



THE STATESMAN

A LEGISLATIVE & POLICY REVIEW



■ ISSUE 001

**STEADY LEADERSHIP, STRONGER
INSTITUTIONS: NAVIGATING
NIGERIA'S SECURITY CROSSROADS**





EDITORIAL TEAM

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Sam Ifeanyi Hart, mni

EDITORS

Tordue Umah
Stèpha Abdul
Iyanu Adebiyi

MEDIA & PRESS CONTRIBUTORS

Onyinye Ojiaku
Mabel Aderonke
Vivian Okorie
Udora Orizu
Levinus Nwabughiogu

PHOTOGRAPHY & VISUAL COMMUNICATION

Umoru Idu Ameh
Oluwatobiloba Sofolabo

GRAPHICS & DESIGN LAYOUT

Onyemuwa Ijioma Chikezie



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WELCOME MESSAGE

Esteemed Readers,

It is my privilege to welcome you to the maiden edition of **THE STATESMAN**.

In presenting this first issue, I am mindful of the moment our nation is living through; a moment defined by rising security pressures, institutional strain, and the urgent need for disciplined, principled leadership. It is for this reason that the theme of this edition is: **"Steady Leadership, Stronger Institutions: Navigating Nigeria's Security Crossroads."**

Across our communities, families confront the fear of violence, the weight of economic uncertainty, and the anxiety that comes when public institutions struggle to meet the demands of a changing nation. In times like these, leadership cannot be reactive. It must be steady. It must be clear. And it must be anchored in values that strengthen the Republic: justice, accountability, fairness, and an unwavering respect for the dignity of every citizen.

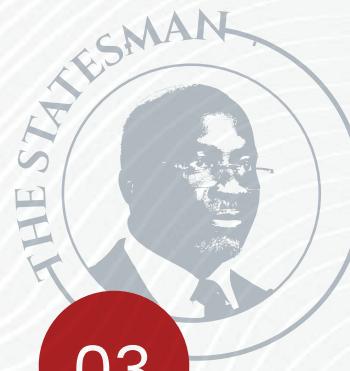
This publication offers a window into the responsibilities I carry and the reforms I am pursuing. It also reflects my work as **Deputy Speaker of Nigeria's 10th House of Representatives** to modernize our national security architecture and strengthen governance structures, and as **Chairman of the House of Representatives Committee on the Review of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (As Amended)**, to widen the space for national stability. Yet beyond official roles, my commitment to public service has always been shaped by a belief that leadership must remain close to the people through empathy, community engagement, and a genuine concern for the welfare of every Nigerian.

Through **THE STATESMAN**, I aim to provide insights into the ideas, legislative actions, and constitutional commitments that guide my service. Within these pages, you will find perspectives on our security challenges, updates on key reforms, and reflections on the principles that shape how we govern. My intent is not merely to inform, but to help build a national culture where citizens understand, question, and contribute to the work of nation building.

Nigeria is at a crossroads, but it is also full of possibility. With unity of purpose, with disciplined leadership, and with reforms that strengthen our institutions, I believe our nation can rise above its present constraints and chart a more stable, more secure, and more prosperous future.

Thank you for opening this first edition. It is an honor to serve, and my commitment remains firm: to lead with empathy, act with clarity, and uphold the trust placed in me by the Nigerian people.


Benjamin Okezie Kalu, Ph.D., LLD., CFR
THE STATESMAN



EDITOR-IN-CHIEF'S NOTE



Leadership is ultimately a conversation with the future, a disciplined effort to translate principles into structure and structure into service. THE STATESMAN emerges from that conviction. This inaugural edition offers Nigerians a clearer window into the values, ideas, and reform-minded commitments that define the public life of Benjamin O. Kalu Ph.D., CFR, not only in his current role as the Deputy Speaker of the 10th House of Representatives, but as a statesman dedicated to strengthening the Republic.

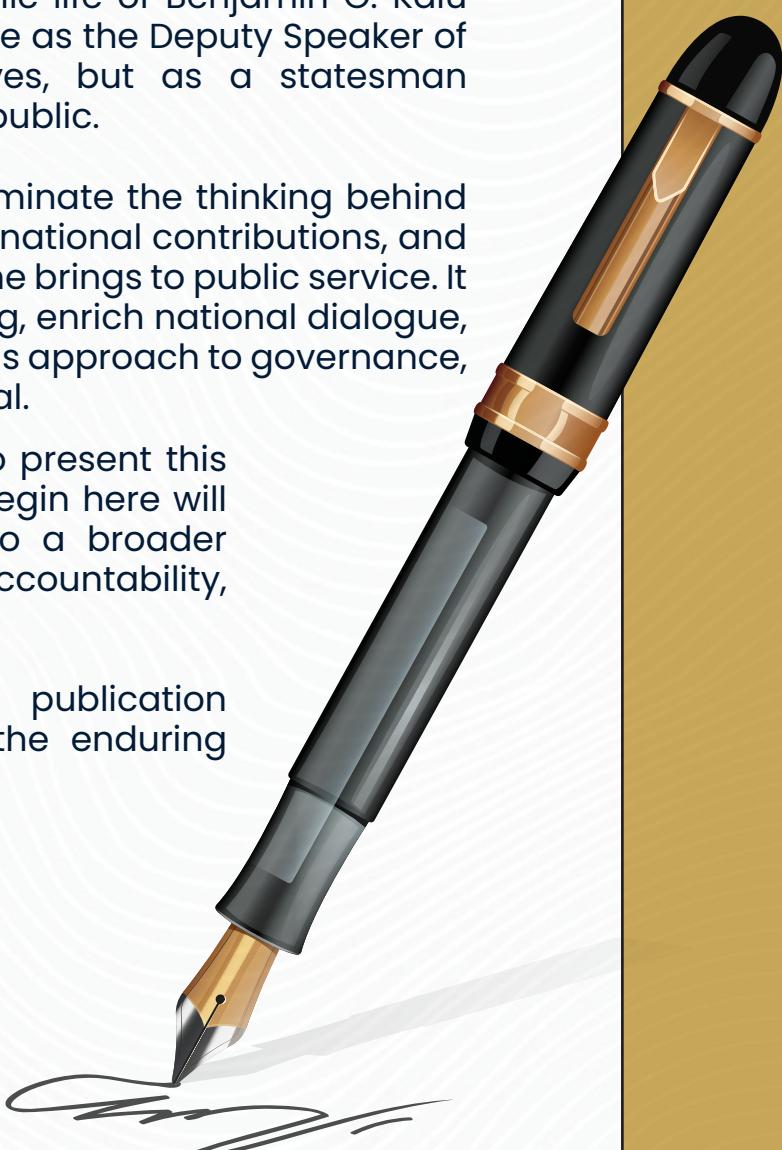
This publication is designed to illuminate the thinking behind his work, the clarity that guides his national contributions, and the disciplined leadership posture he brings to public service. It aims to deepen civic understanding, enrich national dialogue, and anchor the ideals that shape his approach to governance, diplomacy, and institutional renewal.

