

States and Local Government Creations in Nigeria: A Veritable Tool for the Economic Underdevelopment of the Minorities

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Abstract

The creation of states and local governments anywhere in the world has been a veritable instrument to drive and achieve meaningful development and bring governance structure and processes closer to the people. It is indeed one of the models through which development could easily be fostered across all regions in Nigeria. This paper examines states' and local governments' creation in Nigeria to determine whether the practice has achieved its universal purpose or otherwise, especially as it affects the minorities and people of the Niger Delta. Employing historical research methods and using both primary and secondary data, as well as the political economy framework, the paper establishes that the practice of Nigeria has rather underdeveloped the minority and oil-bearing regions in Nigeria. The experiment was purely designed for political expediency at the time and it is important to note that state and local government creation in Nigeria seems to be a veritable tool to undermine and under-develop the minority ethnic groups whose natural resources (the black gold) are used to service the entire nation and develop Lagos, Abuja and other parts of the country, with minimal amounts left to service the area where these natural resources are extracted. This has led to a series of conflicts that are still raging to date, with the minorities of South-South Nigeria demanding justice and the control of their resources through the application of fiscal federalism. They concluded that state and local government creation in Nigeria, rather than being a tool for the development of the minorities, is designed to selfishly enrich the major ethnic groups and recommends amongst others fiscal federalism as a means of assuaging the fears of continuous economic underdevelopment of the minorities by the majority ethnic groups.

Background to the Study

The Nigerian state is a federation of 36 states, a federal capital territory (FCT) and 774 local government areas. To understand the various dimensions of governance capacity at the state and local levels, it is imperative to begin by appreciating the changing federal context within which state and local governments were formed. Egobueze and Ojirika state:

"Nigeria was initially inhabited by various independent ethnic groups with defined geographical territories that exercised authority over their people. The society was generally pre-capitalist, but the advent of colonialism fused these groups and integrated Nigeria into the world capitalist system. Since colonialism did not need to create a capitalist state in Nigeria to obtain raw materials for British industries or control and protect the market for the metropolis, it introduced elements of capitalism but not capitalism". (Egobueze and Ojirika 1999-2016)

The politics of state and local government creation in Nigeria is as old as the country itself. The Nigerian state was a product of the 1914 amalgamation of Northern and Southern protectorates by Lord Lugard. There were no concrete objective criteria for the amalgamation except for the administrative expediency incubated by the exploitative tendency of the colonial lords. As a result, there was no consideration for cultural affinity or geographical contiguity despite natural demarcations such as rivers-like the River Niger and River Benue with confluence at the North Central town of Lokoja -and other natural geographical boundaries. The process of creating states and local governments sowed the seed for regionalism which was planted. But only slowly germinated from three regions to the current 36 States with a Federal Capital Territory located in Abuja. The creation of states and local governments was conceived as a devolution of power ostensibly to enable full participation of individual ethnic configurations in the federation to take full part in the political, economic and social development of the federation. It was indeed predicated on opening avenues for effective geopolitical alignment which was needed to allay the inhibited fears of domination that many ethnic groups nursed against themselves and the acrimonies which greeted the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern protectorate Also, it is a catalyst for the decentralization of governance, which is very desirable in a federal structure of government. Importantly. The notion of decentralization came into fruition through state and local government creation as evidenced in 1914, when the North and South were amalgamated. The 1946 Richards Constitution was a watershed in the introduction of regionalism in Nigeria. It established three regional councils. One each in the North, East and West.

The Northern regional council was divided into two houses, but the councils of the West and the East consisted of only one House each. That in itself showed the fraudulent interest of the colonial administration in causing conflict in the evolving state of Nigeria. Essentially, the major functions of both Houses were to make laws for easy administration of the regions. The creation of the three regions from the three major ethnic groups in Nigeria, namely the Hausa Fulani, Ibs and Yorubas irritated and

increased the agitations of the minorities in their region. In September 1957, the Willink Commission was set up to address the problem of minorities. This was due to the agitation for the creation of Calabar, Ogoja and Rivers States as well as the middle belt. The commission, however, recommended the creation of the Mid-Western region, which came into being as a result of the agitation from the minorities. It is noted that the acrimonious contestations of the minorities for the Creation of new states and local government councils pre-dated the political independence of Nigeria in 1960. Despite these agitations, the nation was granted independence with three regions, namely: Northern, Eastern and Western Regions and a Federal Capital Territory located in Lagos.

