INTRODUCTION

1. The armed forces of most countries serve as veritable tools through which national power is projected. Usually, the armed forces are created and organized along environmental and functional lines for the defence of territorial integrity and projection of national interests. The Armed Forces of Nigeria as established under Section 217 (1) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria comprise the NA, Nigerian Navy (NN) and the Nigerian Air Force (NAF). Of these 3, the Nigerian Army, which is the oldest, largest and most operationally experienced, is saddled with the responsibility of conducting ground battles in favour of Nigeria. It is therefore, quite natural that the study of the Armed Forces should begin with the NA.

2. NA has a rich history, spanning over a hundred years. The army has metamorphosed from foot-soldering at inception in the Nineteenth Century, to the present day mechanized and motorized formations. These transformations were at various times, in line with the threat perception of likely enemies by Federal Government of Nigeria. Furthermore, the Service has undergone several organizational changes in its force structure from pre-independence period to the present. The 2010 Order of Battle (ORBAT) which is the extant force structure, and the NA is gradually being reorganized on its 6 combat divisions structure, which is basically designed to enable the Service achieve its assigned roles, as a principal component of the Nigerian Armed Forces.
3. The 3 aspects of the NA under consideration in this presentation namely the history, roles and organization are inter-related. History of the NA presupposes a written account of its origin, evolution and development. The roles define the ultimate objective of the Service within the ambit of the Nigerian Armed Forces, while organization describes how the Service is arranged to meet its assigned roles. However, it should be noted that more detailed presentations on the composition, duties and responsibilities of the Combat Arms, Combat Support, Combat Service Support and Minor Services elements which are the constituent parts of the NA would be covered later.

**SCOPE**

4. The brief will cover:
   a. History of the NA.
   b. Roles of the NA.
   c. Organization of the NA.
   d. Chronicles of Command.

**HISTORY OF THE NIGERIAN ARMY**

**ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION**

5. The **NA** evolved from the early colonial para-military units established to strengthen Britain’s colonial rule and protect her economic interests in Nigeria. The earliest of these units consisted of 18 indigenes of Northern Nigeria
selected by Lt Glover of the Royal Navy into what was called the ‘Glover Hausa’ in 1863. The force which was used to mount punitive expeditions and protect British trade routes around Lagos became known as the ‘Lagos Constabulary in 1865. Others similar units were Royal Niger Constabulary Force in Northern Nigeria and the Niger Coast Protectorate Force in the South.

6. Towards the end of the Nineteenth Century, the British Government, for various reasons, developed active interest in West African affairs. This was against her previous stand of non-governmental participation or interference. In 1889, with a mandate from the British Government, Lord Frederick Lugard formed the incipient body of what in 1900, became the West African Frontier Force (WAFF), at Jebba. Northern Nigeria. By 1901, the new unit had expanded by absorbing Nigeria based elements of the Royal Niger Company which incorporated all para-military units in the other British West African dependencies; thus fully meriting its designation as WAFF.

7. All units in the WAFF were standardized after the integration, and organized into regiments in each of the British dependencies. Each regiment was seen as a territorial force, with the responsibility of ensuring the security of the territory to which it belonged. There was however, provision for collective assignment amongst regiments. In the territory of Nigeria there were two regiments; these were the Northern and Southern Regiments.

8. The Northern Regiment had two infantry battalions, one mounted battalion and two artillery batteries. The Southern Regiment comprised two
battalions – the first and second battalions. With the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Protectorates of Nigeria in 1914, the 2 regiments were integrated to form the Nigerian Regiment.

9. The Nigerian Regiment was renamed the Queens Own Nigerian Regiments (QONR), following the state visit of Queen Elizabeth II to Nigeria in 1956. Also, in the same year, the WAFF witnessed unprecedented regionalization and each military force in the British colonies in West Africa became independent of the other. As a result, the QONR became the Nigerian Military Force (NMF) later in 1956. As a prelude to Nigeria’s independence, the British Army Council relinquished control of the NMF to the Nigerian Government in June 1958. In 1960, when Nigeria became independent, the NMF became known as the Royal Nigerian Army (RNA). On attainment of the status of a republic in 1963 the RNA was re-designated as the NA.

