

KEY NOTE ADDRESS SEMINAR ON SECURITY **AWARENESS IN SOKOTO**

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Being Text of a Keynote Address delivered at a Seminar on Security Awareness in Sokoto State Organised by the Sokoto State Chapter of Alumni Association of the National Institute (AANI) at the Conference Hall, Sultan Muhammadu Maccido Institute for Qur'anic and General Studies, Sokoto, on Monday 2nd September, 2013

Protocol:

The Executive Governor of Sokoto State, His Excellency, Alh. (Dr.) Aliyu Magatakarda Wamakko;

The Sultan of Sokoto, His Eminence, Alh. (Dr.) Muhammad Sa'ad Abubakar III, CFR, mni

Members of the Sultanate Council of Sokoto

Members of Sokoto State Executive Council

Honourable Members of the Sokoto State House of Assembly

My Lords Spiritual and Temporal

Your Royal Highnesses

Secretary General of AANI, Publicity Secretary, AANI

Executive Members of Sokoto Chapter AANI

Members of the Press

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.

INTRODUCTION

I am delighted to be invited to deliver a keynote address at this auspicious and very important seminar on Security Awareness for the obvious reason that Nigerians need to be properly informed of the very precarious security situation of our time. Certainly, there is no better time to organize such an event than now when threat to our collective security is heightened and or exacerbated by armed robberies, border raids, kidnapping, terrorism and dangerously too; insurgency that is ideologically driven.

Secondly, there is no better body to conceive the idea of Security Awareness than the Alumni Association of the National Institute (AANI). Kindly recall that in 1979, the Federal Government established the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS) to serve as a high level centre of reflection, research, and dialogue where academics of intellectual excellence, policy initiators and executors and other citizens of practical experience and wisdom

drawn from different sectors of national life in Nigeria would meet to reflect and exchange ideas on the great issues of society, particularly as they relate to Nigeria and Africa in the context of the dynamics of a constantly changing world.

In its 35 years of existence, to date, about 1,523 Participants have graduated from NIPPS. The list includes serving and past top level executives from various walks of life, spanning the presidency, state government houses, His Eminence and Royal Highnesses, Federal and state civil service, Security Agencies, Armed Forces, Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), academia, media, and Para-military institutions among others. AANI members more than any other set of Nigerians are better trained and even strategically positioned to take Nigeria out of scores of security woes it currently faces.

I hereby commend the Sokoto State Chapter of Alumni Association of the National Institute (AANI) for rising up to the ideals of the Association through this historic platform contributing objectively to national discourse on Security Awareness. The need for government and the Nigerian society to constantly tap from the rich mix of high level human resources churned out by NIPSS informed the formation of Alumni Association of the National Institute (AANI) cannot be overemphasized. AANI has the responsibility to serve as a think-tank to the Federal and State Governments.

As many as 1,523 researched policy papers and recommendations with implementations strategies have come out of the Institute on all issues of nation-building including security. I call on President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, GCFR to draw on the rich findings of NIPPS, Kuru Jos to put an end to the current governance crisis in the country especially with respect to the issue of security.

The point cannot be overstated that the aims and objectives of AANI are :

- To promote the noble ideals of the National Institute as embodied in its motto: “Towards a Better Society”;
- To promote understanding, unity, brotherhood and cooperation among the members;
- To strengthen the relationship between the Association and the National Institute with a view to maintaining synergy;

- To interact with the Federal and States Governments of Nigeria, other organizations or associations, with similar objectives;
- To establish the means of contributing objectively to national discourse on any issues affecting the positive development of Nigeria and proffer appropriate recommendation and implementation strategies to the Government;
- To serve as think-tank to the Federal and States Governments of Nigeria;
- To maintain the highest standards of conduct, etiquette and discipline among its members;
- To establish schemes for the promotion of the welfare, security and economic advancement of members;
- To create and maintain an endowment fund for the proper observance and discharge of any of the objectives of the Association.