Since independence, and especially during the military era, creating states and local government areas had become enormously popular in the country. Indeed, it has been used as an instrument for socioeconomic and political manoeuvring of the nation's terrain. From 1960 till date, the nation has witnessed a total number of six state creation exercises. Thus, the country grew from three regions in 1946 to four regions in 1963 with the creation of the Midwestern Region. In 1967 during the raging Civil war, General Gowon created twelve states in 1967. Furthermore, in 1976, General Murtala Mohammed created seven more states, bringing the number to nineteen- states. In 1987, General Ibrahim Babangida increased the number to twenty-one when he created Akwa-Ibom and Katsina states. In addition, in 1991, Babangida increased the number to thirty states. This action did not quench the appetite of most Nigerians as the agitation increased. On October 1st, 1996, the dictator at the saddle. General Sani Abacha altered the nation's geopolitical landscape once again, with the creation of six additional states placing it at the current thirty-six states.

Local Government creation has always accompanied state creation. Just as the states were created, they were accompanied by corresponding local government councils. Consequently, local government councils were created in 1989, 1990, 1991, and 1996. Thus, today, Nigeria has 774 local government councils. One of the major assumptions was that the local governments needed to meet the challenges posed by the diversity in Nigeria (Aborisade 2006). To date, the three regions at independence have been partitioned into thirty-six states and a 'federal capital territory', and seven hundred and seventy-four local government areas. Despite these, the tempo of clamours for new states and local government areas remained very high throughout the nation. The objective of this paper, therefore, is to examine if state and local government creation in Nigeria is a veritable tool for the economic underdevelopment of minorities.

Theoretical Framework

To explain the phenomenon under study, and properly understand the nature and dynamics of contemporary Nigerian politics, a reflection of our historical antecedents to evaluate how Nigerian society has evolved since the advent of imperialism and colonialism and understand the socio-economic conditions of their present material base is significant. This must be accompanied by an appraisal of her Contemporary experience. (Egobueze and Ojirika 1999-2016)

The framework used in this research is the Marxist political economy perspective. Esien and Okio note:

"Modern political economy originated from moral philosophy in the 18th century as the study of the economies of states and polities, particularly as relating to morality, ethics, and equity. But today, where it is not used as a synonym for economics, political economy broadly refers to an interdisciplinary approach that applies economic methods to the analyses of how political outcomes and institutions affect economic policies and human wellbeing". (Esien and Okio 2013).

This approach is adopted basically because state and local government creation is an ideology and therefore serves the interest of different classes in different ways. The basic underpinning motif in the Marxist framework is the understanding and interpretation of society and politics. Every state, thus, represents a special apparatus for coercing people and it is therefore an organ of class rule. That is for the ultimate refinement of injustice and oppression.

An important contribution of Marx to the dominant social discourses is focused on the importance of ideology in the analysis of human history and contemporary development studies. In the Marxian perspective, ideology is a system of thought; the mental structure, and patterns of rationalization that shape conduct and how people approach issues. An economic ideology, particularly, defines how a society confronts the fundamental economic problems of how to produce, what to produce, for whom to produce, and how to achieve economic development, and reduce unemployment and poverty. In this context, Marxism distinguishes itself from economic theory on being both logical and normative rather than merely attempting to explain reality."

The framework assists in explaining and understanding politics and its internal dynamics, it focuses attention on class struggle. The basic question set forth by this perspective is how the economy should be managed and used. It perceives capitalism, imperialism and the proletarian struggle against the ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange as the main tenets of politics Marxist political economy approach is characterized by the method of dialectical materialism. Marx demonstrated the following facts about capitalism that are true for all ages:

Capitalist production necessarily involves conflicts in production and distribution. Competition is an essential feature of capitalism, but it often generates instability, crises and unemployment, showing that capitalism is not only the most productive system but also the most systematically destructive mode of production in history.

Capitalist economies are unstable because of the conflicting forces of extraction, realization and accumulation of surplus value under competitive conditions. This instability is structural and even the best economic policies cannot avoid it completely.

