



## EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE BORDER SECURITY MANAGEMENT BETWEEN NIGERIA AND ITS NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

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### ABSTRACT

*Border security is increasingly important to Nigeria's national security, regional stability and socioeconomic development because the country shares extensive land boundaries with Benin Republic, Niger Republic, Chad and Cameroon. These borders facilitate legitimate trade, migration and social interaction but may also be exploited for terrorism, banditry, arms trafficking, human trafficking, drug trafficking, smuggling and other transnational crimes. This paper examined strategies for strengthening border security between Nigeria and its neighbouring countries. The discussion focused on ten major strategies: strengthening joint border patrols and bilateral security operations; improving intelligence sharing and border technology; developing integrated border-management systems; strengthening border communities and cross-border cooperation; accelerating border delimitation and demarcation; improving the capacity and training of border personnel; promoting socioeconomic development in border communities; strengthening multilateral security mechanisms through ECOWAS and the African Union; controlling small arms and light weapons; and establishing joint cross-border task forces against transnational crime. The paper argues that effective border security requires more than the deployment of military and security personnel. It requires integrated border governance, intelligence cooperation, technological innovation, community participation, economic development and sustained collaboration among Nigeria and neighbouring states. The paper concludes that a coordinated and development-oriented border-security framework would strengthen Nigeria's capacity to prevent transnational threats while facilitating legitimate movement of people and goods. It recommends stronger bilateral and multilateral security arrangements, improved border infrastructure, intelligence-sharing mechanisms, community-based security initiatives and sustained socioeconomic investment in border communities.*

**Keywords:** Border Security, Neighbouring Countries, Transnational Crime, Border Management, Intelligence Sharing.

### Introduction

Border security constitutes an important component of national security and international cooperation. In contemporary societies, national borders perform multiple functions: they protect the territorial integrity of states, regulate the movement of persons and goods, facilitate international trade and provide mechanisms for controlling security threats. However, the increasing sophistication of transnational criminal networks has made border security more complex. Terrorist organisations, human traffickers, drug traffickers, arms dealers, smugglers and other criminal groups can exploit weak border controls and differences in the security systems of



neighbouring countries. Consequently, effective border security requires cooperation that extends beyond the territorial jurisdiction of individual states.

Nigeria occupies a strategically important position in West and Central Africa. It shares international boundaries with Benin Republic to the west, Niger Republic to the north, Chad to the northeast and Cameroon to the east. These borders support substantial economic, social and cultural interactions. At the same time, the country's border regions have experienced security challenges associated with terrorism, banditry, arms trafficking, trafficking in persons, smuggling and other forms of transnational crime. The situation makes effective border governance particularly important for Nigeria. The African Union Commission (AUC, 2020) recognizes border governance as an important instrument for peace, security, stability, development and continental integration. The African Union's approach emphasizes that borders should not be viewed solely as barriers but as areas where states can cooperate to promote security and legitimate socioeconomic activities. Effective border management therefore requires a balance between security controls and the facilitation of legitimate movement.

The United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT, n.d.) similarly identifies border security and management as important instruments for preventing the movement of terrorists, foreign terrorist fighters, weapons and other illicit materials across international boundaries. This demonstrates that border security has implications beyond immigration control because it directly affects counter-terrorism and the prevention of transnational crime. Nigeria's security challenges also demonstrate the importance of cooperation with neighbouring countries. Security threats do not necessarily terminate at international boundaries. A criminal group operating in one country may obtain weapons from another country, recruit individuals across borders or use neighbouring territories as routes for escape. Consequently, a security strategy limited to Nigeria's territory may be insufficient to address threats that have regional dimensions.

