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The quest for second term and the crisis of democracy in Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper examines the crisis of democratic leadership occasioned by the quest for a second term in office by a sitting president or governor and its implication on democracy and democratic consolidation in Nigeria. Utilizing secondary sources for data collection, the paper observes that the crises of second term pose a serious challenge to democracy. It therefore canvasses an elongated single term for elected president and governor with a view to forestalling this unnecessary but avoidable crisis for the consolidation of Nigeria's nascent democracy.

Keywords: Democracy; Democratic Consolidation; Democratization; Presidential Democracies; Second Term

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1. Introduction

Democracy as a system of governance entails freedom, good governance, rule of law and personal liberty. Thus, the basic features of democracy as emphasized by Kolawole (2005) is not only limited to free and fair periodic elections, constitutional stability, freedoms and fundamental human rights of the citizens but also includes the extent to which the state protect the life and properties of the citizens, freedoms of choices to choose among competing political parties, peaceful transfer of political power from one administration to another and advance a social order. However, the ideal situation is not found in the political dictionary and terrain in Nigeria. The Nigerian democracy is characterized with political arbitrariness, hereditary leadership style, democratic institutional deficiency, and bloodletting transfer of political power from one administration to the other. Incumbent politicians in Nigeria in their bid to retain power for second term often resulted to electoral sharp practices like vote buying, election rigging and committing of other infelicities designed to subvert the people's will to choose leaders capable of leading the state on the path of growth and development (The Guardian, Lagos. 18th March, 1996, cited in Ejituwu, 1997). In this vein, Obasanjo (2002) posits that we fight and sometimes shed blood to achieve and retain political power because for us in Nigeria, the political kingdom has for long been the gateway to economic kingdom. From Obasanjo's view, Nigeria democratic value includes forceful taking over of power, violence and electoral malpractices as well as rigging to achieve and retain power. Thus, Nigerian politics since independence has been characterized by thuggery and violence. Doubtlessly, politics in Nigeria is conceived as a dirty game where winners take all and losers lose all. Therefore, the conceptualization of democracy and democratic government in Nigeria seem to coincide with Laski's (1980) view that; "Democratic government is doubtless a final form of political organization in the sense that men who have once tasted power will not, without conflict, surrender it". Thus, while there have been several attempts at consolidating democracy in Nigeria (1960 - 66; 1979 - 83; 1999 till date), some indicators have shown that the task is faced with a lot of difficulties. Fifteen of these indicators are identified by Kolawole (2005) as historical limitation, military intervention in politics, leadership problem, apathy on the part of the citizens, poverty, gender inequality, politics of godfatherism, ineffective civil society, weakened legislature, state of the economy, unemployment, corruption, incessant executive-legislative conflicts, tendency towards democratic despotism and failure to accept electoral defeat. This according to Akindele (2002) will result in bad governance characterized by the followings:

- i. Failure to make a clear separation between what is public and what is private, hence a tendency to divert public resources for private gain.
- ii. Failure to establish a predictable framework for law and government behavior in a manner that is conducive to development, or arbitrariness in the application of rules and laws.
- iii. Excessive rules, regulations, licensing requirements etc., which impede the functioning of markets and encourage rent-seeking.
- iv. Priorities that is inconsistent with development, thus, resulting in a misallocation of resources and corruption.
- v. Excessively narrow base for, or non-transparence, decision-making (World Bank, 1992 cited in Akindele, 2002).

These ills of governance, among others, characterized the politics of second term and democracy in Nigeria. It is within the purview of the paper that the political terrain is unusually being heated up by the excessive political manoeuvring for second term by incumbents in their bid to win at all cost.

2. Statement of the problem

Most modern states are democratic; they subscribed to and practice democracy as a system of government. In this wise, eligible citizens are made to elect and vote for the candidates of their choice through election which is usually held periodically for this purpose. In Nigeria, elections are usually legally conducted every four years to elect the president and the various state governors. However, the constitutional provision that guarantees two consecutive terms of office for the elected president and governors as the chief executive officers of the country and the states respectively, has posed a great challenge to democracy and democratization as well as democratic consolidation in Nigeria. That the sitting president/governor can lean on the power of incumbency to pervert the electoral process in his/her bid for second term in office is not only deleterious but highly damaging to democracy and its consolidation. In Nigeria today, leadership succession has been a recurring decimal in our democracy. There is no president/governor in history who has not vied for a second term in office. The pressures generated through this often overheat the polity as such president/governor resulted to politics of 'do or die' unleashing terror and adopting all means, legal and illegal, in a bid to win a second term. In cases where such leader(s) spent their two terms of eight years successfully, the desire for anointed candidate as successor has also constituted a big clog in the democratic wheel of the country.

In some developing democracies like Nigeria, Gambia and Kenya, the inability of the incumbent to step down after losing election or better still, when the leader ridded on electoral fraud to win second term, has resulted in military coup. The 1966 and 1983 coups in Nigeria provided a justification for this explanation. Also, Laurent Gbagbo of Cote D' Ivoire failed to step down after losing election to the opposition, this cost the country 5 months of unending war and violence between 4 December, 2010 to 11 April, 2011. One persistently feature of democracy in Nigeria is what Onovo (1997) called "Votary of Corruption". Onovo observed that the moribund Second Republic was a trademark and patron deity for the nation. Some ministers with meager means of livelihood before their ascension to public offices suddenly became rich. Rumors were rife that a number of them even acquired private jets. Public funds were used to run private errands, legislators demanded and got huge sums of money to subscribe their votes to bills, and went on private cruises across the Atlantic and made this nation to pay for their debauchery (Onovo, 1997).

