

## FULANI HERDSMEN AND RURAL COMMUNITIES/FARMERS CONFLICT IN NIGERA

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### ABSTRACT

*The tension between Fulani herdsmen and farming communities has been in existence for many years, but has seen a dramatic escalation in recent times to include attacks, armed robbery, rape, kidnappings and killings by the nomads. They brutally kill natives of invaded farming communities including women and children in various states across the country. They are armed with sophisticated weapons and usually attack their target communities at a time they are most vulnerable such as at midnight or on Sundays when they are in the church, killing people indiscriminately and burning houses and looting properties. Most worrisome is the brutality and impunity with which the assailants operate without regard for the law and the sanctity of human life. Hence, an understanding of the causes and effects of the conflict between nomads and farmers in the host communities is an important step towards realizing the goals of socio-economic development policies in the country. Therefore, it is against this backdrop that the paper assessed the conflicts between herdsmen and the farmers, using a descriptive technique. It was however observed that, Farmers-herdsmen conflict which is within the agricultural sector is a major setback to the development of the sector and the nation's economy at large and therefore, recommends that, Unless the Federal Government urgently addresses incessant encroachment of farmlands by a group called Bororo cattle rearers, and the havoc they wreck on crops, bloody clashes between the farmers and the peripatetic herdsmen would be inevitable. Consequently that, the proposed federal government policy to create grazing reserves is long overdue as this will ensure that there is access to arable and grazing land to avert constant conflict between these two user groups.*

**Keywords:** *Conflict, Farmers, Herdsmen, Communities, Nigeria.*

## INTRODUCTION

Incessant conflict between farmers and Fulani herdsmen across the country is affecting the security of communities. These conflicts have led to the destruction of land and water resources as the hooves of cattle trample on them (Goor, 1994). The destruction of crops by the herdsmen continues to place restraint on effective utilization of arable farmland, The Global Terrorism Index of 2015 states that over 90 per cent of the attacks carried out by the group are on private citizens, accounting for 81 per cent of deaths in the area. These attacks have mainly been through armed assaults, killing an average of 11 people per attack (Share on Facebook and on Twitter), Inspector General of Police (IGP) Solomon Arase with one of the victims of the deadly attacks on Wednesday, April 27, 2016. In comparison, the Boko Haram insurgency that has attracted the attention of the Nigerian government and the global community kills 2,500 people annually, the (Vanguard, 2016). In 2000, Fulani herdsmen and farmers had a major clash in Oke-Ogun area of Oyo state, which led to a visit by a delegation from the Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF) to the office of the then governor, the late Lam Adesina. Before the report, the largest attack was when the group killed over 200 people and community leaders and residents who were meeting in a remote village in Zamfara state, Nigeria. But their recent activities have surpassed this. Recently, no fewer than 300 people were killed following a series of attacks launched by Fulani herdsmen in Benue state. Several villages were razed by fire, with the decomposing remains of people lying in sight. The number of internally displaced persons is also on the rise in these communities as people desert their homes for neighbouring towns. Recently some local government areas in Benue state were savagely attacked by suspected Fulani herdsmen who killed hundreds of people, torched houses, sacked some communities and occupied them. For instance in Ghajimba, the capital of Guma LGA, 25 farmers were massacred. On Monday, April 25, 2016, herdsmen stormed communities in Enugu state and killed mostly women and children. The unfortunate situation is that this level of criminal impunity is happening in a sovereign nation with a constitution which declares that the security and welfare of the citizens shall be a major responsibility of the state.

In Oyo State, villagers from about eight villages, and settlers from Ilora farm settlement in the Afijio Local Government Area of the state have already declared total war on the cattle rearers. The affected villages include Oluwatedo, Temi-dire, Idode, Kaye, Fitila, Isale-Awon, and Ekefa. The angry peasant farmers narrated how they lost millions of naira to the damages done to their farm produce by the herdsmen.

Villagers from each of the communities planted cassava, maize, and yams on about 50 acres of farmlands each, but were unable to harvest five ridges because the cattle owned by the Bororo had eaten up all the crops. Whenever they contact these Bororos on the damages and the need for compensation, they will draw out their sharp daggers and cork their guns in readiness for attacks (Thisday News paper, 2014).

The situation is not different in Oke-Ogun area where farmers are threatening a showdown over what they referred to as “unabated criminal onslaught” being unleashed by the Bororo cattle rearers who migrated from neighbouring Niger Republic. The latest was the destruction of farm produce valued at about N1.5 million on a 50-acre land of maize farm at Simi Akorede border town in the Saki-west Local Government Area of the state. The food crops were not only eaten up by over 200 cattle, the cattle rearers also destroyed the left over with their cutlasses.

