. Lawan, stated the mission of the Committee in the State. He emphasized that the most important function of the Government is to ensure the security of lives and citizens. It is therefore the responsibility of the Senate as a responsible arm of Government to ensure that the lives and properties of all Nigerians are protected and its people live in peace and harmony with one another.

He assured the Tor Tiv and his council of chiefs that the Senate will always stand by the people. The leader noted that the crisis between farmers and herdsmen has become a recurring and regrettable phenomenon all over the country and it is the responsibility of the Senate to ensure that appropriate executive and legislative action are put in place to promote safety and security for all the communities in Benue state and Nigeria as a whole. He pointed out that even though the Committee has a much wider mandate to ensure and suggest ways and means of resolving the identified short comings of the national security establishment, the Senate cannot stand by and watch the carnage and mayhem that are visited on the people and communities of Benue State, in silence.

It is in this spirit that the leadership of the Senate directed the Committee to visit His Majesty and his council to commiserate with them and the people over the loss of lives and properties, and obtain information on the event and its aftermath.

In his response, the Tor Tiv and Chairman of Benue State Council of Traditional rulers, His Majesty, Professor James Ayatse, expressed his gratitude to the Senate and its leadership over its concern, empathy and prompt action on this unfortunate incident.

He informed the Committee that so far 73 bodies have been recovered and given mass burial the day before the Senators'

visit. He indicated that since 2011 they have witnessed 47 similar attacks against various communities in the State and nothing had been done to bring the attackers to book. This apparent non-challant attitude of the government has pushed the people to the wall. In spite of all these, the traditional leadership had been preaching peace to the people, urging them not to take laws into their hands.

He expressed hopes that the visit to the State by the Senate Committee will be a watershed that will mark the beginning of the change of the government's attitude towards these serial attacks in Benue and elsewhere.

He pleaded with the Committee to note that there have been so many attacks previously before the enactment of Anti-grazing law. The law itself is not the issue, it is only a reaction of the people against impunity and helplessness.

He concluded that Government should do all within its powers to find lasting solutions to this recurring menace.

4.2 Courtesy visit to His Excellency, The Governor of Benue State

The Committee paid a condolence visit to the Governor, His Excellency, Dr. Samuel Ortom where the leader of the delegation expressed the Senate's concern over the frequent invasions and

destruction of houses, farms and farm products by rampaging herdsmen. He further commiserated with the Government and people of Benue State and informed the Governor of the mission of the Committee to the State.

In his brief, His Excellency, the Governor of Benue State expressed his appreciations to the delegation of the Senate to the State and stated that the State had experienced 47 similar attacks since 2011. He noted that the most recent attack that occurred between 31st December, 2017 and 2nd January, 2018 claimed about 100 lives and destroyed properties whose value is yet to be ascertained.

He noted that before these recent attacks the State Government wrote Mr. President, the Inspector General of Police and other security agencies of Federal Government notifying them of the impending attack but the Federal Government and the agencies failed to act on time.

The Governor pleaded with the National Assembly to make legislation that will safe guard the citizens from the frequent attacks by herdsmen and promote peaceful coexistence between farmers and cattle rearers.

He explained that the feud between farmers and herdsmen has deteriorated due to the increased tension in the rural communities and highlighted some remote causes of the crises as follows;

- i. Conflict over farming and grazing rights of different communities
- ii. Non prosecution of perpetrators of violence and non-compensation of the victims encouraged impunity and reprisal attacks,

- iii. Non-challant disposition of some security agencies has alienated them from the people to the point that certain crimes and criminals are not reported,
- iv. Mass unemployment of the state's youthful population,
- v. Lack of proper administration and enforcement of existing ECOWAS protocol regarding the free movement of persons and livestock across national borders. This resulted in the infiltration of herdsmen and proliferation of weapons of high caliber into the country through its porous borders,
- vi. Non-compliance with the State Anti-Grazing law by the herdsmen,
- vii. Inability of the Federal Government to station permanent security units in the affected communities.

The Governor further insisted on the constitutionality of Anti-grazing law, because the State Assembly has legitimate right to make laws for good governance of the state.

He further noted that it is the Federal Government's responsibility to enforce all the legitimate laws made by National and State Assemblies.

