Defence Industries Corporation of Nigeria and Defence Manufacturing - Sixty Years After: An Appraisal

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ABSTRACT

The Defence Industries Corporation of Nigeria (DICON) was established in 1964 as the cornerstone of Nigeria's Defence Industrial Base to foster local defence manufacturing for self-reliance and sustainability. However, over six decades later, DICON has arguably underperformed, leaving Nigeria heavily dependent on foreign arms imports. While existing literature has examined various trajectory aspects of DICON, a long-term evaluation remains unexplored. This article addresses this gap by undertaking a 60-year appraisal of DICON from 1964 to 2024. It argues that DICON's trajectory has been characterised by alternating cycles of brief productivity - such as during the Nigerian Civil War and localis``ed prototype developments like the OBJ006 rifle and Ezugwu MRAP - followed by prolonged periods of redundancy. Adopting a mixed-methods research design, the study synthesises qualitative insights from Key Informant Interviews and Focus Group Discussions conducted in 2024 with quantitative content categorisation and descriptive statistics, supplemented by extensive secondary documentary research. The findings reveal that despite substantial investments and recurring international agreements, DICON has failed to fulfill its core mandate, as evidenced by Nigeria spending approximately ₦777.16 billion on foreign arms imports between 2020 and 2024. This underperformance is driven by systemic challenges, including chronic underfunding, obsolete machinery, frequent leadership changes, alleged sabotage by procurement beneficiaries, and historical legal constraints. To transform DICON into a viable hub for indigenous defence manufacturing, the article recommends ensuring fixed leadership tenures, prioritising local military patronage, completing the Ajaokuta Steel Complex to secure raw materials, leveraging the new DICON Act of 2023 for private-sector partnerships, and modernising Nigeria's industrial infrastructure.

Keywords: DICON, Defence Manufacturing, Nigeria, Productivity, and Redundancy.

INTRODUCTION

Shortly after independence in 1960, Nigeria's political leaders underscored the importance of technology and local manufacturing capability as the country depended on foreign supplies for bulk of its needs, including arms and ammunition. The implication was that Nigeria's defence equipment and other material requirements were sourced from other countries. Existing local industries that engaged in material production, such as Omini shoe factory and some textile factories only had capacity for the production of shoes and clothing materials (uniforms), which the military and security agencies also required (Akran & Ekpo, 2024: 126). However, the basic requirement of the military; equipment, arms and ammunition among other things, were procured from other countries with economic implications for Nigeria. This dependency highlighted the gap in Nigeria's economic development as far as local manufacturing or production capability held promises for economic development, self-reliance and sustainability. Most significant was the critical role of defence technology base as an imperative for national security and development. The absence of a defence technology base highlighted the need for the establishment of a national Defence Industrial Base (DIB), towards the development of a Military Industrial Complex (MIC), for the purpose of industrialisation, national economic development, and security.

To address this gap as it related to defence and reliance on Britain for defence equipment and material procurement, Nigeria signed the Anglo-Nigeria Defence Pact with Britain in 1962 (Agaba et.al 2018). This move was greatly criticised by Nigerian students, due to the perception that the pact was another form of

British colonial control. Public outcry led to the abrogation of the Anglo-Nigeria Defence Pact in 1962 (Akinbi, 2015). The factors leading to the abrogation of the pact underscored the need for building capacity for national development, including Nigeria's industrial drive. Be that as it may, the Defence Industries Corporation of Nigeria (DICON) was established in 1964 with the mandate to produce the arms and ammunition needed by the Armed Forces of Nigeria (AFN) and other security services (Federal Republic of Nigeria,1964). In 2024, DICON celebrated sixty years of existence; 1964-2024. The 60 years anniversary of the Corporation was supposed to showcase the journey so far including its contribution to industrial development, self-reliance in arms and ammunitions production, and capacity in other defence material and equipment production. The 60 years anniversary was marked with a research project as well as an inaugural Africa defence industries conference. This research, therefore, emanated out of the researcher's curiosity as a member of the DICON at 60 research team and as a participant at the inaugural Africa Defence Industries Conference. Since Nigeria's development is tied also to industrialisation which is technology driven, this essay argues that how DICON has fared in it's over 60 years of existence has not been adequately evaluated. The study covers 1964 - 2024. However, emphasis outside the period may be made.

Statement of the Research Problem

Following the establishment of DICON by an Act of Parliament in 1964, itwas envisioned as the cornerstone of Nigeria's DIB. However, 60 years after its establishment, Nigeria remains heavily dependent on foreign arms imports. For six decades, 1964 – 2024, DICON has been characterised by periods of productivity followed by periods of redundancy, underutilisation, and even commercial diversion into non-military hardware. Some factors have undermined its operational effectiveness. While recent policy measures (such as the new DICON Act) seek to revitalise local defence production capability, a critical appraisal that synthesizes DICON's productivity and redundancy cycles, underlying structural challenges, and path forward remains necessary. Therefore, without a clear analysis of how past institutional successes and failures shaped DICON's performance over a 60-year period, Nigeria risk repeating structural mistakes. This study addresses the problem of identifying the historical drivers of productivity and redundancy within DICON and establishing a sustainable framework for self-reliance in Nigeria's MIC.

Research Questions

To address the identified gaps, the study seeks to answer the following key research questions:

a. How has DICON evolved structurally and institutionally from its establishment in 1964 through its 60th anniversary in 2024?
b. What specific internal and external factors accounted for the historical shifts between periods of productivity and operational redundancy in DICON over the 60-year period?
c. What factors have hindered DICON's ability to achieve self-reliance in indigenous defence manufacturing?
d. What reforms are required to transform DICON into a sustainable, competitive, and self-sufficient defence manufacturer going forward?

Objectives of the Study

This aim of this study is to carry out an appraisal of DICON since its establishment in 1964 to 2024 that marked its 60 years of existence. The specific objectives are to help situate the Corporation in a proper perspective by evaluating its historical evolution, shifting cycles of productivity and redundancy and associated impact, highlight its contributions and challenges, and proffer strategies that would help reposition DICON, reduce Nigeria's reliance on foreign procurement and make Nigeria self-reliant and sustaining in defence products manufacturing.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a mixed-methods research design, integrating qualitative and quantitative approaches. This methodology is particularly appropriate for conducting a comprehensive appraisal of DICON over a 60-year period - 1964 to 2024. Combining these approaches allowed the researcher to synthesise insights from existing

scholarly literature with primary oral accounts gathered from key actors in Nigeria's defence sector. The qualitative approach enabled context-rich data interpretation and thematic analysis, while the quantitative component facilitated content categorisation and the generation of descriptive statistics for comparative evaluation.

