



## Human right violation in Nigeria: A lesson from endsars protest

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### Abstract

Nigeria as a nation has numerous human right abuse. The value for human rights has been a subject of controversy, in that these rights as often taken for granted by some influential officials who are in the position to do justice and equity but with impunity they rather turn the other way and infests them with ignominy. It must not be a surprise that some government sector in Nigeria are discredited with high level of corruption. Agencies such as Transparency International, Strategic Programming for Anti-Corruption Agencies, and the International Monetary Fund etc has testified to this facts, and has rated Nigeria also as among highly corrupt countries in the globe. Virtually, almost all fabrics of government in Nigeria are damned for embezzlement of Public fund, Security compromises, Compulsive lies, Blackmail, Extra judicial killings and general indiscipline; The state of complacent in the country so degenerates that a group of highly placed individuals who feels 'untouchable' forming alliance known as 'cabals'. This cabals are notorious for evil activities and they acts with impunity. They are magisterial in every sector of the economy, including the oil and security sector. They dictate the growth of the Nation's economy clandestinely to its detriments. In the security sector, the 'cabals' decides He who get 'What, When and How' The special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), a specialized units created to fight criminal acts such as robbery, kidnapping banditry etc is a reflection of some of the saboteur caused by this nefarious sect on Nigerian government since 1999. Anti-corruption agencies such as Independent Corrupt practices and other related agencies commission (ICPC), Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) created to fight this malefactor in all sector have done their best, yet it is not good enough. The ENDSARS protest was as a result on a series of unresolved dissatisfaction between the Nigerian police force and the masses especially the youth. Some achievements were recorded from the protest as the infamous SARS became outlawed and disbanded and displacing the strong hands of the 'cabals'. The paper adopts the doctrinal method as well as the socio-legal model of inquiries in this research and the conclusion is that, the collective will of the people if articulated could form a major force in achieving human rights in Nigeria at all times

**Keywords:** SARS, corruption, human right, protest impunity

### Introduction

Top officials in Nigeria has always demonstrated a non-challant attitude toward the plights of its citizenry for no just reason. Though the country's constitution has provided a space for human right system in the country but it is a mirage. The provisions in chapter four of the 1999 constitution of Nigeria which guaranteed the basic rights for every Nigerian could have been sufficient but they are usually taken for granted by those in power. This ineptitudes has led to groanings among the citizens which could possibly had led to rancour and picking of arms against the offenders.

The 1999 Constitution provision for fundamental rights of the citizens includes the Right to life, Right to dignity of the human person, Right to personnel liberty, Right to fair hearing, Right to private and family life, Freedom of thought; Conscience and Religion, Freedom of expression and of the press: Peaceful assembly and Freedom of association, Freedom of movement, Freedom from discrimination; and Freedom to acquire and own immovable property anywhere in Nigeria. When these benefits are denied from a human being. His human instincts diminishes then his right as a human being becomes questionable. Human rights dynamism are positioned to affect the political, social, economic, judicial and cultural disposition of the dignity of man either intrinsically or extrinsically. Human rights are Natural, Rational, Inviolable and Unalterable, and the deprivation of which would constitute grave affront to one's sense of justice <sup>[1]</sup>. Human right

provides a common standard of behaviour among communities at both local and international levels. Human right system no longer operates solely from the local arena, rather with collaborate efforts for optimal goals. For the globalization of human rights efforts, Nigeria became signatories to many international bodies of human right movements and other treaties initiated under International Law to aid human protection from abuse. The voluntary ratification of treaties and conventions of international standard demonstrates Nigeria resolved to aid human right and to promote it at all levels. Nigeria has ratified the following international and regional instruments of human right.

1. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) <sup>[2]</sup>
2. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Right (ICESR) <sup>[3]</sup>
3. Convention against Torture <sup>[4]</sup>
4. The African Charter on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR) <sup>[5]</sup>.
5. Most of the contents in these international instruments have all been domesticated. The 1999 Nigerian constitution (as amended) is explicit enough to provide for adequate protection of human rights to all citizens in the country <sup>[6]</sup>.

