

# Blood-And-Thunder Approach to Sustaining Institutional Democracy: A Global Imperative

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**Abstract:** Globally, the most preferred system of governance is democracy. In recent years, the populace of many countries has been hypnotized and deluded by unpatriotic political office seekers who clandestinely portray the tenets of democracy while vying for supports and votes of the electorates but betray such public trust repose on them upon assuming offices. The gradual erosion of democratic principles in countries presumed to have institutionalized democracy calls for blood-and-thunder approach towards resuscitating and sustaining the system in order to revive public confidence and participation. The spiral of distrust, and weighty allegations of electoral irregularities that trailed the United States of America's presidential election of 2020; the overthrow of Mali's democratically elected president and recurrence of coup within Nine months in Mali; the mysterious murder and assassination of the presidents of Chad Republic and Haiti respectively; the call for resignation and impeachment hovering the Nigerian president sequel to his leadership style of sectarianism, poor economic drive and general deterioration of human and national security are all indicatives of ebbing democracy. Utilizing hermeneutical and analytical methods, this paper argued that democracy is at its lowest ebb across the world and such precarious situation has apparently foist on the citizenry to believe that institutional democracy is mythical. The paper examines the underlining challenges to institutional democracy with particular focus on United States of America and Nigeria and posits in conclusion that a more purposeful and pragmatic approach is expedient in order to bridge the trust gap between the government and the governed.

**Key words:** Democracy, Governance, Inclusivity, Public trust.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Generally, democracy straddles every facet of human existence – political, social, economic, religious, educational, and even family life. However, in recent years, questions have been raised as to the suitability of the system to address the apparently failing state of democratic governance and existing structural inequalities<sup>1</sup> which has unseated the institution globally. The embrace of civil rule by many countries under the contemporary nomenclatural democracy has thrown up “a real theoretical puzzle”<sup>2</sup> why governments are inclined to establishing an effective independent international authority to the detriment of

domestic sovereignty and democratization.<sup>3</sup> The tenets of democratic mandates are freedom, inclusivity, public confidence, trust and participation. Over the years however, the trust and confidence repose on governments in a democratic platform have been marred by sectarianism, lopsided polity and general administrative ineffectiveness which engenders apathy and poor participation in the system<sup>4</sup>. United States of America (US) has demonstrated on many occasions as an oracle of modern governance and folklore of institutional democracy in terms of her track record of sustainable peaceful elections and policy of inclusiveness at various strata of the country's administrative formations.<sup>5</sup> The US attitude towards ‘global leadership; defense and promotion of the liberal international order; defense and promotion of freedom, democracy and human rights were always esteemed and reckoned with.<sup>6</sup> However, US presidential elections recently have been particularly greeted with unusual forces—local and external<sup>7</sup> and unhealthy criticisms<sup>8</sup> sequel to underlining deficiency in the delivery of democratic dividends by preceding administrations.

Nigeria on the other hand in her unwavering commitment to institutionalizing democracy has always had serious backlashes of criticism and resentments in all her successive administrations since 1999. In an overview of democracy generally and with particular reference to Nigeria, Nwogu<sup>9</sup> decried thus:

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*

<sup>4</sup> Margaret Folu Oluwagbohunmi, ‘Political Apathy: A Worrisome Impediment to Electoral Process in Nigeria’ (2020) 10(4) *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*, 61

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Role in the World: Background and Issues for Congress, *Congressional Research Service*, CRS Report Prepared for Members of the Congress, Updated January, 2021

<[https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwjs18uzoo\\_zAhXT8OAKHYaRDksQFnoEC\\_AIQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Ffas.org%2Fsgp%2Fcrs%2Frow%2FR44891.pdf&usg=AOvVaw3eLTwDBxzfAOtLm7CuRaBV](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwjs18uzoo_zAhXT8OAKHYaRDksQFnoEC_AIQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Ffas.org%2Fsgp%2Fcrs%2Frow%2FR44891.pdf&usg=AOvVaw3eLTwDBxzfAOtLm7CuRaBV)> accessed 18 August, 2021

<sup>6</sup> *ibid*

<sup>7</sup> Nigel Walker, ‘United States of America: 2020 presidential election’ Briefing Paper, (House of Commons Library, 19 January 2021) <<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9115/>> accessed 20 July 2022. The author lamented that ‘During his four-year presidency, Trump has been a polarising figure and his handling of the Covid-19 pandemic has come under criticism. Trump is the only president to have been impeached twice’

<sup>8</sup> *ibid*

<sup>9</sup> Nwogu, G.A.I, ‘Democracy: Its Meaning and Dissenting Opinions of the Political Class in Nigeria: A Philosophical Approach’ (2015) (6) (4), *Journal*

<sup>1</sup> Barten René Perez Montiel, Eduardo Espinoza and Carlos Morales, ‘Democratic governance—fairytale or real perspective? Lessons from Central America’ (2002) 14 (1), *Environment & Urbanization*, 129

<sup>2</sup> Andrew Moravcsik, ‘The Origins of Human Rights Regimes: Democratic Delegation in Postwar Europe’ (2000) (54) (2), *International Organization*, 217

The nascent democracy in Nigeria is plagued with myriad of intrigues, discordant opinions of the political class. The reason is not farfetched. Every political party sees its manifesto and plans of action as the best for the citizenry. They elbow each other in the process of garnering political recognition and vibrancy. Their unhealthy rivalry only heat up the polity. How be it some Nigerians see these political dissent as a necessary tool to a sound democratic process. They argue that dissenting voices amongst the political class are necessary since a democratic process would never be devoid of antagonism and democracy would never thrive on rational consensus.<sup>10</sup>

The observations that “some Nigerians see...political dissent as a necessary tool to a sound democratic process”<sup>11</sup> seems an acquiescing statement in the face of apparent deep rooted distortion of the very fabric of societal existence in the guise of “democracy would never thrive on rational consensus.”<sup>12</sup> The bloody nature of politicking and electioneering processes in Nigeria and other countries within African sub-region are beyond healthy oppositions expected in a democratic setting.

Adoption of democracy as one of the viable system of governance started gaining tractions since 20<sup>th</sup> century. It was hoped that an ideology conceived and practiced for over a centenary should have been firmly entrenched in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, instilled in the core fabric of all human values, and social existence. However, corruption and awful desire of the political class to perpetuate themselves in offices have hitherto fraught the quest to institutionalize democracy with varying degree of crisis at all levels in the present society. Efforts to minimize disenfranchisement and marginalization have given credence to representative democracy.<sup>13</sup> Be that as it may, the limitation and indirect nature of representative form of democracy has equally been expressed in the sense that popular participation in government is infrequent and brief by the people voting every few years, thereby delegating public powers to the elected few individuals who will exercise and rule on their behalf. This form of representation is only democratic where it establishes a reliable and effective link between the government and the governed.<sup>14</sup> This expected “link” and trust cord are lacking in Nigeria in view of the obvious sentimental disparity between the administration of

President Muhammadu Buhari and the previous governments that has awfully deepened the North-South dichotomy in recent years. This paper therefore attempts to proffer possible ways to bridge the trust gap and reestablish the connection links between the elected the electorates with the view to allaying the already heated polity.

