

## Ethnicity, Separatists Agitations and National Stability in Nigeria: A Study of the South East Geo-Political Zone (1999 – 2020)

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**Abstract.** The issue of national stability in Nigeria has become one of great concern both locally and internationally, this is because, since the beginning of the present fourth republic in 1999, the nation has been gripped by all sorts of crises which have threatened her existence. The resurgent separatist agitations by the mainly Igbo ethnic group of the South east geo-political zone has been a major crisis that has caused so many deaths, casualties and loss of property and despite the various measures taken by the Federal government including proscription of IPOB and designating the separatist group a terrorist organisation, the agitations has persisted and refused to abate. This study, therefore, is undertaken to unravel the motivations for the renewed separatist agitations and its implication on national stability amongst others. The study adopted the phenomenology research design and relied on qualitative data, with the interview guide as research instrument. Data were also sought from previous works on the subject in books, journals, newspapers, periodicals and other internet based sources and were content analysed. The population of the study are the people of the 5 states in the south east geo-political zone, with respondents from Imo and Abia States as the sample population. The study found out that the renewed agitations were as a result of the feeling of marginalisation of the Igbo people of South east zone by successive administrations since 1999. The study therefore, recommends that the issue of marginalisation should be addressed by the federal government, the equitable allocation of resources to all the geo-political zones should be prioritised by the government, that the option of dialogue with the agitators should be explored and the federal government should eschew the use of force and military strategy being used for now. Above all, referendum should be conducted to know the true feelings of the people in respect of the issue amongst others.

**Keywords:** Ethnicity, Separatist, Agitations, National stability, South east, Nigeria

### 1. Introduction

Nigeria has been described as a mosaic of over 250 different ethnic groups, with various religions, beliefs, and influences (Bouchat, 2013). Since the advent of democracy in 1999, the country has witnessed many crises, these crises have ranged from activities of terrorists (Boko Haram) in the North East in particular and some other parts of the North of the country, it has also witnessed spates of kidnappings and abductions for ransom across the nation. The incessant clashes between herdsmen and farmers, the activities of ethnic militia groups across the nation, the frequent communal and religious clashes as well as agitations for separatism from the Nigerian state by the South East geo-political zone in particular, all these crises have taken their toll on the Nigerian State.

There is no-gainsaying the fact that all nations need peace and stability to be able to make progress and achieve development. Without stability, no nation can develop and improve the well-being of its citizens. Fearon (2004:1) has noted that “civil wars of separatist nationalism raged around the globe in the 1990s, in the Balkans, India, Russia, Azerbaijan, Indonesia, Britain (Northern Ireland), Turkey, Georgia, the Philipines and Burma” amongst others. These wars according to him, have caused considerable strains on great power relations and important international institutions like NATO and the United Nations and a significant risk of nuclear war in South Asia.

The issue of national stability has been one of grave concern in Nigeria of recent, with local and international stakeholders in the Nigerian project worried about the worsening crises and insecurity across the nation. The renewed calls for separatism

by the South East geo-political zone since the return to democracy in this fourth republic in 1999 has been a source of great worry and by far the one of the biggest challenges confronting the nation for now. Ordinarily, given the low rate of success of separatists' movements in Africa in particular and the world at large (Englebert and Hummel, 2005., Tull, 2011, Bamfo, 2012) the agitation for separatism by groups in the South East zone shouldn't be taken seriously, but as observed by Wolff (2009) cited in Stothart (2014):

*self-determination disputes are typically among the most difficult, violent and widespread forms of conflict that nations and communities face. Self-determination has led to conflicts in places as diverse as Sri Lanka, Kashmir, Africa and Middle East and the Southeast Asia. These conflicts have displaced many people, destroyed national economies and cost millions of lives (p.3)*

According to Ezemenaka and Prouza (nd: 97), as valid as this low rate of success of secessionist movements in Africa may appear empirically, it fails to account for what could happen and what may not happen in the Nigerian context, they concluded that every single case of a secessionist movement in Africa is unique and so it is with the Nigerian context. This agitation by the predominantly Igbo ethnic group has a long history dating back to the 1960's with its attendant humanitarian, social and economic consequences, a resurgence at this period therefore, does not bode well for the country. It is against this background that this work seeks to investigate the South east separatist agitations.

