POLITICAL INSTABILITY AND INSECURITY IN AFRICA: IMPLICATIONS FOR AFRICAN UNION AGENDA 2063

Obinna Ukaeje [††††††]
Department of Defence and Security Studies
National Defence College, Abuja, Nigeria
obinnaukaeje@yahoo.com

Abstract

The idea of the transformation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to the African Union (AU) in 1999, by African Heads of State and governments, was to accelerate the processes of regional economic integration in the continent. Thus, the AU came into being to enable the continent to play a significant role in global economic affairs, while addressing other multifaceted social, economic, and political problems that tend to hinder progress in the continent. However, after more than two decades of its transformation, and despite the adoption of Agenda 2063 which aims to accelerate economic progress in Africa, the continent remains at a crossroads in its struggle to grapple with the challenges of achieving its core objectives. Drawing data largely from secondary sources of information, the paper attempted a critical examination of the political instability and insecurity across many African states, especially as the continent strives towards achieving economic progress through the framework of Agenda 2063, and found out that political instability and insecurity are fundamental challenges standing against the actualization of the Agenda's objectives. The paper, therefore, concluded that unless these challenges are mitigated, the Agenda 2063 will remain nothing but a document that cannot be actualized because the peace and security required to attend such an enviable feat is seriously in breach in a majority of the states of the Union. The paper recommended the entrenchment of democratic culture and constitutionalism as well as strengthening of existing institutions of governance as the first step towards achieving the desired peace and security that will ensure the economic progress of the continent.

Keywords: Agenda 2063, economic integration, Sustainable Development, Political Instability, Insecurity, Peace, and Security

---

[††††††] Obinna Ukaeje is a Research Fellow in the Department of Defence and Security Studies at the Centre for Strategic Research and Studies, and the Head of Research in the Office of the Deputy Commandant/Director of Studies, National Defence College, Abuja.

Introduction

Since the advent of the 21st century and the return to democracy in a majority of the African countries, issues relating to political instability and insecurity have been dominating continental discourses as regards to the progress of the continent. Coming out of the stronghold of military interregnum in most African states, the continent is confronted with diverse security challenges such as political instability, politically instigated conflicts, and criminalities. These include election violence, separatist movements, insurgency, militancy, armed banditry, crossborder crimes, herders-farmers conflicts, and many other security challenges that are threatening the peace and security of the majority of the states of the continent. Though these challenges are mostly internal, they tend to escalate and spread to other neighbouring countries, thus, constituting a serious threat to the effective functioning of the states and the socio-economic potentials and prosperity of the states and by extension the continent of Africa at large.

Almost every part of the continent is torched by the scourge of insecurity instigated by political instability caused by either the State or those opposed to the State. In the North African region, political instability instigated by the Arab Spring in 2010 led to instability and regime change in Tunisia and Egypt, the fall of Libya in 2011, and the subsequent rise of international terrorism in the North of Africa. The rise of terrorism and armed conflict in Libya compounded the already complex insurrections in the horn of Africa down to the sub-Sahel and the subSaharan regions. Furthermore, the Sudanese civil war between government forces and opposition forces that has led to many deaths since 2013, the subsequent carving out of Southern Sudan, and the protracted political imbroglio in the country have continued to puncture any form of development that would have been achieved in the two countries.

In the East African region, while Kenya is coping with terrorism instigated by Al-Shabaab from neighbouring Somalia, the Eritrea-Ethiopia conflict is tearing the region apart. In addition, President Yoweri Museveni's growing authoritarianism and the country's weak institutions are multiplying political instability in Uganda (International Crisis Group, 2021). In the Central Africa region, the Congo Democratic Republic has been engulfed in a protracted political upheaval and conflict that has been described as the world's most neglected crisis, due to overwhelming needs and an acute lack of funding including media and diplomatic inattention (NRC, 2021). Moreover, countries like Cameroon, Chad, and the Central African Republic have been struggling with issues of terrorism in the various enclaves (Conflict Trends in Africa, 2021).

Similarly, the West African region is experiencing the same issues of terrorism and political instability, particularly, in countries such as Nigeria and Niger that share common borders with neighbouring Chad and Cameroon in the Lake Chad Basin region. Since 2009, Nigeria and Niger have been confronted by Boko Haram Terrorists and the consequences have been severe on the socio-economic and political lives of the people, including the effective running of government. Presently, the entire Lake Chad region has been transformed into a hotbed for terrorism in the region. In addition, Mali and Guinea are experiencing serious political instability. In the Southern African region, the xenophobic attacks in South Africa are instigating social-cultural disharmony which negates the cooperation and solidarity required for integration and cooperation in the continent. Given the level of conflict, insecurity, and political instability that the continent is facing and the daunting challenges in managing the situation by the leadership of the African Union, it becomes obvious that the implementation of the AU Agenda 2063, which aims at the economic progress of the continent, cannot be achieved without peace and security in the region.

Recent data from Uppsala Conflict Program, the Global Terrorism Database, the United States Institute for Peace, and other conflict trend assessment groups revealed that between 1970 and 2020, Africa, due to armed conflicts, insurgency and terrorism has become so turbulent that it disrupts her capacity to develop despite huge potentials and opportunities (The Conversation, 2021; USIP, 2021). Indeed, Africa's greatest threat to her economic transformation and progress is embedded in insecurity triggered by political instability and the leadership of AU's inability to effectively manage the situation (USIP, 2021). Moreover, amidst the political instability and insecurity, the outbreak of COVID-19 has dealt a fatal blow to Africa's socio-economic wellbeing, as a result of the world economic shutdown that nearly collapsed the entire continent's economy in the whole of 2020 and 2021. Thus, dampening the little progress the continent has made in its bid to reposition Africa for economic progress through the ambit of the AU Agenda 2063.

