

## On Strategy, Strategic Leader and Strategic Leadership and the Conditions of Most Nigerians and Nigeria

I will begin this conversation with a debriefing. I became familiar with strategy and strategic in my interaction with ideas and issues of the military, intelligence and law enforcement (MILE) first beyond the shores of this country and increasingly within Nigeria. This interaction was within the academic and intellectual space. This space environment included those created in the university and in the various institutions affiliated with the military, intelligence and law enforcement and to a lesser extent other agencies of government.

In the University space, I have had to develop and teach courses including "Strategy Studies in the 20<sup>th</sup> century", "Fundamentals of Security and Strategy" and "Security and Strategic Theories" to postgraduate students of the Department of History and Security and Strategic Studies Unit of the Institute of Governance and Development Studies in my University. While with the Security and Strategic Studies Unit, I also caused the division into two courses of "Fundamentals of Security and Strategy" and creation of a new course entitled "Fundamentals of Strategy."

In the institutions affiliated with the military, intelligence and law enforcement, I have served as resource person in several presentations for defence (National Defence College) army (Nigeria Army Resource Centre) and airforce (Air War College), the intelligence (Department of State Services National Institute for Security Studies) and the police (National Institute of Police Studies). In 2020, I served as one of the pioneer syndicate directors of the newly inaugurated National Institute of Police Studies, Abuja. The inaugural course was titled Strategic Leadership and Command Course (SLCC 1).

In June 2024, the National Institute for Security Studies, Bwari, selected me amongst others for a one year sabbatical leave. With the exception of these experiences of exposures to the concept of strategy, strategic, strategic leader and strategic leadership in the class room, in discourses as resource person and in listening to other resource persons' presentations, the National Institute of Police Studies and the National Institute for Security Studies provided me platforms where there have been the persistent reference to the terms in discourses in most if not all of its nuances.

In the last four months of my sabbatical leave, the discourses and references to strategy, strategic, strategic leader and strategic leadership have extended beyond the initial confinement to the affairs of the military, intelligence and law enforcement space to including persons and institutions of government outside the MILE. The flagship executive

intelligence management course (EIMC) offered spaces for persons within the MILE and other government agencies inside and outside Nigeria. The participants and to some extent the faculty especially those of them from the military, intelligence and law enforcement and their affairs have come to be referred to as strategic leaders undergoing strategic leadership training in various areas based on the annually selected themes which are arguably underpinned by the specific mandate of the Department of State Services (DSS) wrapped around their vision of what is security for the duration of ten months. There are other programmes in the stables of the Institute gearing towards the impartation of knowledge to strategic leaders in strategic leadership positions in government ministries, departments and agencies.

Let me make this point very clear. Of the estates of the realm, the terms "strategy" and "strategic" and its deployment is almost always the exclusive preserve of the executive. Thus in including persons into strategic leader and strategic leadership category, I made exception for the faculty members from the university. This owes to the mandate of the university system vis-à-vis those of the executive agencies of government. As members of the executive, the ministries, departments and agencies of government and their officials pride themselves as those saddles with the task of planning and executing government policies and programmes at the strategic, tactical and operational levels. This is unlike the university where the mandate is to research, teach and performance community services. The universities do not have and are not saddle with managing resources of the kind available to persons at the strategic and tactical levels in the ministries, departments and agencies of government.

The implication of the categorisation of persons and institutions into strategic, strategic leader and strategic leadership is immense. Of this immense implications, the saying "to whom much is given much is expected" summed this up. What is this strategy, strategic, strategic leaders and strategic leaderships in Nigeria? Has strategy and strategic transcended its military founding etymology and philosophy to including other spheres of human and Nigeria's endeavours?