The objectives of this study are:

- To examine the motivations for the separatist agitations of the South East zone of Nigeria between 1999-2019
- To determine the role of ethnicity in the agitations
- Assess government's response to the agitations
- To evaluate the implications of the agitations on national stability.

From the above objectives the work will seek to provide answers to the following research questions:

- What are the motivations for the separatist agitations of the South East zone since 1999?
- What is the role of ethnicity in the agitation?
- How has the federal government response strengthened national stability?

- What are the implications of the separatist agitations on national stability in Nigeria?

## 2. Methodology

The paper adopts the phenomenology research design, which relies on the "lived experiences of the people involved, or who were involved, with the issue that is being researched" (Green,1997; Holloway,1997; Kruger, 1998; Robinson and Reed, 1998). The population of the study is the entire people of the South East geo-political zone comprising of Abia, Anambra, Enugu, Ebonyi and Imo States. Since the study adopted the phenomenology research design, a sample size of 20 respondents purposively selected from the two sample states of Abia and Imo States were interviewed to complement the secondary data from Journals, newspapers, periodicals, textbooks and other internet sources. Data from the interviews were coded, transcribed and content analysed. The interviewees were made up of Academics, Journalists, Traditional Chiefs, Women, agitation activists and Unionists from the South East geo-political zone in Abia and Imo states which constitute the sample population. The interviews were conducted in Owerri, Nekede and Ahiara in Imo State and in Aba and Umuahia in Abia State. The choice of the two states were based on the fact that the leaders of the two separatist groups (Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) and the Indegenous People of Biafra (IPOB) are from the two states and it was believed (based on media reports) that separatist sentiments and activities were very high in the two states. The responses from the in-depth interviews were collated, coded and analysed based on the objectives of the research and together with the secondary data sources from desk reviews of journals, newspapers, books, periodicals, and other internet sources on the subject conclusions were drawn.

## 3. Conceptual Review

### 3.1 Ethnicity

Ethnicity is an important feature of human identity that manifests differently in different societies. It reflects diversity in the society whose internal harmony and stability depends on how ethnic diversity is accommodated in a pluralistic frame work of the state and society. According to Rehana and Gulshan (2015), pluralistic frame work includes those constitutional designs which guarantee the protection of ethnic identity. The state's failure in creating such institutions, leads towards a conflictual situation in

which one ethnic group feels insecure against the dominance of other. It has also been asserted that the field of research on ethnicity has become very heterogeneous and dynamic, and scholars have been trying to conceptualize it from different perspectives Eller (1999). He contends further that, in spite of these attempted theories the concept has remained slippery or fluid due to both terminological confusion and an inadequate knowledge of the details and background of specific cases (Eller, 1999). Some other scholars have also lent credence to the above assertion by saying that ethnicity is a very complex phenomenon Isajiw, 1993; Nnoli, 2007. It is always closely associated with political, economic, social, religious and other social views and interactions. The main elements of ethnicity according to Nnoli (1978) include “exclusiveness manifested in inter-group competition, conflict in relation to stiff competition, and the consciousness of being one in relation to others.”

Azeez, (2004:329) sees ethnicity as a sense of peoplehood that has its foundation in the combined remembrance of past experience and common aspiration. This definition by Azeez, according to Adamu and Ocheni (2016) clearly explains the recent incessant protest emanating from the Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MENDS), in the Eastern and South-South part of the country. Etang (2004) has observed that ethnicity is a derivative of the ethnic group which forms the basis of its articulation, that is, it is the existence of the group that makes ethnicity possible. From the various explanations, one can deduce that ethnicity in many multi-ethnic societies such as Nigeria is real, and most times exploited, or used by people and elites in particular to manipulate and mobilise the people for the attainment of their objectives, therefore, it is important to see it as an instrument for the socio-political and economic mobilisation in such societies. Osaghae (1995) has in fact defined ethnicity as “the employment or mobilisation of the ethnic identity and difference to gain advantage in situations of competition, conflict or cooperation” (p.11). The contention of this review is that ethnicity can be seen as the behaviour of ethnic groups in a multi-ethnic nation.

