

Herdsmen-Farmers Imbroglia and Nigeria State: Periscoping Security Implications in their Migration to South-East

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Abstract

The Fulani herdsmen migration from the northern region of the Nigeria to other regions like, the south-east had created a mix feeling among the people of the region because of the security implication of this migration, this practice sometimes lead to the grazing of their cattle on people's farm lands and this in effect leads to the destruction of the farmers crops as well as attacking the farmers and the host community. This paper interrogated Herdsmen migration to South-East, its security implications and possible solution. Conflict Theory was adopted for the paper as its theoretical framework of analysis, while the method for data

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collection was anchored on secondary sources like; books, newspapers, journal articles, and internet source materials, among others. The reach findings on the reasons for the herdsmen migration to south-East implicated huge Economic loses and attacks from the Boko Haram insurgency on the herders, to avoid high tax payment on the cattle, to set their cattle free from being attacked by harmful insects, to be free from frequent droughts, desertification, rural banditry and cattle rustling, among others. These has given birth to series of attacks, killing, destruction of farmers crops, by the herdsmen against the rural farmers and the host communities in the south-east. Based on that, the paper suggests ranching as a solution, as it is a global best world practice. Moreover, cattle rearing are a private business. Thus, Government should institute adequate security outfit and Support Community based Conflict Resolution body in the region, among others.

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1.Introduction

The Fulani pastoralist migrate to northern Nigeria from the Senegambia region to northern parts of Nigeria and by extension to other regions in the country like the south-east in search of grasses to feed their cattle. This has resulted in feeding the cattle on people's farm land and on crops and this has given birth to crisis and conflict between the herdsmen, farmers and the host community. Meanwhile, this has been posing a big security threat to lives and property of the people in the south-east. On that note, the act has been interpreted as an agenda or move to Islamize the region with the pretense that they are in search of grasses to feed their cattle. For instance, between January 2016 and 2019, there was over 10,000 estimated deaths case from the herdsmen attacks, which cut across the South-East to other zones. Here, people expected the governors from the South-east and other affected areas to come out with a strong condemnation of the herdsmen carnage and put a stop to such menace. Though, it is the responsibility of the South-East Government to intervene and find a solution to the problem between the herdsmen and the farmers. It is against this back drop this paper aims to investigate the reasons behind the herdsmen migration to south-east, its security implication on the farmers and the host community, and the possible solution. This brings us to the statement of the problem of this paper which gears toward looking at the herdsmen migration to south-east which has been posing a serious security threat to people's lives and property in the south-east

1.1 Statement of the problem

The herdsmen migration to south-east has been interpreted by the people of the south-east as an agenda to Islamize the region while the herders said they migrates to south-east for so many reasons like to avoid huge Economic loses and attacks from the Boko Haram insurgency, to avoid high tax payment on the cattle, to set their cattle free from being attacked by harmful insects, to be free from frequent droughts, desertification, rural banditry and cattle rustling, and most importantly to search for grasses to feed their cattle. Contrarily, the exercise has led to the destruction of farmer's crops, attacking and killing the farmers and the host as well as raping their women, etc. The question now is; if it is true that

they are in search of grasses. ‘Why do they always carry dangerous arms and ammunition? ‘why do they attacks, kill, rape and burnt down people’s houses and which has generated a serious conflict between the herdsmen, the host communities and rural farmers without the government intervention to settle the issue, instead the government security personnel who are supposed to protect the innocent farmers and the host communities are indirectly intervening on the side of the herdsmen and their cattle. Consequently, this gave rise to the research questions of this paper.

1.2 Research Questions

- What are the reasons for the herdsmen migration to south-east?
- What could be reasons for the herdsmen attacks on the farmers and their host communities in the south-east?