The study relied on both primary and secondary sources. Primary data (oral data) were collected through Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with selected serving and retired government personnel, primarily defence stakeholders. Notably, KIIs were conducted with former Director-Generals of DICON, alongside FGDs with serving and retired staff of the Corporation during field research for the "DICON at 60" project in 2024. Secondary data were gathered through documentary research, drawing from official publications, books, journal articles, newspaper reports, and institutional records. Together, these primary and secondary sources enabled a detailed historical appraisal of DICON's evolution, contrasting periods of productivity and redundancy while evaluating institutional challenges and efforts toward self-reliance in defence manufacturing.

The Establishment of Defence Industries Corporation of Nigeria

Nigeria Since independence, have relied largely on arms imports to outfit its military forces (Chukwuemeka et al, 2025; 204). Nigeria's total reliance on foreign imports for small arms and ammunition, other defence equipment and material needs, created a dependency that posed a significant risk to national sovereignty. The quest for strategic autonomy and a self-reliant security architecture necessitated the establishment of a defence industry. This did not just come about; it followed a legislative process. To develop itself and achieve self-sufficiency in defence, Nigeria established the Defence Industries Corporation of Nigeria (DICON) by a 1964 Act of Parliament (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1964). While DICON held a promising future for Nigeria's self-reliance and sustainability, Udeh (2025) has noted that Nigeria was incapable of developing her defence industrial complex to an advanced level. The pursuit of a self-reliant defence industrial complex began in 1964 with the establishment of DICON. However, one would expect a significant development in the Corporation six decades after, evidenced by significant technological advancement, capability and capacity in production of arms and ammunition and other defence equipment required by the Nigerian military and security services which the country has continued to source from other countries.

The Nigeria government have pursued different policies towards industrialisation since independence. This will include the first development plan of 1962-1968 which "was aimed at strengthening the Nigerian manufacturing sector by lessening dependence on foreign trade and conserving foreign exchange by producing locally products that were previously imported" (Arize, 2023: 694). This led to the commissioning of energy projects such as the Kanji dam, the Ugheli thermal plants, oil refinery, a development bank, and a mint and security company (Arize, 2023). These projects laid the foundation for the emergence of Nigeria's industrial sector. Within the period, DICON was established as a response to Nigeria's growing dependence on foreign supply of defence needs some of which could be locally manufactured if pursued. Before the second national development plan between 1970 and 1974, which focused on creating industrial structure linked to agriculture and emphasized the enhancement of local production for export (Ebomoyi, 2016; Effiong, 2022), DICON had been established. However, as observed by Uhere & Akpa-Achimugu (2024: 42), there was a technological or industrial base gap as there was basically nothing on ground in the aspect of MIC to drive the establishment of DICON despite the ever-present defence needs. To bridge this technological gap, the Nigerian government sought technical expertise from abroad. The West German manufacturing firm, Fritz Werner, was selected as the foundational technical partner and was instrumental in the physical and operational setup of the Ordnance Factories in Kaduna (Defence Industries Corporation of Nigeria, nd). The initial contract with Fritz Werner stipulated a production capacity output scheduled to ensure that Nigeria met basic infantry requirements. It is documented that the factory was engineered to produce 5,000 units of BM 59 Rifles, 18,000 units of SMG 12, 12,000,000 rounds of 7.62mm x 51 ammunition, and 400,000 rounds of 9mm x 19 ammunition per annum ((Ministry of Defence, 2024). The establishment of the Ordnance Factories was not merely a military endeavor but also an industrial milestone for Nigeria's industrial development. It was the first major attempt at high-precision engineering and mass manufacturing in the country.

The vision of DICON is: "to be a leading force in indigenous defence manufacturing in Africa, recognised globally for innovation, reliability and strategic partnership, in commitment to international best practices."

The mission is: "to contribute significantly to national security while excelling in global defence markets, by delivering sustainable cutting edge defence solutions through research, adaption of emerging technologies, innovative culture and building strategic partnerships" (The Defence industries Corporation of Nigeria, nd). Will it be safe to submit that the vision and mission of the Corporation have been realised? Or at least, to a significant extent? Whether the Corporation has lived up to its vision and mission or not in it's over 60 years of existence shall be established at the end of the study. In addition to the 1964 DICON Act, other legislations providing the legal framework for DICON include the 2004 Amended DICON Act which ensured the development of Nigeria's MIC, and the recent 2023 DICON Act (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2023), which repealed previous empowering legal framework.

To guide against unregulated production of defence related material and equipment by the private sector, it was craftily inculcated in the legal framework establishing DICON, that the Corporation had become the fulcrum of Nigeria's DIB and all existing or yet to evolve ordnance factories were publicly owned while DICON itself was and remains a state entity (Terwase, 2024: 93). While the legal instrument establishing DICON held potentials for indigenous capacity in arms and ammunition production, defence material and equipment, it equally presented limitations that stalled the advancement of Nigeria's DIB as well as the growth and expected production output of the Corporation towards self-reliance and sustainability in national defence needs.

The Corporation serves as the cornerstone of Nigeria's MIC. Central to its operations is the Ordnance Factories; a network of specialised factories and production lines, primarily clustered in Kaduna, and designed to translate raw materials into functional defence hardware. These facilities represent the transition from assembly-based manufacturing to indigenous production capabilities. The primary hub of DICON's operations was and remains the Ordnance Factories in Kaduna. Since its inception, this facility has been the focal point for the production of small arms and light weapons. The Ordnance Factories is partitioned into specialised lines to handle the distinct metallurgical and mechanical requirements of different weapon systems. It was discovered from the field survey that the production lines within the Ordnance Factories are categorised by the caliber and type of equipment produced. For decades, the primary output centered on the OBJ-006 (a variant of the AK-47) and the BM 59 rifle. These lines utilise high-precision Computer Numerical Control (CNC) machines to ensure the interchangeability of parts, a critical factor in field maintenance. Furthermore, the facility houses a dedicated General Purpose Machine Gun (GPMG) line, which, though intermittently active, represents the Corporation's highest tier of infantry weapon manufacturing.

