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Resistance to Boko Haram: Civilian Joint Task Forces in North-Eastern Nigeria

Daniel AGBIBOA

Abstract. *The vast bulk of youth studies on Africa are skewed towards the view of youth as enfants terribles and 'coming anarchy,' with little or no attempt to understand and explain ways in which youth have created and continue to create alternative lives for themselves under conditions of great adversity. Such popular narratives - while rooted in ideas of youth idleness, ennui and engagement in crime - are mute on the considerable social agency and potential shown by Africa's youth, as well as their legitimate grievances against alienating and corrupt governments that have dashed their promise of maturity. Drawing on a case study from northern, especially northeastern, Nigeria, my overriding aim in this article is to show how a cohort of youth – the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) or yan gora ('men with sticks') – from this impoverished region are coping with the violent campaign of Boko Haram and 'government haram,' especially in ways that both underscore their social agency and their capacity to make a difference in their local communities. A key argument emerging from the analysis suggests that youth are not simply victims or perpetrators of terror, but also active agents of counter-terrorism in their local communities. In making this case, the article draws on a range of sources, including press materials, formal and informal interactions with affected Nigerians, and cumulative observation of unfolding events in northeastern Nigeria.*

Keywords: *Boko Haram, Civilian Joint Task Force, Youth, Nigeria, Insurgency.*

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Introduction

Despite the disillusionment and criminalisation of the young... the fact should also be underlined that *young people do not simply reproduce state violence... but rather find ways of appropriating it and subverting it* (Argenti, 2002:151, 146; my emphasis).

A major lacuna in the field of youth studies is the inattention to the positive contribu-

tions of youth in society. Although the view that youth should not be merely conceived as agents (or victims) of violence is belaboured in the literature, this view appears to be a mere addendum, or a sort of *a priori* disclaimer. A few authors have highlighted the critical role youth can play in processes of peacebuilding. In *Gettin' My Word Out*, for example, Leonisa Ardizzone (2007) examines how youth activists respond to injustice, counteract violence, practice social responsibility, and form collaborative networks of individuals and organisations. In *Youth Peacebuilding: Music, Gender and Change*, Lesley Pruitt (2013) examines music as a tool for engaging youth in peacebuilding activities in Australia and Northern Ireland, countries that appear overly peaceful, but where young people still face structural violence at the community level. Stephanie Schwartz's *Youth in Post-Conflict Reconstruction: Agents of Change* addresses a critical issue of conflict reoccurrence and recidivism of violence in post-conflict societies. Yet, the role of youth as agents of counter-terrorism in sub-Saharan Africa, particularly in West Africa, remains unexplored.

Drawing on a case study of the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) – or *yan gora* ('men with sticks') – in the restive northeast of Nigeria, I seek to expand the African youth literature by providing cases of positive contributions of youth to counter-terrorism activities in their local communities. In so doing, I take up issue with skewed narratives that portray Africa's youth as hopeless 'troublemakers' and *enfants terribles*. I argue that such popular narratives — while rooted in ideas of youth idleness, ennui, and engagement in crime — are mute on the considerable social agency and potential shown by Africa's youth, as well as their legitimate grievances against alienating and corrupt governments that have dashed their promise of maturity. Thus, a key argument emerging from the analysis suggests that youth are not merely victims or perpetrators of terror but also *active agents* of domestic counter-terrorism efforts in their local communities.

The rest of the article is divided into five parts. The first aims to rethink the dominant youth narrative. The second part looks at the violent campaign of Boko Haram in northern, especially northeastern, Nigeria. The third part focuses on state security responses, and popular reactions, to the Boko Haram insurgency. The fourth part investigates how local youth are putting up a vigorous resistance to the Boko Haram menace in their local communities, with particular attention to the Civilian Joint Task Force. The fifth and final part concludes with some recommendations.

Rethinking the youth narrative

'Youth' is a highly context-dependent and fluid signifier. In Africa, there is a fluctuation surrounding the age by which someone is defined as youth (as Figure 1 illustrates). In the West, youth is generally identified with a biological age group – one that is understood as a transitional phase when a person moves from a time of dependence (childhood) to interdependence (adulthood). In Africa, however, youth is never fully reducible to chro-

nology. In fact, the majority of young Africans are defined in terms of social expectations and economic responsibilities. In Sierra Leone, for example, the period of *youthhood* is over when one marries. Boys tend to marry later than girls because of the time it takes them to acquire the money and status required for marriage. Thus, boys remain youth for much longer than girls. Africa's youth are therefore in danger of an 'indefinitely prolonged' youth status, as their efforts to become adults are thwarted (Cruise-O'Brien, 1996: 58). The lack of gainful jobs in many African countries, including Nigeria, pushes an increasing number of youth into a criminal-political economy. This reinforces Patrick Murphy's (2003: 64) 'revolutionary' and 'delinquent' youth models – the former views youth as rebelling against political and socio-economic marginalisation, while the latter views youth not as 'revolutionary idealists' but as 'alienated opportunists exploiting the economic spoils of social turmoil.' Faced with shrinking space to 'grow up' in a traditional sense (that is, to secure a job, get married, start a family, rent a house, support their relatives, and gain social recognition as adults), young men across Africa are often left with violence as the most readily available way of 'proving' their manhood. Thus, Africa's 'youth crisis' should be seen as 'the upshot of the failure of capacious young cohorts to "accomplish" adulthood' (Smith, 2011: 97).

Table 1: Definitions of Youth Age, the Age of Majority¹, and the Age of The Right to Vote in Commonwealth Countries in Africa

Country	Youth age	Majority age	Voting age
Botswana	12-29	19	21
Ghana	15-35	18	18
Malawi	14-25	18	18
Namibia	15-30	21	18
Seychelles	15-30	18	18
Sierra Leone	15-30	18	18
Tanzania	15-35	18	18
Zambia	15-25	21	18
Uganda	18-30	18	18
South Africa	15-35	21	18
Lesotho	12-35	21	18
Zimbabwe	15-30	18	18
Nigeria	12-30	18	18
Swaziland	12-30	21	18
The Gambia	12-30	18	18
Kenya	15-35	18	18
Mozambique	18-35	18	18
Mauritius	14-25	18	18

Source: (Chigunta, 2002:3).

1 The age at which most civil rights are accorded to young people (United Nations 1999, cited in Chigunta, 2002:3).

The field of youth studies is awash with narratives that are heavily skewed towards criminalising 'Africa's restless youth' (Gavin, 2007), especially their propensity to violence and 'rebellion' (Waller, 2006). In his controversial essay 'The Coming Anarchy,' Robert Kaplan (1994: 3) compared West Africa's youth to 'loose molecules in a very unstable social fluid... clearly on the verge of igniting.' Yet such mainstream image of youth as troublemakers need not merely be cast in the negative light; it can also imply 'the productive unsettling of dominant epistemic regimes under the heat of desire, frustration, or anger' (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2011: 268). Contrast, for example, the child soldiers of Sierra Leone, the very symbol of civil disintegration, with the heroic 'young lions' of South Africa, who were harbinger of democracy and played a central role in countering the terrors of apartheid. Another example is post-war Sierra Leone which has seen an upsurge in self-organised social networks, institutions and business cooperatives among youth, as the example of the motorbike taxi riders illustrates. Through these creative ways, Sierra Leonean youths are assuming greater control over their lives, bringing about sustainable change to their situations, and contributing to broader nation-building (Denov, 2010). The key point here is that youth can stand for many things at once: 'for the terrors of the present, the errors of the past, the prospect of a future' (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2011).

While the popular discourse of 'youthhood' in Africa as a problematic transitional period, clearly demarcated from adulthood, tends to be couched in, and defined by, 'fixed and consolidated power arrangements' (Denov & Maclure, 2006: 75), the social theorist Michel Foucault (1981: 71) reminds us that prevailing discourses are fluid and not unassailable: 'We must make allowance for the complex and unstable process whereby discourse can be a stumbling block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy.' In Nigeria, youth resistance and opposing strategy tends to occur in hostile socio-economic environments (such as northern Nigeria and the oil-rich Niger Delta) where unemployment and poverty are rife (Agbibo, 2013a, b). As Wyn and Dwyer (1999: 14) argue, 'where structured pathway do not exist, or are rapidly being eroded, individual agency is increasingly important in establishing patterns... which give positive meaning to lives.' Indeed, the resilience and social agency of youth, especially the emergence of ingenious youthful entrepreneurs, is one that is becoming increasingly evident across West Africa and the Sahel. In their paper entitled 'Reflections of Youth: From the Past to the Postcolony,' Comaroff and Comaroff (2011: 277) consider ways in which youthful entrepreneurs in West Africa are bypassing or transcending modernist modes of production. Drawing on examples from the Sahel, they invite readers to consider:

The burgeoning "bush economies" of Cameroon and Chad where "market boys" cross borders, change passports, trade currencies, and traffic in high-risk cargo like guns and drugs; in so doing, they invent fresh ways of getting rich on the margins of global markets. Or consider the ferociously escalating teenage diamond trade

– another amalgam of danger, desire and deregulation – that provisions armies in West and Central Africa, setting up innovative configurations of libertarian commerce, and profit. Or observe the young Mouride men from Senegal who have taken to translocal enterprise with such energy that they talk of New York as “a suburb of Dakar”; their remittances finance reconstruction of urban neighbourhoods at home, transform local power relations, and, concomitantly, highlight the dwindling capacity of the nation-state to sustain its infrastructure (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2011: 277).

The above examples demonstrate that Africa’s youth are making positive contributions and asserting their social agency in their local communities under conditions of great adversity. Unfortunately, such active youth engagement often go unnoticed and are yet to penetrate mainstream literature, which is still directed by narrow perspectives of Africa’s youth-as-trouble and advances a dualistic framework that views Africa’s youth as *either* makers *or* breakers. In the next sections, I offer an alternative perspective to this popular narrative through the lens of local youth resistance to the threat of Boko Haram in northern Nigeria.