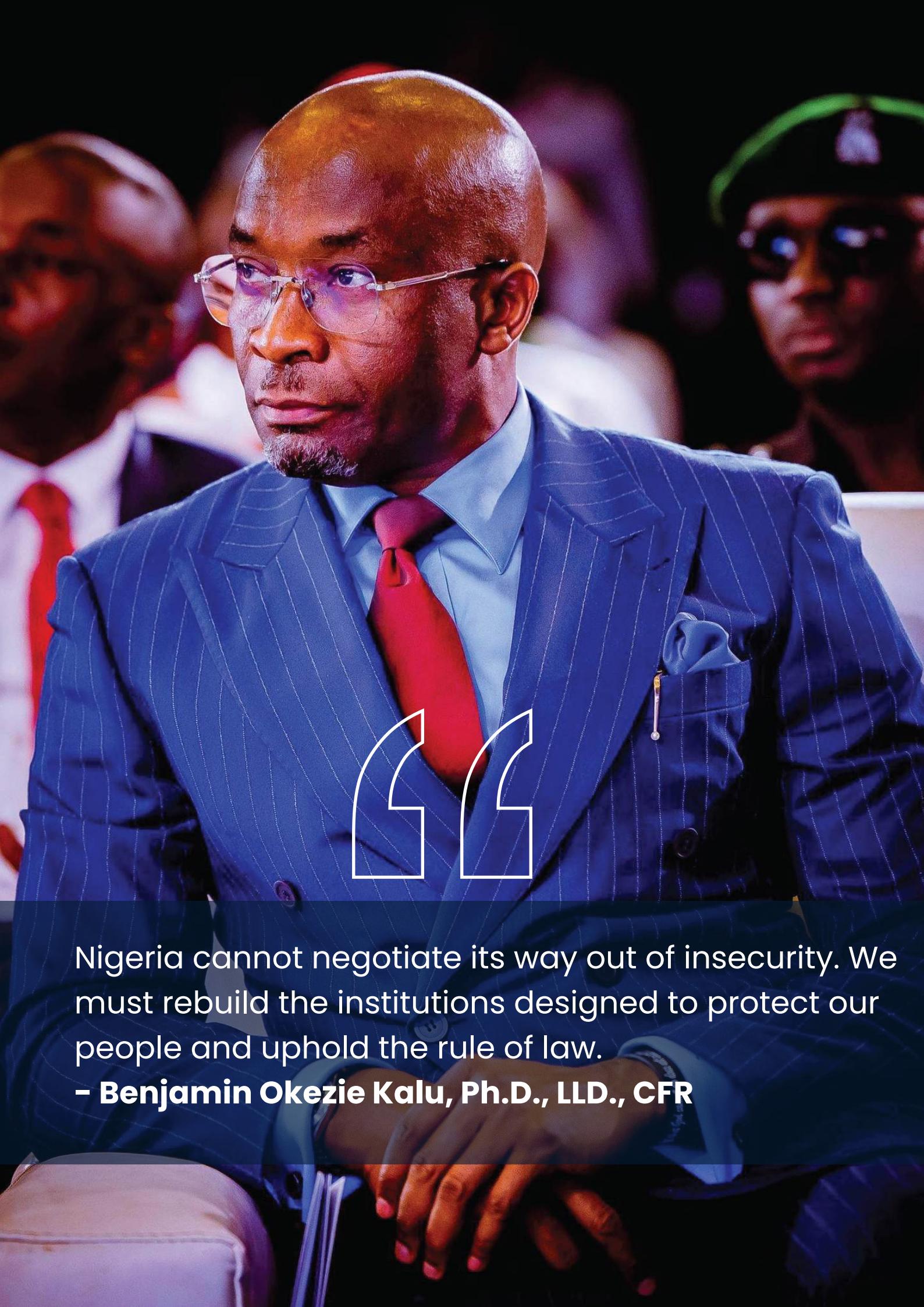
As Editor-in-Chief, I am pleased to present this first issue. The conversations we begin here will evolve, deepen, and contribute to a broader national journey toward stability, accountability, and reform.

Welcome to THE STATESMAN; a publication committed to truth, clarity and the enduring work of nation building.

Sam Ifeanyi Hart, mni

*Editor-in-Chief,
THE STATESMAN*





Nigeria cannot negotiate its way out of insecurity. We must rebuild the institutions designed to protect our people and uphold the rule of law.

- Benjamin Okezie Kalu, Ph.D., LLD., CFR



NATIONAL SECURITY: FROM REACTION TO STRUCTURAL REFORM.