**OPERATIONS**

10. The NA since inception has participated in a number of military Campaigns, Internal Security (IS) operations as well as Peace Support Operations (PSO). It is to be noted that some of these campaigns were under the auspices of the British authority in pursuance of their colonial interests. Let us briefly look at these operations one after the other:

a. **Campaigns.** Some of the campaigns the NA has taken part in include:
(1) The Epe Expedition of 1863 carried out by the Lagos Constabulary.

(2) The Kumasi Expedition of 1873 – 74 by the Royal Niger Constabulary.


(4) The Brass River Operation of 1895. (Conducted by the Niger Coast Constabulary).

(5) The Benin Campaign 1897.

(6) The Second Kumasi Expedition of 1900.

(7) The siege of Yola, Kontagora, Bauchi, Sokoto, Kano and Arochukwu (by the Northern and Southern regiments from 1902 to 1903, under overall direction of WAFF).

(8) The First and Second World Wars. (1914-18 and 1939-45).


b. **Internal Security Operations.** The NA has also participated in a number of Internal Security Operations. Some of these include:


(2) Western Region Political Crises – 1965.


(5) Political crisis following the annulment of 12 Jun 1993 elections. Op SECOND 11 etc.


(11) The on-going Jos/NE Operation (Op RESTORE ORDER).

(12) Op PULO SHIELD.

c. **Peace Support Operations.** One of the areas in which the NA has excelled and carved a niche for itself is in PSOs. Since inception, the NA has participated in the following PSOs amongst others:


(2) IS and Training Mission in Tanganyika – 1964.


(4) UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) – (1978 – 1982).


(9) UN Verification Mission in Angola (UNAVEM) I & II.


(11) UN Mission for Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO).

(12) The UN Iraq-Kwuait Observer Mission (UNIKOM).


(15) UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) – 2003 – date).

(16) UN Observer Mission in Cote d’Ivore (2004 till date).

(17) UN Observer Mission in Sudan (2000 till date).

(18) The UN/African Union Mission In Darfur in Sudan (2007-date).

**ROLES OF THE NA**

11. The roles and tasks assigned the NA are based on the National Defence Policy. This presentation will not delve into the key features of the National Defence Policy. However, it is important to outline the defence priorities
assigned to the Armed Forces by the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The defence priorities are:

a. **Priority 1.** To defend the territorial integrity of Nigeria.

b. **Priority 2.** To deter attack by any nation and should deterrence fail, to bring any war to a rapid conclusion in favour of Nigeria.

c. **Priority 3.** To provide aid to civil power.

d. **Priority 4.** To aid sub-regional, regional, global peace initiatives and or any other arrangements or agreements that may be entered into from time to time by the Federal Government of Nigeria.

12. Bearing in mind these priorities, the statutory responsibility assigned the NA demands that the Service is combat ready to undertake the full spectrum of land operations for the defence and security of Nigeria. The NA is therefore task organized to carry out any mission related to the above objectives either independently or in conjunction with the other Services.

**ORGANIZATION OF THE NIGERIAN ARMY**

13. Before we examine the outline organization of the NA, let me reiterate that the force structure subsisting for the NA is the ORBAT 96. It was fashioned out in 1996 and only certain aspects of the ORBAT have been implemented. This is the seperations of corps headquarters from schools. Meanwhile, the ORBAT is currently under review.
14. The NA is organized into an Headquarters (AHQ), Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), Combat Arms formations, Combat Support Arms, Combat Service support Arms and Minor Services. These are also a number of Corps and Schools.

**ARMY HEADQUARTERS**

15. The AHQ is organized into the Office of the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), the 6 Departments and an Army Headquarter Garrison.

a. **Office of the COAS.** The Office of the Chief of Army Staff is at the pinnacle of the NA. Directives and decision-making on the day to day functioning of the NA emanate from this office. The office has the final authority on all issues concerning the daily superintendence of the NA. At the head of this office is the COAS.