The Problem of Boko Haram in Northern Nigeria

‘Boko Haram’ (‘Western education is sin’) is a colloquial name that was ascribed to the jihadist group led by Muhammed Yusuf and his successor Abubakar Shekau because of the content of their doctrine and preaching against Western education (Hausa: *makaran-tun boko*). However, Boko Haram has rejected this ascription and, instead, propagates the official name *Jama’at ahl al-sunna li-’l da’wa wa-’l-jihad* (Sunnis for Proselytization and Armed Struggle). Muhammed Yusuf (1970-2009), born on 29 January 1970 in Yobe State, founded Boko Haram in 2002 in Maiduguri, the capital city of Borno state, north-eastern Nigeria, with the goal of establishing sharia government under the Senator Ali Modu Sheriff (Governor of Borno, 2003-2011). Yusuf established a following as a *malam* (teacher) and preacher from about 2002, taking a very hard line against secularism and Western influence (Higazi, 2015). Yusuf led Boko Haram until he suffered extrajudicial death in the hands of Nigerian security forces following sectarian violence that broke out in July 2009 and during which an estimated 1,000 Boko Haram members were killed (Agbiboa, 2012, 2014). Before the 2009 security crackdown on Boko Haram, there was significant contact between the group and Borno State government. For example, Alhaji Buji Foi, former Chairman of Kaga local government in Borno and the Religious Affairs Commissioner in Borno when Ali Modu Sheriff was governor, was a member and sponsor of Boko Haram (Mustapha, 2014). The police in Maiduguri executed Foi during the 2009 uprising.

Yusuf established a religious complex in his hometown that included a mosque and a school where poor families from across Nigeria and from neighbouring countries en-

rolled their children. However, the centre had ulterior political goals and soon it was also working as a recruiting ground for future jihadists (Agbibo, 2012). Boko Haram thus includes members who came from neighbouring Chad and Niger and speak only Arabic. The sect was able to attract more than 280,000 members across northern Nigeria and these two countries (Umar, 2011). Boko Haram gained lots of support among the poor and alienated Northern population. This is not unrelated to the fact that Boko Haram, under Mohammed Yusuf, made education and informal jobs available to its marginalised members of the community. Governor of the Borno State, Kashim Shettima, gives us some insight into the appeal of Boko Haram. Shettima argues that despite its misguided ideology, Boko Haram's slain leader Mohammed Yusuf,

retained the loyalty of his supporters by providing one meal a day to each of his disciples. He also had a youth empowerment scheme, under which he helped his disciples to go into petty trading and wheelbarrow pushing. He also arranged cheap marriages between sect members, which enabled many of them to marry, which gave them personal dignity and self-worth (cited in Mustapha, 2012).

A recent analysis of 144 imprisoned Boko Haram members shows that the median age of the group's members is thirty years (United States Institute of Peace [USIP], 2014). This youthful membership is not surprising if we recall that in Nigeria, 'youth' has come to occupy 'a category of risk, it labels a dangerous, insurgent and unpredictable force which threatens the social and political fabric' (Pratten, 2012). Boko Haram's foot soldiers are also drawn from unemployed youth (graduates) and street children (*almajiri*) in northern Nigeria. Recent reports have also revealed that some members in the Nigerian security sector and the government have strong links to Boko Haram. In January 2012, for example, former Nigerian President, Goodluck Jonathan, claimed that 'Some [Boko Haram members] are also in the armed forces, the police and other security agencies' (*Punch*, 2015). Shortly after this rather bizarre claim, in February 2012, the commissioner of police in charge of criminal investigations in Abuja, Zakari Bui, was dismissed from the Nigerian police force for his role in the escape of Boko Haram suspect Kabiru Sokoto. Sokoto is believed to have masterminded the bombing of St. Theresa's Catholic Church in Madalla, Niger State, in which over 40 people died. Sokoto's escape also led to the sacking of the former Inspector General of Police, Hafiz Ringim (*Elombah*, 2012).

Boko Haram's initial doctrinal slant came from the Salafi-inspired reformist group *Jama't Izalat al Bida'a wa Iqamat as Sunna* (Arabic for 'The Society of Removal of Innovation and Reestablishment of the Sunna' - JIBWIS, also widely known as *Izala*). This movement is a *Wahhabi*, anti-Sufi movement established in 1978 in Kaduna by Sheikh Ismaila Idris (1936-2000). It was one of the fast-growing Islamic reform movements in Nigeria, shaped by the teachings of Sheikh Abubakar Gumi, who was Grand Qadi of northern Nigeria. *Izala's* main purpose was to 'purify' Islam from Sufi mysticism and other sup-

posed innovations (*bida'a*) (Umar, 1993: 154-178).² Boko Haram is vehemently opposed to what it sees as a Western-based incursion that threatens traditional values, beliefs, and customs among Muslim communities in northern Nigeria. Yusuf told the BBC in 2009, 'Western-style education is mixed with issues that run contrary to our beliefs in Islam.' Elsewhere, the leader maintained that 'Our land was an Islamic state before the colonial masters turned it to a *kufir* (unbelief) land. The current system is contrary to true Islamic beliefs' (Badar, 2014: 41).

Since July 2009, Boko Haram's message has been decidedly one of *jihad*. This *jihad* seeks to destroy the Nigerian state and anything not Islamic. This includes Christianity in northern Nigeria, which is why so many Christians have been killed and displaced during the insurgency. In addition, any Muslim who opposes Boko Haram was perceived as an apostate or hypocrite (*takfir*). This is why the predominantly Muslim inhabitants of places outside Boko Haram's control, within northern Nigeria, are viewed as justifiable targets for attack. On 28 November 2014, for example, hundreds of people were killed during Friday prayers by bombs launched by Boko Haram fighters (Mustapha, 2014).

Why Boko Haram Rebel

Boko Haram became a full-fledged insurgency following confrontations between the group and Bauchi State's security service, charged with enforcing a new law that required motorcyclists to wear crash helmets. Members of Boko Haram reneged on this law. This led to a violent clash between the state enforcement agencies and the group, which left 17 Boko Haram members injured. Boko Haram mobilized its members for reprisal attacks which led to the deaths of several policemen and civilians. The riot was temporarily quelled in mid-2009 after Nigerian forces captured and killed the Boko Haram leader, Mohammed Yusuf. Following the death of Yusuf under police custody, and the arrest of hundreds of Boko Haram members, the group went underground, but only to recuperate (Agbibo, 2012). Yusuf's death compelled Boko Haram to 'transform itself into a network of underground cells with a hidden leadership – a situation that today makes any military solution illusory' (Marchal, 2012: 3). Boko Haram soon announced its re-emergence with more advanced tactics and sophisticated attacks, including the bombing of police headquarters and UN building in Abuja in 2011. In the first ten months of 2012 alone more than 900 people died in attacks perpetrated by the group - more than in 2010 and 2011 combined (Agbibo, 2012). Recently, Boko Haram's *modus operandi* has involved the use of *gunmen* on motorbikes, assassinating policemen, politicians, or anyone critical of the group, including Muslim clerics who disclose information regarding their whereabouts to state security services (Human

2 *Izala* are now strongly against Boko Haram and in that respect they are a bulwark against the *jihadists*, in Nigeria and Niger.

Rights Watch, 2012). In particular, suicide bombing has become a major strategy and trademark of Boko Haram. A particularly disturbing practice is the use of young children (in several cases, the children used are aged 10 or even younger) to carry out bombings – they are indoctrinated, and then bombs are strapped to their bodies and detonated by the children themselves.

For many Boko Haram members, the extrajudicial killing of their founder, Yusuf, served to foment pre-existing animosities toward the Nigerian government and its security forces. In the group's bid to avenge the death of its founder, almost every individual and group outside its network was impacted, particularly the Nigerian police and army. Boko Haram's most frequent targets have been police stations, patrols, and individual policemen at home or in public including those who were off-duty or retired (Agbibo, 2013a, b). They have used petrol bombs, improvised explosive devices, and armed assaults in these violent attacks (Forest, 2012). In 2012, Boko Haram launched several attacks against police officers, Christians, and perceived moderate or liberal Muslims who allegedly cooperated with the government or opposed the will of the group. Among the demands of the group are the release of its imprisoned members and the prosecution of those responsible for the killing of Yusuf.

Beyond this 'psychology of vengeance,' the extent of relative poverty and inequality in the north has created a fertile ground for the growth of Boko Haram. Isa (2010: 329), for example, argues that Boko Haram communities are wrecked by chronic 'poverty, deteriorating social services and infrastructure, educational backwardness, rising numbers of unemployed graduates, massive numbers of unemployed youths, dwindling fortunes in agriculture... and the weak and dwindling productive base of the northern economy.' For Mustapha (2012), 'Boko Haram is the symptom of the failure of nation-building and democratic politics in Nigeria. It is the misguided cry of a disgruntled youth crushed by the socio-economic system on the one hand and then repressed by the state on the other.' It is this perceived injustice that has de-legitimated the modern secular state in Nigeria in the eyes of Boko Haram members, and made Sharia law increasingly attractive to a large section of the northern population (Mustapha, 2014: 168). Furthermore, the state of alienation from the secular state explains the emergence of 'God's warriors' dedicated to cleansing society through Sharia, as a divine 'cure' to corruption and injustice, and jihad as a legitimate method, embracing death in the process (*ibid*). The power of this doctrinal commitment to 'God's work' may explain why individuals, who are not themselves poor, are nevertheless drawn to Boko Haram. For example, 'children of notable public figures, including a nephew of the then serving Governor of Yobe State, a son of the secretary to Borno State Government, and five children of a local wealthy contractor' all joined Boko Haram at its inception (Mustapha, 2014: 168).