Beyond small arms, there is the Ammunition Factory which constitutes a vital component of DICON's industrial footprint. The production of ammunition involves a complex multi-stage process: deep drawing of brass cups for casings, primer insertion, propellant loading, and projectile seating (Interview with major General AE Edet, 18 March, 2024). The ammunition lines are engineered for high-volume output, specifically targeting the 7.62mm x 51mm and 9mm x 19mm Parabellum rounds. A NATO standard DICON has been urged to uphold (Benjamin, 2025). These lines are critical and represents DICON's capacity and readiness for domestic production and supply of small arms ammunition. Defence Industries Corporation of Nigeria partners with a number of local and international companies, basically defence related industries. The Corporation recently expanded its production lines to include armored vehicles and tactical gear. The DICON-PROFORCE partnership led to the establishment of an assembly line for the Ara (Thunder), a Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicle, and initiated the production of Nigerian made drones (Ministry of Defence, 2023). This marks a shift from small-scale machine to heavy industrial assembly. Additionally, the Specialised Garment Factory represents a diversification into soft defence products, including high-quality combat fatigues, ballistic vests, and helmets.

Defence Industries Corporation of Nigeria: Between Productivity and Redundancy

The Corporation's over 60 years of existence could be divided into two periods; years of productivity and years of redundancy. The Nigerian Civil War broke out in 1967, three years after the establishment of DICON. Under the leadership of Mr HA Koehler (a German), who served as the General Manager from 2 January 1967 - 31 December 1971, DICON is reputed to have produced enormous quantity of weapons; it tripled production of rifles, submachine guns, and ammunition and significantly supported the war course of the Federal Military Government (FMG) (Igimoh, 2025). The war presented a situation that tested the capacity of DICON to deliver on its primary mandate, which was to produce arms and ammunition for the use of the AFN and

security agencies (GlobalSecurity.Org, 2015). Nigeria leveraged the output of DICON in addition to international support to prosecute the war against Biafra. As DICON produced, the military consumed the products by acquiring and sending these weapons to the troops in the field. It must be noted that the FMG did not rely solely on DICON for its weapons supplies before and during the civil war, and DICON was not also the major source of arms and ammunition to the federal troops during the civil war. A significant quantity of the weapons with which the FMG prosecuted the war were sourced from the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Belgium and the Soviet Union, among other countries (Uwomano, 2023: 67-76). Despite external weapons supply to Nigeria, DICON was relatively productive during the period and was able to support the FMG with locally produced weapons during the civil war period.

As the civil war ended in 1970, Nigeria's commitment to DICON which was instrumental to its productivity during the war period declined. By the 1970s, DICON had capacity to produce West German-designed HK G-3 rifles, BM-59 and PM-12 handguns, and 7.62mm and 9mm parabellum ammunition (GlobalSecurity.Org, 2015). However, lack of financial and management support as well as reduced or lack of patronage by the military and security agencies or the FMG so to speak, impeded further growth of the Cooperation. The end of the war in 1970 signaled a turning point for DICON; its decline. As a result, the Corporation became unproductive.

To get back to business, DICON established a strategic affiliation with Fabrique Nationale (FN) of Belgium in 1971, which served as a primary technical partner for the Corporation after Fritz Werner (Koleosho, 2020, cited in Terwase, 2024). This collaboration was instrumental in the domestic production of Nigerian-made rifles and shotguns, effectively transferring small arms technology to the local industry. Beyond manufacturing, FN Belgium provided technical training to DICON staff to ensure operational self-sufficiency (Akran & Ekpo, 2024). This effort was not sustained as DICON slipped into another period of redundancy.

It is stated that DICON was reenergised in 1984 (GlobalSecurity.Org, 2015), leading to the return of FN Belgium which renewed its engagement with the Corporation to provide additional technical support (Uhere & Akpa-Achimugu, 2024: 44). The effort did not yield any significant result. As observed by Major General KO Ojomo (Rtd) (Interview, 15 March, 2024), FN had evolved its production line back home in Belgium, developing advanced, carbine-length variants. They sought to market these updated systems to Nigeria which already had the licenses and technical knowledge for the earlier weapon generations and that did not go well with DICON or Nigeria. Again, DICON was not living up to its mandate. The implication was that it drifted from its core mandate of producing arms and ammunition to engaging in the production of civil items to keep afloat. According to GobalSecurity.Org (2015), "in order to remain in business DICON decided to use its equipment to produce civilian items like rural water supply equipment, industrial spare parts and furniture for sale to the public." This was corroborated by many of those interviewed, including former DGs of the cooperation. For instance, there was the Union-DICON salt which was a lucrative source of revenue for DICON in the 1980s (Interview with Lieutenant General TY Danjuma (Rtd), 16 March, 2024; Interview with Major General KO Ojomo (Rtd), cited). Established in 1984, DICON Salt Limited began as a joint venture between DICON and its technical partner, AIMS of Brazil, with a 60% and 40% equity split, respectively. By 1987, the company scaled its operations by opening a factory at the Kirikiri Lighter Terminal, Lagos. This facility served as a strategic hub where DICON processed imported bulk salt through specialised refining stages before distributing the finished product through its nationwide network (Union Dicon Salt, nd).

Plate 1: Union DICON Salt



Source: https://dicon.gov.ng/dicon-salt/

One of the former DGs pointed out with dismay that at some point, DICON engaged in the production of caskets, staff of office for traditional rulers, mace and seal for government officials and traditional rulers as well as ceremonial swords for the Nigerian Defence Academy (Interview with Major General (HRH) KO Ojomo (Rtd), Cited). Without any significant output as a defence industry, the Corporation was just there for many years. General ML Agwai, a former Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), observed that DICON was revived by General Olusegun Obasanjo, who was Nigeria's President between 1999 and 2007. He stated that as the CDS, President Obasanjo asked to be updated on the status of DICON but he lacked the right information on the true condition of DICON with which to brief Mr. President. This led to his being directed to pay a visit to DICON and report his findings to the President. General Agwai stated that he saw a very promising but dilapidated industry, the failure of which was blamed majorly on lack of patronage. The immediate outcome of the visit was the setting up of a committee headed by the CDS, to oversee the revitalisation of the Corporation (Interview with General ML Agwai (Rtd), 29 May, 2024). In 2004, "DICON successfully produced prototype medium range weapons including 60mm and 81mm mortars and the RPG-7, 7.62mm × 39 ammunition which is preferred by the Security Services (Dada et.al, 2022: 94). In 2006, in addition to other things including ammunition, DICON was able to produce a prototype of the AK47codename OBJ006 (named after President Obasanjo) which was tested and fired by Mr. President during his visit to DICON shortly before leaving office (Vanguard, 2007; Interview with General ML Agwa (Rtd), cited; Interview with General Olugsegun Obasanjo (Rtd), 18 May, 2024). It is important to note that the OBJ006 was Nigeria's first locally produced variant of the AK47 rifle.