NATIONAL SECURITY: FROM REACTION TO STRUCTURAL REFORM

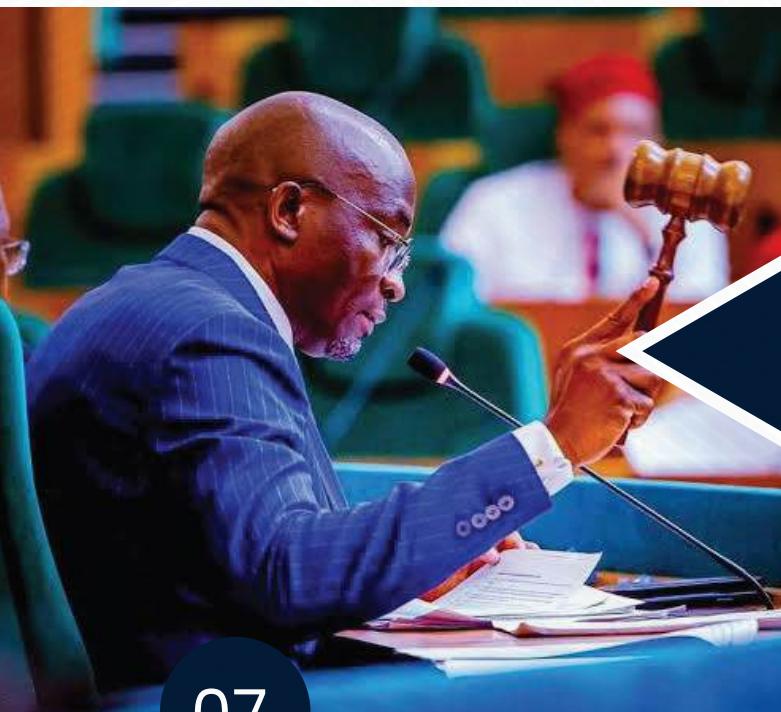
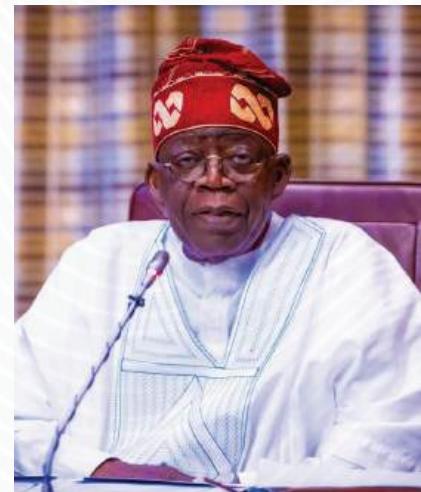
A LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT TO REBUILDING NIGERIA'S SECURITY ARCHITECTURE

Nigeria stands today at a security crossroads; a moment when the limits of reactive, short term measures have become painfully clear. As our people confront rising threats across regions, it is evident that the nation cannot rely on emergency responses to solve structural problems. This edition's theme, **"Steady Leadership, Stronger Institutions: Navigating Nigeria's Security Crossroads,"** reflects the conviction that true security is not built through improvisation, but through deliberate reform, disciplined governance, and institutions strong enough to protect the Republic.

In the Welcome Message of this edition, I underscored that our country is navigating insecurity, economic pressure, and institutional fatigue. Nowhere is this more urgent than in the area of security. For too long, our national framework has depended on centralized command structures that were never designed for a nation of over 230 million people or for the complexity of modern threats. The results are predictable: slow response times, overstretched forces, uneven coverage, and recurrent tragedies that erode public trust.

It is against this backdrop that **His Excellency, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu GCFR** declared a nationwide security emergency, authorizing additional recruitment into the Nigerian Army, the Nigeria Police Force, and the Department of State Services. The President also directed the immediate deployment of trained forest guards and urged the National Assembly to begin reviewing the laws required for states that desire state police to establish them. His directive reflects the urgency of the moment and aligns with a truth I have consistently emphasized: Nigeria cannot secure itself with tools designed for a different era. We must strengthen institutions and modernize the structures responsible for protecting our people.

In my recent contribution during plenary, I made this position clear:



01

Recruitment alone will not solve insecurity unless we reform the architecture that deploys those recruits.

02

Emergency measures are necessary, but they must evolve into structural measures.

03

Negotiation with criminal elements must never become a national strategy.



NATIONAL SECURITY: FROM REACTION TO STRUCTURAL REFORM

Enduring security is built on the reliability of our institutions, on systems designed to serve, protect, and respond with clarity and competence. It begins with a policing system close enough to communities to understand their realities, accountable enough to earn public trust, transparent enough to deter abuse, and professional enough to prevent crime before it occurs. It also requires intelligence systems capable of early detection to prevent attacks before they occur, and a justice system that treats criminality as a matter of law, not negotiation.

This is why I have maintained that Nigeria must move beyond reactive deployments and pursue structural reform. My position emphasizes decentralizing policing to improve responsiveness; strengthening intelligence and operational capacity; ensuring transparent and accountable security funding; and rejecting any approach that normalizes negotiation with criminal actors.

These convictions form the foundation of the State Police Bill (HB617) which I sponsored in the House of Representatives, alongside other members and fellow co-sponsors. This Bill is one of the most consequential constitutional reforms before the 10th Assembly because it directly confronts the structural weaknesses that have kept Nigeria locked in cycles of insecurity. It introduces a dual-policing architecture; federal and state, with each tier clearly empowered, constitutionally defined, and bound by rigorous accountability mechanisms. This modernization aligns with the President's call and provides the legal bedrock required for effective decentralization.

However, decentralization without safeguards would merely shift the problem, not solve it, leading to political misuse. That is why the Bill introduces an Independent State Police Service Commission (PSC) insulated from gubernatorial influence.

This Commission will oversee recruitment, promotions, discipline, and professional standards, ensuring that state policing does not become a tool of political coercion; under this model, no Governor can unilaterally appoint or remove a Commissioner of Police. Such decisions must be recommended by the PSC and ratified by a supermajority of the State House of Assembly. This ensures that the state policing system protects citizens, not political interests.

Equally important is financial integrity. A policing system dependent on discretionary funding is vulnerable. To address this, the Bill proposes that state police budgets be treated as a first-line charge on state revenue, guaranteeing operational continuity and insulating the system from political manipulation. Federal grants will further support states, ensuring uniform standards and viability across the country.

These reforms are not abstract. They respond directly to real crises; children abducted from schools, communities terrorized, farms abandoned, highways unsafe, and citizens increasingly unsure of the state's capacity to protect them. No nation defeats insecurity by bargaining with criminality. Stability is achieved through justice, deterrence, and the consistent enforcement of the law. We cannot build a stable nation on ransom payments or unofficial settlements. We can only do so by strengthening the institutions designed to secure justice and uphold the rule of law.



STRENGTHENING THE SECURITY ARCHITECTURE: ACTIONS TAKEN THUS FAR.