Another feature of leadership quest for continuity of office in Nigeria is gross misconduct and indiscipline on the part of the politicians. This is reflective in General Muhammadu Buhari's speech in his reasons for military take-over of politics in 1983 that:

The 1979 Constitution was promulgated. However, little did the military realized that the political leadership of the second republic would subvert most of the checks and balances in the

constitution and bring us to the present state of general insecurity. The premium on political power became so exceedingly high that political contesters regarded victory at elections as a matter of life and death struggle, and were determined to capture and retain power by all means. While corruption and indiscipline have been associated with our state of underdevelopment, these twin evils in our body politics have attained unprecedented height in the past four years. The corruption, inept and insensitive leadership of the past four years has been source of immorality and impropriety in our society. Since what happens in any society is largely a reflection of the society. We deplore corruption in all its facets (Onovo, 1997).

The above is reflective in President Muhammadu Buhari's inaugural speech of May 29, 2015, that Nigeria as a nation is confronted with the challenges of; insecurity, pervasive corruption, the hitherto unending and seemingly impossible fuel and power shortages (Vanguard May 29, 2015).

Thus this paper addresses the crises of democracy generated by the politics of contestation for a second term by incumbent president and governors in Nigeria.

3. Literature exploration; democracy, democratization and democratic transition

The former President of the United States of America, Abraham Lincoln, as quoted in Schumpeter (1961), defined democracy as the "government of the people, for the people and by the people". Schumpeter concluded that, democracy is, 'that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's votes (Schumpeter, 1961). In Schumpeter's view, democracy is the formation of electoral body, formation and registration of political parties, registration of voters, vying for political position, voting on elections etc. Expanding on this definition, Dahl (1971) identifies seven key criteria that are essential for democracy, namely:

1. Control over governmental decisions and policy, constitutionally vested in the elected officials.
2. Relatively frequent, free and fair elections.
3. Universal adult suffrage.
4. The right to run for public office.
5. Freedom of expression.
6. Access to alternative sources of information that are not monopolized by either the government or any other single group.
7. Freedom of association (i.e. the right to form and join autonomous associations such as political parties, interest groups, etc.).

Paradoxically, Nigeria democratic government provides a fulcrum for the promotion of violence rather than the milieu for popular participation and accountability. Nigeria democracy has become a liability, the source of instability, political decadence, thuggery, brigandage, unmediated and unrestrained violence. Therefore, the political office holders and political elites in Nigeria have seen politics as a means of becoming

affluent, a short-cut to wealth in which they want to win at all cost either by crook or other means of securing political power which does not know legitimacy but expedience (ogundiya and Bada, 2005).

While the concept of democratization expresses both a clear direction of change along the spectrum and a political movement or process of change, which can apply to any given system not only change from authoritarian or dictatorial form of rule (Nicolas van de Walle, 1994). Therefore, democratization implies the internationalization of democratic culture and institutionalization of democratic “best practices” by a party that is successfully in a democratic transition. Nwabueze (1993) observed the trends in democratization, which involve the following twelve things:- “Multi-partism under a democratic constitution having the force of a supreme overriding law; a complete change of guards and the exclusion of certain other categories of persons from participation in democratic politics and government; a genuine and meaningful popular participation in politics and government; a virile civil society; a democratic society; a free society; a just society; equal treatment of all citizens by the state; the rule of law; an ordered, stable society; a society infused with the spirit of liberty, democracy and justice; and an independent, self-reliant prosperous market economy”.

Examining the above trends, the one most crucial to democratization in the emergent countries of the world like Nigeria is the infusing spirit of liberty, democracy, justice, the rule of law, and order among the people. The chief problem of democratization, according to Nwabueze (1993) in these emergent countries like Nigeria has to do not with the inappropriateness of the underlying values and principles of liberty, democracy and social justice as with an inability to imbibe their spirits. These principles and concepts – elections, universal suffrage, political competition, representative government, separation of powers, limitations upon government for the protection of liberty, the welfare state, social equality etc. have a universal appropriateness and validity. It is only some of the institutional forms trapping and practices, ballot boxes, ballot papers, secret ballot, winner-takes all, etc. that may be inappropriate in the conditions of mass illiteracy and poverty prevalent in the emergent countries like Nigeria (Nwabueze, 1993). Gill (2000) writes that democratization involves the reworking of the state through transformation of its institutions (either creating new bodies or breathing substance into existing ones) and opening of it up to mass control through institutional means. Fundamentally, according to Gill, the shape of transition in any democratic regime is determined by the relationship between the regimes on the one hand and oppositionists, popularly based civil society, force on the other hand. Michael Bratton and Nicolas van de Walle speak of transitions in Africa as having manifested four outcomes: where transition was precluded owing for example to internal insecurity situation like civil war or to other factors which prevented it from getting effective underway (as in Somalia) where transition after on-set was “blocked”, prevented or interrupted by the incumbent authoritarian rulers tendentious maneuvers or by the military intervention from followings its desired course, (as in Sierra Leone, Gambia election in 2016), where a transition is “flawed”, by preventive manipulation of its process, thereby enabling the incumbent authoritarian ruler to win multi-party elections and stay in power (as in Kenya and most of the other 14 countries in which transition elections were won by the incumbent like Nigeria in 1983, and 2003), and lastly, where the transition culminate in the installation of a new government following a free and fair election that is, a truly democratic transition (as in Zambia and Nigeria in 2015. However, Gill (2000) concerned that transition is determined by the relationship between

the regimes and the oppositions. Therefore, the nature of the society plays major roles whether there will be successful transition or not. Gill (2000) examined two major relationships that can exist between a regime and the nature of the society which are:

- a. Unitary regime: A regime in which unity is highly developed and the mechanism for restoring unity should its breakdown are rapid and effective.
- b. Segmentary regime: A regime in which unity is weak, often characterized by the substantial differences between different components parts of the regime.

