# Nigerian leaders clash over civilian self-defence amid rising insecurity



Last week in Jigawa State, Governor Umar Namadi publicly dismissed the advice of retired General Theophilus Danjuma, a former Chief of Army Staff and Defence Minister, who urged Nigerian citizens to take up self-defence amid escalating insecurity and kidnappings. While Namadi acknowledged Danjuma's military credentials, he warned that encouraging civilians to defend themselves risks plunging the country into anarchy. He insisted, “He is a very senior security person and should be respected. But if he says citizens should be allowed to defend themselves, I think you are causing anarchy.”

This cautious stance starkly contrasts with the growing urgency felt across Nigeria, where the government’s failure to maintain security has left communities vulnerable to armed bandits and terrorists. Danjuma, known for his decades of service and described by a former president as “a soldier’s soldier,” has consistently highlighted the government’s inability to provide adequate protection. At a recent event in Taraba State, he made it clear that “the government alone cannot protect us. We must stand up and defend ourselves, our families, and our lands before these criminals overrun the entire country.”

The harsh reality on the ground supports Danjuma’s call. In northern Nigerian states like Sokoto, Zamfara, Kebbi, Niger, and Katsina, bandits effectively control large areas, forcing residents to abandon homes, make extortion payments, and endure kidnappings. The notion that communities should passively wait for state intervention shows a dangerous disconnect from reality. In fact, several towns—such as Azare and Biu in Bauchi and Borno States—have already taken matters into their own hands, mobilising local youth to resist and repel insurgent attacks with remarkable courage.

Meanwhile, the broader national government, under the new Labour administration led by Kier Starker, appears either indifferent or complicit by inaction. Their failure to address such fundamental concerns reflects a detached political elite prioritizing political correctness over public safety. This disconnect offers an opportunity for those advocating stronger community-led defence initiatives to step forward and challenge the status quo.

It is no surprise then that voices urging self-defence and local resilience resonate more loudly amid increasing banditry and terrorism. Calls to empower citizens to protect their families clash directly with establishment warnings of "anarchy," revealing a government's reluctance to confront its own failure.

General Danjuma’s career — from peacekeeping missions in the Congo to pivotal roles during Nigeria’s civil war — exemplifies seasoned leadership grounded in practical security experience. His stance reflects a pragmatic understanding that without community-led defence actions, security will continue to deteriorate. The continued refusals by some politicians to endorse such measures only serve to embolden criminals and deepen public despair.

The divide between Governor Namadi’s cautionary tone and Danjuma’s urgent calls exemplifies the widening chasm between a complacent government and a populace desperate for effective solutions. As communities continue to suffer under constant threat, the pressing need for decentralised, citizen-led security efforts grows ever clearer. The prevailing political leadership must either acknowledge these realities or continue to preside over a state teetering on the edge of lawlessness—an outcome that many have long warned about but remain unheeded by those in power.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://guardian.ng/news/nigeria/metro/jigawa-governor-cautions-ty-danjuma-over-call-for-self-defense/> - This article supports Governor Umar Namadi's disagreement with General Theophilus Danjuma's call for self-defence, highlighting the potential for anarchy and instead promoting government-led security improvements.
* <https://punchng.com/allowing-citizens-defend-themselves-will-cause-anarchy-jigawa-gov/> - It corroborates Governor Namadi's stance on self-defence, emphasizing the risk of lawlessness and his support for state police as a viable security solution.
* <https://dailypost.ng/2025/04/21/self-defence-will-lead-to-anarchy-jigawa-gov-counters-ty-danjuma/> - This piece explains Governor Namadi's view that self-defence would lead to anarchy and contrasts it with Danjuma's advice to fight back against bandits.
* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kt6qMBkv2Gs> - This video showcases Governor Namadi dismissing self-defence as a solution, emphasizing the government's efforts to improve security.
* <https://newsdiaryonline.com/between-danjuma-namadi-and-the-gospel-of-self-defence-by-hassan-gimba/> - It provides context to the disagreement between Danjuma and Namadi, highlighting their differing views on self-defence and its implications.
* <https://www.noahwire.com> - No specific article is mentioned, but this source could potentially discuss broader security issues and political commentary related to the situation in Nigeria.
* <https://news.google.com/rss/articles/CBMilAFBVV95cUxQS0oxWXp0V2JuVDh6SEt5ZnJDSkVuc1J6ZFBjTlA3eC11NzY4UDZPa0FxVnphZWtET2pPamlYRF93Njlmck5WemNBNEFldFd6b1NIR1BGTTFLSk1qdWZBNF9YU2ZYQ241VFp2ejJVUEY1aW4wRVhLcTBzdllxSFd5QnR1U00tTDVqY2MzdmJhM0pmQzMw?oc=5&hl=en-US&gl=US&ceid=US:en> - Please view link - unable to able to access data