This now gives birth to the objectives of this paper.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

This paper has both broad and specific objectives. The broad objective of this paper examines the Security implication on herdsmen migration to south-east and its possible solution. While the specific objectives of this paper are to find out reasons behind the herdsmen migration to south-east, causes of the conflicts between the farmers/host community, and the herdsmen in the south-east, its security implication and the possible solutions to that.

3. Methodology

3.1 Methods of Data Collection

In this paper we adopted the documentary method of data collection which is qualitative in nature.

According to Legee and Francis (1974):

The quality of data is extricable tied to methods and techniques used for generating data. As a model used in social sciences and other related discipline, qualitative research method is very attractive in that it involves collecting information in depth but from a relatively small number of cases

Burnham et al (2004) noted that:

Analytic induction is often used by qualitative researchers in their efforts to generalize about social behavior. Here, concepts are developed intuitively from the data, and then defined, refined and their implications deduced from the data

On that note, data generated for this paper was collected from secondary sources which anchored on documentary method used to obtain in-depth information and concept clarification so as to facilitate instrument designed; Nwabugwu, (2006) observed that documentary method is adopted because it is useful when the task is to glean, illuminate, interpret and extract valuable information to draw inference from the available evidence so as to reach a conclusion; hence, it is well-suited for contextual analysis because it is able to gain access to institutional/organizational issues and structure and a way of resolving them; again, it can lead to the discovery of the unexpected phenomenon. The adoption of this method of data collection now becomes imperative since the paper made use of data generated from secondary sources which is a set of data gathered or authored by another person, usually data from the available data, achieves, either in the form of document or survey results and code books (Ikeagwu, 1998; Asika, 2006). Advantages of secondary sources of data include that of economy and, the information of this sort is collected periodically, thereby making the establishment of trend over time possible. Most importantly is the obvious fact that the gathering of information from such sources does not require the co-operation of the individual about whom information is being sought. In this regard, the paper utilize secondary sources of data such as textbooks, journal articles, magazines,

conference/seminar papers and newspapers, internet material and other written works. Besides, the researcher has

2. Conceptual clarification

Conceptually, Herdsmen according to Iro (2014) are Fulani people whose occupation is to raise livestock and to breed them. The Herdsmen as revealed by Iro (2014), resides in the Sahel but due to the recent changes in climate, some of them moved towards savanna area. Though they are found in Nigeria, Niger, Senegal, Guinea Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, Benin, Cote d' Voire and Cameroon, among others.

South-East

South-East is the name used to refer to the five states in the former east central state otherwise called eastern region. The people that make up the five states called Igbo people and they are one of the famous people in Africa and their homeland is in the south-east region. They constitute the Igbo speaking people of the present five states in the zone, namely, Abia, Anambra, Enugu, Ebonyi and Imo. The Igbo territory is surrounded by the Ogoni, Idoma and Igala people in its northern side of the land and Ibibio people by the Eastern side, in the South by the Ijaw, and in the West, by the Edo.

Grazing or grazing land

Grazing or grazing land refers to a land on which animals are grazed. It is called grazing land because grasses are allowed to grow there for animal feeding mainly, cows, goats, and sheep, among others.

Ranching

The name Ranching refers to a large farm set aside for breeding animals of all kinds like cows, goats, and sheep, among others. Ranching is a large land set aside for breeding young and old animals for human consumption.

Government

The word government refers to a group of people who were either elected, or selected by their people or by themselves to control the affairs of the state. Government most times, consists of the legislature, the executive and the judiciary. It can be used to refer to the group of people with the authority to govern a country or state; thus, they can be called civilian or military government, among others