4. The quest for second term and democratic crisis in Nigeria

Nigeria became independent on October 1, 1960. This monumental achievement ended a long period of colonial rule, which started with the cession of Lagos to Britain by King Dosumu in 1861. Independence meant that the erstwhile British administrators would no longer be required; successful management of peace and conflict now depended on the capability of the Nigerian political elites to justify preparedness for self-rule and parliamentary democracy giving to us. Meanwhile, a coalitional government had been formed after 1959 general elections held in 1959 by the NPC and NCNC/NEPU with the AG in the opposition that ruled the country in 1960 to 1963. Aside from the fact that ideological differences between the parties in the coalition were wide enough for many to doubt its continued success, the relationship between opposition and government was not the type that would limit politics in the house to “war without violence” (Akinola, 2014).

Other serious national problems that affected the fragile Nigeria state during this period were the controversial and disputed census figures results of 1962 and 1963, the 1964 nationwide strike, which was a major industrial upheaval caused by the seriously disputed federal elections of December 30, 1964. From many accounts, the elections were reported neither free nor fair and serious malpractices were reported from many parts of the country. The year 1965 started with a major national crisis due to these elections. There was a great tension in the country while the nation anxiously waited for the president to make his important constitutional decision. At the end, despite protests from some quarters, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa whose party had recorded the highest number of seats in the disputed elections, was invited by the president to form the federal Government, and once again another dangerous crisis was averted (Irukwu, 2014). Next to this were the massive killings in the western region in an unprecedented political violence tagged “operation wetie”, which erupted following the alleged rigging of the 1964/1965 general elections in the region. This regrettable but avoidable wasting of human lives just to settle political scores gave the region the unenviable appellation of Wild-Wild-West. The crisis, which spread to other region in varied proportions, claimed the lives of First Republic and most of its key players like Sir Ahmadu Bello, Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Chief S. L. Akintola and Chief Festus Okotie-Eboh among others. (Rafiu et al., 2009). However, the 1964 general elections and other political unrest led to the overthrow of government by the military in 1966.

Also in the Second Republic, 1979-1983, it was not just in the realm of political rhetoric that the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) led by Shehu Shagari maintained a heat contest to win second term. The party also had a keen sense of historical symbolism. Its motto of one Nation, one Destiny, and One God was reminiscent of the motto of the Northern People's Congress (NPC), one North, and One Destiny. Shagari also presented the NPN flag to the party's 19 gubernatorial candidates, a symbolism brilliantly evocative of the 19th century Sokoto Jihad when Usman Dan Fodio presented the Sokoto flag as a symbol of acceptance to provincial jihadist leaders (Babarinsa, 2003). The Shehu Shagari government reviewed voter's registered. When the revised register was revealed, it showed that the Nigerian electorate had almost doubled between 1979 and 1983. Most of the increase in voters' register occurred in NPN strongholds. Sokoto now had 5.12million, a 38.38 percent increase from the 1979 figure of 3.70million. Other astounding increases include Kano, 49.02 percent; Kaduna 98.24 percent, Rivers 115percent; Benue 128.57percent. But the populations in the opposition states were not lucky to have increased in such geometric proportion. Registered voters had increased by only 23.89 percent in Lagos State; Ogun State 15.63percent; and Plateau 3.75percent. The opposition party led by UPN openly condemned this FEDECO magic but the NPN hailed it, praising Ovie-Whiskey for his competence. When the final list came out, FEDECO announced that, it was sale at #1.6million Naira for each party (Babarinsa, 2003). Oladepo (1983) commented that one of such states where more voters were registered than the cards supplied was Sokoto which is not one of the high-population centers in the country. Sokoto State was given 4.2million voters cards, it registered 5.12million voters. This represented an increase of about 1.4million over its 3.8million voters recorded in 1978. Where did the excess one million cards come from? Simple commonsense would prove the figure fake (National Concord, 1983 cited in Babarinsa, 2003).

The NPN used the police to intimidate those it perceived as its opponents. In Lagos, Adewusi ordered the arrest of Dele Giwa the Editor of Sunday Concord, whose paper was daring enough to expose the power struggle between the Inspector-General of Police and Akinjide, the Attorney General. In Oyo State, police sealed up the premises of both the Nigeria Tribune and the Daily Sketch, and their top editors arrested in August, 1981. In 1983, Dr. Azikiwe was prevented physically from campaigning freely in Maiduguri, Borno State when the police commissioner forbade him from going to any other part of the city apart from the approved campaign venue (Babarinsa, 2003).