### 3.2 Separatism and Secession

These two concepts are often times used interchangeably by scholars, although, they do not mean the same thing theoretically. According to Kaufman and Conversi (2007), ‘much of this terminological inconsistency can be traced to the fact

that theories on nationalism in general, and studies of separatism as a subcategory of this branch, are interdisciplinary; historians, political scientists, and more recently sociologists are concerned with the field of nationalism’ (Kaufmann and Conversi 2007: 6) Rather than treating separatism and secessionism as equivalents, some scholars have distinguished between the two concepts. Lyon (1975) adopts the following definition of the two terms:

separatism; meaning a movement seeking to resist further incorporation, subordination within the larger political authority of which it is already a member, and secession, meaning a movement seeking to break away decisively from the existing principal political authority (cited in Navaratna-Bandara 1995: 4).

Lugard, Zechariah and Ngufwan (2013) contend that, Secession’ is a variant of self-determination and means the separation (withdrawal, dissociation or dismemberment) of one entity from another. According to Jaffrey and Tripathy (2013), it occurs when part of an existing state separates from that state to become a new state or to join with another. For Danspeckgruber and Gardner (2014), secession has to do with ‘...choices regarding the exercise of sovereignty and independent external relations (external self-determination.)’ While Sterio (2009) conceives secession under international law to refer to separation of a portion of an existing state, whereby the separating entity either seeks to become a new state or joins yet another state, and whereby the original state remains in existence without the breaking off territory. From the above, it is clear that the word secession has ‘contested meanings’ (Doyle, 2010:1). Pavikovic and Radan (2007:4) validate this view observing that “there is little consensus amongst scholars on the definition of secession”. However, different definitions of the phenomenon share the common assumption that “secession is synonymous with moving apart or withdrawing” (Anderson, 2013:345)

Wood (1981) defines separatism as the somewhat vague and encompassing terms that covers all acts of political alienation and desires for a reduction of central authority. Separatism thus may take the form of demands for provincial rights or local or regional autonomy. Secessionism on the other hand is the much narrower ideology of ultimate alienation, referring to the formal withdrawal from a central political authority on the basis of a claim to independent sovereign status (Wood 1981: 110). According to Pearson (1997: 18), separatism may be defined as: “The demand for sovereign independence for an ethnically-defined homeland in defiance of resident state authority.

For the purpose of this work, these two concepts will be used interchangeably, for as, Horowitz, (2005) has noted, tactics play a large role in the statement of objectives:

the often tactical nature of demands, their elasticity and even fickleness, the willingness of independence movements to settle for very much less than statehood, and the occasional interest of secessionists in capturing the whole of state if that proves possible – all of these argue for an inclusive conception of separatism and secession. Such a conception should embrace movements seeking a separate region within an existing state, as well as those seeking a separate and independent state (Horowitz,2005:169).

### 3.3 National Stability

National stability is widely considered to be the product of combined political, economic, and social variables. It is generally assessed as the composite performance of a nation across a variety of components or factors. Stability is related to state ability and legal public service of the state, righteousness, good governance and corruption, income, democracy and human rights (Karl and Goldfinch, 2012).

Lewis (2011) has identified poor governance and the zero sum game nature of Nigerian politics as the country's most important catalysts to instability. He stated further that the challenges to stability can be seen along political, social and economic dimensions with communal competition and conflict being important catalysts. Without a functioning state, it is perhaps difficult to even talk of public administration or governance and development is perhaps rather hope than actuality. Indeed, once a state ceases to function, development is more likely to be undermined catastrophically (Derouen Jnr and Goldfinch,2012). National stability for our purpose shall be seen as the same thing as a stable-democratic order. A stable democratic order is the only social order that guarantees individual's freedom, development and peace.

## 4. Theoretical Framework

This work is anchored on the Systems theory as espoused by David Easton (1956). Systems theory is a model of political analysis that explains the stability of the political system to convert inputs (demands and supports) to outputs (authoritative decisions) that please the majority of the people in the polity Enemuo (1999) Johari (2011) Olaniyi (2001) and Thomas (2013). The emphasis of the theory on the analysis of the factors that engender stability and

instability in the political system underpins its relevance to explaining the nexus between ethnicity, separatist sentiments and the question of national stability being faced by Nigeria. The political system within the Eastonian framework is an input and output mechanism which deals with political decisions and activities and performs integrative and adaptive functions necessary for the stability of the system Almond, (1965) Omodia and Aliu (2013) Thomas (2013). Obtaining a balance among input and output variables of the political system is crucial to its capacity to overcome inevitable stresses and frictions as well as maintenance of stability and survival of the system (Omodia and Aliu, 2013).