2.1 Theoretical Framework of Analysis

Conflict Theory was used as a theoretical framework for this paper since the paper was on herdsmen - farmers' disengagement in the South-East. Conflict Theory according to Karl Marx explained how states involve in a conflict because of competition over limited resources; thus, there is always a struggle between the rich and the poor, the cow owners/the herdsmen and the farmers. Marx noted that, society is in a state of perpetual conflict because of competition for limited resources. The Theory examines the herdsmen menace as it affects the local farmers in the South-East. Marx is not saying that conflict is good or bad; rather it is an unavoidable aspect of human nature which explains why things are the way they are. This Theory can also be used for wars, violence and, revolutions, etc. The implication of this theory is that there is always a struggle between the herdsmen and farmers. Conflict is necessary and unavoidable; thus, conflict prevention becomes a test of good leadership, as everyone in the country today is asking our leaders to intervene over the incessant killing of farmers by the herdsmen. There is a time that conflicts between states have much to do with the unequal and unjust socio-economic, political, and allied structures of the international system, at such situation the fundamental factors are sowed and allowed to germinate to its escalation, at this stage, leaders were said to be unable to intervene and arrest the situation due to leadership bad style and ineffective conflict management system, as we can see in the case of herdsmen carnage in the Nigeria state. Here, our leaders pretend not to know what to do, instead to find a solution to the evil activities of the herdsmen they only take actions on newspapers and this shows leadership ineffectiveness. Relating this theory to this paper, we saw how the herdsmen and farmers issues in the south -East is a talk of the time, an issue that needs to be resolved through the intervention of the Federal and state government and other well-meaning/high powered people in the country. Karl Marx in his theory states that, "conflict is inevitable and unavoidable as long as human beings live together" to see that the misunderstanding that always arises

between the herdsmen and farmers are settled, the Federal Government in conjunction with the then Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Audu Ogbe, in August 2019 came up with the idea of ranching, grazing and cattle colony/RUGA (Rural Grazing Area) to be established in the thirty six state of the federation, contrarily the people of the south- east sees the idea of cattle colony/RUGA in all the states of the Federation as an agenda or a move to Islamize the entire country. to the people of the south –east, the idea will even do more harm to the host community and farmers than good. As Marx remarked, conflict is inevitable and unavoidable as long as human beings exist and stays together. In this regard, the theoretical framework of analysis of this paper now gave rise to reasons for the Herdsmen migration to South -East and its Security implication.

Reasons behind the Herdsmen Migration to South East

3. Discussion of the findings

Our finding on the reasons for the herdsmen migration to South-East implicated the following;

- **poverty, inequality, and religious extremism**

Going by our finding, Conflicts and crisis in the northern part of the country according to Iro, (2014) had led to the migration of the herdsmen to South-East. These conflicts were linked to poverty, inequality, and religious extremism among others. As opined by Alhaji Mafandin Danburam, the Miyitti Allah Cattle Breeders Association (MACBAND), their members have lost over one million cattle to the Boko Haram Insurgency in addition to the economic losses and insecurity; hence, this have compelled herders to move to South-East and other regions for dare life, to safe guard their cattle, to avoid tax collectors, harmful insects, hostile weather, social environment and to maximize the availability of food resources for the cattle, and to reduce excessive grazing, (Iro, 2014).

- **Climate Change, (Frequent Droughts and Desertification)**

Climate Change, Frequent Droughts and Desertification has been implicated as aone of the reasons behind the herdsmen migration to South East, Akinmwotu; (2018) opined that in Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Jigawa, Kanu, Katsina, Kebbi, sokoto, Yobe and Zamfara states, estimates suggest that 50% to 75% of the land area becomes desert like due to climate change and these changes do affect agriculture and human live, thereby forcing pastoralists to migrate to South-East in search of productive land for grasses to feed their cattle.

