

## **In a Situation of Great Distress: Cross Border Migration and the Quest for Enduring Security in North-East Nigeria**

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**Abstract :** Nigeria is a highly multifarious nation trapped between affluence and affliction. On one hand, the state has vast territorial size, economic strength, relative internal cohesion, and good external linkages. On the other, it is bedeviled with enormous challenges. It is common knowledge that the North-East geo-political zone has suffered colossal destruction for the most part of the last ten years due to the activities of the insurgent group Boko Haram. Several factors (political, economic, religious, socio-cultural) have been credited with the heightened insecurity in the region. Without a doubt, the security crisis in the region has rekindled several discussions critical to Nigeria's security architecture. However, the debate on finding an enduring solution to the devastation in the North East continually neglects the nexus between cross border migration and national security. Using content analysis, this paper debates two main issues that continue to affect security in the North East. One, the cumulative impact of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) protocol on the free movement of people and goods. Two, the porous nature of Nigeria's borders. Theoretically, the paper will rely on the systems theory because of its broad focus on structure, linkage, and process. The work concludes in twofold. First, that cross border migration and poor border management processes further worsened the political and socio-economic conditions of a region that is already in a bad state. Secondly, in addition to the existing strategies, Nigeria must develop a holistic approach including new methods of handling cross border movements in solving the security issues.

**Keywords :** border, cross border, migration, Nigeria, northeast region, security

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