### *Statement of the Problem*

In recent years, democracy as a way of life of a people aims at fostering equality, justice, inclusivity, fairness, and accountability in governance has been plagued with overwhelming distrust, corruption, political high-handedness, and marginalization across the world. The challenges bedeviling the system cannot be taken with levity, neither with it disappear as a matter of course. It therefore becomes a global imperative to adopt blood-and-thunder approach towards reviving the system, institutionalizing and making it more efficient to meet the yearnings, aspirations, and expectations of the twenty-first century world populace.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

There is virtually no aspect of human existence that democracy and the application of its tenets are not required. Discussing the relevance of democracy in health development in Central America, Françoise Barten, René Perez Montiel, Eduardo Espinoza and Carlos Morales<sup>15</sup> posit that the health sector has developed over time by democratization of the system, particularly through “local participatory governance” while stressing the need to address the incoherence in global reform policies in the sector.<sup>16</sup> Democracy and development agenda have always worked hand in hand. This is the view expressed in the discussion paper on democracy and development: the Role of the UN.<sup>17</sup> To this end, it was further stated that the “(k)ey to ensuring better development outcomes, which democracy can provide, is an enabling environment in which even the poorest and most marginalized can have a voice and help to shape the development agenda.”<sup>18</sup>

Similarly, in a brief history of democracy with a working definition, the characteristics and features of democracy, types of democracy, and principles of contemporary democratic rule were examined in a streamlined project work in which examples of democratic institutions and actors were x-rayed.<sup>19</sup>

of Education and Practice, pp. 131 – 142 also available at: <[www.iiste.org](http://www.iiste.org)> accessed 3 July, 2021

<sup>10</sup> *ibid*

<sup>11</sup> *ibid*

<sup>12</sup> *ibid*

<sup>13</sup> Concepts and Principles of Democratic Governance and Accountability: A guide for Peer Educators, (2011), *Action for Strengthening Good Governance and Accountability in Uganda*, Uganda Office of the Konrad- Adenauer-Stiftung, 4,

<[https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwj4j6GapMXxAhUMjRQKHVMVANwQFjAGegQICBAD&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.kas.de%2Fwf%2Fdoc%2Fkas\\_29779-1522-2-30.pdf%3F11121919022&usg=AOvVaw0tYTsdpalPotgf9EPqqe3](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwj4j6GapMXxAhUMjRQKHVMVANwQFjAGegQICBAD&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.kas.de%2Fwf%2Fdoc%2Fkas_29779-1522-2-30.pdf%3F11121919022&usg=AOvVaw0tYTsdpalPotgf9EPqqe3)>

accessed on 3 July 2021

<sup>14</sup> *ibid*

<sup>15</sup> Françoise Barten, and others (n. 1)

<sup>16</sup> *ibid*

<sup>17</sup> Massimo Tommasoli (ed) *Democracy and Development: the Role of UN (United nation-international Idea, 2013)* <<https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwiAkeTTsLHyAhVFqxoKHWY4AFOQFnoECAlQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.idea.int%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fpublications%2Fdemocracy-and-development-the-role-of-the-united-nations.pdf&usg=AOvVaw0Nzlj4L6H8AM6TkDP5Ltaq>> accessed 5 July, 2021

<sup>18</sup> *ibid*

<sup>19</sup> Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, ‘Concepts and Principles of Democratic Governance and Accountability’ (2011), *Action for Strengthening Good Governance and Accountability in Uganda*, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Uganda Office

The report further attempted to explain that for democracy to succeed it has to be valued and thus be part of a given people's culture, delineating their roles and responsibilities in the system.<sup>20</sup> In his "Democracy and Political Apathy in Nigeria (1999-2011)" Yusufu Abdullahi Yakubu<sup>21</sup> observed the various ways in which political apathy manifested itself in Nigeria which includes "the decline to register; the refusal to vote; failure to protest against rigging; and failure to assist the security agents with useful information." According to the author, these attitudes are sequel to the history of bad governance being experienced over the years in the country, while recommending good governance as a solution to political apathy in Nigeria's democracy<sup>22</sup>

Even in revolution, democracy had been advocated as a viable means of changing a government with humanitarian consciousness.<sup>23</sup> In their erudite, comprehensive, and encompassing analysis, Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt<sup>24</sup> historically and eloquently presented the extent to which democracy is under threat of total collapse in many countries of the world, including US, Nigeria, Hungary, Turkey, Poland among others which this writer equally found overwhelmingly resourceful and reproduced thus:

American politicians now treat their rivals as enemies, intimidate the free press, and threaten to reject the results of elections. They try to weaken the institutional buffers of our democracy, including the courts, the intelligence services, and ethics offices. America may not be alone. Scholars are increasingly concerned that democracy may be under threat worldwide—even in places where its existence has long been taken for granted. Populist governments have assaulted democratic institutions in Hungary, Turkey, and Poland. Extremist forces have made dramatic electoral gains in Austria, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and elsewhere in Europe. And in the United States, for the first time in history, a man with no experience in public office, little observable commitment to constitutional rights, and clear authoritarian tendencies was elected president. What does all of this mean? Are we living through the decline and fall of one of the world's oldest and most successful democracies? At midday on September 11, 1973, after months of mounting tensions in the streets of Santiago, Chile, British-made Hawker Hunter jets swooped overhead, dropping bombs on La Moneda, the neoclassical presidential palace in the center of the city. As the bombs continued to fall, La Moneda burned. President Salvador Allende, elected three years earlier at the head of a leftist coalition, was barricaded inside. During his term, Chile had been wracked by social unrest, economic crisis, and political paralysis. Allende