When Mustapha Umar, the suspected Boko Haram member, did not die in his suicide mission to bomb a plaza housing the offices of some newspapers in Kaduna in April

2012, he was reported to have wept bitterly over his failure to die during the mission. Umar reportedly told Nigeria police he 'was unhappy because not dying with victims of the attack had denied him the opportunity to make heaven' (Chiedozie, 2013). What this suggests is that the motivation for Islamist extremism may not lie in immediate economic deprivation or religious indoctrination, but from perverse 'rational' pursuit of 'an afterlife consumption motive' or the search for assurance and security in a changing world (Mustapha, 2014: 168). As the Governor of Borno State, Kashim Shettima, argues:

For me, there are two major factors that drive the Boko Haram sect, which are spiritual belief and economic desires. Those with spiritual beliefs are led into believing that when they kill, they obtain rewards from Allah and the rewards translate into houses in paradise. When they are killed, they automatically die as martyrs and go to paradise straight away. In other words, death is the beginning of their pleasure. Then, whoever they target to kill is an infidel and will go to hell. They mostly target security personnel, government officials and politicians. They also target residents who they assume support government and security agencies or do not share their ideology of being opposed to western education... One dangerous thing about their ideology is their belief that when they attack a gathering or a community, any righteous person in the sight of God, who dies as a result of their attack, will go to paradise, which means they would have assisted the person to go to paradise in good time by their actions, and any infidel killed by their attack will go to hell, which to them is what he or she deserves and no regret for his death. This is the spiritual aspect that drives the sect, to the best of my understanding (Abah and Idris, 2014).

State Responses and Popular Reactions to Boko Haram

The Nigerian state has responded to the Boko Haram crisis with both a 'soft-hand' and a 'heavy-hand,' two approaches best understood as running concurrently rather than sequentially. The soft-handed approach has involved an attempt to engage Boko Haram members in political negotiations and/or dialogue. In April 2013, for example, former Nigerian President, Goodluck Jonathan, established a 26 member amnesty Committee on Dialogue and Peaceful Resolution of Security Challenges in the North, headed by Nigerian Special Duties Minister Kabiru Tanimu and comprised of former and current government officials, religious authorities, and human rights activists. This committee had a three-month mandate to try to convince Boko Haram to surrender its arms in exchange for a state pardon and social integration. However, Boko Haram leader, Shekau, responded to the amnesty entreaties by saying that his group had done no wrong and that an amnesty would not be applicable to them, arguing that it was the Nigerian government committing the atrocities (Chiles, 2013). In a video released on May 13, 2013, Shekau vowed not to cease his group's violent campaigns to establish an Islamic state in Nigeria (IRIN, 2013). A week after Boko Haram's amnesty rejection, the

group launched two devastating attacks. In the first attack, members of Boko Haram, disguised in Nigerian military uniforms, driving buses and machine gun-mounted trucks, laid siege to the town of Bama, Borno State, killing 55 people, mostly police and security forces, and freeing over 100 prison inmates. In the second attack only a few days later, Boko Haram members killed 53 people and burnt down 13 villages in central Nigeria's Benue State where violent confrontations between pastoralists and nomads had been commonplace (Agbiboa, 2013d). Following the attacks, President Jonathan announced that, 'What we are facing is not just militancy or criminality, but a rebellion and insurgency by terrorist groups which pose a very serious threat to national unity and territorial integrity.' Jonathan further stated that, 'it would appear that there is a systematic effort by insurgents and terrorists to destabilize the Nigerian state and test our collective resolve' (Agbiboa, 2014).

Boko Haram's persistent violent campaign led the Nigerian president to revert to a hard approach, declaring a state of emergency on 15 May 2013 in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe – all three northern states where Boko Haram has been most active – in an attempt to restore order and reclaim control of the territories. Jonathan vowed to 'take all necessary action... to put an end to the impunity of insurgents and terrorists,' including the arrest and detention of suspects, assaults on Boko Haram hideouts, the lockdown of suspected Boko Haram enclaves, raids, and the arrests of anyone possessing illegal weapons' (IRIN, 2013). To this end, the government established a special Joint Task Force (JTF) and ordered 8,000 soldiers to the restive region in a direct military offensive against Boko Haram members, the largest military deployment since Nigeria's Civil War (1967-70). However, far too often, members of the JTF have been accused of killing innocent people in the name of counter-terrorism. In Borno State, for example, the JTF resorted to extra-legal killings, dragnet arrests, and intimidation of the hapless Borno residents (Human Rights Watch, 2012). As noted by Solomon (2012: 9) '[f]ar from conducting intelligence-driven operations, the JTF simply cordoned off areas and carried out house-to-house searches, at times shooting young men in these homes.' In a series of interviews with residents in the city of Maiduguri, Human Rights Watch reported that:

During raids in communities, often in the aftermath of Boko Haram attacks, members of the security forces have executed men in front of their families; arbitrarily arrested or beaten members of the community; burned houses, shops, and cars; stolen money while searching homes; and, in at least one case, raped a woman. [In addition] Government security agencies routinely hold suspects incommunicado without charge or trial in secret detention facilities and have subjected detainees to torture or other physical abuse. (Human Rights Watch, 2012: 58)

In a firefight between the JTF and Boko Haram in Baga, a village on Lake Chad near Nigeria's border with Cameroon, up to 187 people were allegedly killed, and 77 others

were injured (*Premium Times*, 2013). At least 2,000 houses, 64 motorcycles, and 40 cars were burnt in the wake of the attack (*ibid*). Notably, residents of Baga accused the JTF, not Boko Haram, of firing indiscriminately at civilians and setting fire to much of the fishing town (Chiles, 2013). This lends evidence to the view that the Nigerian state apparatus 'kills even more civilians than Boko Haram does' (Marchal, 2012: 1).

Both the soft and heavy-handed approaches of the Nigerian government have divided Nigerians along two opposing lines: those who support the use of coercion, and those who support conciliation. Advocates of the coercive approach argue that force rather than dialogue is more effective in dealing with terrorist organizations. As argued by a prominent Nigerian constitutional lawyer, Yahaya Mahmud, the Nigerian government had no choice but to take military actions against Boko Haram:

No government anywhere will allow a group to usurp part of its territorial sovereignty. The declaration of a state of emergency was necessitated by the constitutional obligation to restore a portion of Nigeria's territory taken over by [Boko Haram] which involves the suspension of constitutional provisions relating to civic rights. (Anyadike, 2012)

However, there is a legitimate concern that coercive responses is forcing Boko Haram to shift their bases and arena of violence, with grave consequences for Nigeria's neighbours. As Nigerian political scientist Kyari Tijani has pointed out, 'Boko Haram cannot face Nigerian troops in conventional war; the troop deployment to northern Borno means they will move out to other towns and cities with less military presence and launch guerrilla warfare' (Anyadike, 2012). In recent years, the conflict has become increasingly regionalised because Borno State – Boko Haram's birthplace and stronghold – shares borders with Cameroon, Chad and Niger, with long established economic, religious and ethnic ties across porous boundaries. By February 2015, soldiers from these three border countries were fighting in Borno, confronting Boko Haram in areas that the Nigerian military had retreated from. Predictably, there has been large-scale internal displacement of people, estimated at over one million by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and Nigeria's National Emergency Agency (NEMA). On 3 March 2015 UNHCR stated that 100,000 people had fled northeastern Nigeria into eastern Niger, 66,000 had fled to northern Cameroon, and 18,000 to western Chad (including 15,000 after the attack on Baga in January 2015) (UNHCR, 2015).

Youth Local Resistance to Boko Haram: the Civilian Joint Task Force

An underreported but fundamental aspect of the on-going Boko Haram counter-insurgency is the way in which frustrated youth (*yan gora*) in affected local communities in the northeast are exercising their considerable agency amidst on-going conflict. Armed with machetes and sticks, these local youth are mobilizing themselves against Boko Haram elements in their communities, complementing the counter-terrorism efforts of

the state's Joint Task Force (JTF) (which has now been disbanded and replaced with the army's 7th Infantry Division) and the Multinational Task Force (MJTF) through provision of combat support and intelligence gathering. Far from being lawless mobs, the *yan gora* function as community-based police forces. The emergence of anti-Boko Haram youth vigilantism in Maiduguri occurred from the grassroots, in reaction to the failure of the Nigerian military to protect civilians against Boko Haram. While the *yan gora* originated in acts of necessity undertaken in the face of relentless terror, their noble intentions also have a tenuous existence in the middle of endemic corruption, political factionalism, and electoral machinations that speckles the Nigerian political landscape. Most youth involved in the *yan gora* are largely teenagers without basic education. Some have lost their parents and siblings to Boko Haram attacks and are on a revenge mission. Others have been maimed and incapacitated for the rest of their lives in the process of fighting Boko Haram. Interviewed members of the *yan gora* say they were motivated to organise themselves because they had grown tired of being targeted by both Boko Haram and the state's JTF – in other words, many of these local youth – mostly young men – are caught between Boko Haram and 'government haram.' One member of the *yan gora* reported: 'We are into this to salvage our people from the Boko Haram who had killed our people, security operatives, and destroyed our economy.' Another member noted:

The army took us as the enemy... We didn't see them as here to protect us. [If there was a Boko Haram attack] they don't come on time, they arrest whoever they see, or open fire, or burn shops and houses in revenge... People were pressed to the wall, we needed to stand, to protect ourselves (cited in IRIN, 2014).

The impact of the CJTF is increasingly felt across northeastern Nigeria, but particularly in Maiduguri, the largest city of Borno state, where angry vigilante youth groups (comprising some 500 youths) – officially known as 'Civilian Joint Task Force' (CJTF) – are tracking down Boko Haram members in their communities, whom they turn in to state security forces or kill themselves. The CJTF was formed in Maiduguri in June 2013 and because of its numerical advantage and local knowledge, the CJTF quickly drove Boko Haram out of the city by identifying members house by house. The CJTF has since become regimented into sectors and sub-sectors, with Maiduguri and other hot spots they are defending having sectors and sub-sector leaders. CJTF members operate a number of checkpoints in Maiduguri where they conduct stop and search operations. In doing this, however, they expose themselves to attacks by Boko Haram. In June 2015, for example, a male suicide bomber sent by Boko Haram militants killed three civilians JTF and injured several others at a checkpoint near Maiduguri (*Sahara Reporters*, June 13, 2015).

According to the Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), the *yan gora* are the 'eyes and ears of the security forces... they are often the first responders to trouble' (IRIN, 2014). While armed with only rudimentary weapons such as sticks, knives, and

old rifles, the CJTF's local knowledge, and in some cases personal knowledge of Boko Haram, has helped them identify Boko Haram members in their local communities. In the process, the *yan gora* have helped in the improvement of civil-military relations. In fact, in some areas the *yan gora* fight alongside Nigerian soldiers and provide the military with local intelligence and manpower. However, the relationship between the CJTF and state security forces have not always been cordial, with reported cases of police brutality against some youth vigilantes. In 2014, many angry youth took to the streets chanting anti-military slogans in Hausa: *Sojoji ne Boko Hara, Soja oga Boko Haram* (translation: soldiers are the real Boko Haram; soldiers are the masters of Boko Haram). These youth were angry at soldiers who tried to shield five men who the *yan gora* had arrested. The protest resulted in the death of at least two members of the CJTF, as well as some injuries (Agbiboa, 2014).