One major strategy for addressing these challenges is the strengthening of joint border patrols and bilateral security operations. Nigeria should deepen operational cooperation with Benin Republic, Niger Republic, Chad and Cameroon. Joint patrols can improve surveillance, facilitate rapid responses to security incidents and prevent criminals from exploiting jurisdictional gaps. Bilateral security cooperation should also include joint training, coordinated operations and communication mechanisms among relevant security agencies. The second strategy is improved intelligence sharing and the deployment of appropriate border technologies. Effective border security depends heavily on timely and accurate information. Nigeria and neighbouring countries should strengthen information exchange among immigration, customs, police, military and intelligence agencies. Technologies such as biometric systems, surveillance cameras, drones, communication networks and digital databases can enhance the capacity of security agencies to identify suspicious movements and respond to threats. The United Nations and UNODC have emphasized the importance of intelligence-led approaches and inter-agency cooperation in effective border management (UNOCT, n.d.; UNODC, n.d.).

A third strategy is the development of integrated border-management systems. Fragmentation among border agencies can create operational gaps and unnecessary duplication. Nigeria should



strengthen coordination among the Nigeria Immigration Service, Nigeria Customs Service, police, armed forces and intelligence agencies. Joint border posts and coordinated inspection arrangements can enhance security while reducing unnecessary delays for legitimate travellers and traders. The African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC, 2021) has promoted integrated border governance and cross-border mechanisms such as One-Stop Border Posts. Another important strategy is community participation in border security. Border communities are often the first to observe unusual movements and activities. Traditional rulers, traders, transport operators, farmers, youth organisations and other community stakeholders can provide valuable information to security agencies. The African Union's border-governance framework emphasizes borderland development and community engagement as important elements of effective border management (AUC, 2020). Consequently, Nigeria should develop trusted community-based reporting mechanisms and ensure that border residents are treated as partners rather than merely subjects of security operations.

Border delimitation and demarcation also deserve greater attention. Clearly defined and properly marked international boundaries can assist security agencies in determining areas of responsibility and conducting effective patrols. Nigeria should work with neighbouring states to maintain boundary markers and address outstanding boundary issues through peaceful diplomatic mechanisms. Modern geographic information systems, satellite imagery and other geospatial technologies can support accurate boundary monitoring. The capacity building of border-security personnel is another critical requirement. Border officials need continuous training in document verification, intelligence gathering, surveillance, counter-terrorism, human trafficking detection, customs procedures and human-rights standards. Joint training involving personnel from neighbouring countries can improve interoperability and develop mutual understanding among security agencies.

Border security should also be linked with socioeconomic development. Poor infrastructure, unemployment and limited economic opportunities in border communities can increase vulnerability to criminal recruitment and illicit economic activities. Investment in roads, schools, healthcare, electricity, communication infrastructure, markets and legitimate employment can strengthen community resilience. The African Union (AUC, 2020) recognizes borderland development as an important component of integrated border governance. Nigeria should strengthen multilateral border-security mechanisms through ECOWAS and the African Union. Transnational crimes require regional responses because criminals can exploit jurisdictional differences between neighbouring countries. Regional institutions can facilitate intelligence exchange, joint operations, standard-setting, training and peaceful resolution of border disputes. Nigeria, as a major regional state, has an important role to play in promoting stronger regional security cooperation.

The control of small arms and light weapons is another essential strategy. Illicit firearms can facilitate terrorism, banditry, kidnapping, communal violence and other forms of organised crime. Nigeria should improve weapons detection at border crossings, strengthen firearms tracing systems and cooperate with neighbouring states to identify and dismantle arms-trafficking networks. Regional intelligence and law-enforcement cooperation is particularly important because arms



trafficking networks frequently operate across several countries. Nigeria should establish and strengthen joint cross-border task forces against transnational crime. Such task forces should bring together police, military, immigration, customs and intelligence personnel from participating countries. Their activities could target human trafficking, drug trafficking, arms trafficking, smuggling, terrorism and other forms of organised crime. Cross-border task forces would reduce the ability of criminals to exploit jurisdictional boundaries by escaping from one country into another. Based on the background, the study seeks to discuss the strategies to curtail the inter-state crimes in Nigeria.