This method has certain important features which make it possible as a scientific method of analysis. The approach regards material production as the bane of socio-political activities. Economic need is man's primary activity; hence every society is saddled with the task of production. Every society at different stages of development has a different mode of production corresponding to the objective material condition. Each mode of production develops its productive forces and production relations in the sense that it puts the interest of the producers at crossroads with the interest of the owners of the means of production. In effect. The two are in antagonistic relations with each other. Thus, the dialectical method not only recognized the primacy of material production relations but more importantly the dynamics and contradictions inherent in different production systems. These important features will be useful in the analysis of the reasons behind state and local government creation in Nigeria and the inherent development challenges of minorities.

With Marxism, there are many possible vantage points from which one can discuss the political economy. Marxists have seen political connotations in the very separation of civil society from the public arena (limiting rights and equality to the latter), the class process by which surplus value is "appropriated" under capitalism, the role of the state in managing the interests and affairs of capital, political (that is, state-backed) guarantees of property rights, revolutionary activity to alter the political institutions of capitalism and the bargaining between labour and capital for control of the economic surplus. In reviewing the reasons for state and local government creation in Nigeria, we shall not fail to investigate the socioeconomic benefits, which in the main is the basis of the conflict. Thus, it is important to posit that the politics of state and local government creation is determined by the socio-economic structure of the country. The importance attached to classes in the Marxist political economy framework will enable us to tackle such questions as:

1. To what extent does dichotomy or sectionalism serve the respective interests of the different classes in Kano State and Bayelsa State?
2. Which section or group in Nigeria benefits most from the politics of state creation in the country?
3. Which action(s) of the privileged ruling oligarchy exacerbate state creation?
4. Do minorities' benefit economically from state and local government creation?
5. Why should Kano State have 44 Local Government Councils and Bayelsa State only 8 Local Government Councils? What are the financial impacts of each of these states on the Nigerian economy?
6. What are the causes of this imbalance and how does it affect the configuration of Nigeria?
7. How do politics affect economic outcomes, which have implications for development?

The dynamics of this method will help us to trace the development of ethnicity or sectionalism in Nigeria. Societies and all social processes are always in motion, and their evolution is determined by inherent contradictions. The questions posited above would

greatly drive the general outlook of this research and would support the explanation of the various contradictions introduced in the process of state and local government creation in Nigeria. It would also assist us in our explanation of the fact that state and local government creation is a veritable tool for the underdevelopment of the minorities in Nigeria whose natural resources, gotten from their lands and waters, are used for the development of the entire country.

The Evolution of the Nigerian State

Eboh states that Nigeria is not a nation, it is rather a multinational state, made up of about 400 nationalities, under one political federation, brought together by history (Eboh 1989). Some of the ethnic groups such as the Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba are regarded as the major ethnic groups while the rest are regarded as minorities. Abu posits that "the current political map of Nigeria owes its origin to the activities and functions of British interests and authorities operating in the nation during the earliest days of the 19th century (Abu 2005). According to Online Nigeria, "the quest for markets, raw materials and the need to exert political influence overseas led Britain to journey to places distant as Wikki in the present day Borno and Sokoto in Nigeria". (Onlinenigeria 2011).

Fafowora posits that "the British colonial policy in Africa was vastly different from the French colonial policy of assimilation that envisioned its colonies as possible French states in future. Lugard and most of his administrative successors in Nigeria did not have such a vision for Nigeria" (Fafowora 2013), According to Agagu, "the scramble for Africa and its ultimate partition among the various European powers during the Berlin conference 1886, provide a clue to understanding the nature and motive of the state that emerged in Africa (Agagu 2004). Fafowora opines thus: "the Africans were neither present at the Berlin Conference nor even consulted about the manner their territories were divided among European powers. Hence, the Nigerian state is a product or output of colonial creation and influence (Fafowora 2013). This is so because, until 1900, the landmasses and territory known today as Nigeria existed as several independent and sometimes hostile national states with heterogeneous linguistic and cultural differences. "It is imperative to state that the Nigerian state falls into the category of the nation which Thomas Hobbes called commonwealth by acquisition, the consequence of this is that the Nigerian state is a product of forced union (Obasanjo 1980; Kolawole, 2004).