He noted that it is unfortunate that since 2011 to the present, not a single person has been prosecuted. Under the current law the state made provisions for interested persons to apply for ranching permit. But nobody applied. According to the Governor, the attackers are known. The security agencies should do their duty and apprehend them.

4.3 Meeting with Traditional Rulers and Chairmen from Logo and Guma Local Government Councils and Visit to IDP Camp.

The interactive session was attended by all the 1st class, 2nd class and 3rd class chiefs as well as Chairmen of Logo and Guma Local Government Areas. The participants narrated the gory event and their frustration that none of the alleged perpetrators has been arrested. People have been killed , houses burnt, farm products destroyed that has resulted in uprooting the local population who are now residing in the IDP camps, one of which the Committee visited.

The people pleaded for greater security and the presence of security personnel in their communities to enable them continue to live their normal lives free from fear of future invasions and violence.

They opined that failure to provide them with security will deter them from going back to their communities given the fact that a lot of them had lost their farm products and valuables. Effort should be made to ensure that they relocate back to their communities and in a position to prepare for the next rainy season.

4.4 Meeting with the Hon. Speaker, Benue State House of Assembly, the Commissiner of Police, Director, State Security Services, Brig.Gen. incharge of Special Forces Brigade with Hqtrs in Makurdi.

The Committee interacted with the heads of security agencies in Benue State and confirmed most of the renditions of the event that was received from earlier interactions. It is generally indicated that the security agents always come into the conflict most of the time after the events have taken place. Both the police and the state security services noted that they had prior to the event organized various stakeholders' fora in order to secure the trust of the leaders of the various communities in their bid to keep the peace, but somehow they always get out of hand. They also alleged that some attacks are sponsored by people whose identity they could not immediately determine, which indicates their weakness in deployment and of intelligence.

This indicates that the presence of security forces is very thin on the ground and the military had been overstretched by being used in a fire brigade manner to quench violence and hostilities in so many locations at the same time around the nation. For example, the special forces brigade alone operates in twelve locations but their successes were short lived because hostilities resume immediately the military withdraws.

5.0 Findings/Observations of the Committee:

After analysing the interactions, responses and physical observation in the IDP camp, the Committee observes as follows:

1. That the violence and mayhem in Benue is a manifestation of a larger national security crisis that if not attended to could result in detracting the unity and cohesion of the nation by destroying its rural economy and the means of the people's livelihood.
2. The crisis which has its origin in competition for access to natural resources such as land, water and pasture has been aggravated and fuelled by proliferation and massive acquisition of fire arms and infiltration of trained armed bandits across international and national borders in the West African Sub-region.
3. It is very clear from our interaction that some faceless people are sponsoring and harbouring the well trained foreign mercenary elements and using them to unleash violence and criminality in Nigeria's rural space. These elements and their domestic acolytes of various ethnic nationalities could also be largely responsible for kidnappings, abductions, armed robberies and unresolved murders.

4. That what happened in Benue State could happen in any part of the Country. This is borne out of the fact that similar incidences of violence have already engulfed neighbouring States such as Taraba, Nasarawa, Kaduna, Niger, Adamawa, etc.
5. Failure to arrest and prosecute the perpetrators of these gruesome acts could play into the hands of those ethnic entrepreneurs whose aim is to break the nation into ethnic principalities. It is deepening the country's ethno-religious faultlines by entrenching the perception of the conflict in ethno-religious dimensions.
6. The crisis has also created a regime of impunity thereby enticing innocent rural youth into criminality because of its perception as a safe and lucrative undertaking.
7. The Committee observed that there have been various reports of panels and committees over the years whose recommendations were never implemented. These contributed to the failure of Government to nip the problem in the bud until it attained the present disastrous dimension.
8. The Committee also observed a very serious decline in trust and cooperation between citizens and security forces for fear of incrimination and exploitation. Hence people do not volunteer any intelligence to security forces. More so, the organic linkage in intelligence gathering between security

forces, traditional leaders and institutions seems to have broken down.