It is in the light of the above that the paper evaluates political instability and insecurity in Africa with particular emphasis on the first ten years of the AU Agenda 2063 implementation plan (2013-2023) amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. The aim is to unravel the implications of political instability and insecurity towards the realization of the AU Agenda 2063 objectives in the continent.

Conceptual Clarifications

For clarity, the following salient concepts are clarified. There are Political Instability, Insecurity, Economic Integration, Sustainable Development, Peace, and Security.
Political instability

The concept of political instability despite the variations in definitions points to one common issue which is the propensity of a change in the executive arm of government either by constitutional or unconstitutional means (Alesina et al., 1996). According to Morrison and Stevenson (1971), political instability is simply a change in the government and challenges to the government. They went further to explain that political instability is a condition in political arrangements in which the institutional structure of authority breakdown and the expected compliance to political authority is replaced by political violence. In this study political instability is meant to encompass all manners of instability emanating from political developments, be it constitutional or unconstitutional that is manifested in the change of government, civil unrest and wars, irredentism, rebellions, ethnoreligious violence, and electoral violence. It has remained a common feature in Africa and a major stomp in the continent's effort towards economic and development progress.

Insecurity

The concept of insecurity could be seen as a state of fear, a feeling of uncertainty or lack of confidence in oneself, or anxiety about oneself. According to Beland (2005), insecurity is the state of fear or anxiety stemming from concrete or alleged lack of protection. Those affected by insecurity are not only uncertain or unaware of what would happen but they are also vulnerable to the threats and dangers when they occur (Ndubuisi-Okolo & Anigbogu, 2019). The majority of African states are in a state of insecurity, due to political instability, conflicts, armed banditry, and terrorism that have characterized the region. And this is seriously affecting economic growth and development in the continent, as many businesses and economic activities have been marred with uncertainty.

Economic integration

Kenton (2021) defines economic integration as an arrangement among nations that typically includes the reduction or elimination of trade barriers and the coordination of monetary and fiscal policies. It also could be referred to as regional integration as it often occurs among neighbouring

nations. Economic integration aims to reduce costs for both consumers and producers and to increase trade between the countries involved in the agreement (Kenton, 2021). It is important to note that when regional economies agree on integration, trade barriers fall, and economic and political coordination increases. This is what the Agenda 2063 of the African Union aims to actualize.

Sustainable development

Sustainable development in this light could be described as that development that meets the present needs without compromising the ability to meet the needs of future generations (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). The WCED (1987) further concluded that economic development and environmental condition are inextricably intertwined. In other words, sustainable development is a form of development that can produce goods and services on a continuing basis, maintain manageable levels of government and external debt, and avoid extreme sectoral imbalances which damage agriculture and industrial production (Harris, 2000). This is what Africa needs to propel economic progress in the continent, and the reason is embedded in Agenda 2063 as a key component of the integration process.

Peace and society

The concept of peace and security essentially has to do with the sanctity of life and the absolute necessity to protect and safeguard lives and property (Ademola, 2019). This simply means the absence of threat to life, property, and socio-economic well-being of the people (Arisi, 2013). While peace is a condition in which there is no social conflict and individuals and groups can meet their needs, aspirations, and expectations, security is broadly viewed as freedom from danger or threats to an individual or nation (Genyi, 2013).

Theoretical Framework

The study adopted the systems theory as its theoretical framework of analysis. This is because the Africa Union as the umbrella body of the continent is a system with many interacting components striving to achieve certain objectives. The systems theory was propounded by Ludwig Von Bertalaniffy in the 1940s and promoted by numerous distinguished scholars such as Talcot Parson and David Easton whose tremendous contributions led to the development of the theory. The system theory

describes the term 'system' as an abstract idea of smaller systems operating within a larger system (Mbachu, 2013). The smaller systems are interrelated because they share a common objective which is to make the larger system more efficient. They also function independently as their objectives are distinctly different. System theory focuses on this arrangement and the relations between the nested systems which connect them to the larger system (Mbachu, 2013).

In Africa, the African Union is the larger system where the states are the operating units, and the institutions of governance in the states are the smaller systems. Therefore if the institutions of governance are not properly managed and it results in political instability and insecurity in the states, it will affect the larger system (AU) by creating serious problems for it. This is the case with Africa and the African Union where the challenges of political instability and insecurity bedevilling the continent all emanated from the states (smaller systems), and these very problems are created by poor management of the state institutions. Inadvertently, the protracted political instability and insecurity in Africa is a problem of the failure of the institutions of government to deliver the desired expectation of the people, especially the basic infrastructures to propel development and good governance and the rule of law to maintain the sanctity of democracy. Africa lags behind other continents of the world despite the resources available and the human capital potential. The evidence is very clear. In Africa, institutions are more than "the humanly devised constraints that structure political and social interaction" and it is that very system on which these constraints structure political, economic, and social interaction operate (Ackon, 2020:2-3).

Empirical research has proven that political instability, conflicts, and insecurity in Africa are all linked to the failure of the political system; a system where the institutions of governance are personalized by the political leadership and turned into instruments for hegemonic preservation and oppression against dissent voices, the rule of law estranged and abandoned and dictatorship enthroned. That system can never experience peace and security unless it is corrected to entrench democratic values and deliver on good governance. It is therefore on this premise that the study posits that the realization of the objectives and aspirations of the AU Agenda 2063 Plan is dependent on the remoulding of the decapitated democracies in Africa, to strengthen institutions of governance for the promotion of democratic values, constitutionalism, and good governance. Unless these constraints are destroyed, the guns cannot be silenced, and the AU Agenda 2063 Plan will remain nothing more than a beautiful document with lofty ideas that can never be realized.

