
United States-Nigeria Diplomatic Ties and Control of Insecurity in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: *For more than 50 years, the United States and Nigeria have enjoyed a strong security partnership and friendship. These diplomatic ties are focused on increasing cooperation on maritime and border security, military professionalization, counterterrorism efforts against Boko Haram and ISIS-West Africa, defense trade, and strengthening governance of the security sector. However, due to the spate of insecurity in Nigeria, the study explores United States-Nigeria diplomatic ties in the control of insecurity in Nigeria. It assesses whether supports received so far are potent to yield a significant decrease in the spate of insecurity in Nigeria. This study uses ex-post factor design. It obtained data cutting across number of reported kidnapping cases, Ransom demanded from victims and value of supports from the US government Nigeria has received in the last six years i.e. between 2015 and 2021. Line charts were used in the presentation of data as well as show graphical relationships among the variables of study. It is found that intervention programme by the US government in terms of financing to support maritime security, military professionalization, and counterterrorism efforts, training, equipment, and advisory support for counterterrorism efforts, institutional and technical assistance to the Armed Forces of Nigeria and Excess Defense Articles program have not significantly reduced insecurity in Nigeria. It is therefore recommended that Nigeria should seek support and build stronger ties with neighbouring countries that are also ready to support in the fight against banditry and unrest and possible causes of kidnapping should be addressed by the Nigerian government through job creation which is critical to ensuring a safe society with progressive and productive individuals working hard to make the country great.*

KEYWORDS: US-Nigeria, diplomatic ties, insecurity, kidnapping

INTRODUCTION

Insecurity in Nigeria is receiving global attention in recent times. This might not be unconnected with Nigeria's position as largest economy in Africa, leading oil producer and possesses strong democratic values. Insurgency/terror attacks, banditry and kidnapping are now so popular in various geo-political zones of the nation with a least two forms of attacks carried out per week in all these zones (Solanke, 2020). However, the spate of insecurity in Nigeria has deeply affected economic growth by drying out investments, milking government revenue and increasing unemployment.

According to the Global Terrorism Index (2020), over \$40.6 billion worth of foreign investments was diverted from the Nigerian economy as a result of insecurity. The Nigerian government has however made efforts in the past and still making efforts to manage the insecurity. For example, in 2020 the federal government allotted N1.78 trillion for security expenses which is approximately an 83.7% increase from the N969 billion allocated for the same in 2015 (BudgitIT, 2021). These efforts do not seem to yield any significant result. Between January 2015 and May 2020, no fewer than 4,962 persons were kidnapped across the country. Many cases are not reported to the police or by the media. Security agencies, such as the police and the Department of State Security (DSS) tasked with the primary responsibility of investigating and tackling kidnapping, also do not always record incidents of kidnapping. When they do, they are reluctant to share them with the media (Premium Times Newspaper, 2021). Since the inability to effectively control insecurity in Nigeria is internally traced to bad governance and externally traced to political conspiracy of some neighboring countries, religious conspiracy of some Islamic nations and economic conspiracy of powerful nations, there is a need to seek international support to compliment good governance (Ajiboye, 2019).

Nigeria has however built several diplomatic ties with powerful nations in the world so as to help in the fight against attacks and kidnapping being carried out.

Objective of the Study

To investigate if the support has yielded a significant decrease in the spate of insecurity in Nigeria

LITERATURE REVIEW

US-Nigeria Diplomatic Ties

Nigeria has strong diplomatic ties with government of the United States of America making her to enjoy supports in the area of security

Law of Armed Conflict and International Humanitarian Law

This involved special training on the Law of Armed Conflict and International Humanitarian Law. Nigeria has an active Air-to-Ground Integration (AGI) program to mitigate the possibility of civilian harm. The persistent light attack and Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities Nigeria is developing will involve more than just airplanes; Nigeria will have the trained personnel and sustainment infrastructure to ensure a robust capability for the aircrafts' full-service lifetime.

Defense Articles

In FY 2020, the United States also authorized the permanent export of over \$1.2 million in defense articles to Nigeria via the Direct Commercial Sales (DCS) process. The top categories of DCS to Nigeria were Firearms; Aircraft and Related Articles; Military Training and Equipment; Military Electronics; and Fire Control equipment.