In the Middle Belt, however, it is no longer accurate to call the attitude resentment, just as it is no longer accurate to describe what is happening as a clash. It is a sustained massacre, and it has engendered an attitude that is approaching hatred the kind of hatred that one reserves for someone who threatens one’s very existence.

Recently, hired mercenaries in the pay of Fulani herdsmen massacred 300 people in several Agatu villages, burned down homes, food barns, and churches, and displaced tens of thousands of Agatu people. Fulani herdsmen leaders in Makurdi then brazenly claimed the attack, describing it as payback for cattle theft. The massacre was a reprise of several such murderous invasions across different areas of the Middle Belt — in Plateau, Kaduna, Taraba, Nasarawa, Adamawa, and Benue States, (Berger, 2003). The genocidal rampage of well-armed herdsmen has become a feature of life in the area in the last seven years. Perhaps we need to ask why the police and the military are incapable of protecting the farmers from violent attacks by Fulani herdsmen. Is it true that the Fulani militia is better armed and sometimes outnumbers the police? Why is it difficult for the federal government to contain the terror of the Fulani militia? Who are those arming the Fulani cattle rearers to unleash mayhem on innocent and defenceless Nigerians? Why is it that the Fulani herdsmen alleged to be behind the inhuman killings and destruction of property in the affected states and indeed across the country always get away with their crimes without being brought to justice? There is certainly grave danger ahead because some of the ethnic nationalities incessantly attacked by the Fulani militia have warned that if the government fails to protect them, they are left with no other choice than to form their own militias to defend themselves, (Osimen, 2012).

However, the immediate past government earmarked N10 billion for the operation of the Great Green Wall Programme (GGWP) to boost the fight against desert encroachment, a major factor that has driven pastoralists from the far North to the North-central region in search of grazing fields.

From 2011 to 2014, an analysis of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development’s capital budget showed inconsistent allocation to the development of grazing routes and reserves. In 2011, the ministry allocated N31, 404,899,584 for capital projects. It channeled N310, 489,185 for its National Grazing Reserves and Pasture Development Programme that year.

Of its N45, 009,990,000 capital budget for 2012, a total N930, 000,000 was allocated to the development of grazing reserves, stock routes (1140km) and resting points across Nigeria. In 2013 and 2014, the ministry allocated N130,582,000 and N100,130,000 respectively from its N50,808,871,428 and N35,151,172,583 capital budgets in the year under review for countrywide grazing reserves development (Vanguard, 2014).

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Conflict is an inevitable part of human life. It is a perpetual gift of life, although varying views of it may be held. Some may view conflict as a negative situation which must be avoided at any cost. Others may see it as a phenomenon which necessitates change. Still, others may consider conflict as an exciting opportunity for personal growth and so try to use it to their best advantage (Sears, 2008). Conflict is a concept that assumes a divergent definition. It is said to be a cultural behavior helping to explain disputes over seemingly similar substantive issues which can be handled so dissimilarly indifferent among citizens Conflict exists whenever incompatible activities occur and an action that is incompatible with another, prevents, obstruct interference or causes injuries to other groups. These are conflicts that are directly or indirectly engendered as a result of the impediment of the necessity of sharing, acquiring, maintaining or preserving natural or human resources.

The term conflict is derived etymologically from the Latin verb *confligere* ('to clash, engage in a fight'). It refers to a confrontation between individuals or a group resulting from opposite or incompatible ends or means Alex Schmid (2002). Many authors and scholars have also viewed conflict in different angles with different views. Schmid added that, conflict as an antagonistic situation or adversarial process between at least two individuals or collective actors over means or ends such as resources, power, status, values, goals, relations or interest. To him, the range of outcomes includes victory, defeat, domination, surrender, neutralization, conversion, coercion, injury, or destruction and elimination of the opposite party or, alternatively, the solution, settlement or transformation of the conflict issue. Conflict is a negation which is anchored on behavioural norms. It is a negative or over-reaction to situation, idea, principles and other forms of behaviour. Once there is the cause for inter-group relations, conflict becomes inevitable and peace must be given a chance. Hence, conflict could be seen as a natural phenomenon which must occur among human beings. Conflict is any form of confrontation between two or more parties resulting from 'a situation where (these) two or more interdependent groups or systems of action have incompatible goals (Charles,2002). Of course, it is universally acknowledged that conflict is inevitable. Thus, it is every moment occurrence'

Dahrendorf (1959:135) sees conflict as "a contest competition, dispute and tensions as well as manifest clashes between social forces". For Boulding (1962:5) it is a situation of competition in which the parties are aware of the incompatibility of potential future positions and in which each party wishes to occupy a position that is incompatible with

the wishes of the other". Pruitt & Rubin (1986:4) see conflict as "a perceived divergence of interests, or a belief that the parties' current aspirations cannot be achieved simultaneously". Coser (1956:8) interprets conflict as "the struggle over values or claims to status, power, and scarce resources, in which the aims of the groups or individuals involved are not only to obtain the desired values but to neutralize, injure, or eliminate rivals". Human goals and aspirations will always clash. It is therefore unreasonable to hold the vision of a world without conflict. Conflict will always occur in any environment where there is more than one person or group (Albert, 1999).