Plate 2: OBJ006 – Nigeria's locally produced variant of the AK47



Source: https://x.com/NigeriaStories/status/2015857291690488195.

While DICON achieved this great fit, it has not been able to keep up with mass producing the OBJ006 so as to equip the Nigerian military and security services with it. While this milestone was achieved, a challenge lay bare. As observed by General Agwai (Interview, 29 May, 2025, cited), the revitalisation seemed like starting the Corporation afresh. This was because in the committee's effort to deliver on the task given to it, a team of experts was sent to Germany to acquire technical knowledge on the G-3 rifle. It was later discovered that the Germans, who started DICON and produced the G-3 rifles had developed new weapons and had moved past the weapon. So DICON could find nothing there. The only option was to go back to the drawing board and think of what to do. The outcome was the OBJ006. After this landmark achievement, DICON slipped into another period of redundancy.

Most periods of redundancy saw the channeling of the Corporation's excess capacity to the production of civil products. The products at this time extended to essential items such as hand pumps, ballot boxes, and ceremonial swords for the Nigerian Defence Academy. In 2008, DICON had an agreement with an agency to be assembling Keke Napep (tricycle) components, though leadership transitions later adversely impacted the project (Interview with Major General NC Maduegbunam (Rtd), 13 March, 2024). Agwai (Interview, 29 May,

2025, cited) on the other hand, stated that DICON also gained market dominance in the production and distribution of high-quality furniture. Major General BO Ogunkale (Rtd) pointed out that while on posting to DICON as DG, he was surprised to find a defence industry engaging in wood work. He highlighted that the Corporation even had a contract with the Kaduna State Government to produce and supply chairs and desks to public schools in Kaduna. The former DICON DG found the situation to be very disturbing and after making efforts to conclude ongoing wood work contracts, declined taking up another wood work contract, citing the security situation in the country as the basis for DICON to be repositioned to function as the defence industry it is (Interview with Major General BO Ogunkale (Rtd), 29 February, 2024).

In 2015, as part of efforts to reposition DICON, the Premier Industry in conjunction with Poly Technologies Incorporated (PTI) of China, were contracted to install a new Ammunition Line in DICON with a pilot production capacity of two million rounds of Ammunition. This arrangement and production were not sustained due to intrinsic issues (A Magazine of the Defence Industries Corporation of Nigeria, 2019: 95). To mitigate whatever challenge that stalled the realisation of the arrangement, a team from DICON, including the then DG, Major General Ogunkale (Rtd), went to China in March 2018, for pre-shipment inspection of premier/propellants for the production of 7.62x39mm ammunition, and to secure adequate raw materials needed for the commencement of full blast production of 7.62x39mm ammunition. A fit that DICON was able to achieve. The management held church and mosque services to commemorate the full blast production of 7.62x39mm ammunition (A Magazine of the Defence Industries Corporation of Nigeria, 2019: 95-98). It is good to give thanks to God for successes achieved. Nevertheless, the action highlights how incapable the Corporation had been with regard to full blast production of ammunition. It is not as if while 7.62x39mm ammunition was being produced, any other caliber of ammunition was being produced alongside. However, under Major General Ogunkale (Rtd), DICON recorded significant achievement. It was able to produce ballistic vests. Some of the ballistic vests customised in Nigerian Immigration Service's (NIS) colour, were delivered to the immigration service. From 2015 to 2019, DICON offered the following services; production of ammunition, training of armourers, repairs of unserviceable weapons, and production of protective equipment such as ballistic vests and helmets (A Magazine of the Defence Industries Corporation of Nigeria, 2019: 71 & 91-92). In 2018, DICON secured a deal with Poland's PGZ to locally manufacture Beryl assault rifles (Martin, 2024). The Corporation has hardly been out of partnership or lucrative deals but has remained hindered by various factors.

With a change in the leadership of DICON in 2019, the tempo was sustained, with additional achievement. In the same year (2019), DICON in collaboration with Command Engineering Deport, manufactured a mine resistance vehicle (MRAP) named Ezugwu MRAP.

Plate 3: Ezugwu MRAP: Mine Resistance Vehicle produced by DICON in Collaboration Command Engineering Deport



Source: https://dicon.gov.ng/gallery/

The MRAP was named after the DG under whose leadership the achievement was recorded (Ekene 2019). According to Major General VO Ezugwu (Rtd) (Interview, 4 March, 2024), within the period, DICON

sustained the production of ballistic helmet, ballistic vest, and rockets, among others. Major General Ezugwu (Rtd) observed however, that when he took over, there were several machines on ground which were not working. This has remained one of the major challenges confronting DICON. During the DICON at 60 field research in 2024, it was reported by the staff at the Research and Development Centre of the Corporation that some equipment in the Centre were not in use because they were either not fully installed or the installers were yet to avail DICON of the "product key" with which to unlock, activate, and use the machine or equipment. This was blamed on incomplete execution of agreement as a result of lack of complete payment to some contractors by the Corporation or the Nigeria Government (Focus Group Discussion with Research and Development Centre Staff of DICON, Kaduna, 18 March, 2024). It became observed that when such equipment is to be eventually put to use, they may have become obsolete, out of use, or may no longer serve the desired need.

In 2024, DICON proposed and got the approval of the Nigerian Army to gather the damaged weapons of the army and recycle them into new and better ones (Interview with Major General AE Edet, 18 March, 2024). This process, which the immediate past DG of DICON, Major General Edet, described as retrofitting which implies subjecting damaged weapons to advance repairs (turning them to new ones), shows DICON has the capacity to give a new bliss of life to damaged weapons. To show that there was once again a period of break in arms and ammunition production, it was reported in 2024 that DICON has resumed the production of ammunition (7.62 mm rounds). Within the year, the Corporation delivered four million rounds of ammunition to the Nigerian Army, assembled weapons for the same service, and embarked on an ambitious expansive drive (Martin, 2024).

Plate 4: Machine Gun Bullets produced by DICON



Source: https://defenceweb.co.za/industry/industry-industry/nigerias-dicon-resumes-ammunition-production-as-it-continues-expansion/.