STRENGTHENING THE SECURITY ARCHITECTURE: ACTIONS TAKEN THUS FAR



In keeping with the urgency of this national moment, I have taken deliberate steps, within my constitutional responsibilities as **Chairman of the 10th House of Representatives Committee on Review of the 1999 Constitution (as amended)** to strengthen Nigeria's security architecture through structured engagement, informed oversight, and coordinated institutional action. These efforts are rooted in the belief that sustainable security requires planning, not improvisation; collaboration, not fragmentation.

One of the most significant interventions is the **Strategic High-Level Security Dialogue on National Security Architecture**, which I convened in partnership with key national security institutions. This engagement brought together senior representatives from the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA), the Defence Headquarters, the Nigeria Police Force, and the Department of State Services and the National Intelligence Agency (NIA). The objective was clear: to build a unified understanding of our security gaps, align institutional priorities, and establish a coordinated pathway for reform.

During this dialogue, there was a symbolic yet consequential presentation of "Legislative Needs" by security agencies across the federation, including the Nigeria Immigration Service, National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), Nigerian Security and Civil Defense Corps (NSCDC), Nigeria Customs Service, and the Joint Task Force on Border Communities. These agencies outlined the operational, legal, and structural deficiencies weakening their effectiveness. The purpose of this exercise was not ceremonial. It was designed to enable the Constitution Review Committee to accurately identify institutional gaps, eliminate duplication of mandates, and prioritize reforms that reflect the realities faced by frontline security agencies.

To build on these insights, a comprehensive security assessment report was commissioned and is now completed. The report maps overlapping responsibilities, identifies critical shortages in manpower, technology, intelligence coordination, and legal authority, and offers a unified framework for strengthening national resilience. In response, specialized committees have been established to analyze these needs and translate them into clear constitutional and legislative proposals.

The next step will be a national convergence of security stakeholders, where these findings will be harmonized into a cohesive roadmap for constitutional reform, operational restructuring, and coordinated national security strategy. This process signals a shift from reactive firefighting to deliberate institution building anchored in transparency, collaboration, and constitutional clarity.

These actions represent a commitment to doing the harder work: not speeches, not symbolic gestures, but the sustained, structured effort required to rebuild Nigeria's security foundation. This is the essence of steady leadership: rejecting temporary fixes and embracing the disciplined path of structural reform. The State Police Bill is a step toward a safer Nigeria, a more responsive policing system, and institutions strong enough to carry the weight of national stability.

The work ahead is demanding, but it is essential. Our nation cannot afford half-measures. We must reform boldly, legislate responsibly, and build institutions that endure beyond the urgencies of the present moment.

This is the commitment of this edition.
This is the commitment of my office.
And this is the commitment we owe the Nigerian people.





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The pathway to peace and security in Nigeria lies in our collective resolves to enact constitutional reforms that empower our institutions, protect our people and secure our future. - **Benjamin O. Kalu, Ph.D., LLD., CFR**



ADDRESS ON NATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY: A CONSTITUTIONAL IMPERATIVE



ADDRESS ON NATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY: A CONSTITUTIONAL IMPERATIVE

It is my great honour as Deputy Speaker and Chairman of the House Committee on Constitution Review to welcome you all to this pivotal Legislative Dialogue on Nigeria's Security Architecture, under the theme: "Nigeria's Peace and Security: The Constitutional Imperatives."

"I extend warm greetings on behalf of the Speaker, Rt. Hon. Abbas Tajudeen, PhD, and the entire leadership of the 10th House of Representatives.

Let me begin by expressing our immense gratitude to our co-hosts and key partners, whose commitment has made today's gathering possible:

1. The Office of the National Security Adviser, ably led by Mallam Nuhu Ribadu
2. The Defence Headquarters, under General Christopher Gwabin Musa
3. The Nigeria Police Force, led by Inspector General Kayode Adeolu Egbetokun
4. The Department of State Services, under Mr. Oluwatosin Adeola Ajayi
5. The National Intelligence Agency, led by Ambassador Mohammed Mohammed

Your presence and partnership are a testament to our shared resolve to chart a new course for Nigeria's security and constitutional future.

I also wish to specially recognize the strong support of the House Committee on Constitution Review, whose members have worked tirelessly to bring us to this moment. Your dedication to the constitutional reform process is a beacon of hope for our nation.

Permit me to pay special tribute to the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, His Excellency President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR, whose leadership and commitment to security sector reform have provided the impetus for this legislative journey. Mr. President, your charge to harmonize security operations and adopt a "whole of society" approach is the foundation upon which we build today's dialogue.

We are joined today by representatives from the diplomatic corps, civil society, the media, and, most importantly, the communities most affected by insecurity. Your voices and insights are essential as we seek to craft solutions that are both effective and inclusive.

Reflecting on Our Journey: Past Dialogues and Stakeholder Engagement

This dialogue is not happening in a vacuum. Over the past year, the House of Representatives has convened several high-level engagements to address Nigeria's security challenges. Notably, on April 22, 2024, we hosted the National Dialogue on State

Policing with the theme, "Pathways to Peace: Reimagining Policing in Nigeria," which brought together Vice President Kashim Shettima, former President Goodluck Jonathan, General Abdulsalami Abubakar, security chiefs, traditional rulers, civil society, and international partners. That event, co-hosted with the Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre and the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, provided a robust platform for frank discussions on the merits and challenges of state policing.

ADDRESS ON NATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY: A CONSTITUTIONAL IMPERATIVE



The Legislative Dialogue: A Diagnostic Laboratory for National Security Reform

Distinguished stakeholders, I wish to emphasize that today's Constitution Review Legislative Dialogue is not just another meeting; it is, in essence, a legislative laboratory for Nigeria's national security sector. The central aim of this engagement is to synthesize and collate, directly from you, the key actors in our national security architecture, your candid perspectives on the "sickness" in our constitution that impedes the effective delivery of your mandates.

Over the years, laws have been crafted on various aspects of national life, including security governance, often without a proper diagnosis of the real gaps and challenges as experienced by those on the frontline. To proceed with constitutional amendments without first hearing from you would be akin to a medical doctor prescribing treatment without a thorough diagnosis, or treating a patient without listening to their symptoms. As legislators, we recognize that the work of parliament is much like that of a physician: we must depend on accurate laboratory diagnosis to prescribe the right medication to cure an ailment.