## **Conceptual Terms**

### **Concept of Border Security**

Border security can be defined as the measures employed by a state to prevent terrorists, criminals, illicit goods, weapons and other security threats from crossing its land, air and maritime boundaries illegally. The United Nations identifies effective border security and management as essential for preventing the movement of terrorists, foreign terrorist fighters, arms, ammunition and illicit cargo across international borders (United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism [UNOCT], n.d.). Border security is the coordinated management of national borders by different government agencies to identify and control security risks while facilitating legitimate movement of people and goods. This involves cooperation among immigration, customs, police, military and other relevant institutions. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) emphasizes inter-agency cooperation and intelligence-led risk assessment as important elements of effective border management (UNODC, n.d.).

Border security refers to the governance and protection of national boundaries in ways that prevent conflict, reduce transnational threats and promote peace and stability between neighbouring countries. The African Union Commission (AUC, 2020) presents border governance as an instrument for promoting peace, security and stability while facilitating cooperation and integration among African states. Border security can be viewed as the systems, personnel, policies, technologies and cooperative arrangements used to detect, prevent and disrupt transnational criminal activities such as human trafficking, drug trafficking, arms trafficking and smuggling. The United Nations notes that effective border controls and international cooperation are necessary to disrupt the activities of terrorist and organized criminal networks (United Nations, n.d.). Border security is the collective effort by neighbouring countries to secure their common boundaries through intelligence sharing, joint operations, coordinated border management, peaceful resolution of disputes and cross-border cooperation. The African Union Convention on Cross-Border Cooperation defines cross-border cooperation broadly as policies and actions aimed at strengthening good-neighbourly relations between populations, territorial authorities and administrations across national boundaries (African Union, 2014). For the purpose of studies on Nigeria and its neighbouring countries, border security may be operationally defined as the coordinated activities of Nigeria and neighbouring states to monitor, control and protect their common borders against terrorism, banditry, arms trafficking, human trafficking, smuggling and other transnational threats while allowing legitimate movement of persons and goods.



## **Importance of Border Security**

### **Prevention of terrorism and violent extremism**

Effective border security helps prevent terrorist groups, fighters, weapons and other resources from moving across national boundaries. This is particularly important for Nigeria because terrorist and other armed groups can exploit remote and poorly controlled border areas. The United Nations identifies effective border security and management as a key component of preventing the cross-border movement of terrorists and foreign terrorist fighters (UNOCT, n.d.).

### **Control of arms and ammunition trafficking**

Strong border controls help governments detect and prevent the illegal movement of firearms, ammunition and other weapons. This is important because illicit weapons can increase the capacity of terrorist, bandit and criminal groups to conduct attacks. The United Nations specifically identifies the control of illicit cross-border movement of arms and ammunition as an important component of border security (UNOCT, n.d.).

### **Reduction of transnational organised crime**

Border security helps combat crimes that operate across national boundaries, including human trafficking, migrant smuggling, drug trafficking and illicit trade. UNODC's border-control programmes emphasize intelligence-led risk assessment and cooperation among customs, police and other border authorities to intercept illicit commodities and high-risk persons (UNODC, n.d.).

### **Promotion of peace and regional stability**

Effective border security can contribute to peace and stability by reducing cross-border threats and encouraging cooperation between neighbouring countries. The African Union Strategy for Better Integrated Border Governance explicitly seeks to use borders as instruments for peace, security and stability and to strengthen cooperation between neighbouring states (AUC, 2020).

### **Facilitation of legitimate trade and movement**

Border security does not mean stopping all movement across national boundaries. Properly managed borders distinguish between legitimate and illicit movement, thereby allowing lawful travellers, traders and goods to cross efficiently. The African Union encourages integrated border management and One-Stop Border Posts to facilitate the movement of people, goods and services while strengthening border governance (African Union Peace and Security Council [AUPSC], 2021).

### **Strengthening regional cooperation and integration**

Border security encourages Nigeria and neighbouring countries to share intelligence, conduct joint operations, resolve border disputes peacefully and coordinate security policies. The African Union Border Programme emphasizes coordination among member states and regional organisations and regards cross-border cooperation as important for continental integration and development (AUC, 2020).