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

In every descriptive, work there is a body of theories that provides the explanation for observable phenomena in that field. The theoretical requirement of this work is draw from conflict theory. In general, conflict theory seeks to scientifically explain the general contours of conflict in society: how conflict starts and varies, and the effects it brings. The central concerns of conflict theory are the unequal distribution of scarce resources and power. What these resources are might be different for each theorist, but conflict theorists usually work with Weber's three systems of stratification: class, status, and power. Conflict theorists generally see power as the central feature of society, rather than thinking of society as held together by collective agreement concerning a cohesive set of cultural standards, as functionalists do. Where power is located and who uses it and who does not. In this way of thinking about things, power is not necessarily bad: it is a primary factor that guides society and social relations.

The development of conflict theory gained new vigor with the publication of Dahrendorf (1959), class and class conflict in industrial society. Although initially influenced by the thought of Karl Marx, Dahrendorf departed from Marx's focus on the conflict between the social classes and looked instead to the conflict between interest groups. Thus, for Dahrendorf, social inequities have their basis not only in economics but also in bureaucratic and political power. Simply put, those with power give orders and those without power take orders. Power relations of super-ordination and subordination, says Dahrendorf, form the basis of antagonisms between groups. He distinguishes three broad types of groups that contribute to social conflict "quasi-group," "interest groups and "conflict groups." The members of these groups share certain common interests.

Quasi-groups are aggregates of people occupying identical power positions and holding latent interests or unconscious role expectations. The population of retired American workers constitutes a quasi-group. The quasi-group may have conflicts of interest with other groups, but these conflicts are not usually overt. People from a quasi-group may be recruited into an interest group.

Interest groups are organized associations of people mobilized into action by virtue of their membership in the group. They share manifest interests or conscious goals.

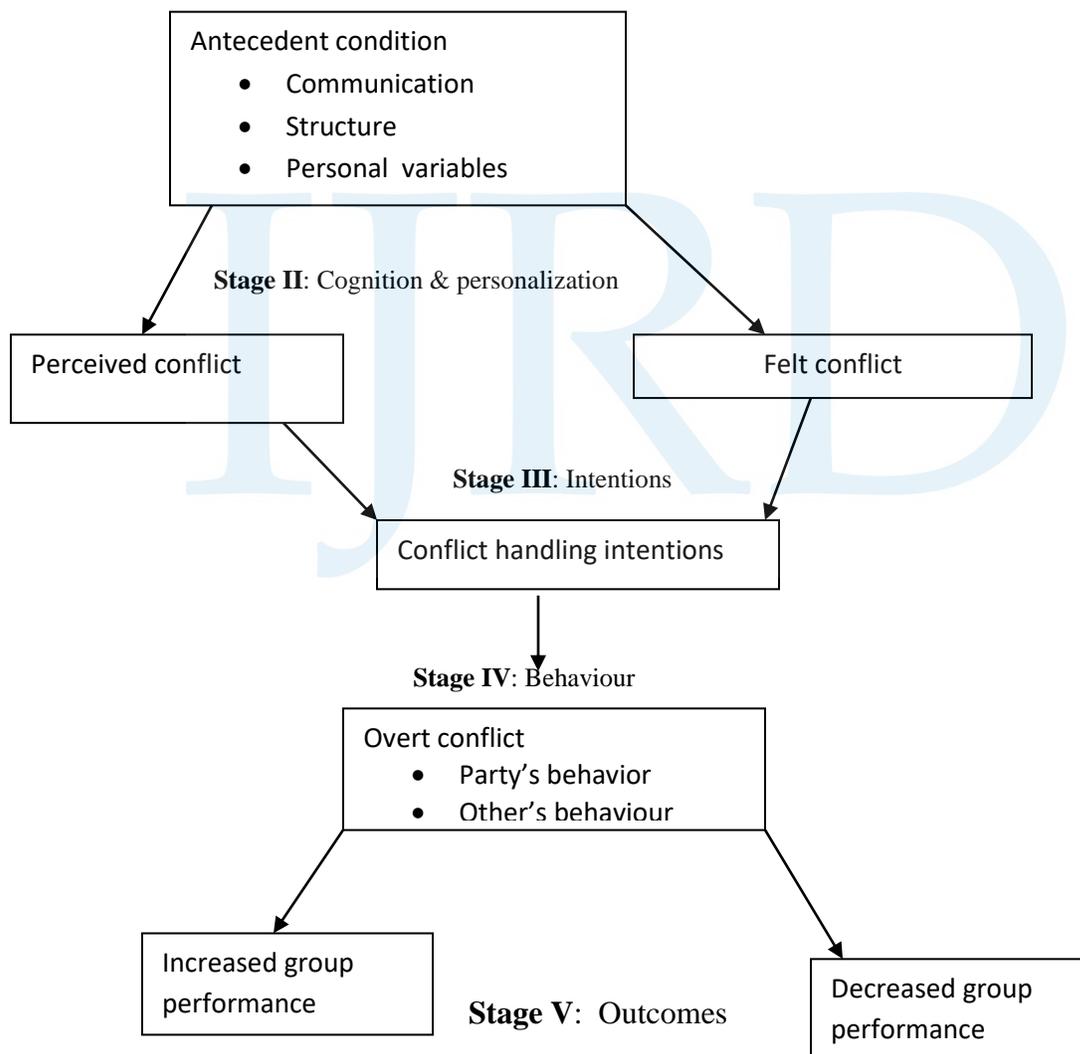
Dahrendorf states that interest groups are the real agents of group conflict. The herdsmen and farmers are examples of an interest group.