The theory has been criticized as an abstraction whose relation to empirical politics is impossible to establish (Verma, 1975) Easton's systems analysis has also been criticized as being confined to the question of locating and distributing power in the political system as well as being concerned more with persistence and adaptation of the political as also with the regulation of stress, stability, and equilibrium and thus advocates only the status quo situation.

Notwithstanding the above criticisms, Easton's systems theory has been noted to have provided an excellent technique for comparative analysis. It has provided a set of concepts and categories which have made comparative analysis more interesting and instructive. It is an attempt to investigate what causes instability in any political system and how to ensure that such occurrences are detected and corrected so that the political system can regain its stability. The theory is relevant to this work as it helps to explain the centripetal forces (input) driving the agitations in the South East geo-political zone, their motivations and concerns especially as the activities and actions of these groups have created a situation of instability in the political system (output). The inability of the political system to address critical demands from the people of the South East zone or respond quickly to important feedbacks from its policy outputs has created a situation that is undermining support for the system fuelling the spate of agitations.

## 5. Separatist Agitations in the South East Geo-Political Zone

The return to democratic rule on May 29, 1999 has witnessed a resurgence in separatist agitations. According to Adangor (2017), the tone for this phase of separatist movements was set in the Niger Delta region following the militarization of the agitations for resource control. Several militant groups emerged

in the region under different commanders all purporting to pursue the resource control agenda. He stated further that ‘perhaps the most ferocious post - 1999 separatist campaign has been launched by two Igbo grass root- based groups namely the Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) and the Indigenous Peoples of Biafra (IPOB)’ p. 9.

The central goal of both groups is that the 5 core Igbo States in South East Nigeria should secede from the Federal Republic of Nigeria and form an independent sovereign state of Biafra. In their bid to actualise this desire, series of protests, riots, demonstrations and clashes with Security agencies have occurred in major cities and towns across the entire South east geo-political zone. According to Adibe (2016), the current agitation for Biafra has its roots in the Republic of Biafra – a secessionist state in the former Eastern Nigeria, which existed from 30 May 1967 to January 1970. He contends that “Biafra evokes something in an average Igbo, making it possible for it to be tapped as a shared victimhood narrative for mobilization” (p,

The questions to ask at this juncture are, what were the motivations for this resurgence? how has government’s response strengthened national stability? what are the implications of this separatist agitations by the Igbo ethnic group of the South East on national stability in Nigeria?

## 6. Data Analysis

**Research Question 1:** What are the motivations for the resurgence in Separatist agitations in the South East zone?

Majority of the respondents were of the opinion that the motivation for the resurgence in the separatist agitations was the marginalisation of the Igbo dominated South East geo-political zone in comparison with the Yoruba and the Hausa-Fulani ethnic groups which are the three main dominant ethnic groups in the country by successive governments at the centre. The marginalisation they say can be seen in all areas of endeavour including appointments of Igbo sons and daughters into key government positions at the federal level. Lack of good roads and other infrastructure such as Seaports and inland ports facilities for the predominantly Igbo traders and business men in the South East zone, the non-completion of the second Niger bridge after so many years, receiving the lowest revenue allocation from the federation account despite being an oil-producing area where the bulk of the revenue accruing to the country comes from, having the

lowest number of States, Five (5) out of thirty six (36) and the lowest number of local governments, ninety- four (94) out of seven hundred and seventy four (774) compared to other geo-political zones.

They also pointed at the series of military and police actions in the zone, the “Operation Python dance” and “Operation Search and Flush” and other military presence in the zone they contend is part of the continued hatred of the Igbo ethnic group and a further attempt to silence the people. The military presence is aimed at not only intimidating the Igbo people but also has been a source of harassment and extortion of the citizens of the zone. The respondents were also unanimous in their views that it is only the Igbos that have not produced the President of Nigeria since 1999, and that this was a deliberate way of punishing them for the role played in the civil war hostilities of 1967-1970. (Field Survey, 2020)