In 2011 and 2015 Nigeria received \$15 million in defense articles granted under the Excess Defense Articles program, to include 24 Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles and two Hamilton-class U.S. Coast Guard high endurance cutters – the USCGC Chase and USCGC Gallatin – which entered service in the Nigerian Navy as Thunder and Okpabana in 2011 and 2014, respectively. In 2016, the United States and Nigeria signed an Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement to exchange common types of support, including food, fuel, transportation, ammunition, and equipment. Since 2000, the United States has had a Status of Forces Agreement with Nigeria establishing the legal framework under which U.S. military personnel may operate when present in Nigeria. The Department of Defense has also partnered with Nigeria since 2009 on its C-130 restoration program and on a multi-year institutional capacity building program to assist the Ministry of Defense with the development of policies and doctrine.

Since 1993, the United States has provided \$2.14 million to support conventional weapons destruction and humanitarian mine action programs in Nigeria. In March 2017, the Department of Defense donated demining and EOD equipment to Nigeria and provides mine action training for Nigeria's EOD teams at the Nigerian School of Military Engineering. According to the Landmine and Cluster Munitions Monitor, the full extent of contamination from landmines and other explosive remnants of war is not known, but incidents have been reported in Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa states.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses ex-post factor design. It obtained data cutting across number of reported kidnapping cases, Ransom demanded from victims and value of supports from the US government Nigeria has received in the last six years i.e. between 2015 and 2021. Source????

Line charts were used in the presentation of data as well as show graphical relationships among the variables of study.

Analysis of Data

Table 4.1: Summary table of reported Kidnapping in Nigeria, Ransom collected in Naira and US support in Dollars between 2015 and 2021

Year	Kidnapping	Ransom collected 000'000'000	US support in Dollars
2015	233	1.5	\$2.4
2016	319	3.12	\$3.9
2017	484	3.37	\$5.3
2018	987	4.18	\$4.4
2019	1386	4.93	\$5.8
2020	2860	7.39	\$10.6
2021	2910	10	\$8.3

Source: SBM Intelligence, 2021

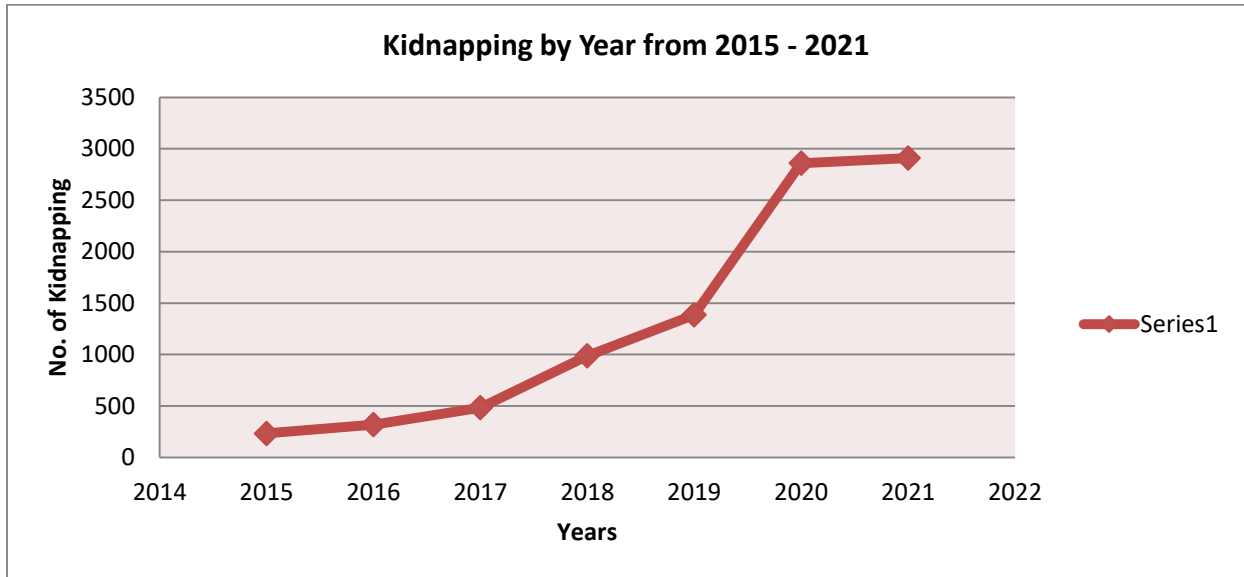


Figure 4.1: Kidnapping by year between 2015 – 2021

Figure 4.1 shows the trend of kidnapping in Nigeria between 2015 and 2021. This trend shows an uprising the case of kidnapping in different parts of the country. It only experiences a slight drop in 2021but still on a high side.