## **Result and Recommendations on Strategies to Improve Border Security Between Nigeria and Neighbouring Countries**

Border security is an important component of national security, regional stability, economic development and the prevention of transnational crimes. Nigeria shares land borders with Benin Republic, Niger, Chad and Cameroon, making cooperation with neighbouring countries essential for addressing terrorism, banditry, human trafficking, arms smuggling, drug trafficking and other forms of transnational crime. The African Union (AU) has emphasized that effective border governance requires cooperation among neighbouring states, regional economic communities and national security institutions (African Union Commission [AUC], 2020). The following strategies can improve border security between Nigeria and its neighbouring countries.

### **Strengthening Joint Border Patrols and Bilateral Security Operations**

One major strategy for improving border security is the establishment and strengthening of joint patrols involving security agencies from Nigeria and neighbouring countries. Criminal groups often exploit poorly monitored border areas by moving personnel, weapons, stolen goods and other illicit commodities from one country to another. Therefore, unilateral border patrols may be inadequate because criminals can cross into another jurisdiction when pursued. Nigeria should strengthen coordinated patrols with Benin Republic, Niger, Chad and Cameroon, particularly in areas identified as vulnerable to terrorism, banditry, trafficking and smuggling. Joint patrols should involve the military, police, immigration, customs and other relevant border-security agencies. Such operations should be supported by common patrol schedules, joint training, coordinated command arrangements and mechanisms for rapid communication. The importance of bilateral security cooperation is demonstrated by the 2026 Nigeria–Cameroon defence cooperation agreement, which provides a framework for strengthening intelligence sharing, military training, joint operations and efforts against terrorism and transnational crime along their shared border (Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation [FMINO], 2026). Similarly, Nigeria and Benin Republic have recently emphasized intelligence sharing, coordinated operations and joint responses to cross-border threats (Voice of Nigeria, 2026). These developments demonstrate that cooperative security arrangements can provide a stronger response to threats that operate across national boundaries. The African Union Commission (2020) also recommends greater coordination and cooperation in border governance because African borders can become vulnerable to crime and insecurity when neighbouring countries operate independently. Consequently, Nigeria should expand bilateral and multilateral joint patrols and ensure that they are sustained rather than activated only during security emergencies.

### **Improving Intelligence Sharing and the Use of Integrated Border Technology**

Another important strategy is the development of an integrated intelligence-sharing system among Nigeria and neighbouring countries. Effective border security depends not only on the physical presence of security personnel but also on the ability of governments to obtain, analyse and exchange timely information about potential threats. Nigeria and its neighbours should establish secure platforms through which immigration, customs, police, military and intelligence agencies can exchange information on suspected terrorists, traffickers, arms dealers, stolen vehicles, forged travel documents and other cross-border criminal activities. Border agencies should also make greater use of biometric identification, digital passenger records, surveillance cameras, drones,



communication systems and other appropriate technologies. The AU migration policy framework stresses the importance of data and information sharing among authorities responsible for integrated border management and recommends harmonising systems so that relevant information can be collected, analysed, stored and shared across states (African Union, 2018). Similarly, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2026) identified weaknesses in border management capacity as a factor that can facilitate transnational criminal activities and has supported the training of Nigerian border-control officers to strengthen border management. Intelligence sharing should therefore extend beyond occasional meetings between senior officials. Nigeria and neighbouring states should establish permanent cross-border intelligence liaison mechanisms, rapid-alert systems and clearly defined procedures for transmitting information about emerging threats. Such arrangements would enable security agencies to identify threats earlier and respond before criminals exploit border gaps.