9. In most of the rural communities in Benue State and elsewhere, the presence of security forces is very thin on the ground or completely absent. In the few places where they are deployed, they are undermanned and underequipped and easily over run by better trained and equipped militia and foreign marauding herdsmen.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION OF THE COMMITTEE

1. The Senate condemns in the strongest possible terms the wanton criminal attacks that claimed the lives of more than 73 innocent citizen in Guma and Logo Local Government Area of Benue State.
2. The Senate urges the security and intelligence agencies to leave no stone unturned in apprehending the perpetrators and the sponsors of these heinous crimes and similar crimes in Zamfara, Kaduna, Plateau, Taraba, Adamawa, Edo, Enugu and elsewhere, so that they are brought before the law to answer for their crimes. The days of indifference complacency, negligence and impunity must come to an end.
3. The Federal Government should re-examine, revamp and re-invent the nation's security architecture and infrastructure in order to ensure that no community or entity is left unsecured and unsafe.

4. The Senate should convene as a matter of utmost urgency a national security summit to examine the recurring violence and mayhem visited on our rural communities before they become an existential threat to the our national cohesion and national survival.
5. The Federal Government should examine the deployment of security personnel in our rural communities and borders to ensure that no one gets in or out of the country without proper documentation and regular surveillance.
6. The Federal Government should ensure full compliance with the letter and spirit of the ECOWAS protocol on free movement of persons, cattle and goods with a view to ensuring that it is administered strictly to preserve the interests, safety and security of Nigeria and its people.
7. In view of the emergence of several failed States and conflict zone around our borders and in the West African sub region, the Federal Government should sponsor and convene an international conference on the proliferation of weapons in Nigeria. The ways and means of stopping the proliferation, and ridding our communities of existing arms should also be proffered.
8. The Federal Government should immediately re-examine the current deployment of security forces, particularly the Police, DSS and Civil Defence Corp, etc. in order to strengthen their presence in the rural areas, starting from the

most conflict prone areas around Niger, Benue, Nasarawa, Taraba, Adamawa axis, Zamfara, Kaduna and in the entire North central zone.

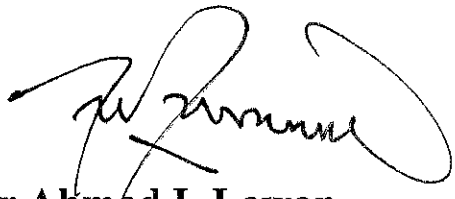
9. The Federal Government should beef up and re-strategize its deployment of security intelligence capabilities with a view to obtaining actionable intelligence about impending attacks and plots in order to forestall and prevent the recurrence of rural violence and inter-ethnic conflagrations.

10. The Federal and Benue State Government should ensure that all those living in IDP camps are properly catered for and the burnt infrastructure in their communities are properly rebuilt to enable the people return and resume their normal lives.

11. The Government through the Ministry of Agriculture should as a matter of urgency convene a special National Council on Agriculture meeting to deliberate on the development and modernization of Nigeria's livestock and dairy industry.

7.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Committee commiserates with Mr. President, the Government and people of Benue State, particularly the families and relations of all those who lost their lives. The Committee also prays for the quick recovery of all those who are injured. May the souls of the departed rest in peace. The Committee is grateful to the Senate for the opportunity to serve the Senate and the nation in this capacity.



Senator Ahmad I. Lawan
Senate Leader/Chairman



Dr. Prince Yomi Omogbehin
Clerk

SIGNATURE PAGE

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| 1. Senator Ahmad I. Lawan | - Chairman |
| 2. Senator Yahaya A. Abdullahi | -Member |
| 3. Senator Emmanuel Paulker | -Member |
| 4. Senator Joshua M. Lidani | -Member |
| 5. Senator Abubakar Kyari | -Member |
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| 9. Senator Biodun Olujimi | -Member |
| 10. Senator Samuel O. Egwu | -Member |
| 11. Senator Ehinnaya Abaribe | -Member |
| 12. Senator Rose O. Oko | -Member |
| 13. Senator Magnus Abe | -Member |

Coopted for the Benue Assignment:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| 14. Senator George Akume | - Member |
| 15. Senator Abu Ibrahim | - Member |
| 16. Dr. Prince Yomi Omogbehin | -Clerk |

Handwritten signatures corresponding to the list of members and coopted members. The signatures are written in black ink on a white background. Some signatures are more legible than others, but they generally correspond to the names listed in the table.