Despite the above provisions, Amnesty International (AI) and Human Rights Watch (HRN) has labeled Nigeria the most brutal in terms of Police operations, Extra-judicial

execution, Organ harvesting, Torture, Rape, Physical assault, Harassment, Extortion, Excessive use of force, Abduction, Unlawful arrest, Illegal detentions and all forms of human rights abuses<sup>[7]</sup>. SARS, a specialized organ in the Nigerian police force was a reflection of all the gory and sordid experience the common man went through in Nigeria before it was disbanded.

### **Nature and Evolution of Human Rights**

The freedom of man is paramount in every society and the means to attain the desired freedom is also very vital to man. When the idea of human rights comes to mind, the rights guaranteed the necessary freedom that man desires, and to recognised that there are certain rights which must not be denied, no matter how cumbersome. Many activists traced the concept of human rights to ancient Greek and Rome, some scholars also restrict it to Magna Carta of 1215, the Bill of Rights of 1689<sup>[8]</sup> the US declaration of Independence of 1776 and the rights of Man and the citizen of 1789 in France. The Vienna congress of 1815 which promoted the abolishment of slave trade which was eventually achieved by the Brussels convention of 1890 etc. These are pointers to evolution of human rights to say but the least.

In contemporary times when new terminology was adopted from the old form of Natural rights to Human rights. John Locke (1632-1704) in his work titled 'An Essay Concerning Human Understanding', the understanding of human right came to bare. Locke understanding was that human beings should be allowed to advance their potentials in the society in so far as such acts do not harm other individuals<sup>[9]</sup>. The expression 'Human Rights' gained recognition in the aftermath of the World War II with several millions of casualties recorded. The war was horrific and unfortunate. This said events propelled members of the United Nations to pledge the necessary supports to hold human lives as sacred as possible, and to take necessary steps to show respect and observance to it as fundamental freedom for all<sup>[10]</sup>. The 1948 was remarkable in the history of the world when the United Nations General Assembly adopted the universal declaration of human rights as a right for all with the charter's preamble as:

"All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in the spirit of brotherhood<sup>[11]</sup>."

The ENDSARs protest probably erupted in the spirit of brotherhood of the above charter in Nigeria to pull down the strong hands of the oppressors of mankind and till date the sponsors of the protests remained unknown. What a mystery.

The UNDHR was the first document of Human Rights into which is today regarded as the bedrock of modern human right machinery.

In 1966, two other instruments emerged to further protect this inalienable rights of man. They are hereunder listed:

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)

and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and were both adopted as 'codicil' of the UNDHR. These twin's instrument binds all state parties to respect and promote human rights in all ramifications. There were also regional instruments such as the American convention of Human rights<sup>[12]</sup>, European Convention of Human Rights<sup>[13]</sup>, The African Charter on

Human and People's rights<sup>[14]</sup> which came up much more later in the 20th centuries and they also supported human freedom and movements. These bodies also have monitoring mechanism for their effectiveness.

### **History of Human Rights in Nigeria**

The history of human rights in Nigeria from the days of the pre-colonial to the present has not been encouraging as it is marred with lots of irregularities, subjugations, novelties, and cruelties. Human being had gone through series of oppositions and neglects from those who are to protect them. In the pre-colonial Nigeria, the strong had always taken the weak as prey. The views of C.A Oputa JSC (as he then was) is relevant in this regards. According to him, "The weak have no rights and what existed then was 'might is right'"

Oputa further mentioned that:

In the pre-colonial times, we had ancient kingdom like the Benin Empire, Powerful sultanates of Sokoto, Emir of Kano, Katsina etc. Obas and chiefs ruled over kingdoms in the west and in the east of what is now known as Nigeria. These very people were those who sold their fellow Africans into slavery. They first dehumanized them and reduced them to the status of things. 'It was the might that was right' the weak had no rights, human or fundamental, Tsarist Russia was a perfect example of the age we are now talking about. How can anyone talk of human rights in such an age and in such societies<sup>[15]</sup>.