Conflict groups emerge out of interest groups. Conflict groups attempt to instigate revolutionary social change, sometimes through violent means. Examples of conflict groups include the Fulani herdsmen. Below is the potential analysis of this theory;

**Figure 1:**

**The conflict process**

**Stage I: potential opposition or incompatibility**



**Source: The conflict process (Robbins, 2005).**

## **HERDSMEN-FARMER CLASH IN NIGERIA: CASE ANALYSIS**

### **BENUE CASE**

Over the past years there has been a different attack by the Fulani herdsmen in Benue State, killing several and leaving many lost. Recently, the state was again thrown into mourning in a fresh attack between suspected Fulani mercenaries and Tiv youths at Agasha and Yelwata, in Guma local government area of Benue State leaving no fewer than 25 persons feared dead. The suspected Fulani mercenaries had invaded these local governments shooting, burning houses and killing people. According to a source “Several houses and farmland have been set ablaze by the herdsmen and many are fleeing the besieged communities (Punch, 2016).” “They came into Agasha after crossing River Buruku at Ayila from neighbouring Nasarawa state; same for Yelwata which is also a border community.” It would be recalled that the former Benue State Governor Suswam’s narrowly escaped death after his entourage was attacked by Fulani Herdsmen on March 12, 2013, with the Fulani herdsmen blaming the governor as the cause of the violent attacks rocking the state.

In 2011, the menace of Fulani herdsmen started in Benue State with consistent attacks on Gwer-West Local Government Area at a time general elections were to take place. At that time, Gwer west farmers complained of destruction of crops in the interior parts of Agagbe the communities where the roads were bad. The revering areas of Gwer-west had wet lands but herdsmen grazed their cows on the dry season farms of the people. The herdsmen later said Benue soil had grasses that made their cows to reproduce at faster rates. So, they insisted that destruction of crops was immaterial. Communities were attacked and chased out of their fertile lands which were used for rice cultivation.

In February 2011, the deposed Chairman of Gwer-west Traditional Council, Chief Daniel Abomtse, cried out against the killing of 23 persons and the razing down of 33 villages located in the interior. When the attacks became consistent every Sunday, Abomtse likened the attacks to the Jihad of 17th Century. The more Abomtse complained, the more herdsmen invaded villages with the result that Naka, headquarters of the local government became a displaced persons’ camp. By the time 2011 elections were held, many Gwer-west people had been disenfranchised as those displaced lost their voters cards to the fire that consumed their houses and harvested crops. By December 2011, the herdsmen had extended their attacks to some parts of Markurdi and Guma Local Government Areas. The aim was to push farmers away from the banks of River Benue and its tributaries which they did between January and February 2012 then governor Gabriel Siswam’s intervention could not help matters. The more he appealed for the settlement of the conflict, the more regular the attacks became. The then police Commissioner dreaded herdsmen as he openly confessed that they had more sophisticated weapons than the police. The result was that from Gwer-west to the