In south western states, Ondo and Oyo States witnessed a bemired violence that led to the loss of lives and properties in the states. Babarinsa (2003) observed that, August 16, 1983 morning was climax of the battle of the airwaves between the Federal government owned Radio Nigeria and Ondo State Radio. Also, announcement by returning officer; Dapo Alibaloye of victory by Chief Akin Omoboriowo (NPN) over incumbent Chief Michael Ajasin (UPN) shortly after that Alibaloye finished his announcement, Akure exploded. Within ten minutes, there was smoke all across the city. Houses and peoples were being set ablaze in one moment of communal madness. 16 vehicles including police land rovers were burnt and the FEDECO headquarters in Akure raised to flame. Many people were killed including NPN state's chairman, Chief Agbayewa, Chief A. O. Orisalade, Fagbamigbe lost their lives (Former House of Representatives members), Tunde Akunbiade, the former majority leader of the State's House of Assembly was beheaded and his house set on fire.

According to Olukoshi and Abdulraheem (1985) one million workers lost their jobs from the manufacturing sector between 1980 and 1983, Nigeria's GDP fell by 4.4% in 1983 after a decline of 2% in 1982 and the budget deficit for 1983 was N6.231 billion, representing more than 50% of total government expenditure. The foreign exchange current account recorded a deficit of N 4.9 billion in 1982 and N2.9 billion in 1983. Babarinsa (2003) noted that, by the time Shagari was shown the red card in December 1983, Shagari had succeeded in turning a buoyant regional economic power into a beggar nation. His government revenue from oil alone for four years was N43.6 billion, about 55.3 percent of the total oil earnings since Nigeria became an oil exporter in 1956. Yet, by the time he left, he had not only rifted through N90 billion, he also left a foreign debt of more than N20 billion. The N90 billion was made up of N43.6 billion from oil, N20 billion from external debt, N10 billion from internal loan, N15 billion from IGR, from other sources and external reserve of N3.5 billion left by Obasanjo. By the end of 1983, many Nigerians mostly politicians, soldiers, favored business men, contractors and civil servants had stashed away an estimated £16 billion in foreign banks. By December 1983, the military as well as group of influential northern Nigeria leaders, mostly bureaucrats and business men were convinced that Shagari second chance or second term in office has turned Nigeria's economic disaster into a calamity supported military junta. According to Onovo (1997), We heard the blare of the martial on 31st December, 1983 and we knew immediately, there was a coup, the coup announcer's voice followed stating reasons for the coup: Fellow country men and women, I brigadier Sanni Abacha of the Nigeria Army, address you this morning on the behalf of the Nigerian Armed Forces. You are living witnesses to the grave economic predicament and uncertainty which an inept and corrupt leadership has imposed on our beloved nation for the past four years. I am referring to the harsh intolerable conditions under which we are now living; our economy has been hopelessly mismanaged. We have become a debtor and beggar nation. There is inadequacy of food at reasonable prices for our people who are now fed up with endless announcement of foodstuffs. After due consultations over these deplorable conditions, I and my colleagues in the Armed Forces have in the discharge of our national roles as the promoters and protectors of our national interest, decided to effect a change in the leadership of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and to form a Federal Military Government. This task has been just completed. Accordingly, Alhaji Shehu Shagari ceased forthwith to be the President and commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Nigeria. The government was overthrown by General Buhari. The Nigerian economy was in a bad state, as 50% of the industrial capacity of the country had been lost owing to the closure of factories because of their inability to obtain foreign exchange to import raw materials and spare parts (Nigerian Daily Times Newspaper, 12/08/1984). The overthrow of the government by the military was greeted with "beers" and "cheers" by many Nigerians (Onovo, 1997).

The aborted Third Republic, there was also attempt at democratic transition between 1985-1993 under President Ibrahim Babangida but it was ill-fated with the annulment of June 12, 1993 Presidential Election (Abdullahi, 2013). The second successful democratic transition which ushered in the 4th Republic in Nigeria was by General Abdulsalami Abubakar. The Nigeria political scene was again fraught with serious concern, challenges and phobia as to what should be the fate of Nigeria as a single political entity. This was not unconnected with the fact that political office was more than ever before do or die affair with people on the mantle, of leadership hankering to remain in power, while people vying for the offices of the incumbents

expressed their inordinate desire to take the mantle of leadership from the incumbents. Nigerians and comity of nations were more concerned with the presidency in the wake of the emergence of the two military retired generals as the flag bearers of their political parties. These were, General Olusegun Obasanjo and Major General Muhammadu Buhari (retired.) (jibrin, 2013).

The do or die affair of politics of second term bid by President Olusegun Obasanjo made the country to record flaws in the general elections of 2003. According to African election Data Base, millions of peoples voted several times, the police in Lagos uncovered an electoral fraud, found five millions false ballots. International observers including the European Union discovered various irregularities in 11 States of 36 Federal States. Thus, in many cases votes were later amended. In some states those did not fulfill minimum standard for democratic elections. However, what precluded the election was the case of political assassinations, killing and maiming of political opponents. Among cases reported including are, killing of party stalwart and political gladiator in Lagos State, Funsho Williams, and that of Minister for Justice, Chief Bola Ige, Harry Marshall, ANPP top notcher, Moshood Gidado, Rasaq Ibrahim (Former Governor Mohammed Lawal supporter in Kwara State), Ogbonnaya Uche ANPP's senatorial candidate in Imo State (Adebanjo, 2004). I could not forget easily the song heard during campaign for second term bid of Obasanjo in 2003, it keeps ringing in my heart that:

A o lo soldiers ooooo

Awa ta lo MOPO fun elections lo jo si

A o lo Soldiers. Interpreted as:

We are going to use soldiers now,

We that used mobile police in the previous elections,

We are going to use soldiers now (Culled from Ariyo, 2010).