African Union and the Agenda 2063

The advent of the African Union (AU) could be likened to an institutional evolution of the continent in the quest for unity, economic integration, and social development under the banner of the Organization of African Unity in 1999. The initiative started in Sirte, July 1999 in an extraordinary meeting of the Heads of State and Government of the Organization of the African Unity, where the body issued a Declaration calling for the establishment of an African Union with a view inter alia, to accelerating the process of integration in the continent, to enable it to play its rightful role in the global economy while addressing multifaceted social, economic and political problems compounded as they are by certain negative aspects of globalization (African Union Handbook, 2019). The Sirte Declaration expedited the process of economic and political integration in the continent that culminated in the official launching of the African Union in 2002. The three other Summits that facilitated the processes that laid the foundation for the transformation of the OAU are as follows: The Lome Summit (2000) which adopted the Constitutive Act of the Union; The Lusaka Summit (2001) which drew the road map for the implementation of the AU and finally, the Durban Summit (2002) which launched the AU and convened the 1st Assembly of the Heads of States of the African Union (African Union Handbook, 2019).

A significant number of OAU structures were carried forward into the AU, as were all treaties and conventions (African Union Handbook, 2019). The AU Constitutive Act and Protocols also established a significant number of new structures, both at the level of major organs and through a range of new technical and subsidiary committees. Many of these have evolved since 2002 and some remain under development. In January 2016, AU Assembly decided to revise and review the AU Constitutive Act for it to be an effective legal instrument to accelerate, facilitate and deepen the efficiency and the integration process on the continent (Assembly/AU/ Dec.597 (XXVI)).

The Vision of the AU is to build an integrated, prosperous, and peaceful Africa, driven by its citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena. This vision of a new forwardlooking dynamic and integrated Africa shifted focus from supporting liberation from colonialism and apartheid to spearheading Africa's development and integration. The vision for the Union included accelerating the process of integration in Africa; supporting the empowerment of African states in the global economy; addressing the multifaceted social, economic, and political problems facing the continent; and promoting peace, security, stability, democracy, good

governance and human rights (African Union Handbook, 2019). It is the quest to actualize this vision of the AU that led the leadership of the AU to come up with the Agenda 2063, which was adopted by the AU Assembly in January 2015. The Agenda 2063 is a framework to guide the processes toward the new African vision.

The African Union Agenda 2063: The Implementation Plan

The African Union Agenda 2063 is a vision and an action plan adopted by the AU which defines Africa's development trajectory in key areas, for the next 50 years. It is a clear and shared strategic framework for inclusive growth and sustainable development developed after a wide consultative process involving critical stakeholders and key drivers with a clear implementation plan (Nwebo, 2017). The Agenda is supported by the shared desire of the African people to determine their destiny for an integrated, prosperous, and peaceful continent, driven and managed by its citizens and representing a dynamic force in the international arena. It is therefore a concrete manifestation of the pan-African drive for unity, self-determination, freedom, progress, and collective prosperity pursued under Pan-Africanism and African Renaissance (African Union Handbook 2019). It is anchored on the AU Constitutive Act, AU vision, AU Assembly 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration of 2013, and seven African aspirations for 2063, and sets out a national, regional, and continental blueprint for progress. Agenda 2063 was adopted by the AU Assembly on 31 January 2015 at its 24th Ordinary Session (Assembly/AU/Dec.565/ (XXIV)). In January 2016, the Assembly reiterated that Agenda 2063 is a common continental framework for socio-economic development (Assembly/AU/Dec.588/ (XXIV)).

The objectives of the Agenda are to develop a growth and developmental path for the African continent for the next 50 years benefitting from lessons learned over the past 50 years of the existence of the OAU to realize the ideal African continent by 2063 as captured in the seven aspirations of the agenda 2063. These are:
1. A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development;
2. An integrated continent politically united and based on the ideals of Pan Africanism and the vision of Africa's Renaissance;
3. An African of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice, and the rule of law;
4. A peaceful and secure Africa;
5. An Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, values, and ethics;

6. An Africa where development is people-driven, unleashing the potential of its women and youth;
7. Africa as a strong, united, and influential global player and partner.

For implementation purposes, Agenda 2063 is divided into a series of five 10-year plans over the 50-year horizon of the Agenda 2063 time frame. The purpose for developing the 10-year plans is anchored on the following:

1. To identify priority areas, set specific targets, define strategies and policy measures required to implement the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan (FTYIP) of Agenda 2063;
2. Bring to fruition the fast-track programmes and initiatives outlined in the AU Assembly Malabo Decision of June 2014 to provide the big push and breakthroughs for Africa's economic and social transformation;
3. Provide information to all key stakeholders at the national, regional, and continental levels on the expected results/outcomes for the first 10 years of the plan and on the roles/assignment of responsibilities in its implementation, monitoring, and evaluation;
4. Outline the strategies required to ensure the availability of resources and capacities together with citizens' engagement in the implementation of the first 10-year plan.

The Agenda 2063 has 14 fast-track or flagship projects that have been identified as key to accelerating Africa's economic growth and development as well as promoting a common identity by celebrating Africa's history and culture (AU Handbook, 2019). They are:

1. **Integrated High-Speed Train Network:** aims to connect all African capitals and commercial centres;
2. **African Virtual and E-University:** aims to utilize ICT-based programmes to increase access to tertiary and continuing education in Africa to accelerate the development of human capital, science and technology, and innovation;
3. **African Commodities Strategy:** aims to enable African countries to add value, extract higher rents from their commodities, integrate into the global value chains, and promote vertical and horizontal diversification n anchored in value addition and local content development. The strategy is to transform Africa from a raw material supplier for the rest of the world to an industrialized continent that will stimulate the economic development of Africans.
4. **Annual African Economic Forum:** A multi-stakeholder meeting that brings together the African political leadership, the private sector, academia, and civil society groups to reflect on how to accelerate

Africa's economic transformation by harnessing its vast resources and potentials to enhance the development the African people.