- **Environmental degradation and Crisis**

Soil degradation, and desertification, is given as one of the reasons for herder’s migration to South-East; hence, climate changes do not cause conflict but change the herder’s migration pattern, for instance, Northern region is vulnerable to climate change and it has experience less farmers-herders conflict (Akinwotu; 2018)

- **The Land Use Act of 1976**

Land Use Act according to Okillo, (2014). is one of the reasons behind herdsmen migration to south East, this is because of the implementation of the land use act of 1976 which authorize states and the Federal Government to lease land out, and to give indigenes the right to apply for certificate of occupancy to enable them claim ownership of their ancestral Lands that are been taken over by the herdsmen for grazing their cattle (Okillo, 2014). This has placed the pastorals in a tight situation and difficulty because; they did not apply for such certificate for their grazing routes. Abbas (2014) opined that between 1996 and 2006 about 121 people lost their lives in Bauchi and Gombe states as a result of a misunderstanding between pastoralists and farmers. Though, Nigeria is known for oil and gas production, yet agriculture employs about 70% of its labor force, while livestock represents about 20% to 30% of the total agricultural production while about 6% to 8% is overall Gross Domestic (GDP) Product (Abbess (2014).

- **Loss of grazing reserves**

Here, it has been noticed that most of the grazing reserves established by the northern regional government in the 1960s, have been lost, and is just about 114 that were formally documented; thus, the association's demand for farm land were overrun by urban and other infrastructure, or appropriated by private commercial interests. With the northern region's division into 19 states, reserves straddling two or more states jurisdictions had lost collective management. Here, the communicative effect has been to reduce the availability of designed grazing reserves, forcing herders to migrate to South-East and some other area in search of grazing pasture to feed their cattle, and this has created a room for crisis and conflict in the South-East; hence, the herdsmen activities possess a big threat to the lives and property of the people therein.

- **Rural banditry and cattle rustling**

Rural banditry is one of the major factors that are driving herders to South-East areas. Meanwhile, cattle theft reportedly has been a major source of funding for the Boko Haram in the North-East. It was reported in 2013 that more than 64,750 cattle were stolen, while about 2991 herders were killed in some states across the North-Central zone. From 2011 to 2015, bandits, cattle rustlers, and other criminals, killed about 1,135 people in Zamfara state (Report from Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps) etc.

Causes of the herdsmen - farmer's conflict in the South East

Discussion of the findings

According to our research findings a lot of factors were behind the herdsmen-farmer's conflict in the South East in recent time, among these factors are;

- **Land ownership as one of the causes of the conflict**

Here, the herdsmen always like grazing their cattle on farmers' crops without minding its implication and this act and practice has been generating a lot of problem in the South-east between the herdsmen and the rural farmers and the host community.

- **Herdsmen attacks, raping, killing and burning of houses of the host communities in the south east**

A report from Abia state in the South East in recent time revealed some communities in the state where farmers were attacked, houses burnt and many people lost their life, among these communities and villages are in; Uzuakoli community in Bende Local Government Area, uturu in isikuato local government area, isi alanga south and north local government Area, Ebem and Akanu in Ohafia and Umuchieze in Umunneochi local government, etc. these communities have witnessed one form of deadly clashes or the other in recent time between the farmers and the herdsmen. This was as a result of an invasion of farm land in these communities by the herdsmen for the grazing of their cattle

- In a related observation this day newspaper, April 27, 2016 revealed that Fulani herdsmen invaded Ukpbi Nimbo community in Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area of Enugu state in the South East, killed many people with the plan to take over their land for grazing of their livestock. Other areas invaded by these herdsmen are Abbi community and Uzo-Uwani community and this resulted to a serious clash between the host community and the herdsmen.

Fulani Herdsmen attacks and their sponsors in the south-east

Adisa (2015) revealed that Herdsmen are Fulani people who are from the northern part of Nigeria. According to Adisa, (2015) there are about 5 million Fulani people in Nigeria, and about 60% of the Fulani in Nigeria are governors, Pastors, Imams, Emirs, Sultan, House of Representatives members,