### **Developing Integrated and Coordinated Border Management Systems**

Nigeria should adopt a more integrated approach in which customs, immigration, police, military, intelligence and other relevant agencies cooperate rather than operate in isolation. Fragmentation among border agencies can create communication gaps, duplication of responsibilities and delays in responding to security threats. Integrated border management should include joint border posts, coordinated inspections, common operating procedures and shared communication channels. The One-Stop Border Post model is particularly relevant because it allows officials from neighbouring countries to coordinate border-control procedures and reduce unnecessary duplication. The African Union Peace and Security Council has encouraged member states to implement cross-border cooperation programmes, including One-Stop Border Posts, as part of improved border governance (African Union Peace and Security Council, 2021). The Seme-Krake border between Nigeria and Benin provides an important example. In 2025, ECOWAS and Benin officials reviewed operational challenges affecting the Joint Border Post at Seme-Krake and considered measures to improve its effectiveness (Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS], 2025). Strengthening such integrated arrangements can simultaneously improve security and facilitate legitimate movement of people and goods. Integrated border management should therefore not focus exclusively on restricting movement. It should distinguish between legitimate travellers and criminal activities. Properly designed systems can make legitimate cross-border trade easier while making illegal movement more difficult. This approach is consistent with the AU Strategy for a Better Integrated Border Governance, which views borders as instruments for peace, security, stability and regional integration (AUC, 2020).

### **Strengthening Border Communities and Cross-Border Cooperation**

Border security should also involve communities living along Nigeria's international borders. Border communities frequently possess valuable information about unusual movements, trafficking networks, criminal activities and changes in local security conditions. However, communities may be reluctant to provide information when they distrust security agencies or when border residents feel excluded from government programmes. Nigeria should therefore develop community-based border-security programmes involving traditional rulers, community leaders, youth groups, transport operators, traders, farmers and other legitimate stakeholders. Security agencies should establish trusted channels through which residents can report suspicious activities



without exposing themselves to unnecessary risks. Community sensitisation programmes should also educate border residents about the dangers of terrorism, trafficking, arms smuggling and other transnational crimes. Cross-border community cooperation is equally important because many communities share ethnic, cultural, linguistic and economic relationships across national boundaries. Consequently, border security cannot be achieved entirely through military or police measures. The AU Border Programme emphasizes cross-border cooperation and borderland development as important components of peace, security and stability (African Union, 2020). The AU has also encouraged member states to pursue cooperation and peaceful mechanisms for resolving border-related problems while strengthening collaboration among states and regional organisations (African Union Peace and Security Council, 2021). Nigeria should therefore combine security measures with development initiatives in border communities. Improving roads, schools, health facilities, markets, employment opportunities and communication infrastructure can reduce the socioeconomic vulnerabilities that criminal groups may exploit. A border community that benefits from legitimate economic activities is more likely to cooperate with security agencies and resist recruitment by criminal networks.

### **Accelerating Border Delimitation and Demarcation**

Nigeria should accelerate the identification, delimitation and physical demarcation of its international boundaries with neighbouring countries. Unclear or poorly marked boundaries can create difficulties for security agencies, local communities and border authorities, particularly in remote areas where criminals can exploit gaps in surveillance. Clearly defined borders can improve patrol planning, reduce territorial misunderstandings and strengthen cooperation between neighbouring states. The African Union Border Programme identifies delimitation and demarcation as important instruments for preventing border-related conflicts and strengthening peace, security and stability. The AU has also called on member states to accelerate the delimitation and demarcation of their boundaries and develop national border-governance strategies (African Union Peace and Security Council [AUPSC], 2021). For Nigeria, this strategy should involve the National Boundary Commission, security agencies, neighbouring governments and affected border communities. Modern surveying and geospatial technologies, including satellite imagery and geographic information systems, should be employed to identify and monitor boundary locations.