This dialogue is designed to be that diagnostic process. We are here to listen to you, those who wear the shoes and know exactly where it pinches. Whether the issues are rooted in inter-agency harmonization, command authority, intelligence coordination, or other critical aspects, your insights are indispensable. You, our security sector stakeholders, are best positioned to articulate the constitutional and operational bottlenecks that hinder your effectiveness.

Our commitment is to first diagnose, by gathering your experiential knowledge, institutional challenges, and actionable recommendations. Only then can we, as legislators, responsibly frame the "prescriptions": the constitutional amendments and legislative reforms necessary to address these challenges. Importantly, this is not a one-off event. Before the finalization of the constitution review process, we will return back to you, the stakeholders, to review the proposed prescriptions, collate further feedback, and ensure that the final version of the constitution truly reflects the needs and realities of Nigeria's security sector.

This approach ensures that the solutions we design are comprehensive, inclusive, and sustainable. The legislature, as we always say, is the solution hub for the hydra-headed problems facing our country. Through this collaborative, diagnostic approach, we aim to craft a legislative framework that delivers long-lasting national solutions.

Therefore, I urge every stakeholder present to express yourself freely and frankly, regardless of your agency or background. Our collective goal is remediation of the challenges facing all security agencies: solutions that are "all for one and one for all." Let us seize this opportunity to make the right diagnosis, so that together, we can prescribe and implement the cures our nation so urgently needs.



ADDRESS ON NATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY: A CONSTITUTIONAL IMPERATIVE

Key Security-Related Constitution-Altering Bills for Consideration

The House Committee on Constitution Review is actively considering several transformative bills, including:

House Bill 617 (HB-617): This landmark bill seeks to amend Section 214 of the 1999 Constitution, transferring policing from the Exclusive to the Concurrent Legislative List. It will enable the establishment of State Police and Local Government Police, formalizing what is already a de facto reality in many regions and providing a legal framework for oversight and accountability.

Bills to Clarify Command Authority: Proposed amendments will refine constitutional language to clearly delineate the roles of federal and state security agencies, minimizing inter-agency clashes and fostering unified responses to security threats.

Intelligence Coordination and Data Governance: Legislative proposals will address the fragmented legal framework for intelligence sharing and data protection, ensuring lawful, effective, and secure intelligence operations.

Border Security and Regional Stability: New bills that will strengthen border control and regional cooperation, addressing the spillover of terrorism, arms trafficking, and organized crime from the Sahel region into Nigeria's frontier communities.

These bills are part of a broader suite of 87 prioritized constitutional amendments currently under review, with public hearings scheduled across the six geopolitical zones and further engagements planned with the Nigerian Governors Forum, Speakers of State Assemblies, and the diplomatic community.

Our Objectives Today

Today's dialogue aims to:

1. Advance the ongoing Constitution Review process, focusing on security and policing reforms.
2. Facilitate inter-agency collaboration for a unified approach to national security.
3. Discuss and refine legislative proposals, particularly those on state policing and intelligence coordination.
4. Enhance border security strategies and promote regional stability.
5. Encourage robust public engagement and stakeholder input.

A Call to Action: The Narrow Window for Reform

Colleagues, the urgency of this moment cannot be overstated. If we fail to act decisively in this legislative session, the next window for meaningful constitutional amendment may not open until 2027, by which time the security environment and political landscape may have shifted, especially with the current precarious situation unraveling in the Sahel, complicating future reforms. We must seize this narrow but actionable window to deliver a security framework that is responsive, accountable, and fit for purpose.

ADDRESS ON NATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY: A CONSTITUTIONAL IMPERATIVE



Appreciation

Let me once again thank our co-hosts, the Office of the National Security Adviser, Defence Headquarters, Nigeria Police Force, Department of State Services, and National Intelligence Agency. I extend appreciation to our civil society partners, the Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre, the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, and all who have supported our dialogues and roundtables. My gratitude also goes to the members of the House Committee on Constitution Review, who have demonstrated a resolute commitment to this cause.

Above all, I thank President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, for his leadership and for placing security sector reform at the forefront of our national agenda.

Conclusion

As we commence today's deliberations, let us approach our task with candor, courage, and a shared sense of responsibility. The pathway to peace and security in Nigeria lies in our collective resolve to enact constitutional reforms that empower our institutions, protect our people, and secure our future. Together, let us unlock the opportunities before us and chart a new frontier for Nigeria's peace and security.

Thank you, and welcome.

Rt. Hon. Benjamin Okezie Kalu, Ph.D., LLD., CFR,
Deputy Speaker, House of Representatives,
Chairman, House Committee on Constitution Review



A nation endures because some stand watch, some
bear arms, and some pay the ultimate price.
Leadership begins by remembering them.
Benjamin Okezie Kalu, Ph.D., LLD., CFR



BILL IN FOCUS: STATE POLICE BILL (HB617)



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BILL IN FOCUS:

STATE POLICE BILL (HB617)



Nigeria's security challenges have grown far beyond what a centralized policing system can effectively manage. Every region faces distinct threats that require faster response times, deeper community understanding, and institutions that citizens can trust. As a nation, we can no longer depend solely on emergency deployments or short term reactions. We must embrace structural reform.

This conviction led me to sponsor the **State Police Bill (HB617)** in 2023, among other co-sponsors: Hon. Julius Ihonvhere, Hon. Onanuga A. Oriyomi, Hon. Joseph Bassey, Hon. Ibe Okwara-Osonwa, Hon. Thaddeus Attah, Hon. Hassan B. Shinkafi, Hon. Chinwe Clara Nnabuife, Hon. Obed Paul Shehu, Hon. Fatima Talba, Hon. Tolani Shagaya, Hon. Abubakar H. Nalaraba, Hon. Blessing Onuh, Hon. Joshua Audu Gana. It is one of the most consequential constitutional interventions before the 10th Assembly, a reform designed to modernize our security architecture and bring policing closer to the people it must protect. The Bill seeks to amend the 1999 Constitution by moving policing from the Exclusive Legislative List to the Concurrent List, allowing both the federal government and the states to exercise policing powers within a clearly defined constitutional order. Such decentralization is not experimental; it is a practical response to the realities of governing a large and diverse federation.