The *yan gora* has recorded great success against Boko Haram since its formation in 2013. In March 2014, members of the CJTF killed at least 207 Boko Haram militants who stormed a military barracks and a neighbourhood of Maiduguri. In particular, the CJTF's cooperation with regular security forces has also helped deter attacks in Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State and push the Islamists out into more rural areas. In late 2014 the *yan gora* played a fundamental role in repelling multiple attacks on Konduga, for example, which is critical because the town stands between Maiduguri and Bama, the second city in Borno, which from September until March 2015 was controlled by Boko Haram. According to the Civilian JTF spokesperson and legal adviser, 'We are not going to be weary; we will intensify our efforts by ensuring that our communities are peaceful and the residents are free from attacks and molestation by the misguided insurgents' (*Nigerian Eye*, February 21, 2015).

Given its success in tracking down Boko Haram members, the CJTF has, itself, become a major target of Boko Haram's attacks. While the CJTF succeeded in Maiduguri, it was less so in other insurgency-affected areas. Attempts by the CJTF to carry out operations in some of these areas resulted in heavy casualties. For example, Boko Haram killed at least 100 *yan gora* in 2013 and twice as much in 2014. The *yan gora* were particularly susceptible to ambush and could not defend themselves without military assistance (even with) when heavily armed Boko Haram fighters launched concerted attacks on specific towns or villages. On 5-6 May 2014, Boko Haram attacked the town of Gambaru Ngala where they overpowered the *yan gora* and killed more than 300 people (BBC News Online, 13 May 2014). In January 2015, Boko Haram fighters killed hundreds of the inhabitants of Baga, targeting people of all ages and both sexes. The reason given in a video released by Boko Haram was that the Baga people had been cooperating with the Nigerian military. In June 2015, facts emerged on how hundreds of CJTF members in Borno State were killed while attempting to prevent bomb strapped Boko Haram insurgents from detonating their bombs in large crowds (*All Africa*, 30 June 2015). The

Bornu state political leadership in northern Nigeria have commended the efforts of the *yan gora* to protect their communities from Boko Haram killings, with the Nigerian president describing them as 'new heroes of the nation' (Agbiboa, 2014). According to Governor Kashim Shettima of Borno:

I have never been as proud of our youth in Borno State as much as I am today. The youth have since 2013 rose in firm defence of the good people of Borno State, and today, they have once again proved to all of us, that they have by playing complementary roles, taken our collective destiny in their hands and we are full of gratitude to them for their sacrifices that cannot be sufficiently rewarded (*Information Nigeria*, 2015).

In spite of the CJTF's success, many northern residents and observers have expressed concerns that the *yan gora* are 'hapless victims' and 'brewing trouble' which could transform into new militias or semi-criminal outfit if their activities are not regulated by the state. Some also fear that the actions of the CJTF are inciting Boko Haram to target civilians even more. In this respect, various questions have been raised: What will be the fate of the *yan gora* when the Boko Haram insurgency is degraded and or finally defeated? Will they join or be integrated into the Armed Forces of Nigeria? Will those of them that have been involved in numerous killings be rehabilitated and counselled and reintegrated back to the society? Will the State and Federal Government keep a record of those that participated in the struggle? Will they be compensated and assisted to start a new life? (Okoye, 2015). The popular images and questions surrounding the *yan gora* as 'heroes,' 'hapless victims' and 'brewing trouble' reveal the logic of opposite extremes and ideological norms of youthhood which combine to deny youth agency, as well as to exoticize, decontextualize and essentialize youth experiences (Denov, 2010: 13). In this way, the complexity of the everyday lived realities and actions of youth in northern Nigeria are lost. This is not to trivialise the apprehensions over the possible hijack of the *yan gora* by politicians and or religious extremists. For example, in the 2015 Nigerian elections some of the *yan gora* were mobilised as political thugs. Nonetheless, these growing anxieties should not detract from the current reality that concerned local youth in northern, especially northeastern, Nigeria are taking the initiative to organise themselves and risk their lives (and those of their loved ones) everyday to protect members of their communities from Boko Haram and to support state security forces in their counter-insurgency efforts. As one member of the *yan gora* said:

We are aware of the security situation in the Northeastern states of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa, and it is our duty to ensure that our communities are safe and secure... We are not going to be weary; we will intensify our efforts by ensuring that our communities are peaceful and the residents are free from attacks and molestation by the misguided insurgents (*Punch*, February 21, 2015).

In an effort to sanitize the operation of the CJTF and instil patriotism and discipline in the *yan gora*, the Bornu State government, under Governor Shettima, introduced a reorientation course – known as the ‘Bornu Youth Empowerment Scheme’ (BOYES) – for members of the CJTF. Shettima regarded the first batch of 800 BOYES youth volunteers as the greatest assets of Borno because of their zeal and commitment toward ensuring the immediate return of peace in the state. In Shettima’s words:

[BOYES aims to] ensure our youths discover or rediscover their potentials, enhance these potentials with necessary skills, indoctrinate them into having a better organised love for their fatherland, make them conscious of what goes within and around them, train them to be conscious of the security of wider civilian population without taking laws into their hands so that they can lawfully help in policing their own communities (*Nairaland Forum*, 2013).

In Borno State, most CJTF members now receive \$100 per month from the government (Agbibo 2014; IRIN 2014). However, the government has balked at the idea of arming the *yan gora*. The Bornu State government recently announced its plan to employ over 5,000 Civilian JTF members as street vanguards. According to Alhaji Nasiru Surundi, Bornu Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, the plan is part of the on-going efforts of the state government to ensure healthy, safe and clean environment as well as to create job opportunities for the teeming youth:

... We thought it wise to employ some of our youth as street vanguards to assist us in cleaning shops, markets, streets and government offices. Some of the youths have also been doing stop and search as part of the measures to check Boko Haram insurgents and the state government is paying them monthly. Many of them are also doing the jobs without pay and because we don’t want to leave them idle, we will employ them as our sanitation vanguards and pay them N10,000 monthly (*360 news*, July 24, 2015).

Also, efforts to integrate the *yan gora* into the Nigerian Security Service are underway. Speaking at a two day summit on Security and Governance in the northeast organised by the CLEEN Foundation, Barr Jubril Gunda, legal adviser of the CJTF, disclosed that 360 CJTF members have been integrated into the conventional security agencies including 200 in the Nigerian Army, 120 into the Department of State Service (DSS), and about 40 about to be recruited into the Air force. According to Gunda, the current number of the CJTF members in Borno is 25,000 (*All Africa*, 30 June 2015). Meanwhile, many northern residents and astute observers remain suspicious of the power ceded to the *yan gora*. They recognise that the ‘goodness’ of any action is never absolute, regardless of the evident ‘evil’ of its target. If history has proven anything to Nigerians, it is that power no matter who wields it, will eventually corrupt, as was the case with the ‘Bakassi Boys’ of southeastern Nigeria (McCall, 2004). This notwithstanding, I argue that the Bornu state government’s investment in, and focus on, on youth sensitization and education

is not only key to turning the tide of the Boko Haram menace, but also fundamental to regenerating battle-damaged northern Nigeria. In the book *Youth in Post-conflict Reconstruction*, for example, Stephanie Schwartz (2010) documents a positive scope for youth's roles in post conflict reconstruction that can be enhanced by reintegration, education, employment, and empowerment programmes, as opposed to humanitarian, psychosocial or advocacy initiatives. Schwartz argues that even the programmes with a higher success potential are conditioned on other factors for their effectiveness. For example, *reintegration* was found to be successful when focused not only on family reunification (as in the DRC) but also on community reintegration through acceptance and reestablishment of youth roles (as in Mozambique), which, in turn, might involve vocational training or religious practices, as well as conflict resolution workshops and youth voluntary corps (as in Kosovo) (Schwartz, 2010; Achvarina, 2012: 1093-1095).

Conclusion

A nation that does not take care of its youth has no future, nor does it deserve one.

Oliver Tambo, late president of the African National Congress

This article has underscored the role of local youth in northeastern Nigeria as victims and agents of counter-terrorism. Considering their sheer number, creativity, vital force, and local knowledge, youth in northern, and especially northeastern, Nigeria should be seen as key actors in the on-going battle to defeat Boko Haram. According to a CJTF leader and local hunter: 'We know we don't have the AK-47 and other weapons that Boko Haram fighters have, but we have the heart, we also have dane guns, talismans, and charms. And most importantly, we have God on our side.' Given that the best efforts of the *yan gora* might not be enough in the face of a very sophisticated and ruthless enemy, their gradual integration into the ranks of the Nigerian force and local counter-terrorism operations is a welcomed development. In this respect, it is important to rethink the popular perception of youth in northern Nigeria, and much of Africa, not just as 'a signifier of exclusion, of impossibility, of emasculation, denigration, and futility...' but especially as 'a constant source of creativity, ingenuity, possibility, [and] empowerment' (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2011: 280). Besides from this, to overcome Boko Haram, it is vital to improve intelligence gathering among security agencies in Nigeria and its neighbors; national and regional forces must be proactive in nipping planned Boko Haram attacks in the bud before they are executed. Moreover, critical issues of poverty and youth unemployment, which creates a sense of frustration and hopelessness among youth in (northern) Nigeria, need to be addressed to prevent youth from easy manipulation by political opportunists and religious extremists. In this regard, the BOYES initiative of the Bornu State government is a step in the right direction. Also, in the context of the current Boko Haram insurgency, the payment of some compensation (by the Nigerian

government) to victims of the group's violence, no matter how limited, will go a long way in assuaging their sense of victimization and alienation from the state. Finally, there is need for a concrete ideological intervention to counter the appeal of Boko Haram's violent Salafist ideology.

