

**African Journal of Strategy, Defence and Security Studies
(AJSDSS)**

E-ISSN 2978-3364 (Online); ISSN 2978-3356 (Print)

Indexed by SABINET and EBSCO

Volume 1, Number 1, June 2025

Pp 5-9

Editorial Note

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31920/2978-3364/2025/v1n1a0>

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Editor-in-Chief

African Journal of Strategy, Defence and Security Studies (AJSDSS)

I am humbled and honoured with a great sense of professional pride for being selected to serve as the editor-in-chief of the *African Journal of Strategy, Defence and Security Studies (AJSDSS)* and to present to you the inaugural issue. The establishment of the AJSDSS comes at a time when Africa faces a web of interconnected and transboundary security threats that are exacerbated by rapidly evolving megatrends such as climate change, technology, demography, urbanization, fracturing world, erosion of multilateralism, increased middle and great power competition, and growing global inequality and social exclusion. Besides these security threats, the establishment of the AJSDSS is necessitated by the gap in rigorous African academic agency in advancing continental, regional, national and human security.

This inaugural issue of the AJSDSS marks the beginning of creating and sustaining a trusted platform for evidence-based research-policy dialogue and sharing of experiences and knowledge on security governance between and among researchers, policymakers, and practitioners. The uniqueness of the AJSDSS is that it focuses on improving understanding and analysis of African security within the overarching nexus between development, security and governance. This nexus was rightly echoed by Kofi Annan, the former Secretary General of the United Nations (UN), when he declared:

We will not enjoy development without security, we will not enjoy security without development, and we will not enjoy either without respect for human rights. (UN, 2005).

Before I provide the synopsis of the papers in this inaugural issue of the AJSDSS, let me provide a brief account of the status of African security sector governance. Despite variations across regions and countries, the overall governance has been deteriorating in Africa, particularly in the security sector. Since 2014, the status of security, safety and justice has been worsening and that resulted in increased feeling of fear among African citizens and erosion of public trust in security agencies and institutions (Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2025). This deterioration occurs in the midst of the disproportional increase and unconstrained security spending, particularly military spending (Kuol and Amegboh, 2022). Besides this disproportional allocation of resources, the risk of corruption in defence and security institutions is very high and critical in most African countries (Transparency International, 2025).

It is within this context that the AJSDSS will endeavor to provide evidence-based analysis and understanding with the aim of contributing to improve the African security sector governance. The papers presented in this inaugural issue were the outcomes of rigorous reviews and editorial processes and I extend my profound appreciation to all the authors, reviewers, editorial board members and editorial team at Adonis & Abbey Publishers whose efforts have brought this inaugural issue of the AJSDSS to fruition. There are six research articles in this inaugural issue:

The first is the article by Ikiyouleimo Goodluck Dogi, Muiyiwa B. Afolabi, Olusegun O. Idowu that provides *assessment of Inter-Agency Cooperation and Community Involvement in Border Security*. Addressing the growing transitional organized crime necessitates better understanding of the level of collaboration and cooperation among security agencies and community members to improve security of national borders. The hybrid research methods employed in the paper indicate that an overwhelming majority of the respondents were unaware of community programmes related to border security and local security agencies' border security initiatives. The majority of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with communication channels and a widespread lack of awareness and minimal involvement from local communities in border security initiatives. The authors provide practical recommendations to encourage greater participation of communities in border security. This article

underscores the importance of effective participation of communities in ensuring border security.

The second article, *Western Nigeria Security Network (Operation Amotekun) and the Quest for State Police in Nigeria, 2020-2024*, is by Temitayo Marcus Akinlade, Adedeji Matthew Adedayo and Professor Ademola Victor Akinyoade, who examine the efficacy and sustainability of the Operation Amotekun in addressing insecurity and farmers-herders' conflicts. Based on qualitative research approach, the study shows that the Operation Amotekun as a regional security initiative has fulfilled its mandate in enhancing and bolstering regional security. The study provides some practical recommendations to empower Amotekun to improve regional security including the recognition of state police in the Nigerian constitution and the development of a comprehensive national security policy that includes regional security initiatives. Their work is a reminder of the need for an overarching national security strategy that recognizes and empowers state police and regional security initiatives to advance and sustain regional security.