While there are efforts to build on its capacity in arms and ammunition production, there are equally efforts to produce drones and other local technology for use in national security in the country (Ministry of Defence, 2024).

Apart from the Nigerian Civil War period during which DICON is believed to have produced enormous quantity of arms and ammunition to support the war, it has shown intermittent local production capacity of arms and ammunition among other things. It has not been able to live up to its vision and mission and significantly deliver on its mandate. As a result, Nigeria has remained heavily reliant on foreign supplies despite heavily investing in DICON. In September 2023, the administration of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, approved a $1 billion partnership agreement with the Indian Government to help Nigeria through DICON, to attain %40 self-sufficiency in local manufacturing or production of defence needs in three years (Martin, 2023). Despite efforts at repositioning DICON to function optimally, the rate of arms imports in both wartime and peacetime increased significantly. The growth rate is argued to have stabilised in recent years due to the

ongoing economic crisis and security threats in Nigeria (Chukwuemeka, 2025; 204). According to data obtained from National Bureau of Statistics foreign trade report for the second quarter of 2026, from 2020 through 2023 when Nigeria approved $1 billion partnership agreement for DICON to 2024, Nigeria spent ₦777.16 billion on importation of arms and ammunition (National Bureau of Statistics, 2026; Arinze, 2025). A yearly review of the foreign trade data provided by the NBS shows that Nigeria spent ₦29.24 billion on importation of arms and ammunition, including parts in 2020, ₦72.50 billion in 2021, ₦28.24 billion in 2022, ₦127.16 billion in 2023, and ₦520.02 billion in 2024 (National Bureau of Statistics, 2026; Arinze, 2025). The import figures for the years provided above, simply shows that the country remains reliant on foreign arms and ammunition imports. The implication is that after six decades, DICON's local defence manufacturing capability has Persistent rise in arms import tends to prove that DICON This is worrisome considering the evolving dynamics of security threats and insecurity confronting the country within the past two decades. Interestingly, within the past few years, there have been series of conferences or seminars and exhibitions, discussing the lucrative markets for DICON as hub of Nigeria's defence industries whereas local demand is yet to be met.

Plate 5: What DICON Produces or has Capacity to Produce



Source: https://dicon.gov.ng/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/DICON-PRODUCTS-1-pdf-212x300.jpg

At one point or another, DICON has been able to produce or show capacity to produce each of the items contained in plate 5. Some, it has been able to produce independently. Some, it has produced in collaboration with one technical partner or another. Since inception, the Corporation has sought and entered into partnership with a number of local and international defence manufacturing companies. Some of its partners will include Proforce, AMALITE, South Africa Aerospace Maritime and Defence Industries Association, National Agency for Science and Engineering Infrastructure, Nigerian Machine Tools, and INNOSON, among others.

There have been efforts in the recent time to reposition the Corporation. Between 2024 and 2025, DICON was making effort to partner with China's North Industries Corporation (NORINCO). This was part of efforts to

ensure collaboration, repair the burnt ammunition line or set up a new production line (Major General Edet, 2024). On 18 March, 2025, the group (NORINCO) visited Abuja, as part of efforts to strengthen bilateral defence cooperation between Nigeria and China (Global Defence Insight, 2025). Focus was on three key pillars including;

a. Comprehensive technology transfer to enhance local manufacturing infrastructure.
b. Advanced training and technological capacity building for Nigerian defence personnel
c. Increased integration of local content in the development of military hardware and system (Global Defence Insight, 2025).

Nothing significant has happened in this regard. However, in July 2025, DICON signed a $2bn investment partnership deal with SP Offshore Nigeria limited to revive the defence industry and boost local sufficiency in the manufacturing of defence needs (Aleke, 2026). This partnership, according to Aleke (2026), aligns with the Federal Government's projection of achieving self-sufficiency in defence manufacturing while reducing reliance on foreign imports. Perhaps, it is too early to begin to assess the impact factor of this agreement. In mid-September 2025, there was an effort to advance collaboration towards joint production of unmanned aerial vehicles, munitions and missiles between Pakistan's Global Industrial and Defence Solutions (GIDS). This was described as part of efforts towards boosting local manufacturing to reduce reliance on foreign imports (Ekene, 2025). In a recent development, DICON and the Terra Industries in February 2026, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the establishment of a Joint Venture Company (JVC) as part of moves to deepen Nigeria's defence industrial capacity and advance indigenous high-technology (DICON: Press Release, 23 February, 2026). DICON has partnerships and agreements with other local and international companies. It is hoped that these recent partnerships and agreements which hold enormous potentials like previous ones, will not go the way of previous agreements and partnerships that existed before them.

Defence Industries Conferences and Exhibitions: The Issue Therein

Defence related companies have gathered from time to time to discuss defence technology, defence manufacturing, local and international partnership, funding, the lucrative market of the defence manufacturing and above all, how to locally satisfy the defence needs of Nigeria and Africa to support national and regional security. It appears every now and then, such gatherings end in rhetoric. In 2024, DICON at 60 was marked alongside the Inaugural Africa Defence Industries Conference. The combined events held from 14-15 August, 2024, at the Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Centre, Abuja, on the theme "DICON @60: Future Frontiers in Africa's Defence Technology (African Defence Industries Conference, 2024). The event hosted by the DG of DICON, attracted representatives of African militaries as well defence manufacturers who used the opportunity to exhibit their products or showcase what they are capable of producing. It featured panel discussions and anyone who attended the conference would agree that it was intellectually rich with beautiful ideas, well thought out plans and expected outcomes. Few months after, the leadership of DICON changed as then DG, Major General Edet was replaced with Major General Babatunde Ayala in May 2025 (News Agency, 2025). This came shortly after speculations that the new 2023 DICON Act has addressed the issue of tenure of office in DICON leadership. The immediate past DG, like many of the former DGs, had innovative ideas on how to move DICON forward. There was little to nothing he could have done judging by the time he spent in office (July 2023-April 2025).

Within the same year (2024), the Defence Research and Development Bureau (DRDB) held its maiden annual seminar and exhibition themed "enhancing synergy in research and development towards a robust military industrial complex in Nigeria." The exhibition and seminar held at the]\]Abacha Hall, National Defence College, Abuja, from 15-16 October, 2024. The two-day event featured series of paper presentations and exhibitions of products by local and international defence manufacturers advancing research and development in the manufacture of relevant equipment and operational tools needed to promote and sustain defence and security. In 2025, DRDB hosted the second edition of its annual seminar and exhibition at the National Defence College, Abuja, following the same manner.