In 1849, the British government appointed John Beecroft as the Governor of the Bights of Benin and Bonny. His job was to direct and control commercial relations with coastal city States. Backed by fierce gunboats, he influenced and regulated the internal affairs of these states and processes which culminated in the imposition of Colonial authority (Online Nigeria, 2011). In 1861, Lagos was annexed and proclaimed a crown colony. Hence, through the initiative of the United Africa Company, formed by George Goldie, and through an amalgamation of British firms in 1879, most of the regions which became Northern Nigeria were preserved as a British sphere to the chagrin of French and German contenders (Online Nigeria, 2011). The company received a charter to administer it until 1899 when the charter was revoked (Online Nigeria, 2011). "By 1900, the British

government took over the control of the Northern region from the company and proclaimed it the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria (Babawale, 1998). The colony and Protectorate of Lagos Was distinct entity at that time. By 1906, the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria was amalgamated together With Lagos, which had been proclaimed a crown colony in 1861. The two were subsequently titled the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria (Babawale 1998).

The British effort at securing administrative convenience in the governance of these different ethnic groups led to the amalgamation of the two protectorates in 1914. "France and England seized Cameroon from Germany during World War 1, which she administered as part of Nigeria. On October 1st. In 1960 Nigeria became an independent nation. In 1961, a plebiscite was held in Cameroon and Southern Cameroon voted to join Northern Cameroon. With the separation of Southern Cameroon, the external boundaries of Nigeria attained their present form (Abu, 2005).

The Politics of States and Local Government Creation Exercises in Nigeria

The Nigerian state was contrived on a false premise of oneness to exploit her resources. The implication of this is that the Nigerian state is a product of a forced union. The whole ethnic group never came together to agree to form a union. The historical circumstances of her concerning amalgam of divergent Ecclesialth differences in language, culture, values and beliefs. It is a historical irony that from the moment of amalgamation in January 1914, Online Nigeriampts are still being continuously made to wedge together the differences to have a united, unified and cohesive state. Nigeria is a diverse and plural society with a lot of cleavages. Some of these are related to ethnic, religious, cultural, linguistic, and geopolitical differences. Others consist of social and economic diversities, but ethnic heterogeneity is the most pronounced of all, with religious sentimentalism ranking second. This has greatly affected the growth and development of politics in the state.

The historicity of the politics of state creation in Nigeria arose from the colonial experience of the country, especially, in the 1946 pre-independence constitution of Sir Arthur Richards, the Governor-General who created three uneven regions out of the amalgamated Northern and Southern protectorates in 1945. Omotosho reiterated that "the Nigerian state's creation experiences have been quite dramatic, state re-organization in the country have tended to be cyclical or self-perpetuating with each restructuring merely provoking agitation for further reorganization (Omotosho 2004). One could not but agree that what followed when the military took over was a clear-cut detour from the established norms. The long period of military interregnum had awoken ethnic consciousness and tribal stratification in the Nigerian polity. For instance, with the military intervention in 1966 came the tribal consciousness that developed into civil war, which end product culminated in the slogan, One Nigeria, as adopted by General Yakubu Gowon's administration. This was done in his desperate bid to reunite the country which had been devastated by suspicion engendered by tribal Sentiment, Ikporukpo explains

that the criteria for state creation included ethnic affinity, geographical contiguity; population; land area; viability of new and Old state; cultural incompatibility and self-determination, (Ikporukpo 1996) etc. The capacity of jurisdictional partitioning to rectify inequalities through the activities of local states is one of the driving forces behind the demand for more states. Where the equitable distribution of resources is an explicit objective of spatial engineering In Nigeria, the intents of local and state creation are hardly altruistic. Noble or patriotic the core of the argument advanced in support of partitioning in Nigeria centred on the Issue of equity About access to social and economic infrastructure. In the same vein, the agitations for state and local governments are seen as a sort of ethnic, political and economic strategy which consider the number of states from each ethnic group as added leverage for a more equitable share of national resources. This statement was corroborated by Obasanjo When he depicted thus, in fact, there is clear evidence that the creation of local government has been for reasons that not only negate the objectives and principles of the 1976 reform but in some cases, are clear expressions of patronage by revenue distribution to favour areas or interest groups (Ukiwo, 2007). 20 More so, "No sooner than the States and local governments are created, then they are caught up in daunting administrative challenges and problems such as poor infrastructural facilities, excessively high wage bills, low levels of internally generated revenue, dwindling budgets, allocation of scarce resources to unproductive capital projects, massive corruption and wastage through inflated contracts, outright theft of public money and acrimonious battles Over assets sharing, to mention just a few, yet no hope of a stop to the desire for "own state" by the ethnic rivals (Omotosho, 2004).