Lecturers, Vice Chancellors, Ministers, Military personnel, military boys and Senators etc. While about the 40% are the poor immigrant and they are in charge of the cattle owned by the Bourgeois Fulani. Adisa, (2015) further observed that about 10% of the herdsmen terrorists are in some states and zones in Nigeria like in south east, and they live within the Hausa Fulani communities in Ama-Hausa and Garki in the South-East and they do not own cattle. Their job is to kill. Some of them are employed by the cattle owners as “security men” whose job is to protect the cattle. There are also some Fulani middle men who were born in the South-East and their work is to coordinate the cattle business. These set or group of Fulani boys are about 20 to 40 in number and they are within the age bracket of 20 and 35 years. Adisa (2015) further revealed that there are also a group of Fulani herdsmen who rear the cattle from the north to the South-East, Some of them do not speak English and are so poor that they are paid stipend for their job. They do not carry guns. They only carry arrows and machetes to navigate the bushes on their way down to the South. The Ama-Hausas and Garkis according to Adisa (2015) harbor about 80% of the herdsmen security personnel and these men dress differently from the real Northern Nigeria people that live within these Ama Hausa and gariki settlements. They are young boys, less religious and they use drugs, and consume alcohol so much. Majority of the herdsmen are migrants from Chad, Niger, and other countries outside the Nigerian state. While some of these Fulani boys were born in the Nigeria states where they reside. These set of boys are the ones that lead these Fulani killers on their attacks; serving as compasses to the blood-hungry terrorists. These wealthy Nigerian Fulani prefer using the poor ones from outside Nigeria to rear their cattle in the south-east instead of investing in ranches and buying grasses from the South, rather they prefer bringing their kinsmen from outside the country to take care of these cattle in the south-East as their grass kingdom.

Strategies adopted in carrying out an Attack on their perceived Farmers or Host Community in the South-East

As revealed by Adisa (2015), whenever there is a disagreement between the farmers or the host communities with the herdsmen in any area in the south-East, the herdsmen who accompany the cattle will locate the nearest Fulani settlement to Garki or Ama Hausa. When they arrive, they will narrate their story to the Fulani middlemen (cattle managers), who will notify their cattle owners like El Rufai and other top Fulani Bourgeois that own the cattle. At this point, a decision will be taken on whether there should be an attack or not on the said village or community. If an attack is sanctioned, then, modalities will be mapped out and a date will be chosen for the attack. Adisa (2015) observed that most times, the Fulani in the military and in police will be notified and they will send a representative from their men at the neighboring Garki or Ama Hausa settlements. At this point, arms cache will be opened and arms distributed to the participants who may be about 20 to 40 herdsmen who reside in the Garkis and Ama Hausas. These are the Fulani warriors or security personnel whose job is to kill. Adisa noted that, during an attack, every Fulani person will contribute to make sure it goes on successfully. Fulani in the military will ensure that all commands under them stand down, and the top Fulani police officers will do the same. At this point, the road will be clear for the herdsmen to carry out their attacks.

3.2 Summary of the findings

Our research findings have revealed that herdsmen migration to South-East has never been an agenda to Islamize the region as speculated by the people of the South-east. Though the people may be right in their thinking and reasoning because they will not like what happened to King Yunfa, and Afonja in the Hausa and Yoruba land to happen to the people of South East. Our finding equally revealed how King Yunfa the Hausa Sarki in Gobir (now Sokoto) hosted a Fulani immigrant called Usman Dan Fodiyo, and his men in February 1804, who later waged a war against him and his people around 1808 and took over their land and made them slave before they knew it. The same thing also happened to Afonja dynasty who also compromised by allowing a Fulani warrior known as Janta Alimi to settle in Ilorin, as a result, the Fulani guerrillas killed Afonja in 1824, and Ilorin, a Yoruba town under the Oyo Empire, fell into Fulani hands, and has become an emirate under Sokoto caliphate till today. This is the fear and thinking of the people of the south-east in criticizing and fighting against the Fulani herdsmen migration to the region and their request for a grazing reserve land for their cattle through President