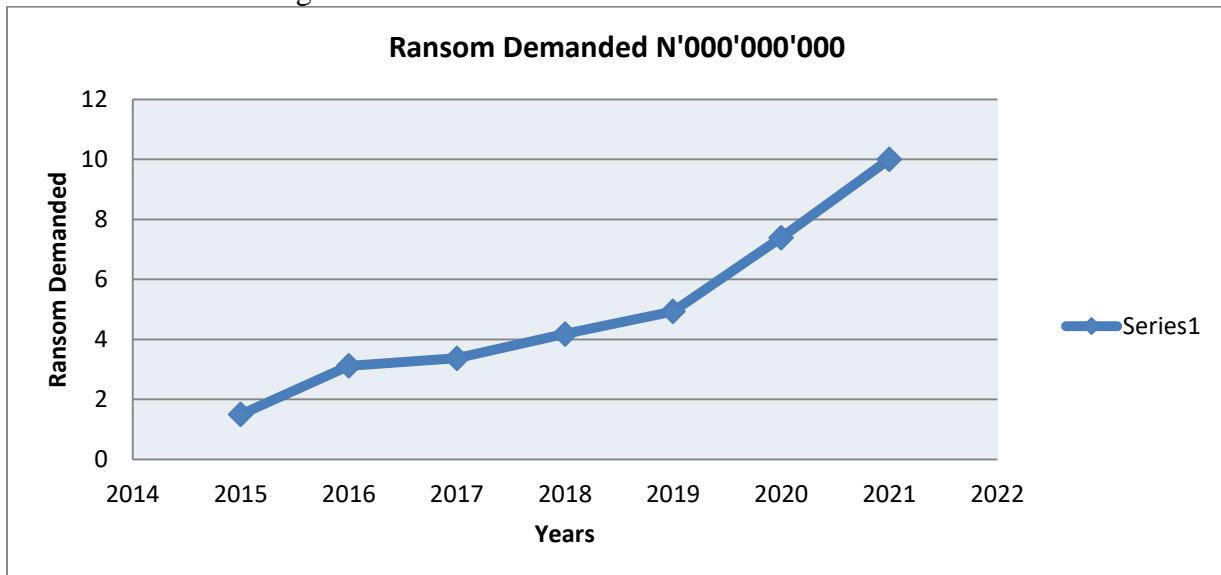


Figure 4.2: Ransom demanded between 2015 – 2021 in billion of Naira

Figure 4.2 shows the trend in the value of ransom demanded from victims between 2015 and 2021. The trend shows a sharp increase in the volume of Naira demanded by bandits for the periods under review.

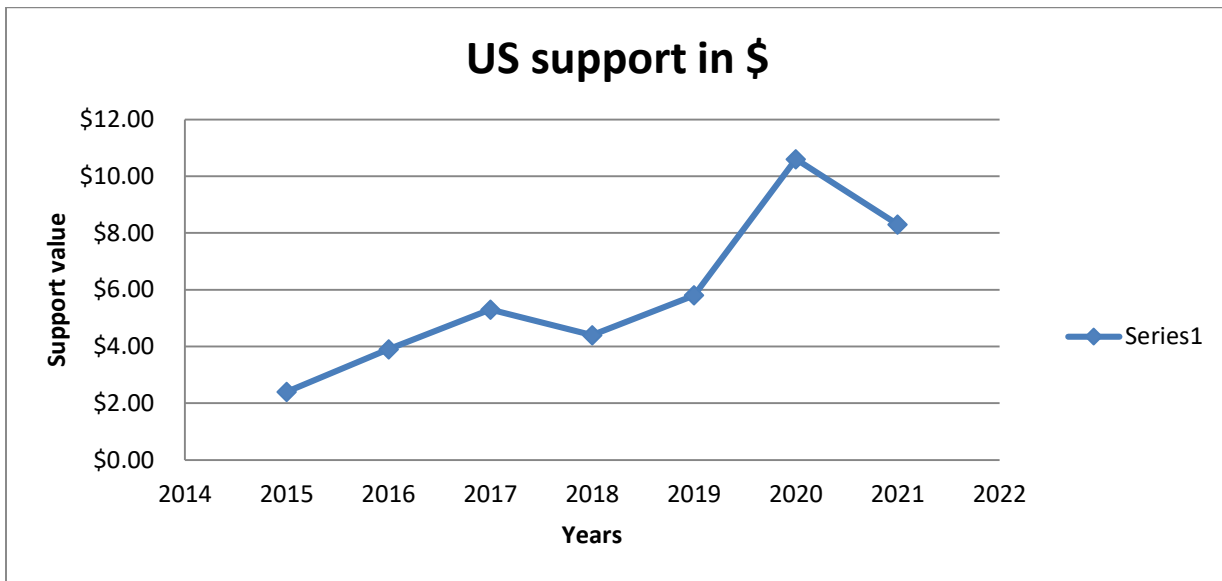


Figure 4.3: United States support to Nigeria between 2015–2021 in thousands of Dollar

Figure 4.3: shows a continual increase in the United States support to Nigeria between 2015 and 2017. In 2018, there is a slight but not significant drop in the support. However in 2019, the trends of support surge significantly till 2020 and in 2021, it dropped significantly again.

