

# An Emergent National Security Challenge: The Herdsmen – Farmers Conflicts In Nigeria, 1999-2018

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*Abstract: Since its return to civilian rule in 1999, Nigeria has grappled with a number of challenges which put the state's security architecture under strain. One of such challenges is the nomadic-herdsmen and farmers conflicts in which thousands of lives have been lost across the country. All the country's six geo-political zones are affected. Prior to this period both groups had interacted and resolved their misunderstandings amicably. This paper discusses evolution of the conflict and the causes of its escalation. It also assesses the response of the government and its security outfit to the problem and makes recommendations at mitigating and resolving the conflict. The paper identifies the primary causes of the conflicts as the invasion and destruction of farms, crops and killing of farmers by organized herdsmen or their proxies, possession of illegal firearms by the latter, cattle rustling by settled communities (farmers) and passive response of government and its security agencies. The paper recommends the replacement of open grazing with ranching, disarming of herdsmen, diligent prosecution of criminal elements and reforming the police.*

**Keywords:** Security, conflict, herdsmen, Fulani, Nigeria

## I. INTRODUCTION

Since Nigeria's return to civilian rule in 1999, after 16 years of military dictatorship, virtually all the successive governments have had to grapple with one major security challenge or another. These ranged from Niger Delta militancy, *Boko Haram* insurgency, kidnapping, audacious armed cult group activities, to more cases of armed robbery. The latest addition to the list is the herdsmen and farmers conflicts raging across the country. This challenge, in truth, predates the 1999 return to civilian rule. However, the period under study has witnessed an unprecedented escalation of the conflicts with the consequent massive destruction of property, human carnage and heightened sense of insecurity among various groups and communities in Nigeria.

So many Nigerians have been left petrified as to why the smoldering embers of disaffection between the two groups were allowed to explode into a conflagration by the government and relevant security agencies. The resultant spike in ethnic consciousness among the people has continued to

strain further, the already overstretched thin elastic thread holding together the fabrics of Nigeria's unity.

Basically at the root of the crises is the struggle for land or access to it. The nomadic herdsmen, largely from northern Nigeria who are also mostly Fulani, believe they should have unhindered access to all land and pastures in the country to graze their cattle, irrespective of location. Settled farmers on the other hand, are bent on protecting their ancestral lands and farms which they have invested so much in and which, in most cases, are their only means of livelihood. It is this deep-rooted clash of interests that has emerged as a new threat to the country's security. Unfortunately, this was allowed to fester to almost all the six geo-political zones of the country.

By the middle of 2018 killings associated with the herdsmen were estimated at more than 3,000 (Adeyemo 2018). These killings had been ongoing in various parts of the country until they reached a macabre sensation when, in 2016, more than 500 people in Agatu community in Benue state were massacred and their farmlands occupied by militant herdsmen. According to Amnesty International (2018), on the whole, the herdsmen attacked farmers in Abuja, the federal

capital, and the following 21 of the 36 states in Nigeria, Taraba, Zamfara, Anambra, Enugu, Abia, Kogi, Cross River, Delta, Niger, Sokoto, Edo, Ekiti, Ondo, Kaduna, Ebonyi, Rivers, Adamawa, Oyo, Nasarawa, Plateau, and Benue. In the process they killed, raped, decapitated and intimidated victims, chasing them away from their lands in the process. Osun State has also been attacked.

Global Terrorism Index (2016) has put Nigerian Fulani herdsmen militants as the fourth most deadly terror group in the world. It states that the Fulani herdsmen undertook more attacks and were responsible for more deaths than Boko Haram since 2016. The government of Nigeria under Muhammadu Buhari, chose not to agree with the anti terror watchdog that the herdsmen are terrorists. Theophilus Danjuma, a retired Army General and a former Minister of Defence, alleged there were attempts at ethnic cleansing by the herdsmen. It is against this backdrop of heightened insecurity that it has become necessary to examine the critical issues.