Mohammadu Buhari who is anxious to establish Rural Grazing Areas (RUGA) in the 36 states of the Federation. The question now is; why do these herdsmen attack their host communities and poor farmers with impunity, killing, raping, injuring them and destroying their crops and property? The answer to this question gave birth to the recommendation of this paper as a possible solution to Herdsmen migration to South-East

4. Recommendations

To curb these violent clashes between the herdsmen and farmers/the host communities in the South-East the Federal Government should endeavor to establish Grazing Reserves and encourage Ranching; hence, there should be an urgent need to reform and improve grazing arrangements in the Nigeria state. As a first step, the Federal Government in agreement with the state governors, should jointly survey, demarcate, and officially document existing grazing reserves that have not being overrun by human settlements and infrastructure. They should as well follow its plan to establish new grazing reserves in the 10 northern states that have already provided 55000 hectares for the cattle business. The Federal Government should help state governors to develop these areas following the model provided by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), which is already funding three reserves in Sokoto state. Similarly, The Federal government should take steps to encourage ranching as it is the world best practice as witnessed in other African and developed countries of the world; hence cattle rearing are a private business and as such the Government should intensify implementation of the “Great Green Wall Initiative” for the Sahara and the Sahel. Here, the Nigeria’s National Agency for the Great Green Wall as a matter of urgency should rehabilitate 22500 square km of degraded land without delay. The federal government and the state governors should work together, take immediate steps to set up security outfit for herders and farmers protection, strengthening conflict resolution mechanisms, and initiating longer term efforts to reform livestock management practices, address negative environmental trends, and curb cross-border movements of both cattle rustlers and armed herder. In effect, the following steps need to be taken to avert further and future conflict occurrence between the two parties in the South East and Nigeria state in general. An immediate step should be taken to improve security for herders, farmers and the host communities. At a minimum, the Federal Government and its security agencies should intensify operations against cattle rustlers, improve the systems to track livestock movement and trade, arrest herdsmen and individuals who carry illegal firearms, and prosecute suspected assailants. Government should strengthen police capacity to curb rustling and banditry; In recent years, the Federal Government and state governors of the South-East and governors of other affected states need to initiate several joint efforts against cattle rustlers and bandits, as witnessed in July 2015, when the governors of Niger, Kaduna, Kano, Sokoto, Kebbi, Katsina, and Zamfara states jointly funded an Anti-rustling Operation in the Kamuku Kuyanbana forests that straddle all six states. The operation involved four organizations; the Nigeria Army, Nigeria Police Force, Nigerian Security Service, Civil Defense Corps, and Directorate of State Security. Again, Government should consider shifting their strategy from curbing cattle rustlers and other banditry from episodic military operations, to steadily deploying more and better equipped police units in rural and forested areas where bandit groups are based. This would allow police to respond rapidly to incidents and discourage further attacks on the farmers/host community. The Federal Government should follow; through on promises, to stop herdsmen attacks on farmers and the communities in the South East. To that end, the police and Nigerian security and civil defense corps, need to focus on preventive measures, including community liaison mechanism to upgrade intelligence gathering. Meanwhile, early warning signal and rapid responses mechanisms should be incorporate into their system as the major priority is to curb the influx and possession of illegal firearms. In addition the following measures should be taking without delay;-

- Better coordination between the Federal and State law enforcement agencies is very important and highly needed. This step would be very necessary and an important step; here, the Federal Government could set up an inter-agency task force, overseen by the Federal Ministry of Justice,

to help states investigate major cases of herder-farmer conflict in the South East and Nigeria state in general, and bring culpable parties to justice. At a minimum, the Federal government could investigate major high-fatality incidents that have occurred under its watch.