Since our election this year the new National Executive Council members (NEC) have moved to consolidate on the achievements of the past and open new chapters. Sokoto and Kebbi states were the first states we visited where we met AANI members as well as the respected members of Heritage Council notably, His Eminence, Emir of Zuru and Emir of Gwandu. In May we had an inaugural Meet-the-Press session where we popularize AANI and made comments on topical issues of national importance. We have also inaugurated participants of Course 35. Through our intervention we have gotten a donation of N600 million for NIPPS development and completion of outstanding projects by the Vice President.

We have also been active to support a number of activities of the Abuja chapter. We continue to seek the continued support, guidance and blessings of the Heritage Council through His Eminence and also through the Board of Patrons led by former President IBB, GCFR, mni. We are committed to the Resuscitation of AANI State Chapters and empowering of those already active, the introduction of a yearly AANI Reunion Day through a national retreat, completion of the multiple purpose AANI centre as well as of the visibility of AANI through regular constructive policy suggestions to all tiers of government towards a better society.

All these will be carried out within the framework of the our Six Point Mission

Statement of promoting transparency, accountability, welfare of members, revival of AANI to be proactive on key national issues, completion of AANI Centre, Abuja and nurturing and sustaining of a cordial relationship between AANI and relevant public and private sector institutions.

SALUTE SOKOTO STATE GOVERNMENT

Thirdly, the seminar is well conceived. The Sokoto Chapter is indeed well positioned to articulate the efforts of all the stake-holders in Sokoto given the remarkable achievements in this state in the areas of peace maintenance, social justice and security. Sokoto state has undoubtedly had its own security challenges. However, on the whole I want to put on record that given the challenges in other states, Sokoto state has done creditably well to maintain and sustain peace, stability and development.

AANI salutes the able leadership of The Executive Governor of Sokoto State, His Excellency, Alh. (Dr.) Aliyu Magatakarda Wamakko in consolidating on peace in the Seat of the Caliphate. Many states have a lot to emulate from Sokoto in terms of peaceful coexistence of people of diverse ethnic and religious background. We recall that recently, Sokoto State under the leadership of His Excellency courageously hosted scholars, clergymen, opinion, religious and traditional leaders as well as youths from within and outside the country to discuss ways of peaceful co-existence in the state. We hereby salute all the heads of security agencies in the state; namely the SSS, Police Command, 1 Brigade Nigerian Army, Comptrollers Immigration, Customs, Prisons as well as Commandant, Nigerian Civil Defence and Security Corps for sustaining peace in Sokoto state. In particular we also specially appreciate the role of traditional rulers and the District Heads in maintaining peace in the state.

LET US PROMOTE THE COMMON PRINCIPLES OF ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY

AANI shares the same perspective with His Excellency that inter and intra-faith conflicts often arise because of pervasive ignorance among the adherents of the two great religions namely Christianity and Islam. The two religions are based on the Holy Books. Therefore without knowledge appreciation of the significance of the two religions for peaceful coexistence will be limited. I agree with his Excellency that "... most of what is happening in our country today, the rising violence, is due to ignorance, a scorching degree of ignorance" .

The two religions preach love, good neighborliness, non-violence, unity and fear of God. The Believers of the two religions must fear God and have Respect for Allah in all their dealings. For instance, in the Bible it is stated that blessed are all who fear the Lord, who walk in His ways. (Psalm, 128: 1). In the Quran it is stated that "O you who believe! If you fear [and respect] Allah, He will give you discrimination, erase your bad actions, and forgive you. Allah's favor is indeed immense. (Surat Al-Anfal: 29).

On the Sanctity of life, the Quran stated that If someone kills another person – unless it is in retaliation for someone else or for causing corruption in the earth – it is as if he had murdered all mankind. And if anyone gives life to another person, it is as if he had given life to all mankind.(Surat Al-Ma'ida: 32. Conversely in the Bible, Matthew 5:21 - Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shall not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment. As leaders we can therefore not be tired educating of our followers on the common principles of the two great religions which emphasise on unity, peace and love.