had said he would not leave his post until he had finished his job—but now the moment of truth had arrived. Under the command of General Augusto Pinochet, Chile's armed forces were seizing control of the country. Early in the morning on that fateful day, Allende offered defiant words on a national radio broadcast, hoping that his many supporters would take to the streets in defense of democracy. But the resistance never materialized. The military police who guarded the palace had abandoned him; his broadcast was met with silence. Within hours, President Allende was dead. So, too, was Chilean democracy. This is how we tend to think of democracies dying: at the hands of men with guns. During the Cold War, coups d'état accounted for nearly three out of every four democratic breakdowns. Democracies in Argentina, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Thailand, Turkey, and Uruguay all died this way. More recently, military coups toppled Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi in 2013 and Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra in 2014. In all these cases, democracy dissolved in spectacular fashion, through military power and coercion. But there is another way to break a democracy. It is less dramatic but equally destructive. Democracies may die at the hands not of generals but of elected leaders—presidents or prime ministers who subvert the very process that brought them to power. Some of these leaders dismantle democracy quickly, as Hitler did in the wake of the 1933 Reichstag fire in Germany. More often, though, democracies erode slowly, in barely visible steps. In Venezuela, for example, Hugo Chavez was a political outsider who railed against what he cast as a corrupt governing elite, promising to build a more "authentic" democracy that used the country's vast oil wealth to improve the lives of the - poor. Skillfully tapping into the anger of ordinary Venezuelans, many of whom felt ignored or mistreated by the established political parties, Chavez was elected president in 1998. As a woman in Chavez's home state of Barinas put it on election night, "Democracy is infected. And Chávez is the only antibiotic we have." When Chávez launched his promised revolution, he did so democratically. In 1999, he held free elections for a new constituent assembly, in which his allies won an overwhelming majority. This allowed the *chavistas* to single-handedly write a new constitution.<sup>25</sup>

In Nigeria for instance, the call for complete jettison of the 1999 constitution and drafting of an all inclusive and peoples' oriented constitution has been sound loud enough.<sup>26</sup> This quest gave rise to the 2014 confab organized by the former

<sup>20</sup> *ibid*

<sup>21</sup> Yusufu Abdullahi Yakubu, 'Democracy and Political Apathy in Nigeria (1999-2011)' (2012) 8(20) *European Scientific Journal*, 38

<sup>22</sup> *ibid*

<sup>23</sup> Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt, 'How Democracies Dies' (Crown Publishing Group 2018)

<sup>24</sup> *ibid*

<sup>25</sup> *ibid*

<sup>26</sup> Maxwell Justice, 'Constitutionalities & Unconstitutionality, the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in View (2017) <[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/315729827\\_Constitutionalities\\_Unconstitutionality\\_The\\_1999\\_Constitution\\_of\\_the\\_Federal\\_Republic\\_of\\_Nigeria\\_in\\_View](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/315729827_Constitutionalities_Unconstitutionality_The_1999_Constitution_of_the_Federal_Republic_of_Nigeria_in_View)> accessed 18 September, 2021

president of Nigeria, Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan.<sup>27</sup> However, the wealth of resources – materially, intellectually and financially, expended in the confab with the attendant nationwide representation,<sup>28</sup> have all gone down the drain as the subsequent government has no regard for the outcome of the confab or have any plan to utilize it. Advocate of Human Rights have also emphasized the indispensableness of democracy in the enjoyment of the inalienable rights of citizens across the world.<sup>29</sup> The fulfillment of all human rights, whether civil, political, social, cultural and economic, requires democratic processes and institutions that are inclusive and responsive, and which protect the rights of minorities, provide separation of powers and ensure public accountability.<sup>30</sup> This fact cannot be overemphasized in the face of dwindling democratic principles worldwide amid the quest to salvage the system.

### *The Concept of Democracy and Origin*

In the words of Bernard Crick,<sup>31</sup> “democracy is perhaps the most promiscuous word in the world of public affairs.” On the origin, the author posited that democracy is traceable to the ancient Greeks and specifically the city-state of Athens in the fifth century B.C. The word democracy is derived from the Greek words “*demos*”, meaning people, and “*Kratos*” meaning power or rule which is translated directly as “rule by the people” referring in Greeks to the poor or the masses.<sup>32</sup> The term democracy has never been associated with political party, economic power or majority votes in its original context. Definitions or descriptions of democratic principles have always been ascribed to the power of “the people” collectively and directly involve in the governance and administrative process of the society. The embattled president of Nigeria, Muhammadu Buhari, like the former President of US, Donald Trump, in their quest to galvanize their administrations with a leadership style of “exclusivity” and “absolute independence” respectively were all waged by the provisions of the constitutions of the duo which specifically spelt out that “power belongs to the people”<sup>33</sup>

<sup>27</sup> The national Conference 2014, Final Draft of the Conference Report, August 2014 <<https://www.premiumtimesng.com/national-conference/wp-content/uploads/National-Conference-2014-Report-August-2014-Table-of-Contents-Chapters-1-7.pdf>> accessed 21 September, 2021

<sup>28</sup> *ibid*

<sup>29</sup> ‘Democratic Governance and Human Rights, *Democratic Governance Reader — A reference for UNDP practitioners*’ United Nations Development Program,

<[https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwjH8ef69JfzAhWZCmMBHUjFA-8QFnoECAyQAO&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.undp.org%2Fcontent%2Fam%2Faplaws%2Fpublication%2Fen%2Fpublications%2Fdemocratic-governance%2Foslo-governance-center%2Fdemocratic-governance-reader%2FDG\\_reader-2009.pdf&usq=AOvVaw1cmSI4s6pv7RUDChw2PH2z](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwjH8ef69JfzAhWZCmMBHUjFA-8QFnoECAyQAO&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.undp.org%2Fcontent%2Fam%2Faplaws%2Fpublication%2Fen%2Fpublications%2Fdemocratic-governance%2Foslo-governance-center%2Fdemocratic-governance-reader%2FDG_reader-2009.pdf&usq=AOvVaw1cmSI4s6pv7RUDChw2PH2z)> accesses 1 July, 2021

<sup>30</sup> *ibid*, 14

<sup>31</sup> Nwogu, G.A.I (n. 9)

<sup>32</sup> *ibid*

<sup>33</sup> Preambles to the US and Nigerian Constitutions respectively

Larry Diamond, in his lecture: “What is Democracy” cited in Nwogu<sup>34</sup>, opined that “democracy is a system of government with four key elements:

- i. A system for choosing and replacing the government through free and fair elections;
- ii. Active participation of the people, as citizens, in politics and civic life;
- iii. Protection of the human rights of all citizens; and
- iv. A rule of law in which the laws and procedures apply equally to all citizens”<sup>35</sup>

The paramount expectation of citizenry in a democratic setting has always been “the availability of opportunities for the people to control their leaders without recourse to a revolution”<sup>36</sup>. This assertion is apparently based on the divergent democratic practices in different countries, the most dominant of which are the direct democracy in which all citizens of a country are given direct and active participation in the decision making process of their countries. While the second is the representative democracy in which the whole body of all eligible citizens remain the sovereign power but political power is exercised indirectly through elected representatives.<sup>37</sup> The latter is the system adopted in Nigeria and US. However, the preambles to the US and Nigerian Constitutions respectively captured the fact that the constitution, in theory, emanated from “the people.” For the US constitution on the one hand, the preamble provides thus:

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.<sup>38</sup>

In Nigeria on the other hand, the preamble to the constitution states as follows:

We the people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria Having firmly and solemnly resolve, to live in unity and harmony as one indivisible and indissoluble sovereign nation under God, dedicated to the promotion of inter-African solidarity, world peace, international co-operation and understanding And to provide for a Constitution for the purpose of promoting the good government and welfare of all persons in our country, on the principles of freedom, equality and justice, and for the purpose of consolidating the unity of our people Do hereby make, enact and give to ourselves the following Constitution.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Nwogu, G.A.I (n. 9)

<sup>35</sup> *ibid*

<sup>36</sup> *ibid*

<sup>37</sup> *ibid*

<sup>38</sup> Preamble to the Constitution of the United State of America

<sup>39</sup> Preamble to the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended)



The realization of radical democracy advocated by Mark Bevir<sup>54</sup> can only be achieved through blood-and-thunder approach. While the citizenry garner synergy to call politicians to order, it was posited that an “increased consultation to build consensus”<sup>55</sup> is expedient “for effective political institutions.”<sup>56</sup> The extent of distrust and apathy on democratic governance being witnessed across the world in the 21<sup>st</sup> century calls for a paradigm shift from rhetoric and lip-services by political office holders to a more coherent and radical determination to revive democratic values.

### *Democracy as an Institution*

Sustainable democracy, good governance and accountability require higher levels of citizen participation, improved civic education, and promoting more awareness and appreciation of democratic principles by the leaders (and citizens) especially at the local level.<sup>57</sup> Democracy is an institution that needs a common front to be sustained. In a heterogeneous society like Nigeria, U.S. and others, a representative democracy is apt. However, the dilemma of the people has always been the mischief of the elected leaders. Every section and region of Nigeria for instance, has peculiar needs and expectation different from others in which the representative of such community at the national level is mandated to present and influence the realization of such desires. In this wise, an elected leader, especially at the National and Houses of Assembly should be more in touch with his or her nationals in terms of information gathering, congenial influence and the voice of the people. These are not the experience of Nigerians and such disconnections also constitute the current smash of U.S. polity.

A crack on democratic topnotch is synonymous with human rights abuses and subjugations. To this end, it has been posited that “(t)he fulfillment of all human rights, whether civil, political, social, cultural and economic, requires democratic processes and institutions that are inclusive and responsive, and which protect the rights of minorities, provide separation of powers and ensure public accountability.”<sup>58</sup> Democracy in the “majority rule”<sup>59</sup> sense has been criticized on the ground that such practice can legitimize the exclusion

of minorities. The emphasis therefore is on “inclusive democracy”<sup>60</sup> with quality representation through participation of all groups in democratic life, rather than focusing simply on the holding of elections and on majority rule.<sup>61</sup> While majority rule is an integral part of popular democracy, the liberal practice of it is indirect alienation of the minority in the process. Democracy as an institution therefore advocates the process in which popular opinion and majority rule are tamed in order to create room for minority participation in national policy through inclusion of the minority voice in decision making.

More often than not, where issues that is peculiar to minority group becomes subject of vote in a democratic manner, conflict of interest always influence the decision process. In Nigeria for instance, the Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB) which was passed by the National Assembly only in July, 2021 suffered a chequered history of non-acceptance to the “majority” to the detriment of the affected minority. Understanding the core of democracy as an institution for mutual benefit, sense of belonging and egalitarianism is critical to institutionalizing democracy, not only in theory but in reality. Several efforts made by Nigerians and especially the petroleum host communities towards passing the Petroleum Industry Bill in 2009, 2012 and 2018 did not succeed due to lack of synergy, conflict of interests between the National Assembly and the Executive, perceived subjugation of ministerial powers, investors’ apathy due to some monopolistic provisions in those versions of the previous bills.<sup>62</sup> As salutary as it is for a level play ground for contributions and concessions towards national development, democracy cannot be institutionalized merely by majority rule or vote where political powers and state machineries are employed for personal gains and aggrandizement of the stakeholders. The rubrics that trailed the passage of the PIB into law were backlashes on democracy in Nigeria.

In pre-colonial era in Nigeria, there was a form of consensus democracy in which traditional rulers and all adults were allowed to take part in discussions on issues affecting their communities.<sup>63</sup> Nigeria, like most other countries of the world, is a federation of ethnic groups or nationalities where politics is played out on ethnic and religious lines on virtually every national issue while ruling groups exclude others from power sharing and participation.<sup>64</sup> Analyzing this trend from security perspective, Ikelegbe<sup>65</sup> observed that ‘the existence of

<sup>54</sup> Mark Bevir, ‘Democratic Governance: Systems and Radical Perspectives’ (2006) (1) (66), *Public Administration Review*, 426-436. Available at: <<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7mg729rw>> accessed on July 5, 2021

<sup>55</sup> *ibid*

<sup>56</sup> *ibid*

<sup>57</sup> Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (n. 19)

<sup>58</sup> Democratic Governance Reader —A reference for UNDP practitioners, United Nations Development Program, (2009) <[https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rc=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKewjxytL2gPvxAhUEDmMBHTL4DOWQFjAAegQIBRAD&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.undp.org%2Fcontent%2Fdam%2Faplaws%2Fpublication%2Fen%2Fpublications%2Fdemocratic-governance%2Foslo-governance-center%2Fdemocratic-governance-reader%2FDG\\_reader-2009.pdf&usg=AOvVaw1cmSI4s6pv7RUDChw2PH2z](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rc=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKewjxytL2gPvxAhUEDmMBHTL4DOWQFjAAegQIBRAD&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.undp.org%2Fcontent%2Fdam%2Faplaws%2Fpublication%2Fen%2Fpublications%2Fdemocratic-governance%2Foslo-governance-center%2Fdemocratic-governance-reader%2FDG_reader-2009.pdf&usg=AOvVaw1cmSI4s6pv7RUDChw2PH2z)> accessed on July 15, 2021

<sup>59</sup> *ibid*

<sup>60</sup> *ibid*

<sup>61</sup> *ibid*

<sup>62</sup> Azubuike H. Amadi, Victor D. Ola, and John O. Ayoola, ‘Review Of Nigeria’s Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB)’ (2020) 5(9) *EJERS, European Journal Of Engineering Research And Science*, 1081

<sup>63</sup> Kayode B. Kareem, ‘Civil-Military Relations for Sustainable Democracy in Nigeria’ (John Archers (Publishers) Ltd 2019) 224