In the pre-colonial Nigeria, another area of violation was the practice of slavery, the Osu caste system in Iboland, human sacrifice in the Benin empire, the killing of twins in Calabar. Human being were completely derogated through idolatry and superstition and banishment from communities over simple cases of suspected witchcraft practices. During the colonial era, mere freedom of association to hold and propagate opinions or to participate in the process of governance were severely curtailed or sometimes not recognised for the colonized people<sup>[16]</sup>

Oputa further narrate:

"Human rights under the slavery of colonization, the exploitation of the native population for the enrichment of the mother country, the alienation of the colonized with scientific arguments clearly used to show up the oppressed group as inferior species leading up to the less of their cultural identity and corporate mortality and in particular, to a pejorative judgment with respect to their original forms of existence – if at all in that situations human rights could exist, they did not exist as rights but as privileges and favour to a favoured few"

Evidence abounds throughout the pre-colonial Nigeria that only little was achieved through the missionaries whose efforts at stopping the killings of twins in Calabar and the cancellation of rituals of human sacrifice in Benin kingdom, as well as the mitigation of slave trade in the nation, little achievement was also recorded in propagating other anti-human rights acts like the abolition of certain customary practice which were considered repugnant to Natural Justices, Equity and Good Conscience.

Human rights during pre-colonial experienced a ray of hope with the emergence of nationalists like Dr. Nnamdi Azikwe, the leader of the defunct National Council of Nigeria and Cameroon (NCNC), and Chief Obafemi Awolow, the leader of the defunct Action Group (AG) Aminu Kano spear-heading the call for national self-determination through

political parties coupled with the McPherson constitution of 1951 conceding to Nigeria, the right to run its own affairs under the supervision of the colonial over lords. These early leaders viewed the interpretation of human rights to be settled on the basis of self-rule as well as the right to decide one's own future and the nature of desired Political, Social and Economic status through prebicides or referendum which resulted into independence.

Since 1960 when Nigeria gained independence, the scourge of deprivation and marginalization still remained a twin factors that has remained in the cloak of the nation wheel. The deliberate wish of states who failed to recognised the impact of various legal covenants of the right of man as a major factor in the economics and management of affairs in his state is a pointer that the nation is yet to attain human right goals. The post independent Nigeria is looming in the aqua of corruption and totalitarian regime where democratic principles and human rights are far from being everywhere, the law enforcement officers, the police and others having thrown caution to the wind and embraced the act of impunity and complacent, high handedness of the citizenry which they ought to mentor and assist, which they have rather turned their guns and ammunitions against, the people whose taxes are used to pay them salaries. What a misfortune. The police especially, turned against the 'fingers that fed them'. The only weapon left for the citizens is to take their lives at their hands. To stage protests and more protests, for a better Nigeria, damning the consequences it has on lives and property. Some times the protests escalates into violence, causing more damages to the innocents

From the first republic to the fourth in Nigeria, issues on human right abuse in Nigeria has not mitigated significantly. It has rather worsen under both civilian regime and military regime. The various military era has not helped in this issue, rather the era witnessed gross misuse of power and impunity. The military rule in Nigeria and the subsequent civil rules failed woefully in safeguarding the right of citizens in Nigeria to date. Hence, the last option was to stage protests. It is retrogressive to note that the last resort for expressing one's dissatisfaction over a governmental authority in Nigeria is to stage a protest, and the protests usually result in gory lost of lives which usually goes violent because successive government lack the maturity and expertise in handling protesters. To the leaders, human lives makes no meaning, rather they see protesters as nuisance that must be flush out at all cost. Here are lists of some protests in Nigeria.