Similarly, Nigerian Exhibition and Security Conference (NISECEXPO), a defence related company, hosted its 7th and 2024 Annual International Defence and Security Exhibition and Seminar themed "Transforming

Africa's Defence Sector: Strengthening Capacity and Capabilities for 21st Century National Security." The seminar which held at the Abuja Continental Hotel, from 28-29 October, 2024, attracted local and international stakeholders in the defence sector, participants from the Armed Forces of Nigeria and security services. The seminar provided the platform for stakeholders including defence manufactures and security experts to share ideas, challenges and strategies for improving defence production in Nigeria and Africa (NISECEXPO programme of event, 2024). Also, NISECEXPO in collaboration with DICON, hosted the 8th and 2025 Annual International Defence and Security Exhibition and Conference themed "Future Wars: Operational Endurance and Force Build-Up Capabilities." The 2025 NISECEXPO-DICON Exhibition and Conference was held at the Abacha Hall, National Defence College, Abuja, from 8-10 December, 2025 (NISECEXPO-DICON, programme of event, 2025). It equally attracted stakeholders and participants from the defence and security sectors and was not any different from the 2024 NISECEXPO Seminar or the other conferences and exhibitions by DICON and DRDB.

In 2025, Nigeria signed a Memorandum of Understanding with a United Kingdom based organiser, DMG Events, and secured to host the largest Africa defence and security in Lagos-Nigeria, in October 2026 (Darek, 2025: 31). Darek posits that "this partnership positions Nigeria at the forefront of efforts to bolster regional security through innovation, collaboration, and technology sharing, drawing on the nation's growing influence in the military and aviation sectors" (Darek, 2025). Being at the forefront is not measured by the number of defence and security conferences and exhibitions hosted by Nigeria or DICON but by driving defence technology and innovation through visible, sustained production output and capacity to significantly supply the AFN and security services. Thereby significantly reducing Nigeria's reliance on foreign supply.

Except for the second and 2025 annual seminar and exhibition hosted by the DRDB, this author participated in the other conferences or seminars. From the view of a participant observer, while these conferences or seminars and exhibitions offer platforms for stakeholders to discuss defence manufacturing and showcase the defence technology capabilities of local and international defence manufacturers, they have remained a gathering of stakeholders with little or no follow up on previous seminars or exhibitions' expected outcomes. The utility value of these seminars and exhibitions would lie in the ability to review the outcome of previous seminars, follow up on highlighted challenges and implementation of proffered strategies. It is a good thing that these stakeholders or establishments are beginning to collaborate in co-hosting the defence seminar and exhibition just like NISECEXPO and DICON did in 2025. Otherwise, it appeared like a competition, particularly in 2024, which saw these organisations independently host defence seminar and exhibition. Above all, the seminar has fallen short as a review platform which should be at its core. While it underscores how defence technology has evolved and advanced, local capacity in defence manufacturing has remained under harnessed and under patronised. Again, the application of defence technologies in defence and security operations for enhanced national security is not encouraging. This, however, is blamed on the high cost of acquiring these technologies, machines or equipment as was highlighted during these seminars and exhibitions.

Challenges Confronting the Defence Industries Corporation of Nigeria

One recurring observation from the key informant interviewees is the fact that there are powerful individuals who do not want DICON to effectively develop and function optimally as Nigeria's DIB and hub of the country's MIC**.** Key expressions from these informants on the challenges confronting DICON will include General Olusegun Obasanjo's remark. According to him, there are a set of people who do not want DICON to succeed. They are importers of what DICON produces and if DICON succeeds, they will be out of business. They have influence in government and until government stops them, DICON will not succeed (Interview with General Olusegun Obasanajo (Rtd), cited). On his part, a former Director of DICON, Major General Ojomo (Rtd), pointed out that part of the challenge was that DICON was not adequately funded by government. He also added that people were and are still making money from travelling overseas to procure arms and ammunition and other defence equipment at the detriment of the country. He observed that if DICON functions optimally, people will no longer be sent on oversea travels and will stop receiving the travel allowances that accrue from such travels (Interview with Major General KO Ojomo (Rtd), cited). Another former DG DICON, corroborated the issue of inadequate funding, and went further to highlight the old and obsolete nature of the machines in DICON as a major setback confronting the Corporation (Interview with Major General MO Uzoh (Rtd), 9 March, 2024). Major General Ezugwu (Rtd) on his part highlighted the inability of the Nigerian

Government to complete the construction of the Ajaokuta Steel Complex as one of the major limitations to DICON. He argues that the Ajaokuta Steel Complex is very critical because everything about defence industry is steel based; be it arms and ammunition, vehicle or any other equipment (Interview with Major General VO Ezugwu (Rtd), cited). The Ajaokuta Steel company project emanated from the findings of a research project carried out between 1986 and 1987 by Oyebanji Oyeyinka and Oluwole Adeloye. It highlighted the significance of a steel plant in technology transfer, industrialisation of Nigeria, and mapped out strategies for the establishment of Ajaokuta Steel Plant (Oyebanji & Oluwole, 1988). The Ajaokuta Steel complex was therefore conceived to be developed as a metallurgical process plant and engineering complex with other auxiliaries and facilities to serve as the bedrock of Nigeria's industrialisation. (Oguchi, 2019: 37). However, years after initiating the Steel plant project, it is yet to be completed. Oguchi (2019: 43) has stated that the non-completion of the steel project means that the steel complex which will activate the metallurgical industry is far from being optimally efficient.