outskirts of Makurdi and the interior of Gima, men, women and children were buried in shallow graves as no inhabitant could dare carry out proper burial for the victims. The situation continued until Emmanuel Jime, a member of the House of Representatives from the area raised the matter on the floor of the House and an ad hoc committee was set up to visit affected areas in Benue State. Unfortunately, the report of the ad hoc committee did not see the light of the day. After the visit, Fulani herdsmen began to invade the interior parts of Guma and crossed over to Agatu, using Nasarawa State as base. The Sunday attacks were aimed at discouraging the inhabitants from going to Church on Sundays. The attacks became so serious that Tiv people in Nasarawa State began to face threats of annihilation. The number of persons and villages destroyed were unquantifiable. On the day Governor Suswam visited Guma, the herdsmen confronted him at Tse-Genyi where there was exchange of fire with the result that Suswam said if it meant him sacrificing his life to reach Gbajimba, headquarters of Guma Local Government area, he would do so. From Guma where the herdsmen were settling at Torkula, Tiv's village after invasion, the herdsmen went back to Makurdi where they attacked Adeke and other settlements at the outskirts of the town (see online vanguard). They did not spare the Mobile Police Barracks as their wives ran to the town along with ordinary citizens. Suswam's escape from the hands of herdsmen in Guma showed him that Benue was already on the danger list. It dawned on him that Makurdi, the state capital was going to fall under the hegemony of cattle rearers. He did not waste time in alerting the Federal Government on what he saw in Guma. Under his nose, herdsmen believed to be backed by suspected terrorists blew up houses with explosives. They killed many people, mutilated their bodies and left them in the over 22 villages that the governor visited. He sought for military assistance since the police had acknowledged the fact that their weapons were inferior to that of herdsmen.

Before the Guma experience, Suswam had made several trips to Lafia to discuss the problem of herdsmen's invasion of Benue State with a view to fashioning out ways of convincing the Nasarawa State government to discourage the herdsmen from crossing over from that state to kill the people. His several trips did not pay off as the attacks increased and extended to Apa, Logo, Katsina-Ala, Kwande, Okpokwu and other local government areas. In fact, the problem became overwhelming as displaced persons scattered across the major towns and villages in the state.

After Suswam's appeal to the Federal Government, soldiers were deployed from outside the state in April 2014. The army high command was told of how soldiers from 72 battalion in Makurdi abandoned Suswam to his fate when he visited Guma. So, fearless soldiers were deployed from outside. In a couple of days, the herdsmen who displaced Tor Tiv's people and sacked the villages of former speaker of the House of Assembly, Dave Iorhnemah and that of the House of Representatives member, Emmanuel Jime and settled there were forced to leave. The story was the same in Logo, Agatu and other areas occupied by herdsmen. As if the havoc caused by the herdsmen in the previous years was

not enough, they re launched attacks on Gwet-Wet, Logo and Agatu before the general elections of 2015. Today, Katsina-Ala and other local governments have over 7,000 displaced persons (Thisday News paper, 2014).

### **ENUGU ATTACK**

Anxiety and confusion has enveloped Abbi Community in Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area, Enugu State, following the invasion of the area by Fulani herdsmen who unleashed mayhem on the people, killing a brother and sister apart from razing down about seven houses and several motorcycles. 19 persons were declared missing in the community even as several others were also wounded with machetes by the invaders. It was gathered that the Fulani herdsmen numbering over 30 emerged from the bush, and began to attack the people in the community, killing their victims and maiming others with machetes before fleeing into the bush unharmed. The two relations who were killed were identified as Fidelis Okeja, 45, and his sister Mercy, 50. Fidelis and Mercy was sitting outside their compound around 6.30pm discussing when she meet her death sudden. About 30 masked Fulani herdsmen emerged from nowhere and them instantly. They later went ahead and attacked other members of the community with machetes, burnt some houses before retreating into the bush (Vanguard, 2014). It was also revealed that sporadic shooting by the suspected Fulani herdsmen sent shivers into the inhabitants of other parts of the community who scampered for safety amid confusion. A reliable source in the community said that the people were taken unawares by Fulani herdsmen, adding that the police and members of the local vigilante group were yet to respond to cries of the people before the invaders escaped into the bush . “The most worrisome aspect of the Fulani invasion of the community is that about 19 people are still missing in the community as nobody can give account of them. Those missing were last seen on the fateful day. The community formed search parties in groups, combing bushes within and outside the community for days, yet no sign of success was recorded.