- Support Community Based Conflict Resolution; here, Local and community based disputes resolution mechanisms have proved effective in averting conflict and helping communities recover from conflict, on that ground, forum that can allow various constituencies like farmers, pastoralists, community vigilantes, and state security agencies to monitor, identify, discuss and manage potential threats that can be helpful need to be in place by the federal and state government.
- **Regional Co-Operation;** Some dimensions of the herders-farmers conflict can only be addressed within a regional frame work. This will require the Federal government to work in close coordination with the neighboring countries to manage human and cattle movements across borders, and to fight illicit arms trafficking. Following revelation that foreign herders were involved in attackings farmers and host communities, the former Minister of Agriculture, Chief Ogbeh said, the government would present proposals at the African Union, to compel members' countries to take steps to prevent their herdsman from grazing into neighboring countries, warning that there could be a major international crisis if something is not done to stop it now. On that note, the government should engage the governments of Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and the ECOWAS Commission to reach agreement on how to collectively monitor and regulate international Tran's humane pastoralist in accordance with relevant ECOWAS protocols. It should also strengthen to regional cooperation in combating desertification of the climate change. In addition, government should make it a priority to take firm and transparent steps to ensure better protection for both herders and farmers in Nigeria state and South East in particular. In effect, the Federal Government's failure to define a clear and coherent political approach to resolving the crisis or even acknowledge its scope is putting Nigerian citizens at risk. Similarly, Government should establish grazing reserves in consenting states and improve livestock production and management so as to minimize contacts and friction between herders and farmers; this will entail developing grazing reserves in the ten northern states where governments have already earmarked lands for this purpose. In effect, formulating and implementing the ten year National Ranch Development Plan proposed by stakeholders Forum, facilitates by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in April 2017 is a sure way to success. The Federal and State Government should address environmental factor that are behind herders' migration to South-East as this will require stepping up implementation of programs under the Great Green Wall Initiative for the Sahara and the Sahel, a Trans-African Project designed to restore drought and desert degraded environments and livelihoods, including developing strategies for mitigating climate change impact in the far northern states. Thus, Nigeria government should work with Cameroon, Chad, and Niger (the Lake Chad Basin Countries) to regulate movements across border, mainly that of the cattle rustlers, armed herders, and others that have been identified as aggravating internal tension and insecurity in Nigeria, and South East in particular.

4.1 Conclusion

Herdsman-farmers conflict in the South East has been as a result of disputes over land resources between herders, farmers, and the host communities across the zones. Since the return of democracy in 1999, series of attacks have taken place in the South East against farmers and the host communities by the Fulani herdsman, as the conflict has underlying economic and environmental reasons as well as religious and ethnic dimensions; thus, thousands of people have lost their lives and property. Sedentary farming and rural communities is often target of attacks because of their vulnerability. There are fears that this conflict will spread to other geo-political zones, but this has often been down played by governments. In some zones, attacks on herders have also led them to retaliating by attacking other communities. Escalating conflicts between herders and farmers in the South-East has been the most

pressing security challenges. This could generate blood shade on an even wider scale, unless the government makes ending to this violence a national priority. Meanwhile, South-East State governors need to formulate and implement steps to address the needs and grievances of all sides transparently, and equitably, strengthening law enforcement agencies, supporting local conflict prevention and resolution mechanism, establishing and protecting grazing reserves would also make a significant and immediate difference. In the longer term, the greater challenge will be curbing the arms influx and crucially addressing the environmental trends that are forcing herders to South East ward. Failure to take such step would spell greater danger for a region already battling with other severe security challenges. Meanwhile, herdsmen migration to South East is for the open grazing of their cattle. In this regard this practice, instead of giving birth to peace, love, unity and development, is giving birth to conflict, killing, raping, kidnapping and destruction of farmer's crops, property and attacking/killing the host communities. As a result, the idea of ranching has been offered as a solution to this herdsmen menace in the South East in particular as this is the international best practices in other African states like Swaziland, South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, among others. Moreover, the Archbishop of the Anglican Communion, Enugu Province, Most Rev. Dr. Emmanuel Chukwuma, requested the Federal Government to declare state of emergency in the South East over the herdsmen threat to security in the region.

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