The original criteria for state creation in Nigeria, according to Suberu (1999), was derived from minority opposition to the three regions' federal structure, which secured autonomy and hegemony for the Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo majority nationalities in the Yoruba and Igbo majority nationalities in the Northern, Western and Eastern Regions respectively (Suberu 1999). Larry Diamond, quoted in Omotosho 2004, rightly observed along the same line. Ethnic minority fears and grievances centred on obtaining a fair share of rewards and resources of an expanding economy and States, contracts, loans, scholarships, and processing plants. Minority demands for separate states were based on the belief actively promoted by their leader that minorities were being cheated in the distribution of those resources by the majority-dominated regional governments (Omotosho, 2004). Domination refers to official discrimination in employment. Distribution of amenities and official infrastructure facilities (Abu 2005). Each of the competing groups would stop at nothing to make sure that the balance tilts in their favour when it comes to the creation of states, local government identification of infrastructure or other employment-generating schemes. The belief is strong that the military leaders who had taken most of these decisions had exercised their powers under the influence of inducements by groups competing for the use of such discretionary powers in their favour (Abu 2005). Odinkalu highlighted three explosive issues in Nigeria's state creation see that are conveniently not spelt out. One is political equity in a multi-ethnic country in which ethnic identity often trumps civic Identity (Odinkalu 2020).

The problem is that states are the bases for the distribution of the federation's assets and liabilities not for the generation of its earnings. There are currently only thirty-six states and one Federal Capital Territory (FCT) to be shared among 370 ethnic and national groups. These states and local government tents are not enough to go around the various ethnic groups. Therefore, several ethnic groups must coexist Within the Same state. This creates majorities and minorities within the same state, with attendant claims and counterclaims of domination and Subjugation; exclusion and marginalization; indigene and settler. Therefore, instead of state creation to solve these problems, it has tended to deepen them (Odinkalu 2020). The second, according to the scholar is Fiscal prudence. Running states and local governments costs a lot of money. States require human assets that must be remunerated and a new elite whose appetites must be funded. Even before development takes place. This means more Overheads and recurrent expenditure for a state that could not raise its revenue internally. Except for Lagos, virtually all the states depend on federally collected revenue for their stipends and overheads (Odinkalu, 2011). The third is national security. This accordingly was initiated by the military regime of General Yakubu Gowon on the eve of the outbreak of the Nigeria Civil War on 27 May 1967, and national security remained perhaps the controlling imperative for state creation under the military. Imperative translated into a need to eliminate the capacity of any of Nigeria's Constituent territories to wage war against the centre. This may have justified the fiscal dependency of states on the federation as an objective in itself. In a democratic dispensation, such dependency could itself become a source of national security threat (Odinkalu 2020). Since 1954 when the minority groups in Nigeria first demanded from the colonial government, the creation of autonomous divisions, to ensure equity and justice in the Nigerian federal structure, the demands for the creation of state and local governments by various ethnic groups have become a recurring phenomenon in the Nigerian. What has aggravated this arrant lack of effectiveness, according to Mimiko, was the lack of an objective set of criteria for state creation. Devoid of this, state creation soon became an instrument in political patronage and one designed to enhance the competitive edge of particular tender concerning hat became dominant ecclesial points in the historical trajectory of Nigeria. And as long as there are no objective criteria for the creation of states, for so loon line Nigeria Lamour for new states in Nigeria continue (Mimiko 2020).

State Creation and the Undevelopment of the Minorities in Nigeria

This research has established that the creation of local government areas is one of the instruments and schemes used by northern military rulers to transfer the proceeds of the Niger Delta oil revenues for the benefit and development of the north, to the detriment of the Niger Delta region. This scheme which has been institutionalized during the long period of military rule in Nigeria has contributed to the impoverishment and underdevelopment of the Niger Delta region and ipso-facto the crises, agitations and conflicts raging in the region. The state creation history shows a glaring imbalance between the majority tribes of especially the north and west and the minority tribes of the south-south as well as the south-east in the various state creation exercises of Yakubu Gowon (1967), Murtala Mohammed (1976), Ibrahim Babangida (1987, 1991) and Sani Abacha (1996).