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Changing the Pattern of Warfare in Africa: Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria

Ferdinand O. OTTOH

Abstract. *The paper focuses on the changing pattern of warfare in Africa arising from the proliferation of armed non-state groups ranging from ethnic militias, Islamist fundamentalist, rebel groups and insurgent movements. It argues that the insurgency is rooted in the complex identity crisis as a result of pluralism of states in Africa. The paper seeks to advance our understanding of African conflicts, or warfare, by going beyond the conventional and fashionable analysis among Euro-centric and some Afro-centric scholars. Combining some theoretical insights and rich empirical details, the paper illuminates the forces and factors that are responsible for the insurgency in Nigeria and the effects on the socio-economic and political stability. Nigeria offers the most fertile environment for terrorist recruitment and radicalization. In such environment, one aggrieved would unleash terror as a way to drive their demand. The data collected through secondary sources will be qualitatively analyzed. It concludes that a rich and culture-sensitive approach of neutralizing terrorist radicalization, promotion of religious moderation, non-violent approach to conflict resolution, mutual co-existence will be the basis for peace and stability in Nigeria.*

Keywords: *Warfare, War, Insurgency, Terrorism, Regular, Irregular, Guerrilla Warfare, Political Islam, Radical extremism.*

Introduction

In the last three decades, the pattern of warfare has changed in terms of targets, weaponry, tactics, lethality, ideology, and location with the increasing nature of intra-state wars. The changes that have been witnessed in the conduct of warfare are due to the following: first, globalization has made it easier for insurgent groups to travel, transfer information and transmit ideas from one region of the world to the other. The advancement of science and technology has contributed to the creation of weapons that

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are very handy and portable for the purpose of inflicting injury on the innocent citizens. In West Africa, the free movement of people within the region makes it possible for the terrorist group(s) to aid insurgency in northeast Nigeria. Secondly, the world of the Internet has further revolutionized the pattern of warfare as it opened the door for new channels of information flow. Through the use of the internet, it is easy for information to be gathered about the state by the insurgents.

In the past, African wars were fought with spears and arrows in the earlier centuries, before the use of firearms in the early 1432 when *harquebus*, a form of musket, was introduced into Egypt by Mamluks (Willie & Hunt, 2005). This also followed with the use of ship-mounted weapons in Africa. Firearms gradually became standard military weapons among African peoples. In the Ashanti Empire of Ghana, muskets were popular weapons of war. The pastoralist Maasai people of East Africa used traditional weapons: the long spear; the *rungu* – a club which is both a striking and throwing weapon, and the knife sharpened on both edges. The Bantu-speaking Zulu people of South Africa represented a major improvement in tactics and organization (Willie & Hunt, 2005). The Zulu warrior Shaka brought changes in weaponry, organization, and tactics in the 18th century which earned him the name “Black Napoleon” after the French general and tactician Napoleon Bonaparte.

Shaka changed the standard armament of his troops by replacing the use of spears used for conventional wars with long-bladed, short shafted stabbing spear called *assagai*. The *assagai* forced the Zulu soldiers to fight at close quarters. In the southern part of Upper Guinea coast the use of firearms slowly and unevenly developed. The use of bows, arrows and javelin was fashionable for fighting African wars in the 18th century. Although guns and gunpowder weapons were used, they were not as sophisticated as the modern guns which have high power force. The gunpowder was transformed in the art of war in the Gold Coast as was the case in Upper Guinea. It was also proved to be of some value to Dahomey (Thornton, 1999).

The United States Marine Corps in 1989 classified warfare into four generations. According to Lindstrom (2012, p. 32), the first generation warfare (1GW) started with the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 and went on until around 1860. During this period in Europe, states set up armies who clashed on traditional battlefields, using the tactics of line and column. At this time, it was possible to distinguish military from civilian with their uniforms, saluting, and gradation of rank. The weapons used were muskets and cannons just like in the traditional African warfare. Europe, during the Industrial Age, adopted second generation warfare (2GW), as military technology began to advance, weapons of war were produced on a massive scale. Military tactics were equally changed based on fire and movement coupled with massive arms acquired which invariably determine the success of the state in war. Instructively, weapons and communication systems and other logistics of war were developed to fight the war effectively. The third

generation warfare (3GW) emerged during the First and Second World Wars when the Germans introduced the concept of Blitzkrieg - to quickly overcome the opponent by "shock operations". In the case of fourth generation warfare (4GW), adversaries almost exclusively use non-linear tactics that are directed against both military and civilian targets. The activities and operations of the terrorist, guerrilla and insurgent groups fall under the category of 4GW, which are different from the conventional armies. These groups are insufficiently trained both physically and psychologically for any conventional warfare.

Indeed, in the 20th century, warfare in Africa has changed dramatically from the traditional conventional method to the use of conventional modern weapons in the conduct of warfare. The military technology has changed with rapidity in the areas such as aircraft, missiles, nuclear bombs and other weapons. As a result, there is a change in the method of waging war. The world generally is undergoing transformation in science and technology which has improved transportation and communication and facilitated interaction among people of different regions and religions (Wright, 1964). In other words, the movement of global ideas, cultures and resources have helped to shape how people fight (Reno, 2009, p. 7). The basic problematic is that because of the interdependent nature of the world, the shrinkage, rapid change in science and technology, the methods of carrying out warfare has equally changed. For a successful attack of terrorist, insurgency needs sufficient communications, an intelligence effort to gather required information, the ability to move people and raise and move necessary funds to support their operations.

The operations of today terrorists have remained largely conventional. According to Mahan and Griset (2008, p. 137), terrorists of the 21st century adhere to the familiar and narrow tactical patterns because they have mastered them. Equally important, they are likely to believe that conventional tactics optimize their likelihood of success. The four basic tactics of the terrorist insurgency are assassinations of public figures, the murder of civilians and genocide, hijackings, kidnapping, hostage taking and barricade incidents, bombings and armed assaults (Mahan and Griset, 2008). It is against this background that this paper examines the changing nature of terrorist insurgency as a form of irregular warfare in Africa. The paper is divided into five segments: the introduction and conceptual clarification, theoretical argument and framework, understanding the changing pattern of warfare, efforts towards addressing insurgency, and the conclusion.

Warfare Explained

Since the end of Second World War the concepts of subversive and revolutionary warfare have emerged in the lexicon of war study. It differs fundamentally from the wars of the past in that victory is not expected from the clash of two armies in a battle (Trinquier,

1964, p. 6). Modern warfare is often less a matter of confrontation between professional armies than one grinding struggle between military and civilians in the same country. In this type of warfare, the enemy army is annihilated completely, but is no longer the case in subversive and revolutionary warfare. Warfare is now an interlocking system of actions which are political, economic, psychological, and military that aims at the overthrow of the established order and authority in a country and replacement by another regime (Trinquier, 1964). To achieve this end, the aggressor tries to exploit the internal tensions of the country, attacks ideological, social, religious, economic values and any conflict that is likely to have a profound influence on the population to be conquered. In modern warfare, we are not grappling with an army organized along traditional lines, but with a few elements acting clandestinely within a population manipulated by a special organization.

Wars can be defined as essentially low-intensity internal conflicts that last longer. Today, wars are fought from apartment windows and in lanes of villages and suburbs, where distinctions between combatant and non-combatant quickly melt away. Clausewitz defines war as:

An act of violence intended to compel an opponent to fulfil our Will... Self-imposed restrictions, almost imperceptible and hardly worth mentioning, termed usages of International Law, accompany it without impairing its power. Violence... is, therefore, the means; the compulsory submission of the enemy to our will is the ultimate object.... In such dangerous things as war, the errors which proceed from a spirit of benevolence are the worst. As the use of physical power to the utmost extent by no means excludes the co-operation of the intelligence, it follows that he uses force unsparingly, without reference to the bloodshed involved, must obtain a superiority if his adversary uses less vigour in its application.... To introduce into the philosophy of war itself a principle of moderation would be an absurdity (Trainquier, 1964, p. 22).

Similarly, conventional and unconventional warfare refers to the weapons and forces conducting operations. Thus, irregular warfare may be conducted by conventional or unconventional forces, or both, depending on the circumstances and the operational environment (United States Air Force, 2007, p. 3). The irregular warfare encompasses a broad spectrum of warfare distinctively different from traditional war. It includes among others activities such as insurgency, counterinsurgency (COIN), terrorism and counterterrorism. Thus, in this regard, a proper classificatory scheme of warfare can be made.

Typology of Warfare

Irregular/Asymmetric Warfare:

The concept of asymmetric warfare arguably relate to the concept of “Fourth Generation Warfare”, which refers to conflicts in which one of the parties in the conflict is not a state and where the state loses its monopoly to wage war against decentralized non-state actors not adhering to the rules of conventional warfare (Ferreira, 2011, p. 52). The irregular warfare can take a variety of forms and be practiced in different modes, even within the same conflict (Gray, 2007, p. 40). It can be described as unconventional warfare which has to do with a broad spectrum of military and paramilitary operations, normally of long duration, predominantly conducted through, with or by indigenous or surrogates forces who are organized, trained, equipped, supported, and directed in varying degrees by an external source (United States Air Force, 2007, p. 2). It includes among others guerrilla warfare, subversion, sabotage, intelligence activities, and unconventional assisted recovery (United States Air Force, 2007). In the case of irregular warfare, anything goes, anything that might work.

Accordingly, the United States Air Force (2007, p. 2) defines irregular warfare as “a violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy influence over the relevant populations. It favours indirect and asymmetric approaches, though it may employ the full range of military and other capabilities in order to erode an adversary’s power, influence, and will”.

In a more distinctive way, irregular war has the following features (Gray, 2007, pp. 43-44):

- a. Irregular warfare is warfare waged in a style, or styles, that are non-standard for the regular forces at issue. The enemy is unlikely to be in the service of a state.
- b. Irregular warfare is contrasted with common banditry, crime, or recreational brigand and hooliganism; it needs an ideology. Ideas and culture usually do matter in warfare. But for an insurgency to mobilize and grow, it has to have a source of spiritual and/or political inspiration.
- c. Arguably, all warfare is about politics. It is the political dimension that gives meaning to the bloody activity. In the case of regular warfare, politics usually take the back seat until the military issue is resolved. In the case of irregular warfare, there will probably be no military decision except that military behaviour must be conducted for its political effects because those effects, in the minds of the public, comprise the true field of decision.