However, decentralization must be executed with the precision of clear operational rules and strict oversight. The Bill therefore establishes a dual-policing framework with constitutionally defined command structures, jurisdictional boundaries, recruitment procedures, and disciplinary protocols for both federal and state formations. To guarantee professionalism at the state level, the **Independent State Police Service Commission (PSC)** will serve as the regulatory authority responsible for appointments, promotions, discipline, and adherence to national policing benchmarks. The requirement for a State Assembly supermajority to confirm key appointments introduces a vital constitutional safeguard, preventing unilateral executive control. This approach positions state policing not merely as a political reform, but as a systems-driven administrative redesign built on legal clarity, institutional accountability, and operational coherence."

Equally essential is financial autonomy. A police force without stable funding is a vulnerable force. To prevent this, the Bill provides that state police budgets will operate as a first line charge on state revenue, ensuring continuity and independence. Federal grants will offer supplementary support, guaranteeing that state police systems nationwide remain viable, professional, and accountable.

This reform responds directly to the painful experiences of Nigerians, kidnappings, violent attacks, school abductions, and the erosion of community safety. True security cannot rest on ransom payments or unofficial negotiations with criminal actors. It must be grounded in institutions capable of preventing crime, gathering intelligence, and enforcing the law consistently and fairly.

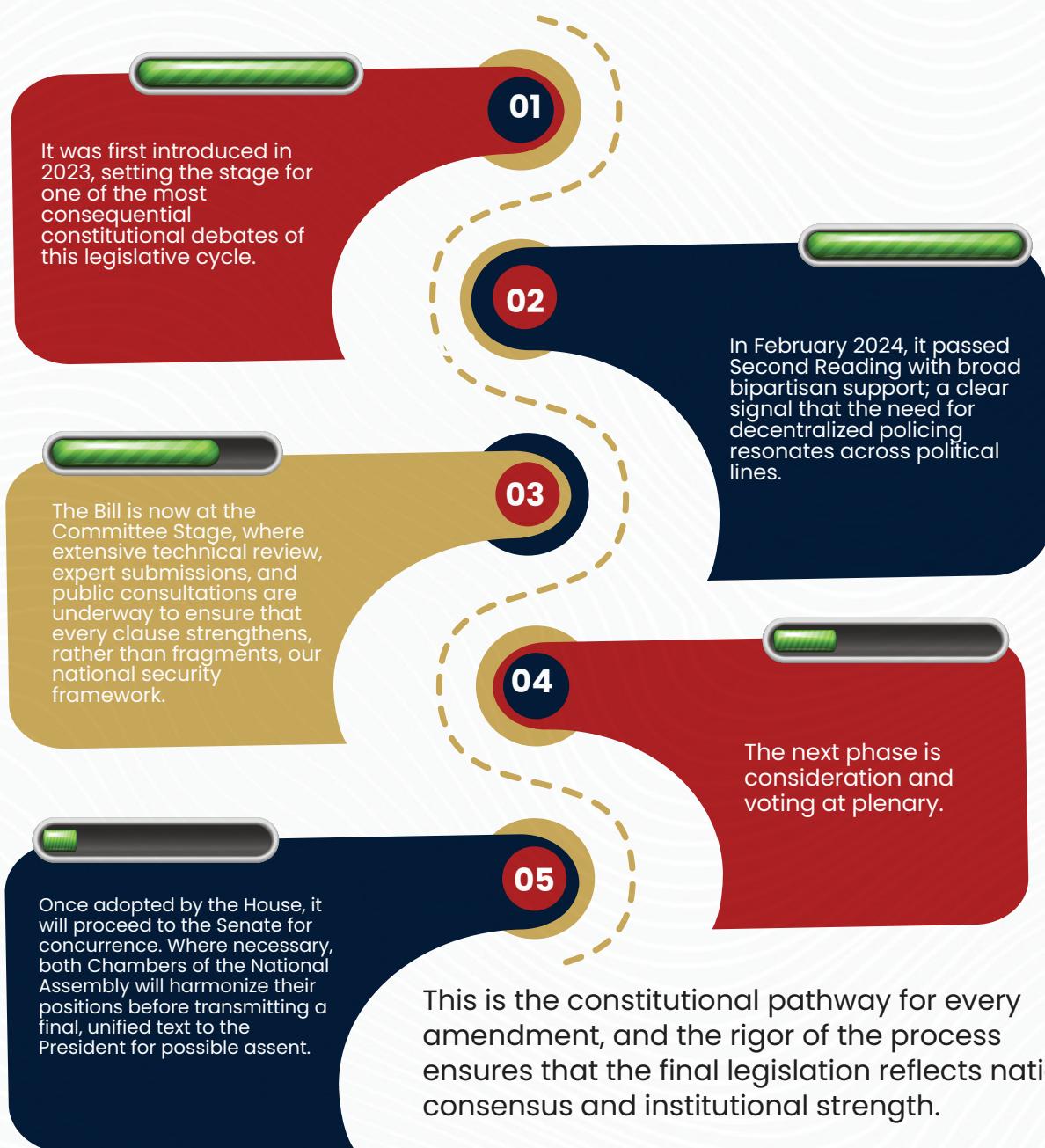


BILL IN FOCUS:

STATE POLICE BILL (HB617)

The Legislative Journey

The progress of this Bill reflects its national significance and the seriousness with which the 10th Assembly has approached security reform:





Why This Bill Matters

At a time when national security challenges continue to stretch federal capacity, the State Police Bill represents a meaningful step toward a safer and more resilient Republic. By localizing policing, strengthening accountability, and balancing federal oversight with state-level responsibility, this Bill offers a realistic path toward restoring public trust and securing our communities.

This is more than a legislative proposal; it is a blueprint for the future of Nigerian security—one built on structure, clarity, and steady leadership.





Insecurity, in all its forms, remains one of the most pressing obstacles to the realization of Nigeria's full potential and to tackle this, we need to take a comprehensive, multi-faceted, and conflict-sensitive approach in addressing these security challenges...