The opposition political parties (ANPP, AC, and APGA) accused the government of Obasanjo of using police office to monitor and rig elections for the ruling party, PDP. But, instead of the President to deny the allegation, he came to the podium in Ekiti State to sing the song that soldiers will now be used to monitor 2003 general elections. Therefore, the instrument for protecting life and properties of the state is now used as instrument of oppression by the government. Thus soldiers that are supposed to be used in defending country from external attacks were used to protect ballot boxes as well as instrument for snatching ballot boxes in the state (Ariyo, 2010). Adebanjo (2004) noted that the worsened situation in the country occasioned by the rising spate of killings and assassinations is the main issue of discussions. In many states of the federation, gunmen are on the loose mowing down both commoners and influential citizens with reckless abandon, death was cheap and the citizens were helpless as security agents seem not be able to stop the trail of blood and lessen pervading fear of the people. Buhari on Wednesday, April 16, 2003 was quoted as saying: - "We would like to emphasize that any repeat of the fraud of April 12 election, a fraud we have rejected in totality, will result in mass action and its consequences, which no one can today foresee." Gov. Segun Osoba of Ogun state in a radio speech on Wednesday, April 16, 2003 dug in with: - "I can tell you that my boys are

incensed. They are armed and ready...If anybody tries what they did last Saturday they will meet legitimate force."

Obasanjo on Thursday, April 17, 2003 sent to Buhari a letter partly reading as follows: - "Let me emphatically urge you not to incite the society and law enforcement agencies. You know as military leaders and former heads of state that (any) direct appeal... against lawfully constituted authority is both reprehensible and extremely unfortunate." "Those who are planning violence would meet their Waterloo." Ojukwu joined in the saber-rattling in a delivered speech with: - "I want him (Obasanjo) to know as a warning from me that if he continues along this line the events of 1967 to 1970 will be child's play to what will be unleashed, not by me but by the massive anger of the Nigerian masses." Tafa Balogun (I-G of police) on Friday, April 18, 2003 threatened use of punitive force:- "The rhetoric of the past few days is enough to ignite violence in tomorrow's elections." "Anybody that dares the security forces will be crushed by the might of law enforcement." "We have declared more than ever to blast or wound and technically amputate any thug or thugs and their sponsors." Chukwuemeka Onwuamaegbu (army spokesman) makes no joke of the army's readiness: - "We are prepared for anything, be it peace or trouble" (The Sun Newspaper, Thursday, April 17, 2003).

Nda-Isaiah (Buhari spokesman) on Tuesday, April 22, 2003 (The Sun Newspaper, Tuesday, April 22, 2003) after the announcement of the election results was quoted as saying, "Any government that is formed on the basis of this so-called election shall be illegitimate and we shall not recognize it. A fraudulent democracy is worse than dictatorship." On Wednesday, April 23, 2003, about 20 parties, including the main opposition group led by Muhammadu Buhari, joined forces to demand that Obasanjo step down by May 29, dissolve the country's election commission and quickly allow a new vote. "We avoid any form of violence, but since the government is violent and has unleashed violence on the nation, the consequences will fall on Obasanjo," said Olagbade Ogboro, chairman of the National Action Congress, reading a joint statement. "If Gen. Obasanjo fails to heed this humble advice being dished out to him, the consequence may be massive revolt," Ogboro said (The Sun Newspaper, Wednesday, April 23, 2003).

Buhari on Wednesday, April 23, 2003, called on his supporters to "massively participate" in the May 3 polls for state parliaments. He also said that, "Where there were no elections, there must be a repeat; otherwise there will be no government by the 30th of May." Obasanjo on Wednesday, April 23, 2003, threatened a crackdown on any mass protest over the election results opponents say was rigged, leaving the opposition in disarray. Obasanjo's ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP) warned Buhari that Obasanjo would stamp out any uprising. "Rebellion is unconstitutional, illegitimate and despicable. Any rebellion will be crushed. Whoever lets himself out for mass action has himself to blame," PDP Chairman Audu Ogbah told a news conference (Following culled from Sun Day Times.Co.Za Issue of Sunday, April 27, 2003).

Despite the irregularities that characterized the 2003 General Elections which ushered in President Olusegun Obasanjo to his second term in office, the president affirmed his non-readiness to leave the office but rather constituted a framework to include members of opposition in his cabinet. Osahon Naiwu described the 2003 General Elections rigging as monumental, audacious, vicious and unprecedented (Osahon, 2010). While different agitations by political parties and international bodies for the cancellation of the

elections were the news in the air, the ministry of information spokesman only advised the opposition to use election tribunals as the home of their agitation. "The government has no power to reverse the election results. We can't bypass constitutional structures set up to handle the elections and set aside the results," Unimna said (Unimna, 2003). A number of such tribunals were set up on Friday. But most of the opposition parties have expressed misgivings about such tribunals, claiming that they are made up of individuals who have been hand-picked by PDP loyalists. But the ANPP seems divided about the issue, with some of its leaders now saying they will co-operate with the tribunals. Opposition allegations of fraud are supported by various international election observer groups, who say that new elections should be held in at least 11 of the country's 36 states.