5. **African Continental Free Trade Area** (AFCFTA) aims to significantly accelerate the growth of intra-African trade and strengthen Africa's common voice and policy space in global trade negotiations.

6. **African Passport and Free Movement of People:** aims to fast-track continental integration by removing restrictions on African's ability to travel, work and live within their continent.

7. **Silencing the Guns by 2020:** ending all wars, civil conflicts, gender-based violence, violent conflicts, and preventing genocide.

8. **Grand Inga Dam Project:** expected to generate 43,200 megawatts of power to support current regional power pools, and for their combined service to transform traditional to modern sources of energy and ensure clean and affordable electricity.

9. **Pan-African E-Network:** aims to put in place policies and strategies that will stimulate transformative e-applications and services in Africa, particularly the intra-African broadband terrestrial infrastructure, and in cyber security, to make the information revolution the basis for service delivery in the bio and nanotechnology industries and ultimately transform African into an e-Society.

10. **African Outer Space Programme:** aims to strengthen Africa's use of technology to bolster technological developments in key areas, such as agriculture, disaster management, remote sensing, climate forecast, banking, and finance, as well as defense and security.

11. **Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM)** aims to ensure intra-regional connectivity of African cities and to create a single unified air transport market for Africa as an impetus to the continental economic integration and growth agenda.

12. **African Financial Institutions:** to create financial institutions that will play a pivotal role in mobilizing resources as well as managing the African financial sector that will accelerate integration and development of the continent's economies. These are the African Investment Bank and Pan African Stock Exchange, the African Monetary Fund, and the African Central Bank.

13. **Great Museum of Africa:** aims to create awareness about Africa's vast dynamic and diverse culture, artifacts, and influence across the world. The focal centre aims at preserving and promoting African cultural heritage.

14. **Cyber Security:** to incorporate Africa's development plans into the emerging technological revolution, and to ensure that these technologies are used for the benefit of Africans by ensuring data protection and safety online. The Cyber Security project is guided by

the AU Convention on Cyber Security and Personal Data Protect (AU Handbook, 2019).

As of August 2018, the flagship projects recorded some milestones. These are the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AFCFTA) signed by 49 of the 55 AU Member States, and ratified by six, namely: Kenya, Ghana, Rwanda, Niger, Eswatini (formerly Swaziland), and Chad. In addition, during the July 2018 Summit in Nouakchott, Mauritania, the Assembly adopted the five services priority sectors: transport, communication, finance, tourism, and business services (AU Handbook, 2019).

Given the ideal and strategies of Agenda 2063, it provides a unique opportunity to recreate the African narrative through a process that appears to surmount the inherent contradictions of Africa's growth and development in the past under the OAU, and stimulate a continental economic integration that will relaunch African into the global economic affairs, not as a supplier of raw materials but as an active player in the control of world economies. In addition, Agenda 2063 will ensure the economic development of Africans. However, achieving the objectives of the Agenda 2063 seems to be a huge challenge given the level of political instability and insecurity that the continent has been bedevilled with. The implication of instability and insecurity to the implementation of Agenda 2063 will be discussed in the subsequent subheading.

Political Instability and Insecurity Calculus in Africa

The post-independent African states are fraught with serious political instabilities as a result of military coups and countercoups that characterized the period. Though, the transitional periods in the late 1990s that heralded the return to democracy recorded some progress in the return to democracy from autocratic military regimes in Africa. However, while the continent is struggling to entrench democratic tenets to secure the nascent democracies across the continent from being truncated, issues of destabilization, such as political instability and insecurity have continued to prop up. This is because the constitutional framework and the state institutions have been tampered with to create a non-level playing ground for the opposition.

Across the continent majority of the states that make up, the AU is grappling with one form of political instability and insecurity or the other. Below is the table showing different states and the security challenges they are facing in contemporary Africa:

Table 1: African countries presently grappling with instability and insecurity

S/N	Country	Nature of instability and insecurity	Remarks
1.	Algeria	Grappling with terrorism by Al Qaeda Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) since 2005 initially known as Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC)	Potential threat
2.	Angola	Ethno-Political confrontation by the Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda. Armed Forces of Cabinda against the state (FLEC-PM).	Potential threat
3.	Burundi	Political instability is rooted in long decades of ethnically instigated crisis. Severe security situation by armed incursions from eastern DRC into neighbouring border areas of Burundi.	Potential threat to the stability and peace of the state.
4.	Burkina Faso	Continued ethnic clashes that have registered 173 security incidents and 285 deaths (including children) between July and September. As of 30 September 2021, the number of IDPs reached 1,407,685 (CONASUR) out of which over 61.02 percent are children. Ansurul Islam linked to al Qaeda is active in the country.	Threat to peace and stability of the region
5.	Central African Republic	Seleka, a coalition of five Muslim rebel groups overthrew a legitimate government and seized power in March 2013. There are also the anti-balaka militias (Christians against Seleka Coalition)	Potential threat
6.	Chad	Severe political threats by the Union of Resistance Forces (URF) and Libya-based Front for Change and Concord (FACT) in Chad and terrorism by Boko Haram at the Lake Chad Basin. The incursion of FACT led to the death of President Idris Derby on 20 April 2021 after a fatal injury from rebels.	Potential threat
7.	Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)	Political instability resulting from electoral violence led to rebel insurrections. Several armed rebel forces fighting to take over power. Most recently is the attack in 2020 carried out by Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), a radical Islamist rebel group, and the Cooperative for the Development of Congo (CODECO).	Potential threat