- a. The Aba woman, riot of 1929 over high tax levies impose by the colonial government.
- b. Abeokuta women revolt of 1947 led by Mrs Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti over high taxation in Egba land.
- c. Ali must go riot led by Segun Okeowo and Ahmadu Ali over a 50kobo increase in student fees which sparked up the protest in 1978.
- d. Anti-SAP Riot in 1989, The National Union of University Student organised the protest.
- e. June 12th protest of 1993 led by Nigerians over the annulment of June 12 election by President Ibrahim Babangida.
- f. Occupy Nigeria led by Nigerians at home an diaspora in 2012, was occasioned by the removal of fuel subsidies by president Goodluck Jonathan etc<sup>[17]</sup>
- g. Endsars protest of 2020 led by Nigerian youth over police brutality on Nigerians especially the youth.

### Human Rights Violation in Nigeria

As earlier mentioned, Nigeria is one of the nations with the most obnoxious, repressive and non-challant in the preservation of human lives and property of citizens. The government from inception takes human lives with levity with frequent brutalizations of citizens and other numerous cases of abuse rends the space.

Though the violation of human right is traceable to the pre-colonial Nigeria when powerful African leaders in Nigeria were deposed, and their kingdoms taken over by their colonial masters. A good example which were Ovonoranmwun Nogbasi of Benin Kingdom, King Jaja of Opobo, Nana of Itsekiri, Oseitutu of Ghana etc. The right of defenceless women during the Aba women riot of 1929 were desecrated by the colonial masters who publicly opened fire and killing a majority of them. (These were women who merely demanded their rights through peaceful protest). The story did not change even after gaining independence in 1960, human right violation continued unabated throughout the 1960s, where the military Juntas in Nigeria held sway to power, the 1966 genocide of the Nigerian Easterners where approximately one million soul perished during the civil war in Nigeria is a pointer to human right abuse. A lot of civilian were then executed in cold-blood, the rules of wars were not followed by combatants, it was almost becoming a tribal war between Nigeria and the Ibo race. The consciousness of the Nigerian troops was to cleanse the Ibo out of the geographical space. The Ibos could not resist the Nigeria superior armament, they had to succumb in 1970, for fear of completely wipe out. There was absolute violation of human rights during the civil war on both side of the war in Nigeria, even after the war, nobody was tried for war crime neither was anyone tried for human right infraction. Till date the agony of the civil war is very noticeable in many families in Nigeria. Human right violations can be noticed even in political position and offices across the country a good example is that of the position of presidency in Nigeria since 1960 which has remained lopsided, and it is clear that some ethnic groups are treated with sceptism in attaining the No 1 political position in the country. It is right to emphasized that at no point in International Law is exclusiveness or divide and rule system permitted, and any nation that practice this, is in violation of human right rules.

### Police and Human Rights Violation in Nigeria

The police force in Nigeria though dated to the 1930s, yet has remained the most unprofessional, corrupt and criminal in conducts<sup>[18]</sup>. Howbeit record abounds of few members of the corps with good achievements and exemplary conducts over the years though at a very little ratio. In the contemporary times, the evils associated with this outfit has over-whelmed its achievement, given that their approach on matters bothering on fundamental human rights has not attained an accepted level of tolerance both locally and internationally hence, breaches of citizen's fundamental rights, ranging from arbitrary arrest of victims and Unlawful detention, threat and act of violence, including physical and sexual assault, torture and even extra judicial killings. The Centre for Law Enforcement and Education (CLEEN) has observed that the use of violence by the Nigeria police personnels against the citizens in Nigeria was alarming in its survey through 14 states, 14.8 percent of those interviewed said they have been physically assaulted by the Nigeria

police personnel 22.5 percent said they have been threatened to be shoot in the past, 73.2 percent said they had witnessed the police beating other persons. A sample of 197 inmates revealed higher figures of police abuse, 81% of respondents said they had been beaten or slapped and 39% burnt with hot objects<sup>[19]</sup>.

Worried by this development, the federal government of Nigeria created the police service commission and the Ministry of Police Affairs to see to ways in alienating this saga. Through the auspices of these organs, a lot of 'bad eggs' among this police force has been dismissed or disciplined accordingly. These organs have also embarked on formulation and implementation of policies for standard practice both in training and orientation of the police personnel. Even at this, the evils in the system seem unabated in Nigeria.