Daniel Bach, head of France's Center for African Studies (The Sun Newspaper, Monday Morning, issue No.1583 Monday, April 28, 2003) was quoted with the following statements regarding the Nigerian election: - "Obasanjo cannot ignore the opinion of the monitors." He said the foreign teams were the only bodies who could bestow legitimacy on his re-election. "The fraud was not an exception to the rule in Nigeria. It's a continuation of everything that happens in Nigeria-" For Bach the level of the corruption was not a surprise, but he too saw the fault in the system that Obasanjo has failed to control rather than any plot by the presidency to cheat its way back into power.

The 2003 second term general elections of the governors and president in Nigeria, most politicians adopted win-at-all-costs attitude. Therefore, importation of arms and sophisticated weapons of war become part of the routine preparation for the election and Nigeria's porous borders and unmanned creeks and waterways made importation of weapons a near risk-free jet (Adebanjo, 2003). Adebanjo warned that the ruthless ECOMOG boys of Ali Modu Sheriff needed to be checked. Adebajo (2004) observed that in Borno, the ECOMOG boys, the military wing of the Senator Ali Modu Sheriff campaign organization openly rebelled against the governor. They accused the Borno State helmsman of using and dumping them. Residents of Maiduguri claimed that the ECOMOG boys are becoming a threat to peace as they carry on as if they are above the law.

Many observers including ECOWAS, European Union observers identified shortcomings including logistical failures, irregularities and sporadic violence, which characterized 2007 general elections. These factors challenged the validity of the election (Ujo, 2012). From the views of the observers, it is obvious that the whole world rejected the 2007 General Elections in Nigeria. At this stage, international governments and organizations started to roll out their guns to strike on Nigeria. Options like sanctions and other punitive measures were considered. Meanwhile, civil society groups called for the cancellation of the election result and started to mobilize the people to protest against the Yar' Adua Government. The Legitimacy of the government was at its lowest ebb. The president decided to appease opposition groups by first; openly apologizing that the election which brought him into power was flawed and promised that he would do something about it (Ujo, 2012).

In the new experience of 2015 general election for continuity of Jonathan Goodluck second term bid, the electoral firmament underwent a profound pleasant metamorphosis as the nation witnessed the occurrence of something unusual in the political playing field with the opposition party gallantly clinching a decisive

victory, or to put it bluntly, resoundingly defeated the ruling party to formally bring to an end its sixteen years of stay in power. Indeed, for the first time, transition elections made it possible for power to change hands at the Federal level from the People's Democratic Party (PDP) to the All Progressive Congress (APC), with the defeat of the incumbent, Goodluck Jonathan by Gen. Muhammadu Buhari (Rtd). The APC presidential candidate scored a total of 15,424,921 votes to beat the PDP presidential candidate who scored 12,853,162 votes. The APC also won for the first time, majority seats in both Chambers of the National Assembly – Senate and House of Representatives to eclipse the PDP's sixteen years dominance.

However, what prelude the election was unholy spending of money meant to procure arms for the fighting against terrorism in Nigeria. The money was later diverted for the re-election bid of President Goodluck Jonathan. According to Daily Post of 3rd December, 2015, about 21 persons were arrested in connection with the arms procurement scandal deal including former senior staff of the office of the National Security Adviser, a former Sokoto State Governor Attahiru Bafarawa, former Chairman African Independent Television, AIT, Raymond Dokpesi. Latest revelation from Economic and Financial Crime Commission revealed that, former Rivers State Governor, Peter Odili, a chieftain of PDP, Bode George and Chief Olu Falae received the sum of N100m each from the former National Security Adviser, Colonel Sambo Dasuki (rtd.) and Mr Bafarawa also received N4.6 billion from Mr. Dasuki for spiritual purposes, Chief Tony Anenih (former Chairman, PDP Board of Trustees) received N260 million all for the re-election bid of President Goodluck Jonathan. According to Sani Tukur (2015), Mr. Dasuki allegedly diverted and distributed billions of naira meant for arms purchase for the fight against the insurgent Boko Haram group, to politicians, his cronies and family members.

The disgusting thing about the diversion was that, the 1 billion dollars borrowed by the Federal Government to procure arms and ammunition to fight insurgency in Nigeria viz-a-viz Boko Haram was cunningly diverted to fund 2015 presidential bid of the incumbent President, Goodluck Jonathan, to win a second term in office, while the insurgents kept spreading their tentacle and raising their flags in 14 local governments in the Northeastern part of Nigeria. The occupied local governments included nine of the local governments in Borno comprising Gwoza, Bama, Mafa, Dikwa, Kala-Balge, Ngala, Marte, Abadam, and Mobbar. Others were Michika, and Madagali in Adama State, as well as Gujba and Gulani in Yobe State (Hamza and Kabiru, 2015). During that time, apart from the 14 local governments totally controlled by Boko haram, they also had partial controlled over Mungono, Kukawa, Guzamala, Gubio, Magumeri, Damboa, Konduga, Chibok, Askira, Uba and Jere. However, the money to be used by federal government to fight this deadly group was diverted by the NSA in collusion with the aid to President Goodluck Jonathan, Waripamowei Dudafa and the director of finance in the NSA office to submerge the PDP Presidential primary election with over 10 billion naira to assist the President to win the primary election as well as his second term election with over ₦2.120 billion for media campaign by Daar Investment and Holding Company Limited controlled by Raymond Dokpesi. Also, the government diverted about N750 million and N1.45 billion from the NSA account with Zenith Bank to the account of Reliance Reference Hospital controlled by Mr. Babakusa with UBA and Ecobank between October 9, 2014 and April 17, 2015 for organizing prayers to win second term. The juxtapositions of Prof. Charles Soludo, former governor of the Central Bank, shed light on the dwindling stage of the nation's economy under Jonathan's Administration and his bid for second term in office. Soludo observed that, the Naira was at the exchange rate of N119 to the Dollar when this present government came in but today,