The principal difference between regular and irregular war is that regular or conventional war involves adversaries more or less symmetric in equipment, training, and doctrine. In the case of irregular war or insurgency, the adversaries are asymmetric and the weaker, and almost always a sub-state group attempts to bring about political

change by administering and fighting more effectively than its state-based foe through the use of guerrilla tactics (Kiras, n.d). The tactics adopted in an insurgent war are usually hit-and-run raids and ambushes against local security forces.

The regular or conventional warfare focuses on the government, the military and the people. Irregular warfare focuses on the people and the military. The main aim of two actions both from the regular and irregular warfare is to influence the government (Ferreira, 2011).

Irregular warfare can be distinguished from traditional warfare primarily by the approach and strategy used to achieve the effects desired. Traditional warfare seeks a change in the policies and practices, if not in the outright existence, of a government by coercing key government leaders or defeating them militarily. Conversely, irregular warfare seeks to undermine a group, government, or ideology, by influencing the population, which is often the centre of gravity (United States Air Force, 2007, p. 3).

Regular/Symmetric Warfare

Regular warfare, as the name suggests, is a conventional warfare that is symmetric in nature. In this type of warfare, the two powers have similar military power and resources and rely on tactics that are similar overall. This is a situation where regular armed or combatant forces are present to undertake regular activities. This traditional warfare is characterized by the confrontation between nation-states or coalitions/alliances of nation-states (United States Air Force, 2007, p. 2). This confrontation typically involves force-on-force military operations in which adversaries employ a variety of conventional military capabilities against each other in the air, land, maritime, space, and cyberspace domains. The objectives may be to convince or coerce key military or political decisions makers, defeat an adversary's armed forces, destroy an adversary's war-making capacity, or seize or retain territory in order to force a change in an adversary's government or policies.

Insurgency

Insurgency may be defined as organized resistance movement that uses subversion, sabotage and armed conflict to achieve aims. Insurgencies normally seek to overthrow the existing social order and reallocate power within the country. They may also seek to (i) overthrow an established government without a follow-on social revolution, (ii) establish the autonomous national territory within the borders of a state, (iii) cause the withdrawal of an occupying power, and (iv) extract political concessions that are unattainable through less violent means. Arguably, insurgencies have some enduring characteristics, that is, they are ultimately about politics, just as war is a continuation of politics. Second, no two insurgencies can ever be the same because political conditions are never alike. Third, insurgencies begin with criminal acts (Killebrew, 2012).

Insurgency is not conventional war or terrorism, but it shares the same attribute of the use of force to achieve political ends. The difference may simply be the scope and scale of violence. The insurgency more often than not enjoys the support and mobilization of a significant proportion of the population.

Guerrilla Warfare

Guerrilla warfare can be defined as the overt military aspect of the insurgency. They exist alongside their counterparts, the auxiliary and the underground. Guerrilla warfare is a strategy used by non-state actors to impose costs on an adversary, who is usually the armed forces of the state as the main target. It is a hit-and-run tactics. The assumption is that since the guerrilla fighters strength cannot be equated with that of the regular and state military force, they device means of ambushing them. They often operate with the support of the local people who give intelligence information, food, and at times, shelter at night.

Terrorism

Terrorism rarely results in political change, but it may be a strategy for change in a violent way. Terrorism is defined as the calculated use of violence or threat of violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological. The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1566 defines terrorism as "...criminal acts, including against civilians, committed with the intent to cause death or serious bodily injury, or taking of hostages, with the purpose to provoke a state of terror in the general public or in a group of persons or particular persons, intimidate a population or compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act..."(UNSC, S/RES/1566/2004).

The United States defines it as premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience (Mahan and Griset, 2008, p. 3; Lindstrom, 2012). In the Code of Federal Regulations, terrorism is defined as the unlawful use of force and violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives (Mahan and Griset, 2008, p. 3). Scholar Bruce Hoffman (2006) defines terrorism as the the deliberate creation and exploitation of fear through violence or threat of violence in the pursuit of political change (cited in Mahan and Griset, 2008, p. 4). Laqueur (1977, p. 79) defines it as the use of covert violence by a group for political ends. The Global Terrorism Database and the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism classify terrorism as actions outside the context of legitimate warfare activities. That means only acts which are contrary to international humanitarian law, such as the deliberate targeting of civilians, conducted by sub-national actors are viewed as terrorism (Global

Terrorism Index Report, 2014, p. 41). It invokes a distinct political and ideological message to be conveyed to a larger audience than immediate victims.

What is common in the definitions of terrorism is that they all share the view that it has to do with violence carried out by non-state actors. Although, terrorism can be employed by state actors against the citizens, that is, employing terror to compel obedience. It is also an act that is politically motivated, which may be subjective interest or motive. The definitional elements found in terrorism are violence or force, political motivation, engendering fear and terror, using a threat, psychological effects, and victim-target differentiations (Mahan and Griset, 2008, p. 5).

In view of these varied definitions, terrorism is one of the asymmetric/ irregular warfare. According to Thornton (1999), a terrorist organization is a typical asymmetric adversary, since it lacks in both number and military equipment, but can cause devastating damage to the society. Terrorists have been accorded the status of non-state actors that can influence or exert pressures on the international system. They tend to argue that they should be granted rights of lawful combatants and that the unlawful methods used are only a consequence of the superior opponent's excessive acts.

Distinctions can be found from these three definitions, but it must be noted that traditional and irregular warfare are not mutually exclusive; both forms of warfare may be present in a given conflict. First, guerrillas are seen as a subcomponent of insurgencies that work overtly toward the latter's counter-regime goals, typically organized not too unlike general purpose forces. Second, each, of the five goals of an insurgency- the violent arm of a given resistance movement- centres on attacking regimes. In comparison, the goals of terrorists are not specific to governments but rather focus on broader ideological intentions. Perhaps, terrorists may not even feel the need to target governments. Instead, they may choose to attack societies directly in order to achieve a particular aim. Hence, by definition terrorists are not concerned with regime change, reallocation of power, or challenging existing social and political orders. In another way, we can say that insurgents use ideology to target governments, but terrorists target governments (or societies) to advance an ideology.

Boko Haram combined all the elements of terrorism, insurgency and guerrilla warfare, therefore, these terms can be used interchangeably, but the appropriate word is insurgency since the rebellion is directed against constituted authority to achieve political or religious goals.

Analytic Framework

The logical sequence of the theoretical arguments of the insurgency are attributable to those factors that form the common narration of causes of conflicts in Africa. These are linked with domestic grievances or circumstances that may trigger insurgency. The theory of 'greed' and 'grievance' by Collier and Hoeffler are useful explanatory vari-

ables. These two contrasting models help us to understand the motivations for civil war (Collier and Hoeffler, 2002). The grievances model refers to inequality, political oppression, ethnic and religious motivations for conflict, which are domestic grievances (cited in Ferreira, 2011). Similarly, Collier, Hoeffler and Sambanis (2005) considered four objective measures of grievance: ethnic or religious hatred, political repression, political exclusion, and economic inequality.

While the greed model refers to the sources of finance to motivate the civil war, this will apply to the insurgency in the northeast Nigeria where the group rely on internal and external sources of finance from the perceived faceless politicians. No doubt, African intrastate wars are mostly driven by economic (greed) motivations in mineral-rich countries like Nigeria. It is argued that corruption in governance induces greed that motivates marginalized people to act for change. Thus, the marginalized group may seek political power for self-aggrandizement (Ibaba and Ikelegbe, 2010, p. 221). Although, 'greed' thesis may be applied completely in the case of insurgency in the northeast since corruption is a product of greed it is, therefore, reasonable to say that greed can lead to grievance. It is the ethnic and regional politics of hegemony, exclusion, prebendalism that is the heart of the grievances in the northeast are the product of the greed of the ruling class (Ibaba and Ikelegbe, 2010).

We can, therefore, link the theory of grievance to Ted Gurr psychological model of relative deprivation popularised in 1970. He emphasizes the relative deprivation gap between expectations and capabilities (Anifowose, 2011, p. 6). According to him, relative deprivation as the discrepancy between what people think they deserve, and what they actually believe they get. In this regard, the greed and grievance models can be combined to provide good analysis and understanding of motivations for the insurgency in most parts of Africa. To this extent, the models will be used as an explanatory variable for insurgency or irregular warfare in Nigeria (Ferreira, 2011).

Arguably, increasing loss of state capacities will provide the conditions for various ethnic militia or insurgent groups to rise to challenge the authority of the state. The absence of local authority can bring about the growth of safe havens for powerful non-state actors like Boko Haram, Al-Qaeda, Al-Shabab and other terrorist groups. The state has the primary responsibility for maintaining public order, organising and controlling the military, dispensing justice, managing conflicts among groups and individuals living in the territory, promoting general welfare, reducing inequalities among others (Adekanye, 2007, p. 139). The paradox of most African states is that they are not able to discharge their responsibilities to the people. This may result in groups organizing themselves as either militant or insurgent to draw the attention of the government on their plight. In other words, the grievance of the insurgent group against the government may be poverty, which has been ravaging the people since independence, especially in the northern Nigeria. The debilitating economic conditions of the country leading to a

number of youths who are unemployed to join the insurgent group in either in the Niger Delta region and northeast Nigeria. In this vein, we turn our theoretical lenses to the motivating factors such as political, cultural, religious, economic, and radical extremism.