## II. CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

A brief explanation of some of the key concepts as used in this paper now follows.

**CONFLICT:** Nicholson (1992) defines conflict as an existing state of disagreement or hostility between two or more people. Conflict emerges whenever two or more persons (or groups) seek to possess the same object, occupy the same space or the same exclusive position... or undertake mutually incompatible means for achieving their purposes (International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences 1972). There are various types of conflicts one of which is inter-group conflict. This refers to the kind of conflict that occurs between two or more sectarian, ethnic groups, communities or interest groups. The above aptly capture the conflicts between the Fulani herdsmen and each of several other groups across Nigeria, whose interests and means of actualizing their purpose have been incompatible.

**SECURITY:** Security may be defined as a protective condition which statesmen either try to acquire, or preserve, in order to guard the various components of their external or internal threats (Cohen and Tuttle 1972). It also implies a stable, relatively predictable environment in which an individual or group may pursue its end without fear of disturbance or injury (Fischer and Green 2004). Afolabi (2015) sees it as the process connected with assuaging any kind of threat to people and their precious values. From the above, it can be deduced that security is always associated with value systems, whether individual or societal. It is when these are protected from threat or, under no threat that security is believed to be assured. In the event of perceived or anticipated threat, process of protection of such values would also go a long way to assure security.

## III. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND DIMENSIONS OF THE CONFLICTS

In Nigeria, cattle herding is practically an exclusive preserve of the Fulani, who have been blamed for the dastardly acts. They are believed to have migrated from the Senegambia (Blench 1994), from where they spread to other parts of West and Central Africa, the nationality of which they claim. These states include Nigeria, the Gambia, Central African Republic, Sudan, Sierra Leone, Burkina Faso, Guinea Bissau, Cote d'Ivoire, Togo, Niger, Senegal, Guinea, Benin, Ghana, Liberia and Cameroon. In Nigeria, some of them settled down to city life and became Muslim clerics. An example was Usman dan Fodio who inspired the Fulani Jihad of 1804, which led to the overthrow of the rulers of most of the traditional Hausa states and their replacement by the Fulani.

As stated earlier, a major occupation of the Fulani in Nigeria right from time has been cattle herding. However, many of them have also acquired formal education and are engaged in other vocations in which they have distinguished themselves. In recent times they have been in the military, police, private business, the civil service, among others. Abbas (2012) asserts that the Fulani own about 90% of the cattle in Nigeria, and contribute 3.29% to Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). As a consequence of their pastoralist activities, they are also responsible for the provision of substantial quantity of hides and skin, milk and meat in the country (Amadi 2017).

Conflicts between farmers and Fulani cattle herders have not been uncommon features in inter-group relations in West Africa. Prior to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the conflicts appeared to have been confined to the savannah zone, because cattle rearing was prevalent in the Guinea, Sahel and Sudan Savannah, where crop production also took place during the short rainy season. As a result of the above and some other factors, even the vast lands of northern Nigeria appeared not to be enough anymore for the herders who felt impelled to move southward to the coastal belt where the rainy season is longer, in search of pasture and water for their animals. This unbridled southward movement by the Fulani herdsmen with their cattle, with the mindset that they were entitled to graze on every available vegetation, (including crops of the farmers) and the determination of the latter to protect their farms, led to clashes.

It is worthy of note that prior to this dispensation, a typical herdsman was armed with a long stick and in some cases a dagger for self-protection. In recent times however, herdsmen tote AK47 rifles, brazenly displayed as they journey with their cattle, and which they have not hesitated to use without inhibition at any perceived threat. This has become more serious with the adoption of improved farming methods and increased population. The result has been that more land is put under cultivation and other uses thereby 'reducing' land available for grazing. The herdsmen alleged that development got in the way of what they called traditional grazing routes. Okello (2014) attributed the initial dispersal of Fulani pastoralists to southern Nigeria to the defeat of the Sokoto Caliphate by the British in 1903, its consequent collapse,

foisting of colonial rule and the introduction of cattle tax, which they were not willing to pay.

