

PROPOSAL FOR THE 2024 POLICY STUDY ORGANIZATION CONFERENCE IN WASHINGTON DC, USA, ON THE 11<sup>TH</sup> OF OCTOBER, 2024.

BEING A PAPER TO BE PRESENTED BY DR. PRINCE PIUS IMIERA, ACHIEVERS UNIVERSITY, COLLEGE OF LAW, OWO, ONDO STATE, NIGERIA.

Dr. Prince Pius Imiera holds a Ph.D. in law, from the University of Pretoria, South Africa, in 2017. Dr. Pius presently, is a law lecturer at the Achievers University, college of law, South Western part of Nigeria, Owo, Ondo state.

**TOPIC: Nigeria: A Failed State, the crime, the criminals and the criminality: a return to the Hobbesian state of nature**

“Failing and failed states present a grave danger to international stability as well as to the well-being of their populations. Internationally, they can become safe havens for terrorist organizations, centers for the trade of drugs and arms, and breeding grounds for dangerous diseases. Regionally, they can spill instability well past their borders and create a conflict dynamic affecting neighboring countries. Domestically, they cannot provide security for their citizens or deliver essential public goods. Beyond these immediate threats, failure of states also means the appearance of a growing number of stateless territories, a phenomenon with which the governments of Western countries are poorly prepared to deal. Despite all the astute reflections on the importance of non-state actors in international affairs and on the need to rethink the concept of sovereignty, states are still the central actors and units of global governance.”

The trajectory of Nigeria as a failed state took its root from the coinage of the name in 1897 by Flora Shaw, a British Journalist and Lord Lugard's girlfriend. Flora Shaw and Lugard's girlfriend were negative external influences to the Nigerian people and her

culture. The foreign external influences made the name “Nigeria” unautochthonous. In other words, the name ‘Nigeria’ is not indigenous, it is not native, and therefore, the name Nigeria was dead on arrival, hence, it has failed in the past, it has failed now and it may continue that narrative, unless, Nigeria returns to the state of nature and be re-engineered.

Nigeria is located in Africa, at the western coast of the continent. The geography of the country is diversified. Its climates rang from arid to humid equatorial. With that being said, Nigeria’s most diversified characteristics or features are the people. Plethora of languages abound in the country; some of which are Yoruba, Igbo, Fula, Hausa, Edo, Ibibio, Tiv, and English, to mention but a few. The most outstanding of all of these are the abundant natural resources, notably large deposits of petroleum and natural gas, which has been misappropriated by successive leaders for their selfish gains and interests. As a result of the misappropriation of the commonwealth by the disgruntled and clueless Nigerian leaders, corruption has thrived on a monumental dimension. Crime, criminals and criminality, kidnapping, adoption, killings of victims for their inability to pay ransom to kidnappers are currently playing out in Nigeria.

The present-day Nigeria originated in 1914, when the British protectorates of the Northern and Southern Nigeria were amalgamated. In 1960, Nigeria became independent from the British clutches. Six years down the line, a military coup installed an Igbo leader, the leader was later removed in a counter-coup led majorly by the combined efforts of the Hausa-Fulani Northern officers. The period in question was chaotic and toxic to the extent that, many of the Igbo populations residing in the Northern part of Nigeria were murdered in their thousands. As a result, several of the Igbo exodus to the east, their native homeland. The Igbos became skeptical that Nigeria’s dictatorial military leaders would not allow them to develop; precedent upon the foregoing, on the 30<sup>th</sup> of May, 1967, Odumegwu Ojukwu and a few non-Igbo indigenes constituted the Republic of Biafra, which comprised several states of Nigeria. Attempts were made through diplomatic efforts by Nigeria to reconcile the warring parties and reunite the country, but all of these failed, this precipitated the war between Nigeria and Biafra which commenced on July 1967.

It can also be recalled that, prior to the military coups and the counter coups, the Awolowo–Akintola leadership tussle had started in the defunct Western region and spilled over to other parts of Nigeria. Although, different opinions are rife on the underlying causes of the rift between Awolowo and Akintola, the opinions are laden with so much inconsistencies. However, it is on record that the quarrel between the two self-centered individuals ensued due to Chief Obafemi Awolowo's reluctance to hand over power to Ladoke Akintola as Premier of Western Nigeria following Awolowo's hidden intention to contest the 1959 federal elections into the Central Legislature; a position Akintola had desired to occupy by all means. This was the bane of the Nigeria's precipice to failure, the precedent and premises were already set, and the logical conclusion is the script being played out today by the successive visionless leaders, hence, Nigeria has been destined to fail.

The history of Nigeria's drive to failure was undertaken in this proposal with a view to identifying the fact that Nigeria has not just failed in these contemporary times, it has failed pre, during and after her independence. The paper, when fully developed will dissect the crimes, the criminals and the criminality that have occasioned Nigeria's failure. The actors in this regard will also be examined, and that it is only when Nigeria as a country returns to the Hobbesian state of nature, Nigeria's failure will be irredeemable.