Twelve (12) States Were Created by Yakubu Gowon in 1967

Benue - Plateau State
East Central State
West - Central State
Kano State
Lagos State
Mid-Western State
North-Central State
North-Eastern State
North-Western State
Rivers State
South-Eastern State
Western State

Nineteen (19) States Were Created by Murtala Mohammed in 1976

No. of states	No. Of Local Govt. Areas
Anambra State	21
Bauchi State	20
Benue State	23
Bendel State	-
Borno State	27
Cross-Rivers State	18
Gongola State	-
Imo State	27
Kaduna State	23
Kano State	44
Kwara State	61
Lagos State	20
Niger State	25
Ogun State	20
Plateau State	17
Oyo State	33
Ondo State	18
Rivers State	23
Sokoto State	23

Two (2) States Were Created by Ibrahim Babangida on 17th September, 1987

No. Of States	No. Of Local Govt. Areas
Akwa - Ibom State	31
Katsina State	34

Nine (9) States Were Created by Ibrahim Babangida on the 27th AuG. , 1991

No. Of States	No. Of Local Govt. Areas
Abia State	17
Delta State	25
Enugu State	17
Jigawa State	27
Kebbi State	21
Kogi State	21
Osun State	30
Taraba State	16
Yobe State	17

Six (6) States were Created by Sani Abacha On 1st October 1996

No. Of States	No. Of Local Govt. Areas
Bayelsa State	8
Ebonyi State	13
Ekiti State	16
Gombe State	11
Nasarawa State	13
Zamfara State	14

Source: Agonies of the Niger Delta Socio-Economic and Political Crises, S. Ukata 2011, 93-94.

From the state creation exercises, we observe that after the first Yakubu Gowon's 12 states, while the states of the majority tribes of north and west have been split into several states and local governments, the splitting of the minorities of the Niger Delta region and eastern Nigeria were either delayed or split just into two since 1967. For instance, after the creation of Rivers State in 1967 by Gowon's regime, it was only in 1996 that the state was split into Rivers and Bayelsa with only a total of 31 (Rivers 23; Bayelsa 8) local government areas while Kano state that was created the same year with Rivers state got split into Kano and Jigawa states in 1991 with a total of 71 (Kano 44; Jigawa 27) local government areas.

In the same vein, the other states of the north and west created in 1967 have been split into three (3) states or more with multiple local governments while the other states in the Niger Delta region of Gowon creation such as South Eastern, Mid - Western state and East - Central states got split into just two states, after much delay. The East - Central state got similar treatments. This pattern in state and local government creations has implications for revenue allocation and sharing of the benefits of oil proceeds. The implication is that during the monthly allocation of federal revenue, in consonance with the practice of fiscal centralism, these states of the north and west always got more allocations due to the numerical preponderance of their local government areas. In this way, over the years, funds derived from the Niger Delta have been transferred to the northern states to the

detriment of the Niger Delta region and eastern states so affected. This institutionalized structural imbalance in the Nigerian federation has ensured a steady drain of the Niger Delta oil revenue to the north to finance their overall development, leaving the Niger Delta region poor and underdeveloped with a devastated and polluted environment. This situation among other factors identified in this study has led to crises, conflicts, agitations and militancy in the region.

Concluding Remarks

State and local government creation in Nigeria is an exercise designed to pauperize and under-develop the minorities, especially those of the Niger Delta, whose land bears the resources that sustain Nigeria. Economic adventurism is the focal point that has accentuated State and Local government creation in Nigeria in favour of the majority ethnic groups which dominate the institutions of government. Most of the States and local governments in the major ethnic groups cannot survive on their own without the resources generated from the minorities and centralized at the Federation Account. The monthly Federal Account Allocation Committee (FAAC) explains this factor. This has led to the clamour for resource control and increased sub-national revolts against injustices and the unwholesome domination of the major ethnic groups. The Niger Delta uprising is a point to mention.

Recommendations

To address the injustice, and achieve a stable state, fiscal federalism is advocated. This was the practice in the country in the First Republic and it encouraged local entrepreneurship and development according to the pace of states. This would stem the tide of hostility in Nigeria.

Also recommended is an increase in the fight against corruption which is a social milieu that is ravaging Nigeria. The Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) saga, is a case study. NDDC rather than working within its core mandate of developing the Niger Delta Region is used to develop strong individuals not even from the Niger Delta Region. The Niger Delta people are recruited into the Commission and used as puppets and surrogates by the cabals in Abuja composed of strong elites from the major ethnic groups and a few recruited from the minority ethnic groups in the Niger Delta. The forensic audit embarked on by the Commission should continue and the Financial Crime Commissions in Nigeria are advised to put adequate machinery in place to reshape the Commission. The Buhari administration's war against corruption should strongly spotlight the NDDC.

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