As alluded to above, clashes between herdsmen and farmers are not new. However the frequency, spread, intensity and rate of fatality witnessed since 1999 have been unprecedented. In April 2016, there was an attack on Nimbo, Enugu State by Fulani herdsmen which claimed some 40 lives, with thousands more displaced from their homes. Between 21<sup>st</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of February 2016, over 500 local farmers were killed by the Fulani herdsmen with some 7000 displaced in an attack by the Fulani herdsmen in Agatu Local government Area, Benue State, bringing an alleged total of more than 5,000 deaths, including those that lost their lives in the IDP camps in the state (Duru 2016).

#### IV. CAUSES OF THE CONFLICTS

Herdsmen attacks on farming communities have continued unabated, cutting across several states of Nigeria, earlier identified. At this juncture it is necessary to highlight the salient issues that triggered and also led to its escalation. Events have clearly shown that the major cause of the violence has been recognized as the invasion of farmlands by herds of cattle under the watch and guidance of the herdsmen and the consequent destruction of the agricultural farmlands (Idowu and Okunola 2017). In their lame attempt to defend their major means of livelihood, the largely unarmed farmers have been at the mercy of the well-armed herdsmen. The former have been attacked, raped, killed and traumatized. On the other hand the herdsmen have accused the farmers of cultivating lands in the way of what they referred to as grazing routes. Therefore any vegetation in their way should serve as fodder for their cattle.

It is also interesting to note that the herdsmen accused the people (farming communities) of cattle rustling i.e. stealing their cattle. This has always been a key part of the argument advanced by the Miyeti Allah Cattle Breeders Association (MACBAN), the umbrella organization embracing herdsmen in Nigeria. This was their allegation against Nimbo town in Enugu state in 2015. They allegedly lost 500 cows in 2012 in Nasarawa State (Daily Trust 2012).

Mohammed, Ismaila and Bibi (2015) point to the introduction and increased use of mechanized agriculture as further reducing land available for grazing. The use of tractors, herbicides, and fertilizers have revolutionized agriculture in the country leading to more and more grazing land being farmed extensively. Muhammed, Ismaila and Bibi (2015) argue that the animals should be excused for veering into people's farmlands and destroying crops because farmlands have increased to the detriment of grazing land. The allocation of land allegedly meant for grazing to government layout and also the use of such lands for houses and petrol/gas stations in southern Nigeria, without compensating the herdsmen have also been given as other grouses of the pastoralists for killing farmers, and turning their farms to range for the cattle, to graze. It may be necessary at this point to wonder how the herdsmen expected the farmers to feel and react as they watched the cattle destroy their farms which, in most cases, served as their only source of livelihood.

The herdsmen have been accused of deliberately herding their cattle into farms, therefore exhibiting a high level of inconsideration for the farmers. As long as their cattle fed well, it did not matter what they ate.

There were also allegations that the farms got in the way of the grazing routes. One would tend to ask what grazing routes? If the herdsmen with their cattle had passed through some land in the past, unchallenged probably because of lack of use by the farmers or due to fallow or low population density, at the time, it did not imply lack of ownership. With time increased population had necessitated the deployment of such land to farming activities.

The argument that improvement in agricultural practices and government allocation of land for development projects had depleted grazing land appears to be as preposterous as it is curious. Should the society remain stagnant as the Fulani herdsmen method of rearing cattle has remained? It must be noted that cattle rearing is one economic activity in a dynamic society of several other perhaps more vibrant economic activities. These (nomadic herdsmen) are notorious for waylaying and raping women on their farms and slaughtering men on the spot. One of their allegations of cattle rustling could hardly be blamed on such women and their children and besides, one wonders what happened to the due process of reporting to the police and allowing them to do their job of apprehending and prosecuting suspects? Taking the law into their own hands is an apparent indication of a lack of recognition of, or respect for the Police and the rule of law.