The Changing Pattern of Warfare

In the 21st century, warfare has changed in tactics and weaponry. The modern warfare is based on technological adaptation which has resulted in its lethality and destructiveness. The new pattern of warfare is characterised by the following tactics:

1. Targeting civilians and vulnerable groups such as children, women, and refugees rather than the armed forces of the state. The deliberate attacks against civilians and increasingly turning children into primary targets of war who are not only recruited into armed groups but are abducted in large numbers as child soldiers. Often, the strategic areas are targeted by the insurgents such as health care centres, emergency services are disrupted and law enforcement agencies especially the police are targeted and private property of government officials and citizens. Modern warfare also creates refugees and internally displaced persons that are usually targets of attack (Allen, 1999, p. 369). Even humanitarian activities that were once safe from attack are now treated as legitimate military targets. Relief convoys, health clinics and feeding centres have all become targets. In 2013, Boko Haram targeted businesspeople like the Manager of the Nigerian Flour Mills, Senior Police Officers at the Divisional Police headquarters in Borno State, and people with government connections like the former Minister of Petroleum Resources.
2. Kidnapping, abduction and hostage-taking: The major feature of Boko Haram insurgency is the kidnapping and abduction. Kidnapping and hostage taking were major tactics by the insurgents in Niger Delta. Sexual abuse of women through raping, abduction and kidnapping are becoming more often a systematic policy and weapon of war. During the 1994 genocide in Rwandan women were subjected to sexual violence on a massive scale, perpetrated by members of the Hutu militia group. It has been estimated that more than 20,000 women have been raped since the Balkan war began in 1992 ("Patterns in Conflict: Civilians are now the target", n.d). In Nigeria, Boko Haram admitted abduction of more than 200 Secondary schoolgirls at Chibok in April 14th, 2014. The Boko Haram in its characteristic manner of admitting any attack carried by its operators announced that the girls were kidnapped to become slaves and wives for their members(Global Terrorism Index Report, 2014, p. 19).
3. Extreme brutality also characterised new pattern of warfare. This was the practice in the war in Liberia and Sierra Leone in recent African history. According to Allen (1999), all warfare involves brutal force, even barbarous acts. During the Liberian civil war, there was 'appalling atrocities committed by the rebel fighters, particularly the practice of cannibalism, while in Sierra Leone there was random slaughter and mutilation by chopping off hands, feet, ears, etc. of civilians. Women were brutally

abused as sex partners for the rebels who were forced in a brutal manner to live with them in the bush to satisfy the sexual desire of the rebels. Besides, the new warfare involves forceful conscription of individuals to participate in the killings of neighbours and family members. There were several cases of killing of father and mother in a family leaving their children by Boko Haram. In the past, in many African societies, there were rules and customs that in fierce battle it is forbidden to attack women and children. This is no longer the case in modern African warfare.

4. The new warfare has been characterised by looting, even though this was the pattern in the conduct of warfare in the primitive Africa. For instance, in the famous Benin Massacre of the 17th century, there was looting of the arts and artefacts by the British. In modern African warfare, looting was carried out in Liberia and Sierra Leone of their natural resources such as diamond, gold, and timber by the rebels. These resources were sold to buy modern weapons to prosecute the war.
5. Weapons and tactics have changed. There are more sophisticated weapons used now compared to the weapons used in the pre-colonial and colonial wars. Explosives, such as bombs, dynamites, black powder and Molotov cocktails, are now used as conventional tools of warfare. Although, bombs are also unconventional weapons as technology and innovation combine to create explosive weapons of mass destruction (Mahan and Griset, 2008, p. 141).
6. The technology of war has also changed in ever more deadly ways. Inexpensive new lightweight weapons have made it tragically easy to use children as the cannon-fodder of modern warfare. For instance, AK-47 is popularly used in modern African internal wars. This weapon is simple enough for a child of ten to strip and reassemble and be bought at low prices. In Nigeria, Boko Haram explosives and suicide bombers are adopted since 2009 and used as a common tactics of organized crime and gangs, focusing on armed assaults using firearms and knives apart from bombing or suicide tactics used by large terrorist groups. The armed assault has claimed 85 per cent of deaths in Nigeria while bombing or explosions account for five per cent of deaths (Global Terrorism Index Report, 2014).
7. Boko Haram is operating at a level short of the normal way terrorists operate in terms of the sophistication of weapons, rather they use simple improvised explosive devices commonly used to cause damage. The improvised explosive devices is a bomb that is made of either military components or commercially sourced explosive material, detonators, and trigger mechanisms (Lindstrom, 2012). Improvised explosive devices could be attached to vehicles with some substantial quantities undetected by security agents. The explosives have caused thousands of deaths in the northern Nigeria used by suicide bombers. From 2000 to 2013 there were 750 attacks carried out using explosives, bombs/dynamites and firearms. In some other countries where terrorism has reached its climax in terms of mode of operation, weapons of mass destruction (WMD) are used such as chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (Lindstrom, 2012, p. 37).

8. The internet has become a medium for the recruitment of terrorist group. It was reported that Al-Qaeda recruited individual cells by facilitating operations within Egypt through information sharing, training, and networking. The bombing in Cairo, Egypt, on 23 February, 2009 was inspired through the internet by an isolated group rather than a 'commanded' or 'guided' group.
9. Female suicide bombers/terrorists are said to be the ultimate asymmetrical weapon (Mahan and Griset, 2008). The Boko Haram is now using women as suicide bombers to kill and injure many people in the northeast Nigeria. The use of detonated explosives are now used by the female bombers. Suicides bombers account for five percent of all the attacks by Boko Haram (Global Terrorism Index Report, 2014, p. 33).

Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria

Historically, before the emergence of Boko Haram, there were groups such as the Maitastine sect, the Zakzaky Shiite movement, and the Nigerian Taleban in Yobe transformed into Boko Haram. The name has been interpreted to mean 'Western education is sin' or Western Civilisation is forbidden'. Literally in Hausa 'Boko' means "Western or otherwise non-Islamic education", while in Arabic word, 'Haram' figuratively means "sin" (literally means forbidden). Boko Haram cannot be said to be a new invention or creation as its existence can be traced to the early 1960s, but it began to gain the attention of the public in 2002 (Omotosho, 2014, p. 7). The group was founded by Mohammed Yusuf from Girgir extraction of Yobe State. Boko Haram represents the uneducated, casual and unskilled labourers and the Almajiris. The Almajiris are derogatorily described as those boys who have no home and depend on the crumbs that fall from the rich people around to survive. The leaders of Boko Haram set up mosques and Islamic schools for the propagation of their faith.

The group began with a semblance of a terrorist group as members of a mosque in the north-east which sought to implement a separatist community under Wahhabi Principles (Global Terrorist Index Report, 2014, p. 53). Boko Haram was indeed founded as a Sunni Islamic fundamentalist sect advocating a strict form of Sharia law. It developed into a Salafist-jihad group in 2009, influenced by the Wahhabi movement (Global Terrorist Index Report, 2014). The group became violent after the death of one of its leaders, Imam Mohammed Yusuf, who was in the police custody in 2009. A new group was formed after a dispute with police which killed 70 of the sect. The group reported to be responsible for 3,500 civilian deaths since the insurgency began (Global Terrorist Index 2014, p. 53).

The group's ideological plank is Sunni Islamist and seeks to abolish the secular system of government to implement Wahhabi interpretations of Sharia law in Nigeria. There was hullabaloo over full Sharia law implementation in nine states and partial implementation

in three of the 36 states of Nigeria, all of which are in northern Nigeria. However, Boko Haram is seeking the full application of Sharia throughout the entire country. They aim to use acts of terror to further the social divide between Muslim, and Christian groups. Not surprisingly, the group issued an ultimatum to Christians living in the north-east Nigeria to leave or die (Global Terrorist Index Report, 2014, p. 53).

The emergence and transformation of this group from a mere Islamic fundamentalist to political Islamism has been linked to the apparent dissatisfaction with the people of the debilitating economic base of the country. Besides, they contend that there is no separation between what is sacred and the legal system that governs them. The group attempts to pursue the course of Islamization of Nigeria. Since there is a linkage between Nigerian secular state and Christianity, there is no such link between Islamism and Nigerian secular state and, therefore, they vehemently opposed it and demanded for an Islamic state based on Sharia Law (Omosho, 2014, p. 9). In the midst of this religious sentiment, the group was not unaware of the level of poverty, deteriorating social services and decay in infrastructure, educational backwardness, rising number of unemployed graduates and dwindling productive base of the northern economy among others issues.

The group also resented the democratic enterprise in Nigeria as it was skewed towards political leaders who lead by deception and use Islam as a mere slogan to win the sympathy of their followers. This is the actual twist in their agitation because many have interpreted the activities of the group to be directed against Christians. The group maintained that there is massive corruption in the electoral process that produced candidates based on consensus with the leadership that emerge lacked legitimacy. The group gradually and systematically changed its strategy of advocating for a strict compliance with Islamic laws and principles of Sharia to condemning Western education and secularism. It then began to target northern elites and Islamic clerics who have adapted to Western-styled democracy and secular ideology (Isa, 2010, p. 333). Theoretical reflections flows from grievance which is aptly summarized in the five motivating factors for the insurgency in the northeast Nigeria.

Motivating Factors for Insurgency

1. Political motivation

Insurgencies generally have political objectives. In line with the theoretical argument of grievances, political motivation for insurgencies results from perceived grievances with government's policies. In the case of Boko Haram, there is the general belief that the group is aggrieved because political power has slipped from the Muslims in the North (Hausa-Fulani oligarchs). Politically based insurgencies tend to use latent, underlying social and economic grievances to attract the emotion of the citizenry and even make the people to rebel against the government. The campaign they often carry out against

the government of Nigeria is that it is insensitive to the plight of the common man. This is a general perception among the citizenry which is not peculiar to the northeast where Boko Haram insurgents operate.

The 2011 Presidential elections which saw Goodluck Jonathan emerged as the President did not augur well among the northern elites who felt it was morally right for a northerner to complete the tenure of late Alhaji Musa Yar Adua who died in office before the expiration of his tenure. The argument was morally justifiable, but lack any constitutional merit because the constitution provides that the Vice-President should take over in the event that President is incapacitated.

Boko Haram was now seen as a group to protest the political injustice against the North. This was the situation in the southwest Nigeria in 1993 following the annulment of June 12 Presidential election which was presumed to be won by late M.K.O Abiola. The Yoruba ethnic militia group known as Odua People's Congress (OPC) began to operate in an insurgent manner by making the whole of the southwest Nigeria ungovernable. Thus, the insurgency has become a major weapon to remedy the grievances of marginalization, injustice and oppression. Similarly, in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria, the people raised militia groups to fight long years of neglect of the region where oil is explored. Ultimately, the insurgents offer alternatives to the people to draw the attention of the government and the emergence of the Presidency of GoodLuck Jonathan from the Niger Delta.