Naira/Dollar exchange rate is at N250 – N230. Nigeria's Poverty level index was at 54% when the present government came in but today, the poverty level is at 71%. Recurrent Expenditure was at 62% but today is at 86%. The present government met GDP growth at 11%, but today it is at only 6% Let us not forget the 'almighty' price of petrol (Premium Motor Spirit – PMS) was at N65 when the present government came in before it was recently reduced from N97 to N87 official price but still sold over that price at the slightest scarcity. The Nigerian Stock Market that was thriving before the present government came in is now down by 3.4 trillion in just 12 months. The Warri Refinery that was working before is today shutdown as result of 'no crude oil to refine' due to large scale illegal bunkering activities (Soludo, 2015). Soludo maintained that: there was increase in government expenditure without a commensurate increase in the development of the nation, rather what is seeing in the faces of Nigerians are poverty which is at its peak, drastic increase in domestic and external debt which stood at \$ 40billion and the unemployment in the country soaring higher under Goodluck Jonathan to 24% (Soludo, 2015).

Despite all the issues of ineptitudes and maladministration that characterized his administration, President Goodluck Jonathan still went ahead to re-contest desperately for a second term at the nation's expense.

5. Second term elections and the crises of democracy in selected states in Nigeria

The 2003 General elections in Nigeria were the second elections held in Nigeria Fourth Republic tagged "Elections of transitional and democratic Consolidation". To this end, all the 36 states governors as well as the president wanted power back and have control over their jurisdiction. According to European Union Election Observation Mission (2003), presidential and a number of gubernatorial elections were marred with serious irregularities and fraud- in a certain number of states, like Enugu, Cross River, Kaduna, Imo, Delta, and Rivers, minimum standard for democratic election were not met. Similar irregularities were observed to a lesser extent in a number of other states including Anambra, Benue, Edo, Kastina, and Nassarawa.

In south West States of Nigeria, the crisis of renew their tenure by the incumbent governors were put to abrupt end by the incumbent President Olusegun Obasanjo who wanted to win all the 36 states of the country to the ruling party (PDP) at the federal. This made the incumbent governors in AD including Adebayo Adeniyi to lose to Peter Fayose in Ekiti State, Adebayo Adefaranti to Olusegun Agagu in Ondo State, Bisi Akande to Olagunsoye Oyinlola in Osun State and Olusegun Osoba to Gbenga Daniel in Ogun State, Lam Adesina lost to Ladoja in Oyo State, while Bola Ahmend Tinubu was the only incumbent Governor that won election in the South Western part of Nigeria (Majekodunmi and Olanrewaju, 2003).

The same defeats were also recorded in the North East part of the Country where the incumbent governor Mallam Kachala of Borno State lost to Ali Modu Sheriff. In North Central, Mohammed Lawal lost to Bukola Saraki in Kwara State, Abubakar Audu to Idris Wada. While the Rabiun Kwankwaso lost to Mallam Shekarau in Kano State in North West, Mbandinuju Chiweoke lost to Chris Ngige/Peter Obi in South East Nigeria. In most of the states listed above, EU Elections Observation Mission (2003) observed that; the reported irregularities

include stuffing of ballot boxes, forgery of results, and falsification of result sheets, ballot box snatching and a variety of other means of rigging. Examples below are meant as illustrations and are by no means exhaustive.

Observers witnessed and obtained evidence of widespread ballot stuffing in several states, including Benue, Cross River, Delta, Enugu, Imo, Kaduna, Kastina and Rivers. European Union Election Observation Mission (2003) reported that, even in Kaduna, Calabar, and Enugu INEC staff, police officers and party agents were found thumb-printing in favour of the ruling party which was against the ethics of the election. Mohammed (2003) reported that, in the 2003 elections, there were widespread collusion between governors and INEC officials to manipulate results, the use of members of the armed forces to intimidate the electorates and the party agents and widespread under-age and multiple voting with the use of thugs in the south-south, and south east Nigeria. Also as fallout of the power tussle for a second term in office, the European Union Election Observer Monitors reported the cases of forgery of results as well as falsification of result sheets in Cross River, Delta, Edo, Enugu, Imo, Kaduna and Nassarawa and expressed consternation at the way those in power and authority deliberately and systematically frustrated the expression of the popular will of Nigerians in returning to office (EU EOM, 2003).

In 2007 general elections, most of the governors that were voted as first time governors in 2003 general elections also sought to renew their mandate with the people in 2007 general elections, yet most of the elections were marred with election rigging, fraud, ballot box snatching, killing, arson and political assassination. Preceding the general elections, many governors who were seeking second term in office played deadly politics that ousted many of them out of the office in the first term. Among them are Governor Peter Ayodele Fayose of Ekiti State who was accused of political killing of his strong contender, Ayodeji Daramola and also attempted assassination of Aare Afe Babalola and Taye Fasubaa. While Chris Ngige of Anambra State, Rasheed Ladoja of Oyo State were said to be against their political godfathers Chris Uba and Lamidu Adedibu respectively which led to be ousted from the office (Majekodunmi and Olanrewaju, 2013).