Abdulkarkindo and Ben (2017) and Amadi (2017) have pointed to a religious motivation for the attack. Most Fulani herdsmen are Muslim, and in the opinion of the writers, Christians have been particularly targeted for violence on account of their faith. They support their position by detailing attacks on Christians in Benue State and the fact that the marauders often shouted "Allah Akhbar" just before the attack. The suspicion is further fanned by reports in the same area that some potential victims who could recite some portions of the Koran were spared, while those who could not were murdered.

They concluded "... evidence suggests that the sheer number of atrocities would not have been possible without a motivating ideology and a conscious and deliberate plan of permanent eviction of indigenous Christians from their ancestral homes." (abdulkarkindo and Ben, 2017, 22)

Amadi (2017) also points to the interpretation that the conflicts have assumed disguised religious war aimed at Islamizing Nigeria, or a continuation of 19<sup>th</sup> century unfinished Jihad and consolidation of Fulani hegemony. Related to the above is the allegation of ethnic cleansing made against the Fulani herdsmen. A recurring pattern of sacking communities after orgies of killing and immediately occupying such deserted communities together with their cattle is already established. In Agatu, no sooner had the towns been sacked, than herdsmen moved in with thousands of cattle and family. The same accusation with regards to herdsmen activities in Taraba State, emanating from Theophilus Danjuma, a retired Army General and former Minister of Defense, cannot be dismissed with a wave of the hand (Nigerian Tribune 2018). One of the greatest motivations to crime is the belief by the criminal that he/she would escape

justice. The herdsmen have continued with the impunity because no serious measure has been taken against them despite overwhelming evidence of atrocities. In the very rare cases of arrests, nothing is done and nothing is heard about them after a short while.

#### V. REACTION OF THE GOVERNMENT TO HERDSMEN ATTACKS

Fulani herdsmen attacks have become a serious national security challenge. Reactions to these attacks were more expected from the federal government since it has control over all the machinery to quell such disturbances. The Military, Police, Department of State Services (DSS), National Security and Civil Defence Corp (NSCDC) are all Federal Government's creations. As President, the response of Muhammadu Buhari was naturally expected to go a long way to bringing a solution to the problem. He also needed to tread carefully considering that he is Fulani and a patron of MACBAN. There are horrifying tales of mass murder of farmers in farming communities all across the country by the herdsmen. The media are awash with gory images of victims of the dastardly attacks. The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria with amendments (1999) stipulates that the primary function of government shall be the provision of peace and security for the people. Apparently, in recognition of this responsibility, President Muhammed Buhari, while acknowledging the high level of insecurity during his inauguration in 2015, promised to maintain efficient, disciplined, people-friendly and well-compensated security forces. (Paden, 2016).

Since this pledge however, the murderous activities of the herdsmen have increased significantly not only in intensity but in spread. None of the country's 6 geo-political zones has been left untouched. The issue is consequently that of national security, which buck stops at the President's table. However, the manner in which Buhari's government handled the problem has left much to be desired. These have ranged from a culture of silence to stereotypical press statements, condemning the attacks and ordering the Police to ensure that normalcy was restored quickly. The President's order to the Inspector General of Police to relocate to Benue State until full security was restored, after the Agatu massacre, went unheeded (Punch, 2018).

The inept attitude of the government toward the problem has not gone unnoticed by the international community. Indictments came on the floor of the British House of Lords. According to David Alton, "Beyond intermittent verbal condemnations, I cannot see much practical action that has been taken to end the violence, which has emboldened the herdsmen even further" (Ogundipe 2018). Furthermore, the government received more knocks from Denis Tunnicliffe, another member of the British Parliament, who observed that, "Despite the herder militia taking more lives during 2015, 2016 and 2017 than Boko Haram, President Buhari...has been accused of turning a blind eye" (Ogundipe 2018).