The above findings from the field tally with the views of Ananambu, 2017; Thompson, Ojukwu and Nwaorgu, 2016; and Ugorji,2017, who all asserted that the resurgence in the Biafra agitations was due largely to perceived sense of marginalisation by the Igbos in the distribution of resources and amenities by the Federal government. Abdulrahman (2015) lists the first and second batches of appointments made in the current Buhari-led Nigerian administration which sparked off outrage across the country especially among the Igbo speaking areas. These appointments were to say the least discriminatory of the ethnic group as no Igbo name or person featured in the list (2015, pp. 4-6). According to Ohaneze (2002), of the six geo-political zones, South-east has the lowest number of states and local government. Owing that state and local governments are used as basis for sharing federal resources, the rising Biafra separatism is, to a large extent, driven by a sense of victimization and gross injustice perpetrated through state and local government creations. However, there are those who disagree with the above position above, they point out that corruption and political illiteracy of leaders in the Southeast also contribute immensely in the rising level of infrastructural deficit, disempowerment and social decay in the region, which are often exploited to mobilize people to engage in separatist agitations.

**Research Question 2 –** What is the role of ethnicity in the separatist agitations of the South East?

On this question, majority of the respondents were of the opinion that the Igbo ethnic group, had continued to suffer and bear the brunt of discrimination from successive administration in the country and this is

why the Igbo ethnic group is agitating for their own State of Biafra. They opined that the geo-political zone has been denied its fair share of the resources since the 1960s when the Nigerian Civil war was fought. Specifically, they noted that the failure of the Gowon regime to implement the programme of Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Resettlement (3Rs), put together to address the immediate concerns of the Igbo ethnic group after the war was just one of those manifestations. On return to democratic rule, it was thought that there would be turnaround for the better, but that hope and optimism was also dashed as events since 1999 has indicated. They said that the Igbos feel marginalised in terms of access to power which have not been easy for them despite their enterprising nature and the fact that they move around a lot. They also said that politically, the Northerners, (Hausa-Fulani) and the Yorubas have benefitted more in terms of access to power. They contend that a democratic system that is working portends that things will get better, but the Igbos for now feel comfortable being on their own. Majority of the respondents are of the opinion that the federal government has not done enough for the Igbo as it had done for the Hausa-Fulani and the Yoruba ethnic groups. They also believed that the Fulani ethnic group going by statistics have been most favoured in terms of opportunities of appointment into key positions in NNPC, the Nigerian Ports, etcetera. The Yorubas have also benefitted, more especially, economically giving the economic infrastructural facilities in the zone, for example, Lagos Ports and other facilities. As averred by one of the respondents, the impression the Igbos have is “they don’t want us in Nigeria”. Another respondent says that the motivations for the agitations ‘include deprivation, no sense of belonging to the Igbo, residual experiences, constant reminding of people of previous experience of the war experience, an experience of hunger, Kwashiorkor, starvation and killings, some of which are still prevalent even now’.

**Research Question 3:** How has the Federal government’s response strengthened national stability in Nigeria?

Majority of the respondents were of the opinion that the federal government has not responded well to the agitations. They say that the use of force by the military on the agitators and their sympathisers is itself counterproductive. They maintained that use of force has never solved any problem, Iraq and Syria were cited as examples of nations where force was used as a weapon of combating similar conflicts but up till now those two countries are still engulfed in crises. The respondents contend that that the use of

force by the Federal government has brought more agitations and that repressive response is anti-democratic. They are also of the view that tagging or labelling IPOB as a terrorist group is not good and that the non-violent movement is still not understood by the Nigerian ruling class hence their resort to use of violence when peaceful agitations are embarked upon. ‘Operation Python Dance’, according to many of the respondents was launched to continue the occupation of Igboland and deprive the Igbos the opportunity to move freely without molestation and harassment by security operatives. ‘Operation Python Dance’, according to many of the respondents was launched to continue the occupation of Igboland and deprive the Igbos the opportunity to move freely without molestation and harassment by security operatives. The deployment of the military they contend has resulted in extortion of the Igbos in their land on a daily basis. Majority of the respondents were of the opinion that the deployment of the military and use of force has brought instability to the country, as it has led to killings of agitators and even innocent citizens, rather, they say the federal government should listen to the agitators, according to these respondents continued use of force on the agitators may lead to the escalation of the conflict as the agitators may be forced to take up arms against the state to defend themselves.