The third article by Ulo, Edefe investigates *Internet Fraud and Human Trafficking in Contemporary Nigeria* with the aim of understanding the socio-economic and security implications of the growing role of digital platforms and cryptocurrency in enabling social vices. Based on questionnaire research method, the study reveals that internet fraud and human trafficking are triggered and fueled by social deprivation, gender inequality, high poverty level, unemployment, weak governance frameworks and technological advancements. The study also shows that the majority of the respondents are aware of the existence of internet fraud and human trafficking. It establishes the association between the rise in internet fraud and the rise in human trafficking. In addressing the two vices, the paper recommends a need to strengthen the institutional and legal frameworks and public enlightenment on the dangers inherent in cybercrimes. The author underscores the growing role of technological advancements in undermining national security and safety.

The fourth article, *Illicit Financial and Arms Flows in West Africa: An Assessment of Nigeria's National Security Response and Resilience Framework*, is by Adam Mohammed and Augustine Aboh, who review illicit financial and arms flows in West Africa, with a specific focus on assessing Nigeria's security and resilience framework. Based on intertwining and in-depth analysis, the study identifies the strengths and gaps within Nigeria's security framework and the mechanisms for addressing them. . In this analysis, the study evaluated Nigeria's legal and regulatory

frameworks, the efficacy of law enforcement agencies, intelligence-sharing mechanisms, and international collaborations. Drawing on successful models from other regions, the paper offers some actionable recommendations to enhance Nigeria's security response and resilience. This article underscores the significance of a coordinated, multi-agency approach for addressing transitional organized crime.

The fifth article by Ugwumba Egbuta,⁹ Emmanuel Ogonnaya Chukwu,¹⁰ AI Chukwuma Okoli and Chinedu S Udeh reviews *a new era of Nigeria-U.S. cooperation: strategic partnership for peace and security, 2014 -2025*. This is necessitated by the posture of the new administration in U.S. that suggests a shift towards the right in its relations with the outside world. On the basis of qualitative analysis, the paper shows that both Nigeria and the U.S. stand to benefit significantly from an enhanced relationship by promoting mutually beneficial areas of interest. Also, based on the analysis of the geopolitical, economic, and security contexts of both nations, this study identifies key areas for cooperation such as trade, counter-terrorism, promotion of democracy, and human development. The paper underscores the critical role of strategic partnership in enhancing and promoting regional security and stability and addressing transnational organized crime such as terrorism

The last but not the least article; *Russia-Ukraine Conflict and the Evolution of Inter-state Wars: A Search for a New Security Paradigm*, is by Neba Ridley Ngwa, who explores the evolving nature of interstate wars in the 21st century with a focus on how actors, goals, and strategies have shifted compared to past conflicts. The paper was intrigued by a gap in understanding the Russo-Ukrainian war, which necessitates a new analytical framework. Based on discourse analysis, the study reveals a notable transformation in the roles of participants, objectives pursued, and methods of interstate warfare. These developments include the increasing involvement of non-state armed actors, the growing privatization of military functions through private military companies, and the use of advanced technologies such as drones. On the basis of these changes that mark a significant departure from conventional patterns of interstate conflict, the paper recommends a new security paradigm to accurately understand and respond to the dynamics of contemporary interstate wars. The paper is a reminder of the changing nature and dynamics of security threats, which require more adaptive analytical framework.

The six papers in this inaugural issue of the AJSDSS are not only within the remit of the journal but they have undoubtedly contributed to

enhancing evidence-driven understanding and analysis of a range of issues related to security, strategy and defence. The papers also cover various disciplines and introduce innovative research methods and analytical frameworks. Importantly, the papers have provided valuable and actionable recommendations that will inform policies, and evidence-based strategic interventions in the security sector. While most of the papers are on Nigeria, the Journal will continue to encourage inclusive and diverse contributors across the continent and beyond.

I echo again my profound appreciation to the contributors for showing interest in the Journal and enduring peer-review process. Our deep appreciation go to the peer-reviewers for availing their precious time to review the papers for this inaugural issue of the Journal. Importantly, I thank also the editorial team of Adonis & Abbey Publishers for their sterling, diligent and timely editorial process. I also thank those who contributed to the early articulation of the vision, design and inception of the Journal.

This is the beginning of a journey of advancing the African security through rigorous research and analysis. I encourage researchers, including early-career researchers, professionals, students and practitioners across the continent and beyond to share their contributions to future editions, and also give us feedbacks on how to improve the quality of the Journal.

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