8.	Djibouti	Political crisis in Djibouti between the government and the Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy (FRUD). Islamist terrorism and the spread of Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen (al-Shabaab), the Islamic State (IS) group, and Salafists in Somalia and the Puntland State of Somalia, both of which share borders with Djibouti.	Potential threat to Djibouti's security and stability
9.	Egypt	The security situation in Egypt is unpredictable and certain regions of the country (North Sinai, Western Desert, etc.) are particularly volatile. There is also a significant risk of terrorist attacks throughout the country. Religious institution has been under terrorist threats.	Potential threat to the stability of the state
10.	Eritrea	Political instability and Ethnic tension instigated by the major political parties (Democratic Movement for the Liberation of the Eritrean, Kunama (DMLEK)), Eritrean Salvation Front (ESF), and Red Sea Afar Democratic Organization (RSADO), conflict and rebellion in the state and continuing tensions of the border with Ethiopia and Djibouti	Potential threat to the stability of Eritrea and the sub-region
11.	Ethiopia	Protracted hostilities in the Tigray Region between rebels from the Tigray Defence Force (TDF), formerly known as the Tigray People's Front (TPLF), and troops of the Ethiopian National Defence Force (ENDF) supported by regional militias. Hostilities between TDF and ENDF and its allies on southern and eastern fronts and moving spreading to other cities.	Volatile security situation in the state and the east African sub-region
12.	Ivory Coast	Long history of political instability revolves around deep-seated cleavages such as ethnicity, nationality, and religion. The recent re-election of President Alassane Quattara in October 2020 sparked deadly violence and was boycotted by the opposition voters.	Potential threat to the stability and peace in the state.

13.	Kenya	Rising terrorism in the state from al-Qaeda-linked Somali militia, the Muslim Youth Center in Kenya, and the insurrection activities of the Mombasa Republic Council (MRC) separatist group.	Potential threat to peace and stability of the state.
14.	Libya	Since the assignation of Muammar Gaddafi, Sirte, Libya, the security situation has remained unstable, due to the lack of unified security forces and government. Terrorism, insurgency, and militancy have become a nationwide threat in the state	Threat to the stability and peace of the state and the entire continent.
15.	Mali	Protracted politically instigated conflicts and armed rebellion between the government supported by the French against radical Islamic groups that seized the north of Mali on 12 January 2013	Threats to the state and the region.
16.	Mauritania	Weak government with feeble political institutions, ethno-racial divisions, and endemic corruption reinforces socio-political tensions in the state. These factors make Mauritania become a transit state for arms smuggling, illicit transitions as well as terrorism in the Central African Region. Islamic terrorist groups like AQIM and Ansar Allah linked to AQIM have taken advantage of weak government factors to create a safe haven for their members in the region.	Pose a serious threat to regional and international security.
17.	Nigeria	Continuing Ethno religious conflagrations between Muslims and Christians in Kaduna, Taraba and Plateau states, armed conflict between government forces and Boko Haram Terrorist & ISWAP in the northeast, armed banditry, and kidnapping in the northwest, herders-farmers conflict from the North central down the entire southern hemisphere, and armed separatist movements.	Volatile and threat to peace and stability of the state and neighbouring countries in the Lake Chad Basin.
18.	Puntland	Rebel armed conflict by the Galgala militia loyal to Shiek Mohammed Said-Atom, rooted in religious division among regional divide.	Potential threat to peace and stability of the state.
19.	Rwanda	Volatile security situation by Rwanda Hutu Ethnic militia operating near Rwanda's borders with Burundi and DRC	Threat to peace and stability of the State

20.	Senegal	Severe security challenges rooted instigated by political instability. The Movement of Democratic Forces of Casamance (MFDC) or Movement for the Democratic Forces of Casamance has been fighting against the government since 1982. Though MFDC declared a unilateral ceasefire in April 2014, the state remained unstable.	Potential threat to peace and stability of the state.
21.	Somalia	The instability and terrorism by Islamist terrorist organizations, Al-Shabaab Somali Islamist group or Imaarah Islamiya, Hizbu Islam or Islamic Party which hold way in Somalia for more than two decades have made the state a failed state.	A failed state, an enclave for terrorists, and a threat to the stability and peace of the region and sub-Saharan Africa.
22.	Somaliland	Ethnic and religiously rooted instability in the state by rebel forces against the government. The Northern Somalia Unionist Movement (NSUM) and its army wing, Sool Sanaag Cayn Army (SSCA) (a splinter group of SSC); Tribal militia loyal to Somalia's former Prime Minister Ali Khalif Galayr fighting to create Khaatumo or Khatumo state, as well as other clashes with Puntland army	Threat to peace and stability of the state and neighbouring states in the East Africa region.
23.	Sudan	Sudan has been engulfed in a political crisis since 2002 between Sudan Liberation Army (SLA), Popular Defence Forces (PDF), a pro-government paramilitary group, and the Sudanese Revolutionary Front (SRF) formed by five rebel groups against the government forces. The government has been fighting the Darfur population since 2003, including clashes with rebels.	Severe threat to the state and the sub-Saharan region because of the influx of armed machinery from Sudan to other volatile regions.