The following are some of the departments in the Nigerian police force plagued with the evil of right abuses

- Finance and administration
- Operation
- Logistics and supply
- Crime investigation
- Training
- Research and planning
- Information and communication
- Force secretary
- Force intelligence bureau

The above departments known for violations against human rights, yet, their evil is no comparison with the Special Anti-Robbery-Squad (SARS) a unit in the force department of criminal investigation and intelligence. Other units in the same department are

- Administration
- Anti-Fraud Section
- The Central Criminal registry (CCR)
- Special Enquiry Bureau
- X-Squad
- General Investigation
- Special Fraud Unit (SFU)
- Legal Section
- Forensic Science
- Interpol
- Homicide and
- Anti-Human Trafficking Unit.
- These departments have not been so implicated as that of SARs yet, they cannot be said to be angels.

Here is a life story shared by Professor Moyo Okediji title: **Nigerian Professor in US: How I was robbed by immigration officers, Igbo boys saved me from police officers in Lagos, published by Freedom Reporters December 13th 2023. Here it narrates in part:**

*I came in through Ghana, and decided to enter Nigeria by road so I could see the lagoon landscape, riding a Jeep that I hired to drive me down. Everything went well in Ghana, Togo, Benin Republic, until I stepped into Nigeria.*

*Na dia trouble start ooooo!*

*The first immigration checkpoint that we encountered was at the Seme border, on the Nigeria side.*

*One of immigration officers took a look at me, and said, "Come down, oga."*

*To cut a long story short, they robbed me of \$500.*

*There were many of them, and they "invited" me—more like dragged me—to their shed.*

*They took my hand luggage, with all the money that I brought from the US.*

*Their excuse was that they wanted to search it to see if it contained contraband.*

*They asked for my Nigeria passport. I told them it had expired and I was in Nigeria to renew it.*

*They said it was an offence for me to enter the country with an expired passport.*

*I apologised. But they wanted none of that.*

*They said I had to "settle" them. They had my wallet containing the money I brought to spend in Nigeria.*

*They saw two twenty-dollar notes and said I needed to give them these notes, otherwise they would seize all the money in the wallet, and take me to their office to make a statement.*

*I had heard stories of visitors to the country ending up dead when the police invited them to their offices to clear some issues.*

*So I eagerly gave them the forty dollars.*

*They gave me back my things.*

*But when I counted my money later, \$500 was missing.*

*Then the Jeep driver drove me to the FESTAC Mile Two motor park, where another driver I hired to take me to Ile Ife was waiting.*

*My two suitcases were on the floor at the Mile Two FESTAC car park, in public, right under the large gate to FESTAC.*

*I was narrating my ordeal in the hands of the immigration to my driver, when three gun-toting police officers appeared. They carried some deadly-looking AK 47.*

*They wanted to see the content of my bags.*

*As they searched the bags, they came upon the money I brought from the US.*

*I introduced myself to them as a professor at the University of Texas, Austin.*

*They asked for identifications. I gave them my driving licence, the university issued ID card, my US passport and my Nigeria passport.*

*They took them from me.*

*By that time, about ten police officers had descended upon me.*

*Also listening were some Igbo guys hanging out at the motor park.*

*Before you could say "Ki lo de?" the police officers searched me thoroughly.*

*Then they started searching my bag.*

*They found that my suitcases contained my personal effects. They were interested in a pair of shorts which they said looked like camouflage shorts.*

*They pulled out the shorts.*

*Then there was a sculpture that I made, which they said was juju,*

*They decided to seize my suitcases, hand luggage, ID cards and all of my money.*

*They said I had to follow them to the police station.*

*At this point, a sizable crowd of some fifty people had gathered.*

*One of them, with an obvious Igbo accent, said, "You can see he is a professor from abroad. He has given you several ID cards, including his passports. Wetin you dey find again?"*

*It was like a signal to the others, who began shouting, "You wan kill am? You people are thieves o! Highway robbers! It can never happen! Una don see money, una eyes don open...! Before you can take him, just kill all of us!"*