Omole, a security expert had opined that President Buhari's reluctance to exercise his immense powers would continue to fuel conspiracy theories that he knew more about

the killings than he has admitted, "otherwise he should have acted long before now" (Onomuakpokpo, 2018). Matters have not been helped by a number of tactless statements coming from government quarters. The President had stated that he should not be held responsible for the killing of Nigerians by suspected Fulani herdsmen in different parts of the country (New Telegraph 2018). In a manner considered insensitive to the bereaved and victims of Fulani herdsmen attacks at Agatu in Benue State, the President declared that Agatu people should learn to live in peace with their neighbours (Daily Post, 2018). Such statements made some Nigerians wonder why they should not hold him responsible for their security. In his pre-election campaign, he had promised to tackle insecurity. He is Fulani like the killers. He is also a patron of MACBAN which serves as the mouthpiece of the killer-herdsmen, readily seizing every opportunity to justify their killings. The failed expectation was that he would have used his close association with them to rein them in. Mr. Lai Muhammed, the government spokesman ridiculously continued to blame the Fulani herdsmen-farmer clashes on what he called fake news (Radio Nigeria, 2018 November 18, Politics Nation-wide). During a visit to China, the President expressed disappointment with the Nigerian media's reportage of what he trivialized as "misunderstanding" between herdsmen and farmers, thereby insinuating that journalists were responsible for the escalation of the conflicts. One is left wondering when reporting such unfortunate events, backed-up with overwhelming evidence, became "fake news". The above would tend to suggest that the federal government is yet to fully grasp the enormity of the security challenges created by the activities of Fulani herdsmen and their possible consequences. This state of affairs has perhaps informed why it did not give the situation the desired attention. It continued to point accusing fingers at everyone else but itself. Meanwhile the killings by the herdsmen continued. The culture of silence and denial is the road that inexorably leads to suspicion by many Nigerians of a sinister motive by the government.

State Governors in whose states the herdsmen militia have been ravaging, have practically nothing with which to effectively check the menace. The Governor has no control over the state Police Commissioner who is appointed by the Federal Government and who is in no way accountable to the Governor and therefore cannot take orders from him. So the Governor remains helpless in the face of carnage and atrocities unfolding in his state. The appointment and control of the state Police chief would not have become an issue if the body had lived up to expectation in responding to the crisis. The Police are charged with the responsibility of maintaining internal security within which purview the herdsmen-farmers clashes fall. With all the accolades the Nigeria Police have received because of their exemplary performance at various international peacekeeping missions, much had been expected from them in dealing with the issue in question. Unfortunately and strangely, it has been impossible for the Police to replicate this sterling performance in Nigeria. Their response has been stereotypical and can be summarized as follows:

- ✓ Deployment always after attack
- ✓ 'No arrests have so far been made'
- ✓ Imposition of curfew

- ✓ 'Calm has returned to the area'
- ✓ Investigations are ongoing (in perpetuity)
- ✓ Withdrawal of personnel
- ✓ Another attack

There is no doubt that the Nigerian security architecture has the capacity to decisively deal with the Fulani herdsmen. Gradually however, not a few are beginning to express reservations about their abysmal failure to handle the situation. Indeed some of their actions and inactions have made many wonder if they are not biased in favour of the herdsmen. There have been reported cases of truck load of armed Fulani intercepted on the highway who confessed that they were "imported" to attack specific farming communities (Punch 2016). After the initial headlines, the cases "died". No prosecution. No further information on them. The Police have also failed to enforce the law which prohibits the possession and use of unlicensed firearms which have been consistently violated by the Fulani herdsmen. Amadi (2017) records that the herdsmen roam the bushes and streets in broad daylight with these sophisticated weapons, while the police has done nothing to retrieve them. Rather, the latter occasionally conducts what it calls mop-up exercises aimed at retrieving whatever weapons the settled-farming communities were in possession of (Vanguard 2018) for reasons best known to them.