### **OGUN ATTACK**

The menace of Fulani cattle rearers, otherwise known as Fulani herdsmen is barbaric. So many people lost their lives while properties worth millions of Naira were destroyed allegedly by these Fulani marauders. It was gathered that, the Fulani herdsmen move with their cattle from one of these agrarian communities to the other wreaking havoc. Further findings have also shown that worse still, they do not respect the borders of the state. They did not only seek pasture but also they inflict deaths and mayhem. Records have shown that, not quiet long ago, the border town of Oja-Odan in Yewa North Local Government Area of Ogun State was invaded by some Fulani herdsmen who killed a farmer and injured dozens of others. The farmer, identified as Agbaose Sewotan, was killed because he complained against the invasion of his farm. It was learnt that his elder brother, Mr. Oluwole Sewontan, while narrating their ordeal, said; “this is not the first time that our people were slaughtered like cows on our own soil with impunity. My dear

brother was killed simply because he protested the invasion of his farmland by the herdsmen (Vanguard, 2016).” Also, a mother of three, Mrs Ayesi Balogun, was allegedly raped and killed by some suspected Fulani herdsmen at Asa village, in the Oja Odan area, Yewa North Local Government Area of Ogun State. “On sighting her entering the farm, the killer-herdsmen, who had taken over her farm, pounced on her, probably gang raped her, before hacking her to death.” According to statistics, Balogun’s case brought to 25, the number of innocent and poor people, who had been sent to their early graves in agonising and dehumanising circumstances. Few days later, the corpse of a Fulani man was found in the bush in the same axis. Earlier, a septuagenarian, Pa Mathew Olukogun had narrated how a newly wedded lady in Asa Village, in Yewa North Local Government Area of Ogun State, (name withheld) was allegedly raped by armed nomadic Fulani herdsmen. Speaking on behalf of hundreds of farmers in the area, Olukogun said these marauders have been terrorizing more than 30 communities in the Council Area. He said the immoral acts by the normal Fulani had instilled fears into the communities, saying, fears of being attacked by the herdsmen had gripped the villagers who were appealing to the state government to come to their aid “Aside from this immoral act by the intruders, many people have been gruesomely murdered in a way that appears as if there is no government. “ Many of the women and ladies that had been raped were either on their way to the market or river to fetch water. “How would you feel if I mention your wife’s name as one of those that have been raped by the cattle rearers?,” the old man replied in an answer to a question on the need for him to mention names. Olukogun said those who had been raped by the marauders knew themselves. “Many of our wives , ladies and daughter who have been raped were largely taken to the hospital in Abeokuta, the state capital.”We are losing people as well as being prevented from doing what we know how to do best because of the grazing of our farms by the herdsmen’s cattle. “With the terrible experience of the raping of our daughters and ones, including newly wedded wives, living in our communities is no longer safe, hence, we have deserted the communities in hundreds, praying that the state government would urgently come to our aid. “The worst of the action of the marauders was the raping of many newly wedded wives in our communities and we are bitter about this.” “In a matter of days, they enter the country through our communities and destroy our farmlands with the indiscriminate grazing of their cattle. We are helpless and that’s why we are appealing to the state government to urgently checkmate them.” Reacting to the incident, the State Police Public Relations Officer, Mr. Muiyiwa Adejobi said that the Ketu people were only crying wolf where none existed. While warning the Ketu people not to drag the Police into the matter, he stressed that ‘the Police could only ensure that there was no breakdown of law and order rather than stopping the Fulani herdsmen from coming into the area. Meanwhile, a coalition of socio-cultural groups from the area, including Ketu Advancement Front, Ketu South People’s Assembly and Ketu Alliance have alleged that about 21 innocent residents of the area have allegedly been killed by the Fulani herdsmen since 2000. The representative of the socio-cultural groups, Mr. Lasisi Adewole, said

three residents of the area, including Phillip Akanan from Owode-Ketu, Amosu Olofinjin and Akinola Tunde from Agbon-Ojodu have been killed this year alone by the Fulani herdsmen. Adewole also lamented that all efforts to ensure that the police, the State Security Service and the state government put in place adequate security measures to protect the people, particularly during dry season when the Fulani herdsmen usually encroached and destroyed their farms by the indiscriminate grazing of their cattle had yielded no fruits ( vanguard News paper,, 2015).