*They formed a tight buffer zone between the police officers and me.*

*Two of them jumped into the police vehicle and dragged out my bags from the vehicle. They accosted the one who held the wallet containing my ID card and my money, shouting, "You better give him back his wallet and money now, odawise wahala will burst."*

*Another said, "We will not let you take him to the police station to kill him like you always kill international visitors."*

*In a matter of moments, about a hundred Igbo boys emerged from thin air and surrounded us.*

*The police officers saw they were clearly outnumbered by these Igbo motor park boys.*

*They threatened to shoot.*

*These Igbo boys stood their ground, daring the police officers to kill them.*

*"Oya now," they said, "Sebi you get AK 47. Kill us now, and then you can take him. But you are not taking him if we are still alive."*

*Though some of the police officers appeared to cock their rifles, the Igbo guys only squeezed tighter around me.*

*The police officers slapped some of the Igbo guys near them, but their ring of protection around me did not break, it only got tighter, as the guys were yelling and daring the officers to kill them.*

*I was scared.*

*The police officers realised that the situation was clearly beyond what they envisaged.*

*They had imagined I was alone and nobody would rise to my defence.*

*The police officer who held my wallet, passports and ID cards quickly handed them back to me, looking nervous.*

*The Igbo boys, chanting, carried my suitcases on their heads, sometimes lifting the boxes up above their heads like highly coveted trophies.*

*The boys, seemingly closed in on the police officers, ready to attack them for my protection.*

*The police officers jumped inside their vehicles, and drove off to save face, their tails curled behind their brokos.*

*I recalled the traumatic moment I left the country in 1992, and swore "If you see me in this god-forsaken country again, cut off my neck."*

*Obviously, the country has fallen much lower since then, and is now a danger zone in which men in uniforms of all descriptions—immigration, customs, police, vehicle inspection officers and others wearing uniforms difficult to identify or define—they have all taken over the country and made it difficult for citizens to enjoy, or even just subsist in their own country.*

*Which kain' nsogbu be dis o?*

*It is a geographical zone best avoided if you can.*

### **Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) and the Nigerian Public**

The activity of SARS which was most notorious among other units within the Nigerian police force as earlier mentioned has a long history of human right abuses such as Extortion, Harassment, Assault and Extrajudicial killings, the Nigerian public became fed-up with the nefarious activities of this sect to the extent of going further to organised a grassroot social movement through protests against all forms of police brutality. The protest tagged

ENDSARS' was a call by the protesters to government to disband this special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) <sup>[20]</sup>.

The protest actually started in 2017 calling for the eradication of this unit within the Nigerian police force, the call was revitalized in 2020 following the revelations of more abuses perpetuated by this unit. The protests occurred throughout the country resulting in mass demonstration across major cities, and accompanied with social media platforms. The Nigerian public, especially the youth demonstrated a complete sense of dissatisfaction and resentment against this unit. A lot of petitions were submitted to the National Assembly and calling for the units' disbandment by concerned citizens while the protest last. The slogan 'ENDSARS' spontaneously gained momentum, spreading like wildfire throughout the country as a unified force within and outside Nigeria. All the messages were the same; calling for an end to police brutality and accountability of officers who violates human rights with impunity.

Activists and celebrities from all walks of life joined the protests to demand for the cancellation of this SARS units. However, the protest was responded to, by security forces and the counter action resulted in multiple clashes and casualties from both ends.

The pressure from the masses was so germane that the government had no option than to immediately announced the disbandment of the units ENDSARS, this would not appease the irate youth who had lost some of their members to the protests especially when it was gathered that many of them were shot dead in cold blood at Lekki toll gate in Lagos State. They did not have the sincerity of government over the disbandment, because past antecedence showed in 2017 the then Inspector General of Police (IGP) once announced a ban on 'Stop and search Conducts' of SARS, but to no avail. The ban was also re-announced by the IGP in 2018 and 2020. Yet, this dare devils' squad would not retract their steps.