After the 2007 general elections that ushered in president Sheu Musa Yar 'Adua, he publicly attested to the fact that his election was marred with violence and irregularities and thus declared that, the legitimacy of the government was at its lowest ebb. In this wise, the president then went ahead to appease opposition groups by first; openly apologizing that the election which brought him into power was flawed and promised that he would do something about it (Ujo, 2012). Many of the incumbent state governors who contested for second term in offices faced the charges of electoral fraud, irregularities, and ballot stuffing. Some of them whose elections were declared invalid were later removed by the Court of Appeal. Examples included Among the cases between the then incumbent Ondo State Governor; Olusegun Agagu (PDP) vs. Olusegun Mimiko (LP) which the later won in the Appeal Court, then incumbent Osun State Governor Olagunsoye Oyinlola (PDP) vs. Rauf Aregbesola which the later also won in the Appeal Court (Majekodunmi and Olanrewaju, 2003). While the case of incumbent Governor Olusegun Oni vs. Kayode Fayemi of Ekiti State bothered on electoral impropriety and was decided in favour of the latter.

The 2011 election took another dimension as the then President, President Musa Yar 'Adua died in office. This brought in the vice-president as the incumbent President as Osolase (2014) observed that, it is of noteworthy, that the then vice president and later the president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria; Dr.

Goodluck Ebele Jonathan is from Bayelsa state. As Osolase has observed, the former president fought a toothless battle with the incumbent Governor of his state, Timipre Silva to the extent that the governor lost touch with people and he lost the second term chance of becoming the state governor. The President used all the apparatus of the federal might and financial resources to bamboozle and depose the governor, accusing him of disloyalty, financial misconduct and abusing his position for inflicting pains on the people of the state. However, the election could not augur well as the incumbent governor lost his seat from the primary election to other contestant in the state. Other governors that lost the second term election in their states include: Ikedi Ohakim of Imo State lost to Rochas Okorochoa, Mahmud Shinkafi lost to Abubakar Yari in Zamfara State, Alao Akala lost to Abiola Ajimobi in Oyo State. The 2014 Governorship Election in Ekiti State was also one of the shockwaves in Nigeria's political firmament and within the International Communities wherein the incumbent governor, Kayode Fayemi, lost to Mr Peter Ayodele Fayose (Thomas, 2014).

Despite the fact many governors lost the second term elections in their states to opponents, the aftermath in the political contestation is corruption which is at its prime in Nigeria. However, no recent studies have confirmed the corruption perpetrated after the governor or president of the country losing election to the opponent and during the transition period. But the observable corruptible attitude noted in Nigeria including inflation and approval of emergency contract in the government house, releasing of funds for abandoned projects, even if the projects have been abandoned for many years, the government within the period of the transition to other government will use all means to perpetrate evil by awarding non-existing projects to his cronies. During the three-months of transition to other government, government usually employs measures to forcefully employ party supporters to the government. A vivid example of this was observed in Ekiti State during the transition period between Governor Kayode Fayemi and Governor-Elect, Peter Ayodele Fayose in 2014. The outgoing governor used the avenue to recruit party faithful to his government. It was that time that he approved the establishment of College of Agriculture to his hometown Isan Ekiti; he also used the avenue to recruit more than two thousand party faithful to the state public service. This scenario was also replicated at the federal level wherein the president of the country, Jonathan Goodluck, also used the avenue to recruit after he had lost the election to the opposition.

6. Conclusion and recommendation

This paper examines the issue of second term vis-à-vis the crises of electoral democracy in Nigeria. The paper discusses electoral crises related to the presidential as well as state elections under the current Fourth Republic. Findings from the paper reveal that incumbent factor is antithetical to good governance, democratic transition and consolidation in Nigeria. To this extent and as a control measure, the paper therefore canvasses the re-designing of term limits for political chief executives; president and the governors. It supports the transformation of the current tenure of two four-year terms for presidents and governors in Nigeria into a single term of six years. This is in order to reduce the acrimonious conflict, divisiveness and instability arising from partisan or factional competition for executive offices in the federation. According to Ekweremadu (2017); "among other advertised benefits, single terms would avoid the distractions,

manipulations and divisiveness of re-election campaigns while facilitating a more rapid circulation or rotation of power among the various groups.”

Furthermore, a single term of six years is also less costly as it will reduce the cost of conducting general elections every four years as presently operated. The politics of succession, self- succession including incumbents’ penchant for self-perpetuation, that has been overheating the polity since independence will be reduced if not totally avoided under this system. The single term has the capability of growing and stabilizing the country’s democracy. The citizens should be well educated and nurtured in democratic governance so as to regard election/succession as a simple exercise and not a ‘do or die’ affair. Monetization of democratic government should be greatly reduced to pave way for more dividends of democracy to the citizenry.

Moreover, as a means of reducing the unhealthy competition for presidential power and the adjoining political ills, the paper suggests the rotation of presidential power among the leading ethnic groups/geographical zones of the country. This is capable of allaying the fears of the various regions that the country is composed of and promote the spirit of nationalism in the citizens thus further uniting the country. In the words of Ekweremadu, ‘the rotational presidency will reassure every constituent part that power will come their way at a given interval’. It will further reduce the associated problems of regime succession and the quest for a second term in office.

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