<sup>64</sup> *ibid*

<sup>65</sup> *ibid*, citing Ikelegbe, A ‘Insurgency, Democratic Governance and National Security in Nigeria, in Ikelegbe A., Muhammad-Wali A., and Karim A.A. (eds.), *Democratic Governance and National Security in Nigeria* (Abuja: Institute for Security Studies (ISS), 2014) 119-120

diverse fault-lines generated by the nature of governance and management of diversity has been part of the challenges of insecurity and internal security management in Nigeria.<sup>66</sup> The essence of representative democracy in view of the exponential increase in populations across the world still anchors on the fact that the aspirations, views and wellbeing of the people who vested their collective powers on their representative must constitute the centerpiece of the policies and programs of the government. However, this has not been the experience of Nigerians as their representatives apparently place personal interests far above collective benefits of the larger communities who donated their powers. This fact equally glared in the foreign relation policy of the U.S. administration under President Trump which manifested his campaign rhetoric of “America First.”<sup>67</sup> According to Schultz, “(n)early three years into the presidency of Donald Trump assessments of his imprint on US foreign policy are mixed, with some asserting that he has affected a significant break from his predecessors, while others claim more continuities.”<sup>68</sup> These are all indicative of shaky democratic institution even in U.S.

#### *Electoral Process and Governance in a Democratic Setting*

It is imperative, in the context of this discourse, to juxtapose elections and governance as inherent integral parts of democracy. It has been observed that politicking and other electioneering activities which precede actual election, both in Nigeria and U.S., applicable in other countries, are basically the same – to garner supporters, political loyalists and electoral permutations aimed at outsmarting and even overreaching one another in the process. In the U.S., like Nigeria, presidential elections take place every four years. Election campaigns last for over a year, as the parties hold caucuses and primaries to whittle down the field and choose their candidate.<sup>69</sup> The US political system is dominated by two parties – Republicans and Democrats<sup>70</sup>, while Nigeria has the People Democratic Party and All Progressive Congress respectively. In essence, the presidential race in each of the duo countries is between two major political parties. On these party lines, the countries are sharply polarized which

transcend to governance thereby creates lopsided administrative policies and programs.<sup>71</sup>

The choices of leadership made by the populace in elections worldwide usually stem from “a strong, universal desire by people for accountable, corruption free governance; for voice and participation in determining national development priorities; and for basic human rights and human dignity.”<sup>72</sup> These can be achieved not only through free and fair elections but also democratization of governance by inclusiveness, devolution of powers and people oriented policies. Linking democracy to sustainable development, the UN has been more concerned over the years about how it can more effectively engage through diplomatic or political support, democracy assistance and development aid to help engender mutually reinforcing, or “virtuous”, cycles of democracy and development.<sup>73</sup> To this end, it was posited that the UN and indeed, every stakeholder in the world politics and domestic leadership has a duty to contribute to the idea of how to use the opportunities created by transitional processes through elections to support a mutually beneficial transition to democracy in a way that also fosters development goals. This is particularly imperative with respect to fragile and conflict affected countries like Nigeria, or those highly vulnerable to conflict and/or where the state fails to deliver basic services including security and infrastructures.<sup>74</sup>

In another study, the modalities, effectiveness, and controversies of the UN’s work in promoting and assisting democracy has been questioned, while considering if the UN can help to build the foundations of democracy and whether, as an “external actor”, it can have a substantive positive impact upon the development of democratic governance inside countries.<sup>75</sup> In the same vein, the active involvement by UN in promoting democracy has been further criticized, citing the fact that the word “democracy” does not appear in the UN Charter.<sup>76</sup> It is not one of the stated purposes of the United Nations to foster democracy, to initiate the process of democratization, or to legitimize other actors’ efforts in this field. Democracy is not a precondition for UN membership; candidate members need only be “peace-loving states which accept the obligations in the present Charter and . . . are able and willing to carry out these obligations.”<sup>77</sup> In all these rubrics, the core of UN membership still lies in the extent to which member states or intending members imbibe democratic principles in governance and development. Thus,

<sup>66</sup> *ibid*

<sup>67</sup> Schultz, David, ‘American Foreign Policy in the Age of Donald Trump’ (2019) (17) *Lithuanian Annual Strategic Review*, 11 – 34, citing, Landler, Mark, “Trump, the Insurgent, Breaks With 70 Years of American Foreign Policy.” (2017) *The New York Times*, 28 December, A1; Ruiz, Juan Tovar. 2018. “La doctrina Trump en política exterior: fundamentos, repuras y continuidades.” *Revista CIDOB d’Afers Internacionals*, 120: pp. 259-283, <[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/341919950\\_American\\_Foreign\\_Policy\\_in\\_the\\_Age\\_of\\_Donald\\_Trump](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/341919950_American_Foreign_Policy_in_the_Age_of_Donald_Trump)> accessed 20 July, 2021

<sup>68</sup> *ibid*

<sup>69</sup> Nigel Walker, ‘United States of America: 2020 presidential election’ Briefing Paper, (House Of Commons Library, 19 January 2021) <<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9115/>> accessed 20 July 2021

<sup>70</sup> *ibid*

<sup>71</sup> *ibid*; Yusufu Abdullahi Yakubu (n. 21); Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt, ‘How Democracies Dies’ (Crown Publishing Group 2018)

<sup>72</sup> Massimo Tommasoli (ed) (n. 17)

<sup>73</sup> *ibid*

<sup>74</sup> *ibid*

<sup>75</sup> Roland Rich and Edward Newman, ‘Introduction: Approaching democratization policy’ in *The UN Role in promoting Democracy: Between ideals and reality*, Edward Newman and Roland Rich (eds), (United Nations University Press 2004) 4

<sup>76</sup> Michael Doyle, ‘Kant, liberal legacies and foreign affairs’ (1983) 12, *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 32

<sup>77</sup> *ibid*

it becomes more imperative that the UN, though 'external actor' has more pertinent role to play in institutionalizing democracy in member countries. This lends credence to the reasoning of UN to delegate election monitoring teams to various member countries during their elections.

In Nigeria for instance, during his pre and post-election rhetoric, President Buhari made several hope awakening promises of its ability, readiness and resilient to decapitate the insurgents in the North-East Nigeria and by extension, entrench peace across the Federation.<sup>78</sup> However, the security situation in the country since the commencement of his administration is better imagined than experienced, making Nigerians to resign to accepting the situation as part of Nigeria society.<sup>79</sup> The effectiveness of institutions and the soundness of democracy politics have been acknowledged as catalysts for development.<sup>80</sup> Democracy creates the enabling environment in which policy choices are subject to the control of the free and responsible citizens capable of holding government and state institutions accountable for their implementations.<sup>81</sup> From all indications, Nigeria is yet to set the cornerstones of democratic regime in view of the deteriorating electoral process and chaotic atmosphere in all facet of Nigerian polity, while US on the other hand is fast losing grip of her democratic stronghold, judging from the rising ugly head of insurrection as witnessed in the 2020 presidential election.