– Benjamin Okezie Kalu, Ph.D., LLD., CFR



POLICY PERSPECTIVE: NAVIGATING NIGERIA'S SECURITY CROSSROADS

POLICY PERSPECTIVE

NAVIGATING NIGERIA'S SECURITY CROSSROADS



Nigeria stands today at a defining inflection point in its national security trajectory. Across the federation, citizens grapple daily with the consequences of persistent insurgency, organized criminality, communal violence, and emerging non-traditional threats. These challenges are not isolated incidents; they are symptoms of deeper structural weaknesses within the country's security architecture.

The theme of this inaugural edition: Steady Leadership, Stronger Institutions: Navigating Nigeria's Security Crossroads, is therefore not merely timely. It is foundational. It speaks to the core truth that sustainable security is not achieved through episodic force or reactive deployments, but through deliberate leadership and resilient institutions capable of anticipating, absorbing, and responding to complex threats over time.

At this crossroads, Nigeria's task is clear: to move decisively from a security model centered on control and reaction to one anchored in legitimacy, coordination, accountability, and adaptive capacity.

Diagnosing the Crisis: Beyond Symptoms to Systems

Nigeria's insecurity is often discussed in fragmented terms—terrorism in the North East, banditry in the North West, militancy in the Niger Delta, farmer-herder conflict in the Middle Belt, separatist agitations in the South East, and urban crime nationwide. While these manifestations differ, they are bound together by common systemic drivers.

At the root lies a convergence of socio-economic pressure, governance deficits, demographic stress, and institutional overstretch. High youth unemployment, uneven development, corruption, and perceived injustices have eroded trust between citizens and the state. In many communities, non-state actors; criminal groups, vigilantes, militias, have stepped into the vacuum created by weak formal security presence.

Compounding this is a security architecture largely inherited from a centralized, colonial-era logic, designed for control rather than service, and for hierarchy rather than coordination. Over time, this model has struggled to adapt to Nigeria's scale, diversity, and rapidly evolving threat landscape. The result is a system that is frequently reactive, siloed, and operationally stretched; capable of responding to crises, but less equipped to prevent them.

The Institutional Imperative: Why Reform Cannot Be Deferred

Strong institutions are the backbone of national security. They provide continuity beyond political cycles, ensure professional standards, and anchor the rule of law. In Nigeria's case, institutional strengthening must go beyond rhetoric and policy documents to focus on three core pillars: **clarity of roles, capacity to deliver, and legitimacy in the eyes of the public.**



POLICY PERSPECTIVE

NAVIGATING NIGERIA'S SECURITY CROSSROADS

First, clarity of roles is essential. Overlapping mandates among security agencies, unclear coordination mechanisms, and fragmented intelligence flows dilute effectiveness. Reform must prioritize interoperability; ensuring that federal, state, and local security actors operate within a coherent, integrated framework.

Second, capacity must match responsibility. Institutions cannot perform optimally without sustained investment in training, equipment, welfare, and modern operational tools. Today's threats: cybercrime, transnational organized crime, terrorism financing, and information warfare, require capabilities far beyond traditional policing models.

Third, legitimacy is non-negotiable. Security institutions draw strength not only from arms, but from public trust. Accountability, respect for human rights, and community engagement are not soft ideals; they are operational necessities in democratic societies.

Leadership at the Centre: The Role of the Legislature

At this critical juncture for the nation, leadership matters most—not as symbolism, but as stewardship. The National Assembly, and particularly the House of Representatives, occupies a pivotal position in shaping Nigeria's security future. Through its legislative, oversight, and convening powers, the House has the capacity to recalibrate the national security conversation from reactive responses to systemic reform. Recent engagements, including high-level security summits and sustained dialogue on institutional reform, signal a growing recognition that security is not solely an executive function, but a collective national responsibility.

Legislative leadership is especially critical in three areas:

- **Legal frameworks:** Updating laws to reflect contemporary threats, clarify institutional mandates, and embed accountability mechanisms.
- **Oversight:** Ensuring that security expenditures translate into measurable operational outcomes.
- **Institutional innovation:** Creating space for adaptive models, including public-private collaboration and community-anchored security initiatives.

When exercised with consistency and bipartisan resolve, these levers can significantly strengthen Nigeria's security architecture.

Decentralization and Local Intelligence: Bringing Security Closer to the People

One of the most promising directions in Nigeria's evolving security discourse is the recognition that security outcomes are ultimately local. Threats manifest differently across regions, and effective responses require contextual intelligence.

Moves towards strengthening state-level security frameworks, including security trust funds and closer engagement with traditional and community institutions, reflect an important shift. When properly governed, these mechanisms can improve responsiveness, enhance resource mobilization, and ensure that frontline operatives are better equipped to address local realities.

POLICY PERSPECTIVE

NAVIGATING NIGERIA'S SECURITY CROSSROADS



However, decentralization must be deliberate and disciplined. It requires:

- Clear legal boundaries between federal and sub-national roles
- Strong governance structures to prevent politicization
- Robust coordination with national security agencies

Done correctly, localization does not weaken the state, it reinforces it by aligning national strategy with grassroots insight.

A Crossroads, not a Cul-de-Sac

Nigeria's current security challenges, while formidable, do not represent a dead end. They represent a crossroads: one that demands steady leadership and institutional courage.

The path forward will not be defined by quick wins, but by sustained commitment to reform, coordination, and accountability. It will require bridging political divides, aligning federal and sub-national priorities, and placing institutions, not individuals, at the centre of the national security project.

If this moment is seized with clarity and resolve, Nigeria can emerge not only safer, but stronger. Equipped with institutions capable of safeguarding its people, its democracy, and its future.

A National Call to Action

As this magazine launches, it does so at a moment of consequence. The choices made today by policymakers, legislators, security professionals, and citizens alike; will shape Nigeria's security landscape for decades.

With steady leadership guiding stronger institutions, Nigeria can navigate this crossroads with confidence, transforming today's challenges into the foundation for a more secure, united, and resilient nation.

