

ISSUES IN DEMOCRACY AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSFORMATION

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ABSTRACT

Democracy as a system of governance is supposed to allow meaningful and extensive competition, representation, participation and inclusiveness of as many people, individuals, organized groups and views as possible. This is to feed into the functioning of a fair and just society on one hand, and serve to check unaccountable power and manipulation by the few at the expense of the many on the other hand. However, there are issues, pressures, criticisms and challenges that threaten various democratic foundations, pillars and key aspects of a functioning and true democracy. Nationally, there are issues of blatant violations of democratic principles that involve all the organs of government/administrative, economic, political and social apparatuses - the Legislature, the executive—and the Judiciary. Nigeria's so-called democratic system (democratism?) is going berserk. Internal democracy, a paramount and an indispensable requirement of democratic governance is lacking. There are lots of political alienations and assassinations as well as the political utility and manipulation of religion, ethnicity, tribalism, regionalism, sectionalism, gangsterism and brigandage. As the quality and standard of elections for peoples' representations have plummeted, so have the number of election petitions risen astronomically. Even, in established democracies, there are issues yet to be resolved. At the international level, the United Nations Organization (UNO) for example, is not totally democratic. In the same vein, sustainable transformation is faced with myriad of problematic issues that need coordination, mobilization and collective action to achieve profound and fundamental changes for inclusive societal development in all ramifications -political, economic, agricultural, cultural, medical, sociological, psychological, educational, and environmental and communication — to mention just a few among a host of others. What are the local, national, continental and global issues in democracy and sustainable transformation? What suggestions and policy options can be recommended to address such issues? This paper attempts to provide some answers within the limitations to which the writer is exposed.