Institutionalize democracy is synonymous with development. There cannot be any meaningful development amid resentments among leaders, lopsided appointment into political offices, neglect and marginalization of some federating units of a nation. In his attempt to distil Nigerian federalism and the Federal Character Principle as well as the nexus between the two concepts to ascertain the effectiveness of the later on the former, Kayode<sup>82</sup> posited that since Nigeria got her independent in 1960, she has been faced with the challenge of closing the deep cleavages among its heterogenous peoples.<sup>83</sup> The author further eruditely stated that one of the most effective framework for governing a pluralistic society as Nigeria; the path of which Nigeria had adopted, is Federalism for effective management of her multiethnic state. As laudable as these efforts, instead of unity, cooperation and consensus, there has been apparent division, disagreement and dissension.<sup>84</sup> These are the societal ills that institutionalized democratic governance was meant to cure. The polarization of Nigeria along ethnic and

religious lines was further deepened by the difficulty in actualizing the core tenets of democracy in Nigeria in that, democracy, an ideology based on national cohesion and inclusivity cannot thrive in a hostile, distrust and self-centered atmosphere.

More precisely, Timothy Onimisi, Ku Hasnita Ku Samsu, Mohd Mahadee bin Ismail, and Murni binti Wan Mohd Nor<sup>85</sup> opined that the practice of divide and rule consolidated the deepening division and spilled into the social life of Nigerian people, with the south exposed to western education/Christianity, while the north was quarantined against the possible influence by the south, hence widening the division, marginalization and inequity became more glaring.<sup>86</sup> Citing Locke's Essay Concerning the True Original Extent of Civil Government, Waldman,<sup>87</sup> advocated:

...that the State of Nature called for people to understand that they are free over their actions and can act independently if in accordance with natural law. The second state of equality that Locke made known is the notion that no one person is above another. This fundamental belief became manifest not only in Madison's writings but in the U.S. Constitution (1787) with the words "We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness..."<sup>88</sup>

In the same vein, this writer could not agree more, that in any society where lives, liberty and equality of persons are not prioritized, democracy cannot be found, let alone institutionalized.

#### IV. DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

In every society, there are various institutions created for effective administrations, even in a military-rule situation. However, in a democracy, there are institutions employed by the people in order to entrench civil control of the organs of government and foster democratic governance. These range from executive, legislature, and judiciary as well as civil societies and the media.<sup>89</sup> Entrenching the core of democratic principles entails a coherent and all encompassing approach towards galvanizing the state powers and resources for effective and judicious use for the benefit of all. There is no

<sup>78</sup> Anthony Adoyi (n. 23)

<sup>79</sup> *ibid*

<sup>80</sup> Massimo Tommasoli (ed) (n. 17)

<sup>81</sup> *ibid*

<sup>82</sup> Kayode A. 'Federalism and Federal Character Principle in Nigeria: A Dilution' (2015) (3) (7) Review of Public Administration and Management, Department of Public Administration Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, available at <[www.arabianjbm.com/RPAM\\_index.php](http://www.arabianjbm.com/RPAM_index.php)> accessed August 20, 2021

<sup>83</sup> *ibid*

<sup>84</sup> *ibid*

<sup>85</sup> Timothy Onimisi and others, Federal Character Principles: A Conceptual Analysis (2018) 6 (2), *International Journal of Social Science and Humanities Research*, <[www.researchpublish.com](http://www.researchpublish.com)> accessed 20 August 2021

<sup>86</sup> *ibid*

<sup>87</sup> David Kenneth Waldman, 'Democratic Governance Understanding Democratic Governance and its Effect on the Educational Development Policy' (2012) conference paper 2/2013, 14 <[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/303024312\\_Understanding\\_democratic\\_governance\\_and\\_its\\_effect\\_on\\_the\\_educational\\_development\\_policy\\_for\\_girls](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/303024312_Understanding_democratic_governance_and_its_effect_on_the_educational_development_policy_for_girls)> accessed 21 August 2021

<sup>88</sup> *ibid*

<sup>89</sup> Kayode B. Kareem, 'Civil-Military Relations for Sustainable Democracy in Nigeria' (John Archers (Publishers) Ltd 2019) 224



gainsaying that the success of democracy in any country is dependent upon having strong institutions.<sup>90</sup> To this end, a careful overview of some of the salient institutions which constitute the integral parts of a democratic government is expedient.

### *The Legislature*

The Legislature, which is also referred to as the National Assembly and the Congress in Nigeria and US respectively at the federal level, in the ordinary sense of the word, the most powerful and influential arm of government in a purposeful democratic governance. The legislature is invested with formal law-making power by establishing the link between government and the people, a channel of communication that can both support government and help to uphold the regime, and force government to respond to public demands and anxieties<sup>91</sup> In a functional democracy, as representatives of the people, the legislators make laws on behalf of the citizens and the laws so enacted are 'binding because legislators execute this function on behalf of the people, meaning that the people themselves make their laws.'<sup>92</sup> Where a proposed law is presented in the parliament, debate upon and eventually passed into law after being assented to by the president, the head of the executive, such law(s) is expected to have a nationwide acceptability and compliance with its provisions since it emanates from the people. However, more often than not, rejection and deviance to the law have always being the case. This is because, either the law is sentimentally passed in a manner that engender favoritisms, marginalization, and discrimination against some sections of the country, or the provisions are tailored toward benefiting the legislature and perpetuating them in office contrary to the yearning and expectations of the people.