24.	South Sudan	Political instability, insecurity, and catastrophic humanitarian crisis by ethnic militia and rebel groups, including unending peace agreements that have resulted in no peace by several groups: The National Transition Council (NTC) formed by four rebel groups: SSLA, SSDM, NDF, and SSDF (Peace agreement with the government in April 2013).	Threat to peace and stability of the state and the region.
25.	Uganda	Ethnically related and election violence in Uganda. The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) began against Uganda and Congo armed forces in 1987. There is terrorism-related infiltration and attacks by the Al Shabaab Somali Islamist group, the Allied Democratic Forces-National Liberation Army of Uganda (ADF/NLAU) active in the Democratic Republic of Congo in North Kivu, South Kivu, Maniema, and Katanga provinces pose a severe threat in Uganda.	Threat to the stability of the state.
26.	Western Sahara	The ongoing conflict between the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic or Polisario Front and the Kingdom of Morocco.	Threat to peace and stability of the region.

Source: Compiled by the author from security and conflict trends data (2021) and Wars in the World, (2022).

The data in Table 1:0 above illustrate graphically the high level of political instability and insecurity in contemporary African states, and this situation has not improved rather it keeps getting worse by the day making the entire continent vulnerable. The worsening security situation has caused severe human security challenges to the affected states and created a general atmosphere of fear and social tension across the continent. Such a situation poses a serious threat to the aspiration and objectives of the AU Agenda 2063.

The COVID-19 Challenge

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic towards the end of 2019 and the resultant lockdown across the world from the end of March 2020 affected the little progress the continent was making in the first ten-year implementation plan of the AU Agenda 2063. About 52 countries among

the 54 member countries of the African Union had confirmed cases of COVID19, thus, leading to the extension of the lockdown in Africa and subsequent imposition of movement restrictions of humans and goods by governments of these countries by the end of March 2020. For instance as of April 2020, confirmed cases of COID-19 stood at 12,368 (about 0.8 percent of the world's total cases) with a mortality figure of 632 (0.7%) of the world's related deaths for the same period (WHO Report, 2020; UNDP, 2020).

The impact has been disastrous for the continent as it has exacerbated the scourge of poverty, increased unemployment by loss of jobs, a decline in diaspora remittances, shut-down of businesses across, and near collapse of the economy of African states with its anticipating an economic recession. Although the United Nations in its intervention response plan in collaboration with United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) launched a US$2 billion and US42.5 billion respectively, the global humanitarian response plan targeted the most vulnerable countries to mitigate the danger of economic recession that was looming, of which Africa was a beneficiary (UNCTAD, 2020). Unfortunately, the people in most African countries that received the fund did not feel the impact.

While the regional and country-specific impacts were similar in Europe and Asia depending on which sectors were severely hit, due to the continent's lack of resilience and diversification, Africa faced severe negative impacts from the pandemic (UNCTAD, 2020). First, being the last region to register COVID-19 cases, Africa was already experiencing the consequences mainly through its trade links with the European Union (EU), United States of America (USA), and China, resulting from dwindling markets for African exports. Second, while the infection rates in these regions were flattened out with economic stimulus and investment recovery plans underway, the opposite holds for Africa. While the rest of the world is slowly coming back to form, African economies have plunged into a deeper recession as they are facing further production and trade-related constraints, given the effects of the infection on the continent.

Another area the COVID-19 affected is the AU's free movement protocol. In 2018, the African Union in implementing its flagship project on the free movement of persons in Africa and the African passport adopted the protocol to the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Communities relating to Right of Entry, Right of Residence, and Right of Establishment; as well as adopted the Guidelines on the Production, Issuance of the African Passport(AU, 2020). Although, the Protocol provides for the temporary closure of borders and denial of entry to individuals on health a d security

considerations. However, the spontaneous outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulted movement restrictions which led to the closure of public spaces, businesses, closure of international borders, airports, and other instituted measures disrupted the AU implementation agenda for economic integration, as there was a total lockdown of business activities.

From the security angle, it provided more impetus for terrorist and armed groups in volatile regions perfect their plans of annexation to various borders and communities across the continent. For instance, the AU report (2021) on the effect of COVID-19 on the state of insecurity in the G-5 Sahel and Lake Chad Basin shows that COVID -19 reversed the development gains of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda as well as threatened the livelihoods of people in the G-5 Sahel and the Lake Chad Basin. The report further revealed that extremist groups have integrated COVID-19 in their narratives and propaganda to gain more support by providing basic services to communities in dire need thereby winning the people against the government (AU Report, 2021). The aforementioned impact of the outbreak of the COVID-19 Pandemic shows that the disruptive effects of the Pandemic on the implementation of the AU Agenda 2063 took away the time and resources that would have been utilized in the First Ten Years Implementation Plan.

The Implications for Agenda 2063 in the First Ten Year Implementation Plan (FTYIP)

The African Union Agenda 2063 is aimed at establishing an African Economic Community that would drive the economic progress of the continent through a functional integration process. However, the attainment of this objective seems elusive because of the level of political instability and the height of insecurity that has engulfed the region in contemporary. Moreover, the outbreak of Covid-19 in 2019 and the subsequent global lockdown and movement restrictions that spanned more than a year (from 30 March till the first quarter of 2021) and its attendant human security effect have made it even worse with severely effect implications on the FYIP of the AU Agenda 2063. Below are some of the implications:

Fragility of States

The level of instability and insecurity has placed many countries of Africa in the fragility index category. Some of these countries include Burundi, Central African Republic, Comoros, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic

Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Mali, Nigeria, Libya, Togo and Zimbabwe (Fragile States Index Annual Report, 2021). With this number of countries in the fragility category with their attendant consequences on the effective functioning of governance, it impacts negatively on the objectives of Agenda 2063. For instance, ongoing terrorist armed conflicts in the Sahel and Lake Chad Basin have hindered a lot of business/economic activities in the regions.