On other challenges confronting DICON, Alaita (2024: 255-258) notes that chronic underfunding and mismanagement have historically plagued the cooperation, hindering DICON's ability to meet Nigeria's military needs. He highlighted the technological backwardness of the industry in the era of emerging technologies such artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML), robotics and autonomous systems, nanotechnology and directed energy weapons, among others. The Corporation's obsolete equipment further highlight its deficiency in modern and evolving technology which has also limited it from functioning optimally. Its underperformance, also blamed on obsolete equipment is allegedly exacerbated by internal sabotage by those profiteering from foreign arms and ammunition procurement. In 2023, one of the factories used for ammunition production was engulfed by fire, destroying an entire production line that cost hundreds of millions of Naira to set up. In 2024, the DICON at 60 research team which the researcher was a member of, visited DICON factories in Kaduna. As the team embarked on a tour of the factories, it was shocking to learn about the burning of one of the factories, the damage it caused, the losses to the Cooperation, and the negative impact on the country. The staff of the Corporation could not freely comment on the burnt factory and the arson was not linked to any cause. Some of those interrogated stated that a board of inquiry had been constituted and the report of its findings was being expected (Focused Group Discussion with Ordnance Factories Staff of DICON, cited). Commenting on the incident, a former DG of DICON, Major General HG Tafidda, under whose tenure the incident occurred, observed that the greatest challenge he faced was the burning of one of the most critical factories of the Cooperation. While in a meeting with some Chinese partners, the then DG was informed that his factory was on fire (Interview with Major General HG Tafida, 15 May, 2024). The former DG considered the arson as an act of sabotage. He pointed out that DICON had two firefighting trucks. However, it was reported that those trucks were out of water at the time of the arson. It took the DG's intervention despite being out of town, to mobilise about five firefighting trucks from the Air Force base, 1 Division Nigeria Army, and Nigerian National Petroleum Company, among others, to put out the fire (Interview with Major General HG Tafida, cited). After the burning, the affected factory has remained in ruins. The cost of fixing the burnt factory was said to be almost the same with the cost of setting up a new production line. While the situation of the factory could not be ascertained at the time of this research, it is possible, judging from the level of damage and change of DICON's leadership which is more or less, a regular occurrence, that nothing significant has been done.

On 20 September, 2025, as DICON was barely recovering from the impact of the 2023 fire incident, it experienced an explosion that left 2 persons dead and several others injured (Omonobi, 2025). While the public perceived the explosion as an act of sabotage, the Ministry of Defence held that there was no indication that it was a sabotage. A committee of inquiry was constituted to look into the cause of the incident. However, preliminary report indicated that the explosion occurred while experts were trying to destroy quantities of expired materials, including Ammonia, Nitrates, Primer Caps, Propellants, and other hazardous substances (Omonobi, 2025). During an inspection visit to the scene, the Permanent Secretary Ministry of Defence, Sunday Attah, called for a review of the explosion with a view to strengthening safety and preventing a reoccurrence (Anyanwu, 2025). The fact that some materials which should have been committed to production were left to expire shows that the Corporation has not been as productive as it should be. It is supposed to be running out of materials, not leaving the available production materials to expire and get wasted. It is important

to note that the reports of the Committees of inquiry on the fire and explosion incidents have not been made public. Perhaps, they are classified.

There are other challenges limiting the Corporation from performing optimally, frequent change of leadership inclusive. In the Corporation's over sixty years of existence, it has had regular change of leadership with some DGs spending less than two years in office. Even less. Table 1 highlights the DGs the Corporation has had, including the time they spent in office.

Table 1: Showing Director Generals of DICON beginning from 1979 to 2025

S/N	Name	period
(a)	(b)	(c)
1	Major General D Jemibewon (Rtd)	February 1979-June 1980
2	Major General JO Adeniyi (Rtd)	January 1984-August 1993
3	Major General (Rtd) KO Ojomo	February 1999-June 2001
4	Major General PO Edomwande (Rtd)	February 2001 – June 2006
5	Major General NC Maduegbunam (Rtd)	June 2006-January 2009
6	Major General SU Labaran (Rtd)	June 2009-January 2013
7	Major General ER Chioba (Rtd)	February 2013-July 2015
8	Major General DIO Ehiorobo (Rtd)	July 2015-December 2015
9	Major General BO Ogunkale (Rtd)	December 2015-June 2019
10	Major General VO Ezugwu (Rtd)	June 2019-March 2021
11	Major General MO Uzoh (Rtd)	March 2021-July 2021
12	Major General HG Tafida (Rtd)	July 2021-July 2023
13	Major General AE Edet	July 2023-April 2025
14	Major General BI Alaya	April 2025 -

Source: Author's compilation.

From 1979 to present, apart from three DGs, others spent less than three years with some spending even far less than 1 year in office. In addition to inadequate funding, many of the past DGs that were interviewed complained of not having enough time to implement their good initiatives as well as the plans they had for DICON.

Some of the commentators blamed the limitations of the Corporation on the establishing DICON Act of 1964. Major General NC Maduegbunam (Rtd) pointed out that the 1964 DICON Act did not permit the Corporation to partner with private firms in arms manufacturing (Interview with Major General NC Maduegbunam Rtd), cited). This view was corroborated by Terwase (2024: 98), who noted that the absence of local authority in the 1964 DICON Act prevented Nigerian Machine Tools for example, from collaborating with the Corporation in the local production of arms. This highlights the exclusion of private partnership in arms and ammunition production in the country. This sentiment, whether by error or design, is understandable. Perhaps, Government was guiding against unregulated private sector involvement in arms production as a matter of national security. Whether it did guide against it or not is not for this essay to answer. When it became obvious that the act limited DICON, efforts were made, particularly from those within DICON, to bring about an amendment to the Act. What followed was an amended act in 2004 which did not address the legal limitation in the legal framework and empowering instrument. Barrister Akoji Joseph Adaba, a former Director of Legal at DICON, stated that for over ten years in the course of his career in the service of the Cooperation, they concentration on ensuring that there was an amendment to the Act when they found out that the 1964 (Act amended in 2004), was no longer keeping in step with modern trends and limited DICON from significantly contributing to national development and security. There was therefore need to get the National Assembly of Nigeria to approve the amendment to open up DICON for private sector partnership and for the incorporation of new and evolving technologies (Interview with Barrister Akoji Joseph Adaba, 20 July, 2024). The passage of the bill for the amendment of the 1964 Act in the closing days of the administration of President Muhammadu Buhari between 2022 and 2023, and President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's accent to the bill in ``December 2023, repealed the 1964 Act and brought the 2023 DICON Act to force (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2023). The 2023

DICON Act is believed to have ended the many years of lamentations and is greatly considered a step in the right direction. The development was widely received as a landmark legislation that will transform the defence sector and position Nigeria as a regional and global player in defence technology and local production capability (Ekene, 2023). The 2023 DICON Act is equally applauded for taking a step forward by establishing or empowering DICON to establish the Defence Industry Technology, Research and Development Institute (DITRDI) (Ubabudu & Basharu, 2025: 83). The defence industry that was establish in 1964, which cannot be said to have survived and delivered optimally, has now been empowered to have an institute. While the institute (DITRDI) is still under construction, Ubabudu and Basharu (2025) have observed that the institute lacks adequate funding and skilled personnel. They went further to assert that the defence industrial sector has historically suffered from policy inconsistency, lack of political will, and frequent leadership changes at DICON and the Ministry of Defence, which continue to disrupt continuity and implementation of long-term planning. It will not be surprising if attention is diverted from building DICON as a defence industry to building DITRDI as a defence technology institute.