Apparently it was such pictures as painted above and a catalogue of other unsavory incidents regarding the Nigerian Police, that a report released in 2016 by the International Police Science Association (IPSA) and the Institute for Economics and Peace ranked the Nigeria Police as the worst in the world in terms of its ability to handle internal security challenges (WISPI 2016). The study had been conducted in 127 countries. This show of shame characteristically did not seem to mean much to those who should either have resigned or sought for immediate reforms in the force.

The government also failed to rise above perceived ethnic chauvinism. Most the security outfits in the country under Buhari are headed by the Fulani. In a multi-ethnic and multi-religious country, these lopsided appointments have added more ammunition to the arsenal of those who suspect him of having hidden agenda aimed at Fulani domination. They suspect that it is for this reason that the well-trained security officers in the country look the other way each time any issue involving atrocities by Fulani herdsmen are reported. The late deployment of the police in the affected communities which allowed the better armed herdsmen enough time to completely sack and occupy the affected areas have portrayed the police as pro-Fulani herdsmen. Even after deployment, little effort is made to get the new herdsmen "occupants" to vacate the areas for the owners of the land. Therefore the latter were often herded into derelict Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps. The apparent lack of intelligence on the part of the Police is worrisome. The situation was such that the herdsmen became so emboldened as to write letters to communities ahead of time, informing them of impending attacks. For instance, Governor Orton of Benue State had to publicly acknowledge receipt of such letter to compel the police to respond at a point (Punch 2018). Strangely though, the police was even known to have attempted to block self-help effort by the state to check the menace. It took a court ruling to restrain the police from

proscribing Benue Livestock Guards on business of implementing the State Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establishment law (Daily Post 2018).

Considering that assurance of security was one of the cardinal premises upon which President Muhammadu Buhari was elected in 2015, it would not have been out of place to say that the prevailing security situation in Nigeria suggests an unmitigated failure on the part of his administration. The herdsmen-farmer clashes, which hitherto had been scattered and far-between, became more regular and better coordinated with MACBAN apparently with detailed information on the attacks shortly after each incident. The herdsmen attacks also became more destructive and deadly, recording unprecedented number of casualties. They became more daring as they intimidated their victims out of their ancestral homelands while taking over such "vacated" places with their cattle. The farmers are unable to fight back because they lack weapons and are always taken by surprise as most of the attacks took place in the night. The admission by the President that some of the herdsmen militia were militants who escaped from Libya after the overthrow of late President Muammar Ghadaffi should have jarred the security bodies in Nigeria to be more alive to their responsibilities. The decisions, approaches and inactions of the police and the military especially, in the face of these challenges, have also engendered fear in the people and have made it difficult for them to fight and defend their lands from the rampaging herdsmen. A group of men in a communal meeting at Awgu, in Enugu State, deliberating on how to secure the release of their women abducted by some herdsmen were rounded up by the army and handed over to the police (Daily Post 2016). It took the intervention of the Enugu State Governor, Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi, to bail them after they appeared in a court at Umuahia, Abia State capital. The farming communities feel intimidated, the herdsmen feel they are untouchable and continue with silent and isolated kidnap, abductions, rape, armed robbery and outright killing of settled farmers. The latter cannot fight back but often recourse to peaceful demonstrations in the forlorn hope of drawing attention to their plight.