Lack of democratic culture and weakening of existing institutions

Unlike Europe where such economic integration framework had accelerated economic prosperity and development among member-states and strong regional integration through the coordination of their regional blocs (European Community and later European Union-EU), Africa lacks the democratic culture and strong institutions required to propel such an integration process. The key to sustainable development is good democratic culture, strong institutions, and good governance. Though the majority of African countries claim to be practicing constitutional democracies, they are nothing but symbolic democratic governments without democratic values (Nwebo, 2019). They compromised their integrity to the extent that they are unable to perform effectively and such tendencies impinge on the lofty aspirations of the Agenda.

Uncertainty of Trade Policy Goals and Agreements

Political instability, conflict, and insecurity, most particularly domestic instability and conflict are among the several factors identified by many policy analyses to be behind the unsuccessful regional trade agreements in Africa. Beyond the uncertainty of trade agreements they create, they instigate delay potential investments into new markets (Handley, 2014; Molders, 2016; Wook, 2017). The reasons are political instability and insecurity, which discourages efficient negotiations between partner countries and makes it difficult to implement trade agreements. Secondly, even after the trade agreements had come into force, there still exists the possibility of termination or, at least, of agreements becoming virtually dead. A good example is the impact of instability in Sierra Leone and Liberia over decades rendered the Mano River Union (MRU), one of the regional trade agreements in the continent impotent (Wook, 2017). The majority of African states with severe political instability have experienced and still experiencing it.

Destruction of Economic Investment Potential of Member-States

The economies of the majority of African countries depend largely on foreign investments from outside the continent. With the growing political instability and insecurity in many African countries, foreign investors will be unwilling to invest in a country or region where political instability and internal conflict are evident. A good example is a steep fall in foreign direct investments to Nigeria, the biggest oil exporter in Africa, as a result of the growing terrorism by Boko Haram in recent years. Unfortunately, the outbreak of COVID-19 has exacerbated it. Investment channels hold more importance for the continent because one of the major gains from regional trade agreements in Africa comes from the stimulation of investment in production for export and export-linked industries.

Destruction of Development Agenda

Instability, violent conflict, and insecurity are the main constraints to meeting the SDGs. These challenges destroy countries' human security index and make economic progress unattainable. The case of Cote D'Ivoire, Burundi, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Finally Libya are striking examples. Another striking example is that of the Arab Spring which set several countries on a path of transition with inevitable instability in the short term. The collapse of the government of Mali in 2012 after two decades of political instability was deemed exemplary at the time. Likewise, the rebellion in the Central African Republic spotlights the substantial risk of political instability and a tendency for recovering states to slip and slide and slide back into conflict.

Effect of a Human Security Index

The UN Commission on Human Security in its report in 2003 defined human security to mean protecting the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfillment. This vital core includes the seven issues associated with human security; economic security, food security, health and environmental security, personal security, community security, and political security which are the building blocks of sustainable development. The reason is that they reinforce each other that one element of human security is likely to "travel like an angry typhoon to all forms of human security" (Human Security Commission Report, 2003). For instance, armed conflict in the Lake Chad Basin has an impact on all the dimensions of human security in the Lake Chad Basin Countries

and this constitutes a major impediment to the implementation of the AU Agenda 2063.

Conclusion and Way Forward

It is an incontrovertible fact that no development agenda no matter how perfect it appears can be successfully implemented in the absence of peace and security. Unfortunately, the majority of the states in Africa that are meant to be the spoke for accelerating the economic integration process are bedevilled with issues of political instability, conflict, and insecurity, thus, making it difficult for the integration to function properly. African Union has aspired to build An African Economic Community to propel economic progress in all dimensions in Africa just like it is in Europe among the European Union. But there is a dire need to first restore peace and stability in the region because, without peace and stability, the idea of an African Economic Community that will propel the desired economic progress will remain an illusion.

The paper, therefore, recommends the way forward towards achieving Agenda 2063, knowing fully well that the FTYP has failed, as it has not silenced the guns. First, the AU must wholeheartedly, see to the promotion of democratic culture and constitutionalism in Africa. This is because the fragility challenges of African states are a result of the abysmal lack of democratic culture and good governance, which in most instances are the cause of political instability, internal conflicts, and insecurity. Therefore the need for the entrenchment of good democratic culture and constitutionalism amongst the states; will strengthen governance structure and ensure good governance which in the end bring about political stability and peace in the region.

Secondly, AU should put more efforts towards the strengthening of institutions of Governance such as the electoral institutions, the judiciary, the law enforcement agencies, the military institutions, as well as the strategic MDAs for service to the people, respect for the rule of law and equity and fairness in governance. The institutions of governance should be restructured to serve the people rather than serve as hegemonic instruments of oppression by the political leadership. This will serve as a strategic move towards silencing the guns and restoring peace and security on the continent. When these are practically carried out, the AU Agenda 2063 will be a sure bet.

References

Ackon, K.M. (2020). The systems theory of economic development *MPRA Paper* N0. 104205. https://mpra.ub.uni_muenchen.de/104205/html.

Ademola, A. (2019). Security challenges in Nigeria: The imperativeness of good governance and the role of civil society. *Academic Paper*, Grade 60.

African Union (2019). *AU handbook: A guide for those working with and within African Union (Sixth Edition)*. African Union Commission and New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade/Manatu Aorere. https://au.int/sites/default/files/pages/31829-fileau_handbook_2019_english.pdf.

African Union (2021). The impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on governance, peace, and security in the Sahel. https://au.int/n/documents/20210122/impact-covid-19-outbreakgovernance-peace-and-security-sahel.