In Nigeria, the most controversial bill which was passed in to law in August, 2021 was the Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB).<sup>93</sup> Amid contentions, controversies and agitations over the provisions of the bill, particularly the derivative revenue allocation to the oil producing states, the law has been enacted and taken effect.<sup>94</sup> In terms of the mandates and functions of the legislature, "scrutiny and oversight"<sup>95</sup> stand out more prominently which is the power of the legislature to constrain or check government powers. According to Konrad-

Adenauer-Stiftung<sup>96</sup>, this is what makes the legislatures of various countries "scrutinizing bodies whose major function is to deliver responsible and accountable government. It is for the same reason that the concept of checks and balances is used when looking at the three arms of government, especially parliament that has to scrutinize and oversee the activities of the executive and the judiciary."<sup>97</sup> Any legislature that lacks these rudimentary functioning powers or where such capacity is whittled down by the executive cannot lead a sustainable representative government. Unfortunately, this has been the experience in Nigeria over the years and more alarming in the President Buhari's administration.<sup>98</sup>

### V. THE EXECUTIVE

The Executive branch of government is charged with the function of implementing or executing the law.<sup>99</sup> This is the core of government, as noted by Heywood, because political systems can operate without constitutions, assemblies, judiciaries and even parties, but they cannot survive without an executive branch to formulate policy and ensure that it is implemented. In the broadest sense, the executive is the branch of government responsible for the implementation of laws and policies made by the legislature. The executive branch extends from the head of government (President) to members of the enforcement agencies such as the police and the military and includes both ministers and civil servants.<sup>100</sup> Nigeria, and indeed, African sub-region as a whole is still in the era of war and conquest giving the extreme level of insecurity and apparent population supplanting going on in the northern part Nigeria. Devolution of power is an inherent integral part of democratization. Vesting the president with the control and direction of the entire security architecture and apparatus are glaringly an aberration which impugn the veracity of pragmatic democracy. Concentration of governmental powers – the armed men, in the hands the president as the head of the executive at the national level had led to militarization of electoral process, intimidation of electorates and witch-hunting of positive critics of governments.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>96</sup> *ibid*

<sup>97</sup> *ibid*

<sup>98</sup> Virtually all the foreign loan proposals which have always been approved at glance by the National Assembly were in outright flout and awful disregard to the generality of Nigerians' opinions and approval and that attitude has swelled up Nigerian International debt profile to a precipitating height in few years. Such practice is mortgaging Nigerian economy and self determination to the dictates of the so-called foreign lenders.

<sup>99</sup> Mark Bevir, 'Democratic Governance: Systems and Radical Perspectives' (2006) 1(66), *Public Administration Review*, 426 <<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7mg729rw>> accessed 17 August 2021

<sup>100</sup> *ibid*, Heywood Andrew, 'Politics' (Macmillan Press Limited, 1997), 297.

<sup>101</sup> Anthony Adoyi, 'Nigerian Criminal Jurisprudence: Proliferation of Criminal Laws Opens Pandora's Box?' (2021) (Forthcoming), NAU.JCPL <<https://journals.unizik.edu.ng/index.php/jcpl/>> For instance, the prosecutorial powers of Nigeria Police under Section 66(1) of the Nigeria Police Act, 2020 is subject to unfettered power to institute, takeover, continue or discontinue a criminal case by Attorney-General of the Federation or State under ss 174 and 211 of the CFRN, 1999 and s 106 of Administration of Criminal Justice Act, 2015

<sup>90</sup> Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (n. 19)

<sup>91</sup> *ibid*

<sup>92</sup> *ibid*

<sup>93</sup> Now Petroleum Industry Act, 2021

<sup>94</sup> *ibid*, The whole of Chapter 3 of the Act was dedicated to Host Communities Development. Particularly, Section 240(2) provides for 3% contribution to the Host Communities Development, while the host communities had wanted and emphasized on a higher percent before the law was enacted. The conclusion on 3% apparently would be on the basis of "National Interest." However, the law having been passed, it is believed that the plight and reasoning of the host communities were considered, the proof of which would be determined by the level of compliance and obedience to the law.

<sup>95</sup> Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (n. 19)

## VI. THE JUDICIARY

Another critical institution in a democratic society is the Judiciary which could be described as the pivot of democracy.<sup>102</sup> The central function of the judiciary is to adjudicate on the meaning of law, in the sense that it interpret or construct the law. This function arises because the makers of law, the legislators, though arguable, are very often lay people as concerns matters of law.<sup>103</sup> As rightly stated, in countries with written/codified constitutions, the function of the judges also involves the interpretation of the constitution itself and this allows judges to arbitrate in disputes between major institutions of government or in disputes between the state and the individual.<sup>104</sup> This presupposes that one of the cardinal features of the judiciary in liberal democratic systems is that judges are strictly independent and non-political actors. This, however, remains a very controversial and debatable issue in many countries where appointment of judges by the president, in Nigeria for instance and their involvement in political matters is concerned. To ensure the impartiality of court rulings<sup>105</sup> judges, whether appointed or elected, must have job security or tenure guaranteed by law, so that they can make decisions without concern over pressure or attack by those in positions of authority, especially the executive arm of government.<sup>106</sup>

## VII. MEDIA, CIVIL SOCIETY, AND POLITICAL PARTIES

It is now beyond debate that free and independent media is a critical component of democracy as it is the mouthpiece for reaching out to the masses. As modern societies grow in size and complexity, the arena for communication and public debate has become dominated by the media. The media includes radio, television, newspapers, magazines, books and, more recently, the internet and satellite television.<sup>107</sup> Democracy in Nigeria becomes more complex when gagging of the press is now common place.<sup>108</sup> Similarly, democracy cannot be institutionalized where the civil society organizations are not allowed to air their observations and opinion of the people for and against the government of the day. Also, the extent to which a particular government is

<sup>102</sup> U.S. Department of State, 'Democracy in Brief' (Global Publishing Solutions), 41, cited in Mark Bevir (n. 99)

<sup>103</sup> Mark Bevir, (n. 99)

<sup>104</sup> *ibid*

<sup>105</sup> U.S. Department of State, 'Democracy in Brief' (Global Publishing Solutions), 41, cited in Mark Bevir, 'Democratic Governance: Systems and Radical Perspectives' (2006) 1(66), *Public Administration Review*, 426 <<https://scholarship.org/uc/item/7mg729rw>> accessed 17 August 2021

<sup>106</sup> Mark Bevir (*ibid*). These are laudable propositions by the author. However, the bottleneck of effective implementation remains the bane of falling democracy worldwide, hence, the call for blood-and-thunder approach though protest – physically, in writings, and participation in direct democratic processes.

<sup>107</sup> *ibid*

<sup>108</sup> Akeem Ayofe Akinwale, 'Repression of Press Freedom in Nigerian Democratic Dispensations' (2010), 35 (3) *Africa Development* <<https://www.ajol.info/index.php/ad/article/view/70207>> accessed 11 September 2021

democratized is proportional to the level of internal democracy of the political party that produces such government. A political party formed ultimately for the purpose of seizing power from the subsisting government without democratic ideology cannot form or run a democratic government. The media, civil society organization and political parties are a necessary congruence for a sustainable democracy in any society.