Najib A Waziri

Esq, ACIArb, mMBA, M.A, CCRFA,
FIMC, CMC, Msyl, DSS, MISSS

Managing Director
Tsaro Global Defence



Beyond law-making, implementation is critical, as the effectiveness of any legal or policy measure depends not just on its enactment but also on the political will, administrative capacity, and public trust necessary for enforcement.

**–Benjamin Okezie Kalu,
Ph.D., LLD., CFR**

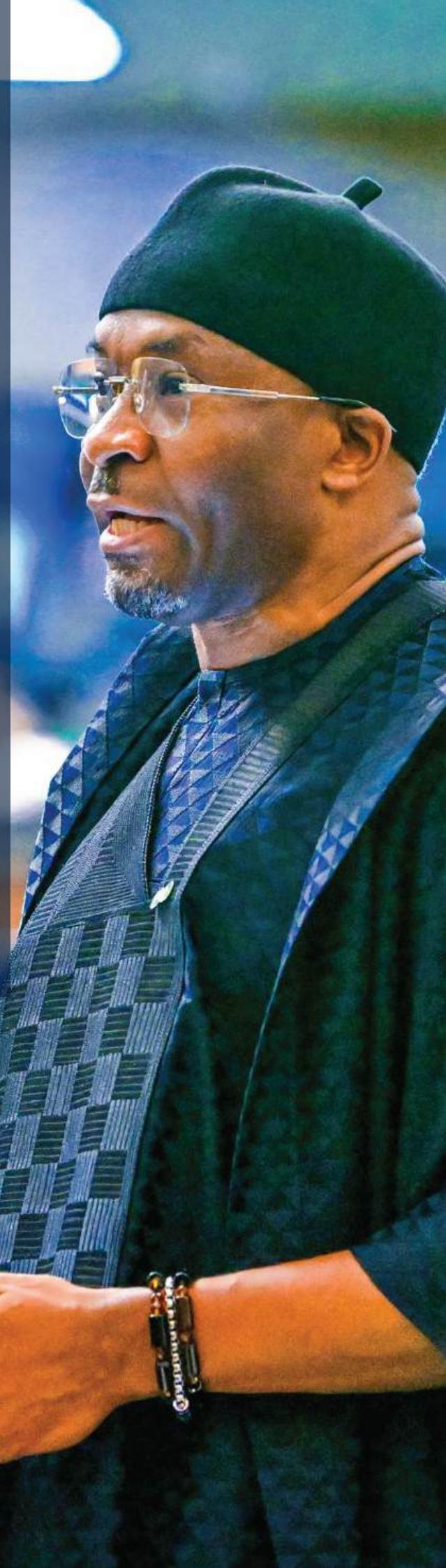




PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS

PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS



Armed Forces Remembrance Day Interdenominational Service

Deputy Speaker, Rt. Hon. Benjamin Okezie Kalu, Ph.D., LLD., CFR, delivering the goodwill remarks on behalf of the Senate President, Dist. Sen. Godswill Akpabio, GCON, at the Interdenominational Church Service held at the National Christian Centre, Abuja, as part of activities marking the 2025 Armed Forces Remembrance Day.



PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS



Armed Forces Remembrance Day Dinner; Commitment to National Security and Remembrance.

Deputy Speaker, Rt. Hon. Benjamin Okezie Kalu, Ph.D., LLD., CFR, representing the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, His Excellency Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR, at the official dinner marking the 2025 Armed Forces Remembrance Day in Abuja.



PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS



Armed Forces Remembrance Day Commemoration; Honoring Service and Sacrifice

Deputy Speaker, Rt. Hon. Benjamin Okezie Kalu, Ph.D., LLD., CFR, joins the Vice President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, H.E. Sen. Kashim Shettima, GCON, the Senate President, Dist. Sen. Godswill Akpabio, GCON, Service Chiefs, and other national leaders at the 2025 Armed Forces Remembrance Day ceremony where wreaths were laid in honor of Nigeria's fallen heroes.



PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS



Recognizing Excellence and Promoting Gender Inclusion

Deputy Speaker, Rt. Hon. Benjamin Okezie Kalu, Ph.D., LLD., CFR, decorates two of his female police aides, Priscilla Thomas, and Omeoga Princess Esther, on their promotion from Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) to Superintendent of Police (SP), and Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) to Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP), conducted with the assistance of the Director of Defence Liaison, National Assembly, Maj. Gen. S. Nicodemus.



PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS



Constitution Review 2nd Joint Retreat of both Chambers

L-R: Deputy Senate President, Sen. Barau I. Jibrin, CFR; Deputy Speaker, Rt. Hon. Benjamin Okezie Kalu, Ph.D., LLD., CFR; and House Leader, Prof. Julius O. Ihonvhere, at the 2nd Joint Retreat of the House and Senate Committees on Constitution Review in Abuja



...not
less, we
reform the architecture that
deploys those recruits.

PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS



Deputy Speaker, Rt. Hon. Benjamin Okezie Kalu, Ph.D., LLD., CFR, participates in a high-level policy training on American Foreign Policy under the Trump Administration: New Realities for African Negotiations, organized by the Office of the Minister of State (Finance) in collaboration with the National Assembly and the Presidency at the National Assembly Library Trust Fund, Abuja.



PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS



Plenary - National Security Presentation

Deputy Speaker, Rt. Hon. Benjamin Okezie Kalu, Ph.D., LLD., CFR presenting his proposals on strengthening Nigeria's National Security Architecture and Enhancing Legislative Response Mechanisms during plenary session at the House of Representatives, Abuja.



PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS



Presiding Over Plenary Session

Deputy Speaker, Rt. Hon. Benjamin Okezie Kalu, Ph.D., LLD., CFR, presiding over plenary, guiding legislative deliberations with clarity, discipline, and a firm commitment to national stability.



PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS



Defence Headquarters - Nigerian Navy Stripes Decoration Ceremony

Chief of Naval Staff, Vice Admiral Idi Abbas (left), and Deputy Speaker, Rt. Hon. Benjamin Okezie Kalu, Ph.D., LLD., CFR (right), decorating Rear Admiral Chinonyerem Emmanuel Oji (center) during the elevation ceremony for newly appointed Rear Admirals of the Nigerian Navy at the Defence Headquarters, Abuja.





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