**Table 2 some Reported cases of Fulani Herdsmen and Farmers' Conflicts in Nigerian Newspaper between 2009 and 2016**

- July 1999: the herdsmen invaded villages in Karim Lamido, Taraba state undisclosed numbers of people were killed
- August 2000: Tarok, Langtang versus, Hausa, Fulani, Plateau State undisclosed numbers of people were killed.
- October 2000: Yoruba farmers versus Fulani (Bororo) herdsmen. Herdsmen were accused of allowing their cattle to destroy farmlands in Oyo state, Oyo North; undisclosed numbers of people were killed
- October, 2001: Tarok and Fulani herdsmen. Fulani herdsmen allowed their cattle to destroy local farms, Plateau state, Tarok, undisclosed numbers of people were killed.
- August, 2002: Hausa Fulani versus Tarok people. Land and water resources in Plateau state, Wase. Undisclosed numbers of people were killed.
- 2002: Hausa-Fulani and Local farmers. Fulani herdsmen allowed their cattle to destroy local farms in Maza.undisclosed numbers of people were killed.
- March 1, 2003: Yungar people versus Fulani Herdsmen. Dispute arose over grazing land for cattle in Adamawa state, sony local government Area. 40 people were killed
- December, 2009: Fulani herdsmen with Jukun and Ebira mercenaries attacked the communities in Nassarawa state, Udeni-gida. 70 people were killed
- March, 2010: Hausa-Fulani and the Local farmers. Fulani herdsmen allowed their cattle to destroy local farms in Beye and Batern villages. 13 people were killed.
- April, 2010: Suspected Fulani Herdsmen attacked a Beron village in Plateau state. Undisclosed numbers of people were killed.

- May, 2010: Attack of 3 Fulani herdsmen by people suspected to be Beron youths at Tusung village in Barkin Local government, Plateau state. 3 people were killed
- July, 2010: Muslim Fulani herdsmen launched an attack on a Christian village, Mazah in Plateau state. 8 people killed and several houses burnt.
- February, 2011: about 200-300 Fulani men sacked 3 districts in Gowen Local Government, Plateau state. Scores were killed
- June, 2011: Clash between Fulani herdsmen and Tiv farmers in Guma Local Government Area in Benue state. 2 soldiers and 18 others killed while more than 3000 people were displaced
- March 2012: Fulani herdsmen armed with AK 47, mark 4 and other assaults weapon attacked Tiv farming communities Tse Abatse and Tse yoo in Benue state. Undisclosed numbers of people were killed.
- March, 2012: Clashes between Fulani herdsmen and farmers in Benue and Cross River states. 3000 fulani herdsmen displaced from their settlement in Katsina-Alla (Benue) and fled to Utanga in Obaniku local government area (Cross-River).
- October, 2012: Fulani herdsmen attacked a village in Benue state. 30 people killed
- July 2012: Senator Gyang Dantong and the Majority Leader of the Plateau State House of Assembly, Mr. Gyang Fulani died in the stampede that ensued while attending the mass burial of about 50 victims of attack by Fulani herdsmen at Maseh village in Riyom LGA.
- April 23, 2013: 10 farmers killed in an attack in Mbasenge community, Guma L.G.A by suspected herdsmen.
- May 7, 2013: 47 mourners gunned down by suspected herdsmen in Agatu while burying two policemen.
- May 14, 2013: Over 200 herdsmen surround Ekwo-Okpanchenyi, Agatu LGA killing 40 locals Farmers.
- July 5, 2013: 20 people were killed in a conflict between Tiv farmers & herdsmen at Nzorov, Guma LGA.
- July 28, 2013: In retaliation to the alleged killing of 112 cows, herdsmen invade 2 villages in Agatu LGA killing 8 villagers.

- August 2, 2013: Allegation of herdsmen attacked on Trok people of wase local government area in Plateau state. Undisclosed casualties
- October, 2013: Fulani herdsmen attacked and killed one Yoruba farmer in Ogun state Ketu(Nigeria/Benin border town). 1 person killed
- October 7, 2013: Fulani herdsmen attacked Egun settlement. Attack connected to grazing/farming activities in the area, Benue state Agalie Local Government, Eguma settlement. 6 people's property worth millions of Naira destroyed
- October 10, 2013: Gunmen suspected to be Fulani herdsmen attacked a family and some cows were stolen in the process in Plateau state, Barkin Ladi Local Government Area, KuKek community. 21 people including 9 members of a family and 12 herdsmen killed.
- October, 2013: Gunmen suspected to be herdsmen attacked the community in Kaira local government, Kaduna state. 100 people killed.
- November 7, 2013: Attackers strike at Ikpele & Okpopolo communities killing 7 and displacing over 6000 inhabitants.
- November 9, 2013: 36 locals killed, 7 villages overrun in an outbreak of fighting between herdsmen and locals in Agatu L.G.A.
- February 4, 2014: Gunmen suspected to be Fulani mercenaries attacked the various villages in Kirim, Zagar and Zandyan villages in Southern part of Kaduna state. Several people were killed and many displaced from their homes
- June 2015: Fulani herdsmen attacked Motokun village, Patigi Local Government Area, Kwara State. The Oro-Ago community in Ifelodun Local Government Area of the state was also attacked. Fulani herdsmen attacked Ninji and Ropp villages in Plateau State and killed 27 persons. Also, the same group reportedly murdered about 70 Christians.
- July 16, 2015: Fulani Herdsmen attack and killed farmers in Plateau.
- September 2015: an attack by some Fulani herdsmen on the community of Onitsha Ukwuani in Ndokwa West local government area of Delta State left about three persons dead. A middle-aged woman was raped and subsequently killed by three Fulani herdsmen in Edo state.
- October 2, 2015: Fulani Herdsmen raped, killed Ogun Residents and Farmers in Ogun State.