Feeling protected by belonging to the same ethnic group as the President Buhari, and deriving inspiration from the fact that they share a lot in common with the leadership of the various security agencies in the country, the Fulani herdsmen have failed to appreciate the ill-feelings their dastardly activities are generating in the victims across the country. The unity such acts are engendering in the latter can also be ominous. The herdsmen appear to forget that power is transient. In the event of a sudden collective effort on the part of their victims and a coordinated rise against them, the international community would be quick to adjudge the result genocide because it could be quite some slaughter. The ominous call by Theophilus Danjuma, a retired General of the Nigerian Army, and a former Defence Minister, for Nigerians to rise up and defend themselves should serve as warning to all concerned,

Everyone of us must rise up. The Armed Forces are not neutral. They collude with the bandits that kill Nigerians. They facilitate their movement. They cover them. If you are depending on the Armed Forces to stop the killings, you will die one by one. This ethnic cleansing must stop... in all the

states in Nigeria. Otherwise, Somalia will be a child's play. (Agwaza, 2018, Tribune March 25)

## VI. CONCLUSION

This paper identified that the herder-farmer clashes in Nigeria are not new. However, the return of civilian rule in 1999 saw to its escalation and indeed the casualty rates reaching unprecedented heights. The spread of the crisis is such that it cut across the entire 6 geo-political zones of the country. The massive mindless killings by the Fulani-herdsmen made the international community classify it as a terrorist organization. This paper also examined the causes of the imbroglio and found that this was a problem that was allowed to escalate by successive administrations, especially the government elected in 2015. It was from this time for some inexplicable reasons, culminating in conspiracy theories, the clashes escalated in intensity, spread and casualties. Security agencies appear indifferent to the attacks and have been accused of supporting the herdsmen. The latter, emboldened by this attitude have continued to perpetrate wanton destruction of lives and property. The clashes portend very serious threat to the country's food security as farmers have been uprooted from their farms, uncertain when it would be safe to return. Behind the feeling of fear for the Fulani that the situation appears to have engendered in some of the attacked groups, lies the masked ill-feeling toward them which does not augur well for the country's unity. Be that as it may, it is the opinion of this writer that it is still possible to find a permanent solution to the problem if the following recommendations are adopted and implemented.

## VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

A situation as has been created by the herder-farmer clashes would require a multi-faceted approach to deal with. Some of these include:

- ✓ The abolition of open grazing and their replacement with ranches, which is the modern and productive way it is practiced in more developed parts of the world. For a start, the grazing reserves project (Awogbade, 1987) abandoned in northern Nigeria, should be resuscitated by the government and developed to international standard with the herders and their herds encouraged to go back to them.
- ✓ In the event of some of the herders opting to ply their trade elsewhere, the property should be acquired from willing communities, established and managed by individual herders. By implication, it would not be advisable for the government in this case to, confiscate farms of the people and hand same over to the Fulani herdsmen.
- ✓ Immediate disarming of the Fulani herdsmen of their deadly weapons and ensuring they do not have access to such weapons in the future. The providers/suppliers of such weapons should also be prosecuted.
- ✓ The arrest and prosecution of killer herdsmen, cattle rustlers and the like by relevant security agencies. For once, justice should be done and be seen to have been done. This should serve as deterrent to future perpetrators.
- ✓ The police should increase its intelligence gathering machinery to forestall any future occurrence.
- ✓ The police should see local vigilante groups as partners in progress to monitor the activities of cattle rustlers and the herdsmen especially with regards to the latter's other nefarious activities such as rape and armed robbery. A similar arrangement between the military and civilian Joint-Task-Force (JTF) in Borno yielded very fruitful results against Book Haram.
- ✓ The settled farmers should also be willing to live in peace with the herders in the event that the latter chose to acquire and invest in their lands.
- ✓ There should also be a mental re-orientation of the herdsmen that all the bushes do not belong to Buhari and consequently themselves, but to the settled communities where they are located
- ✓ It is of utmost importance that the appointment of heads of the various security agencies in the country should adhere strictly to the provision of the constitution to leave people with a sense of belonging and diminish the impression that an ethnic group, out of hundreds is out to dominate others.
- ✓ Plundered villages should be rebuilt
- ✓ Compensation should also be paid to the victims of the attacks for the destruction visited on their farms.

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