

ABSTRACT

The escalation of violent and brutal attacks mainly perpetrated through the use of small arms and light weapons (SALW) largely against the people, the security personnel and formations, government facilities and buildings, as well as those of the foreign governments and international organizations by various armed groups have undermined Nigeria's national security thereby posing a greater danger and reign of terror in the minds of Nigerian populace. This also poses a direct threat to the national unity and integration, as well as the survival of Nigeria as a single geopolitical entity. This paper specifically examines the challenges of the attacks mainly perpetrated with small arms and light weapons in Nigeria, and assesses the extent of damages to both human and material resourced as well as general development process. The paper argues that security failure in terms of incompetency, lack of modern weapons and poor training among security personnel coupled with corruption and lack of serious political will and commitments from the government are the major factors responsible for the continuous attack and its persistence in the country. Hence, it recommends the review of the security approach-style and peaceful approach to the resolution of the crisis, the political and administrative leadership should demonstrate sufficient commitment, dedication and political will in the administration of peace and security. Government should also engage in an urgent capacity building and resource augmentation for security agencies in Nigeria in view of the glaring deficiencies in training, weapons and in information acquisition and management.

Keywords: Small Arms and Light Weapons, National Security, Insecurity, Armed Violence