b. **Department of Army Policy and Plans.** The Department of Army Policy and Plans (DAPP) is the hub around which all the activities of the NA rotate. It could aptly be described as the ‘horse that pulls the cart’. It is the centre of the wheel of the general staff activities. It is also the ‘Think Tank’ and coordinator of all AHQ Principal Staff Branches. At the head of the Department of Army Policy and Plans is the Chief of Policy and Plans (COPP ‘A’).
c. **Department of Army Training and Operations.** The Department of Army Training and Operations (DATOPs) is responsible for the training, planning and directing all NA operations. It is also responsible for the continuous assessment and threat evaluation for all overall national defence of Nigeria. In addition, the Department is responsible for the planning and conduct of PSOs. The department is headed by the Chief of Training/Operations Army (CTOPs ‘A’).

d. **Department of Army Logistics.** The Department of army Logistics (DOAL) is responsible for all Logistics matters in the NA. It also supervises all quartering services of the NA and manages NA estates. The Department is headed by the Chief of Logistics (COLOG).

e. **Department of Army Administration.** The Department of Army Administration (DOAA) is responsible for the welfare, discipline, employment and human resource management for the NA. The Department has 2 major directorates – Directorate of Manpower Planning (DMP) and the Directorate of Personnel Services (DPS). It also controls a number of other minor directorates and units. The Department is headed by the Chief of Administration Army (COA ‘A’).

f. **The Military Secretary Army.** The Department of Military Secretary Army is the link between all officers of the NA and the Office of the COAS. It is responsible for matters relating to commission, promotion conversion, appointment, inter-corps transfer, extension of service and
retirement of NA officers. This is done in accordance with the career planning policies as may be directed by the COAS or the Army Council. The Department is headed by Military Secretary Army (MS ‘A’).

g. **Department of Army Standards and Evaluation.** The Department of Army Standards and Evaluation (DASE) was formerly the youngest of the departments in AHQ. It is responsible for the enforcement of standards in accordance with NA establishment and procedures, safety and evaluation of all NA scheduled activities. The Department is headed by the Chief of Army Standards and Evaluation (CASE).

h. **Department of Army Civil Military Affairs.** The newest of the Departments established in Dec 10. It serves as an interface between the NA and civil populace. It oversees the civil-military activities necessary for the success of the military in a democracy by underscoring the fundamentality of civil-military affairs as a strategic national institution. The Department is headed by the Chief of Army Civil-Military Affairs (CACMA).

i. **Army Headquarters Garrison.** The AHQ Garrison is responsible for the overall administration of the personnel of AHQ. It coordinates AHQ activities such as sports, weapons meetings, training programmes and daily activities. The AHQ Garrison is headed by Commander AHQ Garrison.
**TRAINING AND DOCTRINE COMMAND**

16. The NA Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) is responsible for streamlining training activities in the NA in line with the training policy thrust. It is charged with the responsibility of conducting researches into manpower development and using training institutions to satisfy vital educational and training needs. It is also responsible for the provision of training manuals, conduct of NA examinations and the evaluation of field training exercises. Headquarters TRADOC is headed by the Commander TRADOC.

**COMBAT FORMATIONS**

17. Operationally, the organization of the NA is based on the establishment of 5 combat divisions and a brigade of guards. The combat divisions are sited and organized to among other considerations; provide effective command and control of the formations and units within their command, simplify the logistic support requirements and to make the best use of resources available from the other 2 Services in joint operations. The current 5 divisions are:

a. 1 Div – Div HQ at Kaduna.
b. 2 Div – Div HQ at Ibadan.
c. 3 Div – Div HQ at Jos.
d. 81 Div – Div HQ at Lagos.
e. 82 Div – Div HQ at Enugu.

f. Guards Bde – FCT.

CORPS AND SCHOOLS

18. The NA is also organized into Corps and Schools. The main objective is to facilitate the provision of corps-specific training to meet the corps roles and responsibilities to the NA. The Corps are classified into 4 basic categories. These are Combat Arms comprising the Infantry and Armour; the Combat Support Arms which consist of the Artillery, Engineers and Signals, and the Combat Service Support Corps made up of the Corps of Supply and Transport, the Medical Corps, the Ordnance Corps and the Electrical and mechanical Engineers Corps. The last category is the Minor ‘A’ and ‘Q’ Services. The A services include the NACMP, NAIC, NAEC, Chaplain, NAFC, NABC, PT, APR AND Legal Services. The Minor Q Services are the NAE (Resources), NA Signal Dispatch and Postal Services and the NA Post Exchange (NAPEX).