### **Strengthening Capacity Building and Training of Border Security Personnel**

Another strategy is to improve the professional capacity of personnel working at Nigeria's international borders. Border security personnel require continuous training in surveillance, intelligence gathering, document verification, migration management, counter-terrorism, human trafficking detection, customs procedures and the identification of transnational criminal networks. The African Union Strategy for Better Integrated Border Governance identifies capacity development as one of the essential pillars of effective border governance. It emphasizes strengthening the capabilities of public authorities responsible for managing borders and addressing security threats (African Union Commission [AUC], 2020). Nigeria should therefore establish regular joint training programmes involving Nigerian security personnel and their counterparts from Benin Republic, Niger, Chad and Cameroon. Such training would improve interoperability and enable officers from different countries to understand each other's procedures.



Training should also include language skills and knowledge of the social, cultural and economic characteristics of border communities. Better-trained personnel would be better positioned to identify suspicious activities while protecting the rights of legitimate travellers.

### **Promoting Socioeconomic Development of Border Communities**

Border security should not depend exclusively on military and law-enforcement measures. Nigeria should also improve the socioeconomic conditions of communities located along its international borders. Poverty, unemployment, inadequate infrastructure and limited access to legitimate economic opportunities can make vulnerable populations susceptible to recruitment by criminal organisations and facilitate participation in smuggling and other illegal activities. The African Union's border-governance framework specifically recognizes borderland development and community engagement as an important pillar of effective border governance. It recommends socioeconomic development in areas such as transportation, communication, trade, agriculture, health, education, water supply and other essential services (AUC, 2020). Nigeria should therefore implement targeted development programmes in border communities. These could include improved roads, electricity, schools, health centres, markets, water supply, telecommunications and employment programmes. Legitimate cross-border trade should also be supported through properly regulated markets and simplified procedures. According to the African Union, cross-border cooperation can contribute to border security while promoting socioeconomic development and good-neighbourly relations (African Union, 2025).

### **Establishing Stronger Multilateral Border-Security Mechanisms Through ECOWAS and the African Union**

Nigeria should strengthen its use of regional institutions, particularly the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union, to address transnational security threats. Criminal networks do not necessarily respect national boundaries; therefore, security responses should also operate across national boundaries. Nigeria should advocate for regular regional security meetings, joint operations, common border-management standards, intelligence-sharing mechanisms and coordinated responses to terrorism, trafficking, arms smuggling and other transnational crimes. The African Union has emphasized the need for cooperation between member states, Regional Economic Communities and continental border-governance structures to ensure coherent border management (AUPSC, 2021). The AU Border Programme also promotes cooperation among member states and Regional Economic Communities, including the development of joint approaches to border management and cross-border cooperation (African Union, 2025). Nigeria should therefore use its strategic position within ECOWAS to promote regional border-security initiatives while maintaining bilateral arrangements with Niger, Benin Republic, Chad and Cameroon. Regional mechanisms should also support joint monitoring of border areas, coordinated responses to security emergencies and peaceful resolution of border disputes. Such cooperation would reduce the ability of criminals to exploit differences between national security systems.



### **Strengthening Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons**

Nigeria should strengthen measures to prevent the illegal movement of small arms and light weapons (SALW) across its borders. The movement of illicit firearms across poorly controlled borders can increase terrorism, banditry, kidnapping, communal violence and other forms of organised crime. Effective border security should therefore include stronger controls over firearms, ammunition and other weapons entering or leaving Nigeria. The African Union Peace and Security Council has identified illicit arms flows as a significant contributor to insecurity and has called for stronger import and export controls, improved criminal-justice responses to arms trafficking and greater regional cooperation in border management. It specifically recommends intelligence and experience sharing among member states and closer cooperation among regional police and intelligence institutions (African Union Peace and Security Council [AUPSC], 2019). Nigeria should consequently strengthen customs and immigration inspection at official border crossings, improve the tracing and registration of firearms, and establish stronger information-sharing arrangements with Benin Republic, Niger, Chad and Cameroon. Joint operations should also target known arms-trafficking routes. The African Union has further emphasized the importance of effective arms control and improved border management in combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons (African Union, 2023).

