Funso Doherty
Lagos Nigeria
email: fd@funsodoherty.org

Address: 3rd Floor, Block 10, Plots2 &3
Admiralty way Lekki 1, Lagos, Nigeria.
105102
email: fd@funsodoherty.org
Phone Number: +234-12791700

Monday, November 24, 2025

RT. Honorable Tajudeen Abbas
Speaker of the House of Representatives
House Chambers,
National Assembly Complex
Three Arms Zone,
Abuja

Dear Mr. Speaker,

OPEN LETTER - RE: REITERATING THE CASE FOR STATE POLICING

You may recall in 2024, during the constitutional review process, I made the case to the National Assembly that introducing State Policing is a necessary constitutional reform (*see relevant extract of that submission attached as Annexure A*). The core arguments I presented then remain unchanged today; but what has changed is the degree of urgency.

Nigeria is experiencing a persistent and now surging wave of insecurity that has become a way of life for many across vast areas of the country. The near-constant stream of tragic reports is reminiscent of historical accounts, dating back millennia, of attacks that forced vulnerable communities to build fortified city walls – ancient examples of which still remain, in part, in places like Kano.

Yet this is modern-day Nigeria in 2025, sixty-five years after independence and one hundred and ten years after amalgamation.

Mr. Speaker:

1. Our constitution defines welfare and security as the primary purpose of Govenrment, neither of which are being well served presently.
2. Government, in our federation, exists in three tiers, Federal, State and Local. Accordingly, the resources and revenues of the federation accrue and are shared to the different tiers of government.
3. By retaining policing and related security on the exclusive list, and providing for one Federal police force to the exclusion of other tiers, the Federal Government is assuming responsibility for policing the entire nation. This is a task that it clearly and increasingly lacks the resources and capacity to undertake effectively, as is evident from the events of the past decade.

4. The current situation has been long and widely acknowledged as untenable and now appears to be experiencing a calamitous deterioration. There are many apparently ungoverned spaces and vulnerable populations facing armed criminals, bandits and terrorist groups. Taken together with porous shared national borders with nations infiltrated by arms, ammunition and insurgent groups, the current insecurity is, in many ways, almost inevitable.

5. Widespread poverty, exacerbated by weak and self-serving internal governance has provided a fertile breeding ground for the growing insecurity.

6. The military has been unfairly saddled with the Herculean, near-impossible task of dealing with this unfortunate situation. Though valiant in their efforts, they also lack the resources and capacity to deal with such a widespread, disparate and increasingly pervasive problem that is rooted in governance failures.

7. We are all witnesses to the international attention that this unchecked situation is now drawing. Foreign involvement, though sometimes helpful in bringing short term crises under control, often comes with long term complications and is never ideal.

Mr. Speaker, It is important to recognize that these terrorist activities will continue to spread and even urban centers like Lagos will continue to experience increased fall out from insecurity if we persist with a centralized policing system that clearly does not work. Communities deserve the right to participate meaningfully in policing and to defend themselves through legitimate, well-equipped and accountable local security structures.

The time for legislation to enable State and Community Policing is NOW. This should be pursued with a single-minded focus and unprecedented urgency. The National Assembly under your leadership must seize this unfortunate but defining opportunity to deal with the rapidly metastasizing cancer of insecurity that produces unimaginable human death and suffering.

Should you fail to rise to the demands of this moment, people in communities across the country may as well revert to the practice of building physical town walls and gates to protect themselves, though it is doubtful that such efforts will be as effective today as they were in millennia past.

Yours faithfully,



Funso Doherty.