**Research Question 4:** What are the Implications of the Agitations on National Stability?

On the implications of the agitations on National Stability, majority of the respondents were of the belief that the Igbo agitations have created more agitations. One of the respondents maintained that “there is division, no coherence, no good understanding within the system, there is suspicion in the system, so everybody is being unnecessarily careful and that does not help the growth and development of a nation”. The majority of the respondents say that the agitations have put a serious crack on the stability of the Nigerian state. The respondents believe that the Nigerian state is falling apart or becoming a failed state. The agitations they say is just a mere sign of the failure and as long as the agitations persist, Nigeria cannot harness all its potentials for development. They also contend that the agitations have brought ethnic distrust among the major and minor ethnic groups in the country, the Igbos no longer trust the Northerners and Northerners are not trusting the Southerners, Nigerians are not talking as one again. Some respondents also observed that the agitations have increased the level of hatred, bitterness, anger against the Igbos, saying that the agitations have done more harm to the Igbos. Another

harm done to the Nigerian state is that the agitations have destabilised the nation, people of the country have become more separated, it has promoted inter-ethnic rivalry and mistrust.

### 7. Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research, it can be concluded that the major reason for the resurgent separatist agitations in the South east geo-political zone is the sense of deprivation and marginalisation of the zone in terms of appointments of Igbo sons and daughters into key government positions since 1999 and especially from 2015 -date, opportunities in terms federal road infrastructure, Ports facilities to cater for the commercial and freight needs of the majorly business oriented Igbo population as well as the inability of the zone to produce a President of Igbo extraction since 1999. This brings to the fore the ethnic nature of the agitations and the politics of resource allocation and sharing in a multi-ethnic nation. The Igbos believe that some ethnic groups are being favoured more than others in the sharing of the benefits accruing from our commonwealth.

The deployment and use of the military and police has only worsened the situation, as the security agencies have become avenues for extortion and brutalisation of the citizens of the South east area and not a good response from the Federal government. The study concluded that the separatist agitations in the South East zone has contributed to instability in the Nigerian State as there now exist more than ever before a mistrust among the various ethnic groups and people of Nigeria. Evidence has shown that many more ethnic nationalities and groups are now clamouring for exit from the Nigerian state, the prominent one for now being some prominent Yorubas championing the establishment of an Oduduwa Republic in the South West part of the nation. It is also concluded that the agitations have brought some measure of consciousness and awareness to those in government.

On the basis of the conclusions the study hereby makes the following recommendations:

- The Federal government should sit down with the agitators and listen to their genuine concerns, allay their fears and show it means well for the agitators concerns relative to the positions of other ethnic groups. In effect, government and the agitators should make up their mind for reconciliation.
- Political and economic resources should be distributed equitably among the various

ethnic nationalities and groups. If these are done, agitations and discontentment by ethnic groups will be drastically reduced since the system already has a mechanism to evenly distribute resources to all ethnic groups and parts of the country without discrimination or bias.

- Referendum should be conducted on the agitations to know the true position of things as regards the agitations. As a further way to gauge the mood of the Igbo especially with respect to separatist agitations and their desire to opt out of the federation, the federal government should go the extra mile to see whether indeed the Igbo people really meant to opt out genuinely by organising a “Yes” or “No” referendum for the South Easterners, this will go a long way in knowing what next line of action to take on the issue of the agitations.
- Implementation of suggestions/policies that would bring stability in favour of the agitators and the Nigerian state. Various proposals and suggestions have been put forward by well-meaning Nigerians, civil society organisations, international bodies and friends of Nigeria on how to tackle the growing spate of agitations in the South east geo-political zone, government should therefore heed these calls and put mechanisms in place for implementation.
- Create an enabling political environment as done for the South West in 1999 for an Igbo man to become the President of Nigeria, this will erase the fear held by the average Igbo man that he is not wanted in Nigeria. If this is done, the Igbo agitations will fizzle out. The Igbo on their part should embrace other ethnic groups and their leaders and allay their fears that if Presidential power comes to the South East, it wouldn't be used as an instrument of vendetta, revenge and victimisation of other ethnic groups and nationalities within the Nigerian political system.
- Military and Police action under whatever name should be stopped, as these actions have not prevented the agitators from carrying out their demonstrations and activities but rather only emboldened the agitators in violent confrontation with the security operatives which have led to extortion, victimisation, destruction of properties, displacements, loss of income and even loss of lives.

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