African Union (2020). Continental Forum on the impact of COVID-19 on free movement of persons in Africa. https://au.int/en/newsevent/20201130/continental-forum-impact-covid19-free-movement-persons-africa.

African Union (2002). *The Protocol relating to the establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union.* https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/3793-treaty   0024_protocol_relating_to_the_establishment_of_the_peace_and_security_council_of_th   e_african_union_e.pdf.

African Union (2000). *Constitutive Act of the African Union.* Addis Ababa: OAU. https://scholar.google.com/scholar?q=Constitutive%20Act%20of%20th%20African%20   Union.%20Constitutive%20Act%20of%20the%20African%20Union.

Alesina, A., Ozler, S., Roubini, N., & Swagel, P. (1996). Political instability and economic growth. *Journal of Economic Growth*, 1(2), 189-212.

Arisi, R. (2013). Good governance: A panacea for peace and stability in Nigeria nation. *Public Policy and Administration Research*, 3(4), 124.

Assembly of the Union (2015). Decision, declarations and resolution of the Assembly of the Union twenty-fourth ordinary session, 30-31 January 2015: Assembly/AU/Dec.546-568 (XXIV). Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. www.au.int.

Assembly of the Union (2016). Decision, declarations and resolution of the Assembly of the Union twenty-sixth ordinary session, 30-31 January 2016: Assembly/AU/Dec.588-604 (XXVI). Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. www.au.int.

Beland, D. (2005). The political construction of collective insecurity: From moral panic to blame avoidance and organized irresponsibility.

Centre for European Studies Working Paper Series 126.

Commission on Human Security (2003). *Human security now. Commission on Human Security Published Report.*

Conflict Trends in Africa (2021). Tracking conflicts in Africa. *ACCORD.* https://www.accord.org.za/publication/conflict-trends-2021-2/

Genyi, G. (2013). Good governance: Antidote for peace and security in Nigeria. *European Journal of Business and Social Sciences*, 2(2), 57.

Harris, J.M. (2000). Basic principles of sustainable development. *Global Development and Environment Institute Working Paper 0-04.* https://www.bu.edu/eci/files/2019/06/Sustainable-Development.pdf.

Harrod, R.F. & Domar, E. (1957). *Essays in the theory of economic growth.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

International Crisis Group (2021). Uganda: The Kampala attacks and their regional implications. *Crisis-watch: Tracking Conflicts Worldwide.* https://www.crisisgroup.org/crisiswatch/january-alerts-and-december-trends/uganda.

Kenton, W. & Scott, G.   (2021).   Economic   integration. https://www.investopedia.com/terms/e/economic-integration.asp/html.

Mbachu, O. (2013). *Great issues in political theory*. Medusa Academic Publishers Ltd.

Molders, F. (2016). On the path to trade liberalization: Political regimes in trade negotiations. *The World Economy*, 39(7): 890-924. http://doi:10.1111/twec.12280.

Morrison, D.G. & Stevenson, H.M. (1972). Integration and instability: Patterns of African political development. *The American Political Science Review,* 66(3): 902-927. https://doi.org/10.2307/1957486/html.

Ndubuisi-Okolo, P.U. & Anigbogu, T. (2019). Insecurity in Nigeria: The implications for industrialization and sustainable development. *International Journal of Research in Business Studies and Management,* 6(5): 7-16. https://www.ijrbsm.org/papers/v6i5/2.pdf.

Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) (2021). DR Congo tops list of world's most neglected crises.

https://www.nrc.no/news/2021/may/dr-congo-tops-list-of-worlds-most-neglectedcrises/html.

Nwebo, O.E. (2017). African Union Agenda 2063 and the imperative of democratic governance. *The Journal of Law and Development Review.* https://doi.org/10.1515/ldr-2018-0019.

The African Union Commission (2014). Agenda 2063: *The Africa we want.* Addis Ababa: African Union. https://au.int/en/agenda2063/overview.

The Conversation (2021). What drives instability in Africa and what can be done about it. https://theconversation.com/what-drives-instability-in-africa-and-what-can-be-doneabout-it-87626.

The New Humanitarian and Fund for Peace (2021). *Fragile states index: Measuring the fragility, risks and vulnerability in 179 countries*. https://fragilestatesindex.org.

UNCTAD (2020). *Report of the United Nations Trade and Development of Agency Report on the Outbreak of COVID-19, UNCTAD Document;* https://unctad.org/system/files/officialdocument/tdr2020_en.pdf.

UNCTAD (2020). Assessing the impact of COVID-19 on Africa's economic development. *UNCTAD/ALDC/MISC/2020/3. https://unctad.org/system/files/officialdocument/aldcmisc2020d3_en.pdf/*

UNDP (2020). The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria: A socio-economic analysis, file:///C:/Users/ser/AppData/Local/Temp/Socio-Economic-Impact-COVID-19-NigeriaPolicy-Brief-1-UNDP-Nigeria-April-2020pdf.

United States Institute of Peace (USIP) (2021). Security challenges in Africa: 2021 and beyond. https://www.usip.org/events/security-challenges-africa-2021-and-beyond/html.

Wars in the World (Updated 11 January 2022). Daily news in the world and on new states. https://www.warsintheworld.com/?page=static1258254223.

World Health Organization (2020). *COVID-19 pandemic, situational report updates*, https://www.bing.com/search?q=WHO-Update+on+COVID-19/

Wook, J.J. (2017). The impact of political instability on trade agreements in Africa. *Korea Institute for International Economic Policy,* https://hdl.handle.net/11540/10558.

World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) (1987). *Our common future*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.