Another announcements of banning SARS at this time was not taken with seriousness by the angry youth who had actually taken over every street in the country demanding for justice for victims of human right violation. For days, the protest would not abate, the youths were all out for a show down this time and damning all consequences. It was like a war between two rival groups. The protest, among other reasons, bordered on frustrations with socioeconomic inequalities and high levels of unemployment in Nigeria. Many protesters believed that reforming the police force was crucial to addressing systematic issues that negatively impacted their lives and the country's future.

The systemic corruption as traceable to this unit within the force eroded public trust in the police force, this same SARS were seen by the youth as enemies of progress, the indiscriminate profiling and harassment of youth by SARS officers were the major anger that took Nigerians to the street. Another complaints was that the youth were targeted and manhandled based on their appearance on hair styles, tattoos on their body or dreadlocks. Numerous reports and video clips of incidence of youths being tortured which surfaced on social media and went viral culminated in the heart of the youths that SARS officers were seen as a clog on the wheel of progress within the domain of human rights in Nigeria, and this was a big challenge to fundamentals of human right of the citizenry, therefore the youth vowed that SARS must go down at all cost.

### Significance of the ENDSARS Protest

The ENDSARS protest of 2020 in Nigeria was a turning point in the history of the country. Never in Nigeria has protesters be so united for a common purpose like that of ENDSARS. The escalation of the protest nationwide was a demand for justice, accountability and reforms of all disgruntled government parastatals. The incident captured on live streams and shared globally, was a vindication on a people in quest for accountability and justices against a failed government. The aftermath of the protest saw an increased scrutiny of Nigeria institutions and a renewed focus on the need for comprehensive overhaul of all apparatus of governments and the granting of the five points demand by the protesters as stated below:

1. Immediate release of all protesters involved in the ENDSARS protest.
2. Justice for all deceased victims of police brutality and appropriate compensation for their families.
3. Setting up an independent body to oversee the investigation and persecution of all reported police misconduct within 10 days.
4. Carrying out psychological evaluation and retaining of all disbanded SARS operatives before they can be deployed.
5. Government to increase police personnel salaries and they should be adequately compensated for protecting lives and property of the citizens <sup>[21]</sup>.

The aftermath represent a people disgruntled with actions beyond just ending of SARS and police brutality, it demonstrated a clear reflection of the limit to which human endurance can be tested in the midst of accumulated pains and hardship they had undergone, hence it was remarkable to take their destiny and future in their hands even if heavens falls.

Another remarkable features of the protest was that, till date, the organizers of the protest remained obscured.

The ENDSARS protest brought a reminder of article 4 of the African charter which positioned every human being as inviolable and entitled to respect and dignity. A right that no human being should be arbitrarily deprived of; the right to access to benefits necessary for dignified living.

The protest brought the realization that the state must ensure that the necessary condition to prevent violation of the fundamental right be created, adequate statutory framework to deter any forms of threat to life, or unwarranted hardship on innocent citizens in the country must also be created in line with the necessary constitutional provisions of the Nigerian constitution of 1999 (as amended).

### Conclusion

The ENDSARS saga demonstrated the extent to which human nature can endure hardship by organs of governments who perpetrate evil with impunity. The protest, though initially meant to be peaceful, turned violent due to the insensitivity of the security agency in Nigeria to the plights of the protesters. In counter responses to the approach of the security men who thought of squalling the protests with violence the actions escalated. The security men were disappointed as this action as it were vehemently resisted with anger, resulting in clashes and deaths. When violence could no longer avail in the situation, dialogue was employed, and systematically the protests subsidized on

conditions that all demands by the aggrieved people would be looked into.

The Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) was immediately disbanded by government and in replacement, the Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team was created, with a promise to abate all illegal machineries that has brought untold hardship to the people. The government also promised full reforms of its apparatus to include full accountability of erring officers and transparency in all activities of government. Government promised the inclusion of civil society organisation and human rights advocates in all its scheme to promote full transparency and freedom through collaboration. The only obstacles the protest could not break completely, was the oligarchy of the 'cabals' which hitherto has remained a snare for the country.

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