- November 2015: Herdsmen invaded Ulaja and Ojeh communities in Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State and killed about 22 men and women.
- December 1, 2015: Fulani Herdsmen kill a man in Ofagbe community, Isoko North council area of Delta.
- January 24, 2016: Nigerian police DPO, 29 others killed by suspected Fulani herdsmen.
- February 2016: Fulani herdsmen reportedly killed About 10 persons in Tom-Anyiin, Tom-Ataan, Mbaya and Tombu in the Buruku Local Government Area of the state.
- February 8, 2016: 10 killed, Over 300 displaced in clash between herdsmen and farmers at Tom-Anyiin, Tom-Ataan in Buruku LGA.
- February 11, 2016: Herdsmen attacked Abbi community in Uzo-Uwani LGA, Enugu killing two siblings and burnt houses, motorcycles.
- February 29, 2016: Over 500 locals killed and 7000 displaced in an attack in Agatu LGA by fulani herdsmen.
- March 9, 2016: 8 residents killed during herdsmen attacks in Ngorukgan, Tse Chia, Deghkia and Nhumbe, Logo LGA.
- April 5, 2016: APC youth leader, Mr. Aondohemba Kasa and 3 others killed in fresh Fulani herdsmen, farmers' clash in Benue.
- April 8, 2016: Fulani herdsmen kidnapped and killed Falae's security guard at his Ondo state farm land.
- April 9 2016: Fulani camp was razed following the killing of a 64-year old farmer, identified as Alex in Edo State.
- April 12, 2016: Fulani herdsmen attack Dori and Mesuma villages in Taraba, killing at least 15.
- April 19, 2016: A member of about 18 suspected Herdsmen that invaded farms in Lagun village, Lagelu local council Oyo state, shot Mr. Jimmy Aido to death.
- April 25, 2016: 48 killed, 60 injured by Fulani herdsmen in Ukpabi Nimbo community, Enugu state
- May 14, 2016: Fulani, herdsmen attacked a village in Binev council ward of Buruku Local Government Area, Benue state. 13 people killed

On this note, it was revealed that 90 per cent of the attacks carried out by the Fulani herdsmen are on private citizens, accounting for 81 per cent of deaths and 52 per cent of displaced persons in the area in which the attacks are carried out. It was also discovered that the attacks have mainly been through armed assaults, killing an average of 11 people per attack. This placed the group (herdsmen) as the fourth most dangerous terrorist group in the world, according to Global Terrorism Index of 2015

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❖ Absence of grazing reserves and routes discovered to have been the main cause of Headers and community farmers. Therefore, the proposed federal government policy to create grazing reserves is long overdue as this will ensure that there is access to arable and grazing land to avert constant conflict between these two user groups.
- ❖ Some of the Fulani herdsmen do not know their bearings because there are no cattle routes, they graze without limit, and in most cases the cattle are not guided (or guided by under age herdsmen) and so they cause not just havoc to the crops but the response by the farmer's results into violent conflicts, which usually lead to wanton destruction of lives and properties in most cases. Therefore, the use of under age as herdsmen unless accompanied by at least an elderly person should be avoided and government should also construct more dams in far north especially cattle producing states.
- ❖ Increase in human and livestock population with no corresponding increase in land mass can result to conflict between the parties. Hence, domestication of cattle is a lasting alternative solution which needs to be put into consideration especially as time changes, population is on the increase, cattle is on the increase but land is constant; more so, considering the effects of climate change coming into play.
- ❖ The National Boundary Commission needs to be sensitized on the need to ensure proper demarcation/reviewing existing demarcations of borders around States in Nigeria as this has been a recurring point of conflict in Nigeria;
- ❖ The place of Land Use Act of 1978 as it relates to ownership of land, act of 'possessiveness' must be thorough explained to all Nigerians. The Fulani herdsmen and the community farmers alike. They must be schooled on the provision of the land as it relates to the use, possession, ownership 'right' and privileges that one has in the light of the Land Use Act 1978. This can be achieved through Advocacy and seminars and workshops.

- ❖ The community farmers and their children should stop scaring cattle and arousing the anger of the Fulani herdsmen and Training of Traditional/Religious Institutions on peace building and conflict resolution in dealing with this situation whenever it occurs.

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