COMMEND PRESIDENT GOOD LUCK JONATHAN

Fourthly, the duo of President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, GCFR and Arc. Muhammadu Namadi Sambo, GCON are indeed steering the ship of Nigerian state . They are well focused and open to accept wide shades of opinions on how best to respond to the peace and security challenges confronting the nation. The President's use of carrot-and-stick, especially in the inauguration of the Presidential Committee on Dialogue and Peaceful Resolution of Security Challenges in the North and the deployment of force is commendably strategic. It is also a timely response to suggestions by respected Nigerians on the need to dialogue with those who have unfortunately taken up arms and taken to violence to resolve their grievances.

We support and commend Mr. President's initiative and pray that the recorded successes will be sustained for the collective benefit of the generation yet unborn. Nigerians are urged to support the President in ensuring sustainable peace and development in the country.

WE COMMEND HIS EMINENCE

Fifthly and very important too is the very important and strategic position and presence of His Eminence of His Eminence, the Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Muhammad Sa'ad Abubakar III, CFR, mni as the conscience and custodian of the Islamic faith in Nigeria and the very vast Sokoto Caliphate and as the Chairman of AANI's Heritage Council. The multiple positions of His Eminence have been used positively in helping the country in the fight against insecurity. We hereby today once again acknowledge the tireless efforts of His Eminence in promoting genuine understanding among people of different faiths in the country. This is indeed very critical in designing the architecture for addressing any peace and security challenge as the one we have at hand. To his credit, His Eminence has brought to bear his royalty to respond to the problem at hand. He has also commendably deployed his wealth of experience, skills, knowledge in military service and above all his innate attributes of humility, dedication and patience to the country's utmost advantage.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are particularly delighted to have the personality of His Eminence the Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Muhammadu Sa'ad Abubakar as Chairman of the Heritage Council of AANI. He is one of us and we are proud of him. His Eminence's role as President-General of the Nigerian National Supreme Council of Islam (NNSCI); head of Jama'atul Nasril Islam (Society for the Victory of Islam – JNI) and Co-Chairman of the Nigerian Inter-Religious Council (NIREC) has been a stabilizing force for a more peaceful and prosperous Nigeria. May God bless Your Eminence, give you long life and prosper your reign. I join other dignitaries in welcoming His Eminence to this Seminar.

WHY PEACE AND SECURITY?

Your Excellency, His Eminence distinguished Ladies and gentlemen, my assignment is a very simple but delicate one in the sense that as the keynote speaker. I am expected to articulate in clear terms the contours or parameters of the discourse at the seminar. I am to accomplish this task not by forcing speakers or participants to contribute in a particular way and manner, but to articulate the theme of the seminar in such a persuasive tone as to direct the subsequent contributions

It is important to note that Section 14 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended) provides that:

(1) The Federal Republic of Nigeria shall be a State based on the principle of democracy and social justice.

(2) It is hereby, accordingly, declared that:

(b) The security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government ... (Emphasis is mine).

By vesting in the government this power, Nigerians are re-echoing the ancient principle of social contract which according to Thomas Hobbes, "... the drive for freedom yields at that point to the stronger drive for self-preservation. To end the war of "every man against every man." People agreed to create an organization that could use compulsion to avoid and or end life-threatening violence.

We agree with Kofi Anan former Secretary General of UN that: Security, in its broadest sense, embraces far more than the absence of violent conflict. It encompasses human rights, good governance, access to education and health care and ensuring that each individual has opportunities and choices to fulfill his or her potential. Every step in this direction is also a step towards reducing poverty, achieving economic growth and preventing conflict. We hereby urge governments at all levels here to also combine physical security measures with social and economic security measures in terms of youth employment schemes and provisions for the needy. Freedom from want, freedom from fear, and the freedom of future generations to inherit a healthy natural environment – these are the interrelated building blocks of human – and therefore national – security.