This writer could not agree more with Mark Bevir,<sup>109</sup> who in aligning with US Department of State, advocates that:

The main ideas of system governance include: a shift from hierarchies and markets to networks and partnerships at least within the public sector, the interpenetration of state administration and civil society and of national and international domains, a change in the administrative role of the state from intervention and control to steering and coordination, a related change in state activity from laws and commands to negotiation and diplomacy, the incorporation of non-state actors into the policy process, an emphasis on local self-governance, greater levels of public involvement in decision-making, and a reliance on more reflexive and responsive modes of public policy. System governance seems to be committed to ideals of dialogue, participation, consensus, empowerment, and social inclusion.<sup>110</sup>

Speaking on Brexit, it was reported of Theresa May to have said that "we're going to make a success of it" and has called for "a Brexit that works for Britain", stressing that "Brexit means regaining national control over our laws and our borders...she expects Brexit to result in Britain being prosperous as well as fairer and more outward looking than ever before."<sup>111</sup> This was a projection of the set plans for self determination which was aired as a result of freedom of speech and a reflective of commitment to ideals of "dialogue, participation, consensus, empowerment, and social inclusion."<sup>112</sup> No system can be more democratic than when the freedom of media and civil society groups is guaranteed. This is lacking in Africa at large and in Nigeria in particular. In Nigeria, there is virtually no statement of self realization or agitation for inclusion of other federating regions in governance and participation that is not described as 'terrorism.' There can hardly be any realizable dream of institutional democracy in such quagmires.

<sup>109</sup> Mark Bevir, (n. 99).

<sup>110</sup> *ibid*, 9

<sup>111</sup> Anand Menon and others, 'A successful Brexit: Four Economic Tests' (The UK in a Changing Europe), 3 <<https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwjk08668s3yAhVnAmMBHQ0mCYQQFnoECAIQAAQ&url=http%3A%2F%2Fpic.com%2Fsystem%2Ffiles%2Fdocuments%2Fa-successful-brexit-four-economic-tests.pdf&usq=AOvVaw3mszFv8z-foZRfOxPbnsNG>> accessed 26 August, 2021

<sup>112</sup> Mark Bevir, (n. 76)

## VIII. CORRUPTION AND DEMOCRACY

Corruption is the worst destructive force in democracy. A government that is characterized by corruption cannot institutionalize democracy. Corruption is a resistant to any form of development, free and fair elections and inclusivity in governance. It was observed; with particular reference to Nigeria, that corruption is an open disease of democracy which has eaten up the “jubilations, hopes and outlooks which accompanied the re-democratization of the country since May, 1999 sequel to bad governance, characterized by weak and/or lack performance, policy failures and, above all, systemic corruption.<sup>113</sup> Succinctly stated, Ogundiya<sup>114</sup> equally posited that “Nigerians have reaped more deficits than dividends of democracy due to the systemic corruption in the country. Therefore, the impact of corruption is no longer the hidden, but open disease of democracy in Nigeria.”<sup>115</sup>

Corruption refers to any conduct or individual that is depraved, perverted, or debased morally and dishonesty with the improper use of a position of trust for personal benefit.<sup>116</sup> It was posited, rather narrowly, that the emphasis on corruption is on the giving and receipt of private benefits in exchange for favored treatment by a government official who is supposed to be deciding the matter without regard to his private interests.<sup>117</sup> However, juxtaposing corruption and democracy, Heymann,<sup>118</sup> aligning with Noonan<sup>119</sup> in the latter’s opinion stated that corruption as secretly receiving private benefits to affect a decision that is supposed to be made in the interests of others and uninfluenced by private gain is not solely a problem of governments. The author, in a further analogy, narrated that:

A buying agent for a corporation may also be corrupt by demanding kickbacks to influence his purchasing decisions. Corruption is certainly not a problem solely of democracies. Some of the worst corruption has taken place under highly undemocratic governments including the Communist governments of the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China and the authoritarian

governments of regimes such as those in Zaire and Nigeria.<sup>120</sup>

Democracy as a viable platform for development is only more effective if there were a democratic foundation to build from and in which a broad array of domestic actors and stakeholders play a substantial role in policy debate and oversight.<sup>121</sup> There is also a wall of difference between development and its sustainability. In this wise, development would be more sustainable by strengthening domestic accountability through the consolidation of democratic institutions and processes.<sup>122</sup> In turn, the political space opened up by such dialogue would provide building blocks for strengthening national, democratic decision making through multiple channels of interaction between the government, parliamentary bodies, elected leaders at sub-national levels and civil society.<sup>123</sup> Nigeria remains one of the “celebrated” underdeveloped nations of the world despite overwhelming natural and human resources because of endemic systemic corruption in all facets of the country’s economic and political landscapes over the years. The greatest monster to institutional democracy therefore is corruption which must be gun down by radical, pragmatic blood-and-thunder approach.

## IX. CONCLUSION

Institutionalizing the practice of democracy within the context of the 21<sup>st</sup> century expectations requires a holistic approach of a purposeful and inclusive leadership and accountability locally and internationally. This equally heralds internationalism nexus for a sustainable interoperability among nations; for ideological sharing, healthy partnership and ‘competition’ as well as respect for states’ sovereignty and territorial integrity. To salvage institutional democracy, it is expedient for leaders – domestic and international, to be more pragmatic in adhering to democratic principles in governance, policy formation and implementation.

<sup>113</sup> Abubakar Mohammed, Fadeyi Taofiq James and Yusuf Isah Musa, ‘Corruption And Democracy: A Reflection On The Nigerian Case’ <[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/334285724\\_Corruption\\_And\\_Democracy\\_A\\_Reflection\\_On\\_The\\_Nigerian\\_Case/Link/5e56e97d299bf1bdb83e51d9/Download](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/334285724_Corruption_And_Democracy_A_Reflection_On_The_Nigerian_Case/Link/5e56e97d299bf1bdb83e51d9/Download)> accessed 11 September, 2021

<sup>114</sup> Ogundiya, I.S. "Anti-corruption Reforms in Nigeria: Challenges and Failures" in Ogundiya, I.S; Olutayo, O.A; and Amzat, J. (eds). *A Decade of Re-Democratization in Nigeria (1999-2009)* (Ibadan, Ayayayuyu Printers 2009)

<sup>115</sup> *ibid*

<sup>116</sup> Philip B. Heymann, ‘Democracy and Corruption’, (20 Fordham Int’l L.J.323, 1996). <<http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HUL.InstRepos:12967838>> accessed 11 September 2021

<sup>117</sup> *ibid* at 325, citing: John T. Noonan, Jr., ‘Bribes’ 606-07 (1984), in which the U.S. Government used a fictitious business, Abdul Enterprises, as a cover for a sting operation wherein ABSCAM is a contraction of Abdul and scam

<sup>118</sup> Philip B. Heymann (n. 116/)

<sup>119</sup> John T. Noonan (n. 117)

<sup>120</sup> Philip B. Heymann (n. 116)

<sup>121</sup> Massimo Tommasoli (ed) (n. 17)

<sup>122</sup> *ibid*

<sup>123</sup> *ibid*