There are concerns regarding the capacity of the 2023 DICON Act in opening up DICON for private sector engagement. According to Terwase (2024);

> Just like the repealed DICON Act, the 2023 Act does not make any express provision sanctioning private sector involvement in the manufacture of defence products. Nevertheless, many sections in it have made implied allusions to the private sector in this enterprise. Section 7(1)(i) of the 2023 Act reproduces the function of the Corporation under section 393 of the 1964 Act, which empowers the Corporation to encourage private manufacturers to produce defence products. Section 7(1)(k) empowers the Corporation to collaborate with… local industries involved in military hardware and software production… There is another implied sanctioning of private arms manufacturing in section 10 of the 2023 Act. While conferring on the Corporation the exclusive right to produce and sell arms to the military and other security agencies, it says further that where the Corporation is unable to do so, the military and other security agencies could purchase such arms from other licensed manufacturers… (Terwase, 2024: 103).

By implication, where DICON fails to deliver, it is incumbent on Nigeria to ensure it delivers on its mandate as a matter of national economic development and overall, national interest, including defence and security. Nothing significant has happened in DICON after the 1964 DICON Act was repealed and the new 2023 DICON Act entered into force. What exist is eulogised hopes in the potential of DICON, projections into the future, the lucrative market and fortunes that awaits the Corporation. All these in the light of evolving security threats and reliance on foreign supplies of arms and ammunition among other defence needs. Some persons have compared DICON and the defence industries of other countries that were established at about the same time. According to Chuwkeuemeka et.al (2025: 205), "DICON, established concurrently with its Brazilian equivalent, has not evolved into a robust military corporation, although Brazil has significantly advanced by manufacturing high-quality equipment, including ships and aircraft." The defence industries of Brazil that was established the same time with DICON has advanced beyond imagination whereas DICON is still drifting between years of relative productivity and years of redundancy.

CONCLUSION

From its establishment in 1964, DICON has remained a defence industry that is characterised by cycles of brief productivity followed by periods of redundancy. While established with the mandate of achieving self-reliance in arms and ammunition production for the AFN and security services, the Corporation has largely failed to meet this objective, leaving Nigeria heavily dependent on foreign imports. Between 2020 and 2024 alone, Nigeria spent approximately ₦777.16 billion on foreign arms procurement (National Bureau of Statistics, 2026; Arinze, 2025), highlighting the significant economic and sovereign risks of this continued dependency.

Nevertheless, DICON has contributed significantly to national security by contributing to local manufacturing

of defence needs. Its history shows that it possesses latent technical potential, as seen during the Nigerian Civil War and the development of the OBJ0o6 rifle, ballistic helmets, ballistic vests, and the Ezugwu MRAP, among others. However, these successes have been stifled by a combination of systemic hurdles such as underfunding, the use of obsolete machinery, and frequent leadership turnovers that prevent the implementation of long-term strategies. Furthermore, the Corporation has often drifted from its core military mandate into the production of civilian goods like salt, furniture, and maces just to remain financially afloat. This is not totally wrong. The excess capacity can be harnessed after the realisation of the mission and vision of the Corporation.

Alleged sabotage by individuals profiting from foreign procurement and the historical limitations of the 1964 DICON Act have also played a role in stagnating the industry. While the New DICON Act of 2023 and recent partnerships, including the $2billion-dollar partnership with SP Offshore Nigeria Limited offer hope for a more inclusive, private-sector-driven MIC, the utility of these reforms remains to be seen. This is because the Corporation's current status remains one of eulogised hopes and future projections rather than significant output in local, mass production of arms and ammunition for instance. For more than sixty years, Nigeria has continued to underscore the imperative of prioritising home grown defence solutions without making adequate commitment to keep DICON optimally functional. Ultimately, for DICON to transition from a non-viable hub of Nigeria's defence industry to a viable one, the Nigerian government must ensure consistent political will, complete the Ajaokuta Steel Complex for local raw materials, and prioritise indigenous patronage over foreign imports as a matter of national interest.

Based on the appraisal of DICON provided in this essay, strategic recommendations to enhance the Corporation's effectiveness and sustainability are outlined as follows:

a. Ensure Leadership Stability and Continuity: The FGN should ensure a minimum fixed tenure for the DG of DICON to prevent the frequent change of baton that has seen many leaders spend less than two years or far less in office. The 2023 DICON Act is reputed to have addressed the issue. However, the Corporation still experienced change of leadership despite the 2023 DICON Act being in force. Leadership stability is essential for the long-term implementation of innovative research, developmental plans, and the fulfillment of international partnerships that often stall during transitions.

b. Prioritise Local Patronage and Cut off Sabotage: The FGN must mandate that the AFN and other security agencies to prioritise DICON-manufactured arms, ammunition, and tactical gear over foreign imports. Additionally, the government must take decisive action against alleged powerful individuals and importers who benefit from foreign procurement, thereby allegedly sabotaging DICON's to protect their own business interests.

c. Finalise the Ajaokuta Steel Complex: The completion of the Ajaokuta Steel Complex should be treated as a national security priority to provide DICON with a steady, indigenous supply of steel. Since the defence industry is heavily steel-based (from weapons and ammunition to armored vehicles), relying on imported steel remains a major limitation to achieving true strategic autonomy.

d. Leverage the New DICON Act for Private Partnerships: DICON should aggressively utilise the New DICON Act of 2023 to move beyond the limitations of the original 1964 Act, which restricted collaboration with the private sector. By forming Joint Venture Companies (JVCs) and attracting private investment, DICON should ensure adequate integration of modern technologies such as AI, robotics, and drones into its production lines.

e. Modernise Infrastructure and Protect Assets: Immediate investment is required to replace obsolete machinery with modern CNC equipment and high-tech production lines. Furthermore, DICON must enhance its internal security and fire safety protocols to prevent or ensure prompt response to fire outbreak as the 2023 fire destroyed a critical ammunition line due to a lack of functional firefighting equipment.

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