We are encouraged that the Sokoto State government recently commenced the payment of over N1billion pension and gratuities arrears to 920 retired, contract and deceased staffers. This is a practical social security measure for the civil servants. The gesture will alleviate the sufferings of the beneficiaries, including the families of the deceased workers.

The current insecurity situation makes Nigeria to be too precarious because of the high level of poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, corruption, inequality, nepotism, tribalism, sectionalism, selfishness, greed and covetousness. But we all know that the current security challenges facing the country is partly man-made in the sense that our political elitists failed to clear up the dirt especially

the stockpile of small arms and light weapons given to, and used by, their thugs during elections to intimidate their opponents.

POLITICAL CLASS SHOULD PUT THE PEOPLE FIRST

AANI hereby therefore uses today to appeal to members of political class to put the people and the nation first in their quest for political power so as to minimize conflicts and violence that will further pose security challenges to Nigeria mo so as we move towards 2015.

In order to properly understand the current state of insecurity in Nigeria certain fundamental variables must be appreciated. They include the forces of globalization, the impact and nature of global terrorists' network, impact of climate change, porosity of our international borders, challenges and consequences of corruption on security, ethnicity and proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

These challenges are further exacerbated by advancement in information technology that actually shrunk political, economic, religious and social spaces that were hitherto easily policed by local security operatives and introduces new dynamics and perspective to insecurity in the country.

In his book Clash of Civilization, Samuel Huntington highlighting some of those dynamics. He argued that the world is witnessing an upsurge of clashes among the various identities. In fact, in more recent publication titled, Clash of Identities, Dr. Abdu Hussain, in a similar manner analyses the problem of ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria, with special reference to the Kaduna perennial violent clashes. He also brought in bold relief the level of destruction of lives and properties, disruption and displacement of population and other deadly incidences. This is another dynamic.

Another variable that has compounded insecurity situation in the country is the problem of climate change, especially with the level of desert encroachment in the northern part of the country. The impact of this phenomenon is the mass movement of people southward and the incidences of perennial clashes between the sedentary farmers and nomadic pastoralists, as have become the yearly event in Jigawa, Nassarawa, Benue, Taraba, Plateau, Adamawa and Yobe States. One of such notable conflict is the perennial Tiv-Fulani conflict in the River Benue

valley. But I am aware of the efforts of the Governors of Benue, Nassarawa and Taraba States and the Sultan of Sokoto to finding a lasting solution to this intractable problem.

Again, one of the reasons why insecurity persists in the country is the problem of porous and unmanned international borders, especially borders with the Republics of Niger, Cameroun, Benin and Chad. The conflicts and/or instability in these countries make for easy availability of small arms and light weapons and their proliferation across neighbouring countries. Secondly, these countries have served as safe haven, breeding and training ground for terrorists' cells before they launch their attack on the country. It has been widely reported that the arm struggle that characterized the 'Arab Spring' led to the eventual proliferation of arms in West African countries. Apart from these there are other illicit routes through which arms and ammunitions have found their way into the country, and eventually into the wrong hands.

The Niger Delta Amnesty programme witnessed the recovery of large turnover of arms and ammunitions from ex-militants. But the 'big question' is how these weapons got into the hands of these unauthorized persons. We must also not forget that the phenomenon of transnational crimes including terrorism go hand in hand with illicit drugs which sometimes provide the fuel for terrorism.

One explanation to this troubling situation is that corruption has been so pervasive in the country that public officers easily mortgage the peace and security of the commonwealth for filthy lucre. This is because corrupt individuals are celebrated in the Nigerian society, above the virtues of sobriety, modesty and hard work. Therefore, the mad rush to meet up societal expectations, border security operatives tends to compromise and bend rules for tips.

What is broadly the nature of responses to these security challenges? It must be noted from the onset that three broad arguments have emerged on how to handle the problems of insecurity in Nigeria. The first school argues that the current state of insecurity requires the state to be tough in asserting and controlling the situation by deploying the maximum force and strength in quelling the spate of violence in the country. The second school argues for non-violence and peaceful method of crisis management, especially through the use of dialogue. The third school tries to strike a balance from the two arguments by urging for the use of

the carrot-and-the-stick whereby the state will not sheer away from using force to prevent the escalation of crimes, impunities and atrocities, but also use persuasion and other incentives as bait to lure and entice opponent to negotiating table where amicable settlement with contending individuals or groups would be reached.