### **Establishing Joint Cross-Border Task Forces Against Transnational Crime**

Nigeria should establish and sustain joint cross-border task forces with neighbouring countries to investigate and disrupt transnational criminal networks. These task forces should bring together police, immigration, customs, military, intelligence and other relevant agencies from participating countries. Their responsibilities should include combating human trafficking, migrant smuggling, drug trafficking, arms trafficking, terrorism, vehicle theft and other forms of organised crime. There is already evidence that such an approach can work in the African context. In 2024, AFRIPOL coordinated preparations for Operation TAPI, a cross-border operation involving Nigeria, Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Togo and the Central African Republic. The operation targeted trafficking in drugs, pharmaceuticals, arms, counterfeit and smuggled goods and environmental crimes, while emphasizing intelligence sharing, joint training, secure communication and coordinated operational planning (African Union, 2024). African Union Nigeria should build on this model by developing permanent or regularly activated task forces with its immediate neighbours. Such task forces should have clearly defined responsibilities, shared intelligence platforms, joint investigation procedures and mechanisms for transferring suspects and evidence in accordance with national and international law. The AU has also stressed that cross-border cooperation and structured intelligence-sharing mechanisms are essential for combating trafficking and migrant smuggling (African Union, 2024).

### **Conclusion**

Border security is fundamental to Nigeria's national security, socioeconomic development and regional stability. Nigeria's geographical position and extensive interaction with Benin Republic, Niger Republic, Chad and Cameroon make effective border governance particularly important. Although border areas provide opportunities for legitimate trade, migration and social interaction, they can also be exploited by terrorists, traffickers, smugglers, arms dealers and other criminal networks.



The review established that effective border security requires a multidimensional approach. Joint patrols, intelligence sharing, integrated border management, community participation, boundary demarcation, personnel training, borderland development, regional cooperation, arms control and joint task forces can collectively strengthen Nigeria's capacity to address transnational threats. The African Union and United Nations frameworks support the view that border management should combine security with development, cooperation and the facilitation of legitimate movement.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the study recommends the following:

- 1) Nigeria should strengthen joint border patrols with Benin Republic, Niger Republic, Chad and Cameroon, particularly in identified vulnerable border corridors.
- 2) A permanent regional intelligence-sharing mechanism should be strengthened to enable Nigerian and neighbouring security agencies to exchange timely information on terrorists, traffickers, arms dealers and other transnational criminals.
- 3) Modern border-security technologies should be deployed, including biometric identification, surveillance systems, drones, digital databases and secure communication networks, while ensuring appropriate legal and privacy safeguards.
- 4) Integrated border-management systems should be expanded by improving coordination among immigration, customs, police, military and intelligence agencies and strengthening One-Stop Border Post arrangements where appropriate.
- 5) Border communities should be incorporated into security planning. Governments should establish trusted reporting channels and community-security partnerships involving traditional rulers, traders, transport workers, farmers and youth organisations.
- 6) Nigeria should accelerate the maintenance and demarcation of international boundaries and use modern geospatial technologies to support effective monitoring of border areas.
- 7) Regular joint training programmes should be organised for Nigerian and neighbouring-country border personnel to improve professional competence, interoperability and coordinated responses to transnational threats.
- 8) Government should increase socioeconomic investment in border communities by improving roads, schools, healthcare, electricity, communication infrastructure, markets and employment opportunities.
- 9) Nigeria should strengthen cooperation through ECOWAS and the African Union by supporting regional intelligence platforms, joint operations, common border-management standards and mechanisms for resolving border-related disputes peacefully.
- 10) Measures against illicit small arms and light weapons should be intensified, including improved detection, tracing, intelligence sharing and joint operations against arms-trafficking networks.
- 11) Joint cross-border task forces should be established or strengthened to investigate and disrupt networks involved in terrorism, human trafficking, drug trafficking, arms trafficking, smuggling and other transnational crimes. Border-security policies should balance security with legitimate movement. Excessive restrictions that unnecessarily disrupt lawful trade and migration should be avoided, while risk-based controls should be used to focus resources on high-risk activities and individuals.



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