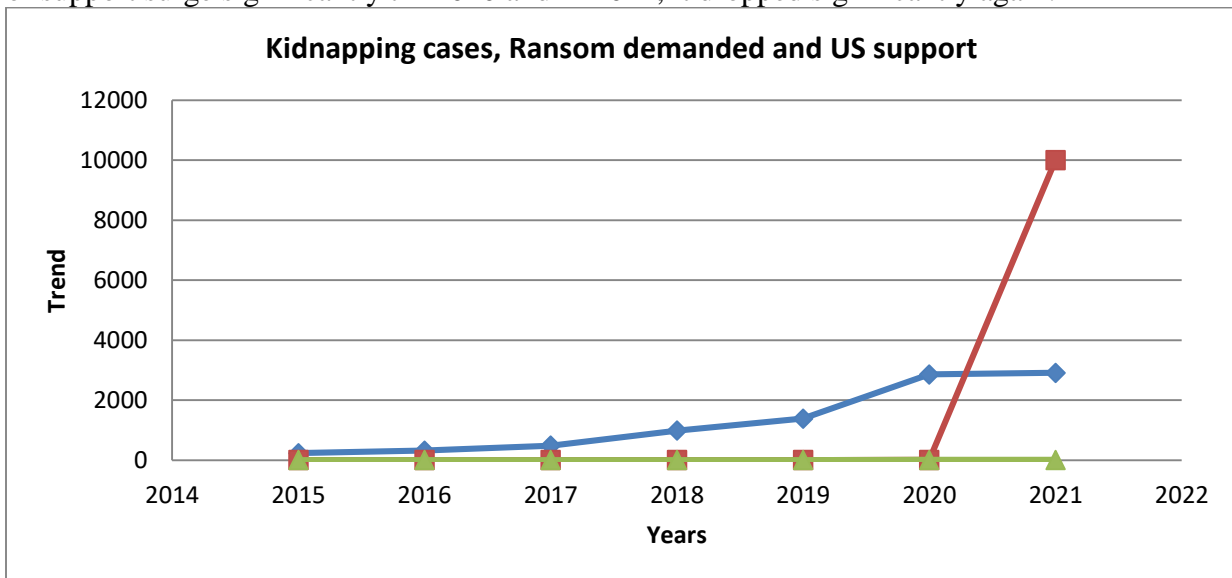


Figure 4.4: Cross examination of kidnapping cases, ransom demanded and US support to Nigeria between 2015–2021

In 2015, 2016 and 2017, with the available cases of kidnapping, ransom demanded increased sharply with the value of support received from the United States. In 2018, with the upward movement in the rate of kidnapping and ransom demanded from victims, the value of support dropped.

Major findings

- i. There is no relationship between the value received as intervention support and insecurity in Nigeria. Cases of kidnapping and ransom demand increase almost in the same proportion. On yearly basis, reported cases of kidnapping increases, although about 73% from the Northern Nigeria so also the amount of ransom demanded in Naira.
- ii. Ransom demanded in Naira and Intervention programme of the United States government also increases although not in the same proportion. However, ransom demanded in the South South is about 65% of the total value of ransom. This might be as a result of expatriates and other notable personalities that are kidnapped in the South.
- iii. Intervention programme by the US government in terms of financing to support maritime security, military professionalization, and counterterrorism efforts, training, equipment, and advisory support for counterterrorism efforts, institutional and technical assistance to the Armed Forces of Nigeria and Excess Defense Articles program have not significantly reduced insecurity in Nigeria.

Recommendations

- i. Nigeria should seek support and build stronger ties with neighbouring countries that are also ready to support in the fight against banditry and unrest
- ii. Diplomatic ties should be enhanced to repatriate anyone found in the act of kidnapping who seek refuge in neighbouring countries
- iii. Capital punishment such as death penalty should be imposed on anyone who is found in the act of kidnapping under any guise in Nigeria.
- iv. The possible causes of kidnapping should be addressed by the Nigerian government. One of such causes is unemployment which is critical to ensuring a safe society with progressive and productive individuals working hard to make the country great.
- v. Electoral education and reforms should be strengthened to revamp our leadership recruitment criteria and stick to them religiously and honestly.

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