This third method was employed by the federal government in managing the Niger Delta conflict and found very useful. Government is currently deploying the same method in handling the Boko Haram problem, which is ideologically-based. We recall that government was proactive in responding to the post-2011 Presidential election violent conflict that claimed many lives in some states in northern Nigeria, by quelling the violent aspect of the conflict before setting up the Sheik Lemu and Galtimari Committees to look into the situation alongside other security challenges in the affected zones. In fact, if government was not prompt in containing the situation, it would have spread beyond Kaduna State. I am also aware that Government has also directed the Secretary to the Government of the Federation to harmonise all the recommendations of previous commissions/panels of inquiry into civil disturbances in the country with a view for their implementation by government and other stakeholders. I consider this a right step towards responding to the intractable security challenges in the country because failure in the past to implement recommendations of panels of inquiries have itself fuelled crisis and portrays the government as condoning impunity. Also as part of the recommendations of the Sheik Lemu and Galtimari committees, government is proactively addressing the problem of Almajiri system in the northern states by establishing Almajiri Model Schools. Sokoto State government must be highly commended in this direction.

Be that as it may, government must move beyond its current curative responses to more proactive prevention initiatives that are integrative and broad-based. And considering the destructive nature of insecurity in the country, especially the extent of human casualties, loss of personal and public effects, and investments, more should be done to nip the problem in the bud. Thus the policy implication is to create necessary economic and political conditions for minimization of insecurity.

AANI wishes to observe that despite improved funding all the military, security

and Para-Military Agencies have common constraints. These ranges from inadequate funding, utter neglect, obsolete equipments, depleted stores, inadequate welfare facilities, absence of training and retraining, lack of arms and ammunition and inadequate remunerations. AANI demands that inter-agency rivalry should give way to inter-agency cooperation and complimentarily to consolidate peace. AANI in collaboration with NIPSS, will like to host a retreat of all the Security Agencies in Intelligence sharing, equipment sharing and issue of cooperation. We must also urgently harmonize the vision and missions of all the agencies within the overall vision of the nation on national defense and national security as espoused by the Mr President.

In conclusion, I would wish to urge all participants to eschew narrow, myopic, intolerant and close indulgent when making contributions in this seminar, but instead make broad, positive, implementable, constructive, helpful, productive, useful and beneficial contributions that will enrich the content of the communiqué of this seminar. We must note that the security challenges of our time if not properly managed will consume us all.

This advice must be taken in the light of recent happenings in the Middle East where the entire region is in turmoil because it failed to proactively respond to their own challenges. These experiences also clearly indicate that in the globalizing world where terrorism and insecurity get complex by the day, every citizen has a role to play – you and me, and not the sole responsibility of government. That is what I expect should be the focus of the recommendations of the seminar where every citizen will feel obliged and willingly play his or her role. Hence we must see security as a collective duty of all of us.

AANI shares the view that If the whole society possesses superior virtues like honesty, sacrifice, love and justice, there can be no place for such things as poverty, violence, terrorism, unequal distribution of income, injustice, the oppression of the weak, or limitations on freedoms. In essence, it is not possible to defeat terrorism by physical security measures. In fact by itself, military force is only likely to meet with increased violence, producing a vicious circle in which bloodshed continues to be answered with more bloodshed. Thus what we need to alter is the way of thinking of the forces of violence through education as we are doing today. The solution to the security challenge lies in an integrated holistic approach to addressing the issues raised. The state must live up to its role of providing jobs and other basic amenities and guaranteeing the

lives and property of the citizenry.
I wish you all a blessed seminar.

God bless AANI

God bless Sokoto State

God bless Nigeria

Thank you for listening.