2. Cultural Motivation

Insurgencies may arise from cultural or ethnic differences between groups in a state. In a multi-cultural society, ethnic and cultural differences are explored by groups who want to assert their identity. Samuel Huntington in his famous article, "Clash of Civilization" argues that future conflict on the macro level will result from differences in culture between incompatible civilizations or cultures. The issue of Boko Haram is related to Islamic culture which the insurgents claim that they are protecting. In Sudan, before the independence of South Sudan, the issue of cultural identity compounded the problem of state ethnic relations. Kiras (2015, April 24) argues that in the fourth generation warfare (4GW), networks of warriors will utilize their social and cultural advantages to offset the technological advantages of Western soldiers. Boko Haram falls under the category of 4GW in that it is linked with other Islamic organizations such as Al-Qaeda, Al-Shabab and Islamic State (ISIS) rebels.

3. Religious Motivation

Religious beliefs often shape insurgent and terrorist groups course(s) of action as they are used to garner support among community of the faithful. Religion is used as a mobilizing force in pursuit of political goals. In Nigeria politics, though contestable as-

sertion, religion is used to galvanize the members of a particular religious sect. In the just concluded Presidential elections in 2015, the pattern of voting shows clearly how religion could play a role in the choice of leadership compare to 2011 Presidential election where religion was not major decisive factor in the choice of GoodLuck Jonathan. However, the voting pattern still reflected religious dichotomy in 2011. The North is predominantly of Islamic religion, while the south is Christian. The outcome of the election confirms this hypothesis, as Gen. Mohammadu Buhari had overwhelming votes in the North while President Goodluck Jonathan enjoyed similar support in the southeast, southwest and south-south Nigeria in 2011.

It is without contradiction that religious ideology is a source of an insurgent group's political goals. This is apparently what Al-Qaeda is pursuing, that is, to re-establish a worldwide Muslim Caliphate. In the document "Irregular Warfare" (2007, p. 80), of the United States Air Defence, it is stated that: "For many Muslims, this invokes the golden age of Islamic civilization and helps mobilize support for Al-Qaeda among some of the most traditional Muslims while concealing the fact that Al-Qaeda's leaders envision the 'restored Caliphate' as a totalitarian state similar to the pre-2002 Taliban regime in Afghanistan". It is not surprising that Boko Haram insurgent group in Nigeria allegedly has a link with Al-Qaeda and Islamic State (ISIS) which goes to show that the group is pursuing a new Caliphate agenda of sending infidel Muslims and non-Muslim believers out of the north part of Nigeria.

4. Economic Motivation

The insurgents are also motivated by economic grievances. Criminal organizations may use irregular warfare to terrorize or influence government economic policies for their purpose. There is need to establish the interconnectivity between political and economic policies. The whole struggle among the political elites both in the North and South is to control the resources of the country. Whoever wins political power controls the economic goods after that. This is based on greed, not grievance. Besides, economic hardship, unequal economic development, and failure of economic development are reasons that may be adduced for the insurgency. It is important therefore to underscore the fact that the reward or consequences (real or perceived) of capturing and maintaining state power remains the key source of wealth and privilege. According to Osman (2007, p. 17), the African political system has been the main source of conflict as state power has always been a zero-sum game, where the winner gains all, and in this vein, the winner controls the resources and appropriate and misappropriate the resources to its cronies. Interestingly, the economic insurgents or terrorist groups rarely seek to overthrow or promote change in the existing government; rather they want to incapacitate government to enable them continue with the exploitation of the natural resources. In the case of Nigeria, the Boko Haram actually want to see a change in the power structure.

5. Radical Extremism

Radical extremist insurgents hold extreme viewpoints. They are ideologically rigid and uncompromising. The religious extremists are intolerant of the viewpoints of others and see themselves as “true believers” and brand those they consider to be “non-believers” as enemies. (United States Air Defence, 2007, p. 81). The Islamic teaching or doctrine is that a good Muslim must be willing to defend its faith. Even the Christian faithful will always be ready to die for Christ. So, the culture of martyrdom in defence of one’s faith is not limited to Muslims as the two religions tend to teach that dying for the sake of the kingdom has a reward attached to it.

However, in the contemporary world, there is the movement for the universalising and imposing of one’s own ideology. Marxism was a worldwide movement at a time before the demise and collapse of the Soviet Union. As the underlying principle of Marxism was opposition to materialism just as the religious extremists are averse to accepting the doctrine of pluralism and secularism in modern governmental arrangement. The Marxist views religion as a subterfuge that is only meant to induce fear in the masses of the people. Thus, its absolute nature only makes the people to acquiesce in the violent form it takes. Paradoxically, the religious extremists do not limit their activity to their believers, but to non-believers. The ultimate aim of the religious extremists is to achieve their political goals through a revolutionary and non-evolutionary change to the existing political system (United States Air Defence, 2007). Therefore, the fundamental motive for radical extremism is the underlying social and economic conditions prevailing in the society. When there is a wide gap between the rich and the poor, a large army of unemployed youth becomes a motivation for the insurgency.

The motivating factors for insurgency may vary from state to state, but there are common elements that predispose a group to engage in insurgency. Basically, a combination of poverty, marginalisation and extremist ideologies are common narration for insurgency. In the case of Nigeria, the number of unemployed and street children found in large numbers in urban and rural areas serves as a reservoir for religious bigotry to carry out violence. The Almajiri found in northern Nigerian cities lack western education. In Nigeria’s major urban and rural areas, there are millions of children without education or skill. These group of children are ready tools for insurgent movements.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The paper has analysed the various factors responsible for the insurgency in the north-east and extended our diagnosis of the problem of insurgency from different perspectives. It is important that due attention is paid to new patterns of warfare in Africa. The method adopted by insurgent groups in different internal wars have changed and totally different from regular or conventional war. It is established fact from this work that asymmetric warfare is fully utilised by the insurgent group in the northeast Nigeria and

indeed by other internal conflicts in Africa. It is deduced that religious fundamentalism across Africa arises as cover to rising poverty, bad governance, and politics of exclusion and marginalisation. The inability of the government of Nigeria to tackle the fundamental problems of poverty, inclusive governance and provision of infrastructure such as the school in the northeast has largely contributed to the emergence of the religious sect known as Boko Haram. This is why the Federal Government policy to establish Almajiri schools, even when the Boko Haram has reservation for Western education is a right step in the right direction. This is one of the ways to curb further radicalization of Islamic ideology and create a rich culture-sensitive approach to religious moderation and non-violent in resolving group differences. In the light of this, the following would serve as remedial measures to curtail Boko Haram insurgency.

1. The counterterrorism and counterinsurgency strategy is to mount vigorous surveillance and control through community policing. With the new trend of suicide by female bombers it is only community policing that will supply information to security agents.
2. There is need for the police and other security agents in Nigeria to exhibit mutual respect and trust between them and the communities. The police bear the primary responsibility for overseeing security in locations where the terrorist attacks take place.
3. The Multinational Joint Force established by countries in the Lake Chad Basin Commission should work with the local communities to be able to fish out insurgents as they live among the people.
4. The Multinational Joint Force must increase border patrols and intelligence gathering.
5. There is also need to trace the source of fund and ensure Boko Haram has limited funds and access to weapons. The more funds the group receives it has more access to weapons.

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Beyond the Shadows of Terrorism: Boko Haram Crisis in North-Eastern Nigeria

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Abstract. *Mindful of the threat Boko Haram terrorism poses to Nigeria, the Nigerian state, even before the Boko Haram terrorist's attacks, had made commendable strides towards preventing and combating terrorism in the country. The article critically analyses the antecedent of Boko Haram crisis in Nigeria. It also argues that a more effective implementation of strategies supporting counter-terrorism initiatives will not only help rid the North-East region of terrorist activities and associated threats, but will also help combat other criminal aspects of Nigerian society and security threats. Nonetheless, if the drivers of Nigeria's counter-terrorism agenda do not steer clear of historical development of Boko Haram crisis in line with its justification and socio-economic toll of Boko Haram Islamic militant movement in Nigeria, it is probable that the counter-terrorism efforts of the state would be counter-productive, potentially undermining its own security.*

Keywords: *Nigeria, Boko Haram, History, North-East region, Justification, Economic implications.*

Introduction

After a prolonged international debate on Boko Haram Islamic militant movement, the US Department of State "announced the designation of Boko Haram as Foreign Terrorist Organisations (FTO) under Section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended" and also labeled the Islamic militant movement as "Specially Designated Global Terrorists under Section 1(b) of Executive Order (EO) 13224" (Onuorah, 2013). The Boko Haram Islamic militant movement has been responsible for thousands of deaths and displacement of thousands of people in the North-East region of Nigeria, including

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dozens of attacks on churches and mosques, targeted killings of civilians and injured dozens more.¹

By all accounts, Boko Haram Islamic militant movement's violence in Nigeria has been one of the greatest sources of human suffering and destruction in the last few years and perhaps one of the greatest threats to human and societal security and well-being today. Boko Haram Islamic militant movement started to like the action of a pouting child, merely seeking attention. That, perhaps, explains why both federal and North-East region state government initially treated Boko Haram, an Islamic militant movement wreaking havoc in Nigeria since 2009, with kid gloves. Not until members of the Islamic militant movement launched suicidal attacks on choice locations in the North-East states (Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, and Yobe), of Nigeria, did the authorities wake up to the rude fact that terrorism, a problem hitherto considered the exclusive preserve of some remote locations, had birthed in the country.

The attack on the United Nations building in Abuja, which claimed 26 lives, coming after the devastating attack on the headquarters of the Nigeria Police, where eight people were killed, gave the Islamic militant movement the international recognition it so craved for, just as it forced the federal government to own up to the fact that it is dealing with a Frankenstein monster. By the time the Islamic militant movement punctured the myth of inviolability of the traditional city of Kano, killing 162 people on January 20, 2012, three months before it returned to kill 16 people, barely two weeks after it killed 40 in neighboring Kaduna in April 2012, the security agencies knew that they were up against an unusual enemy. Now, the battleground has grown to include the six states of Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, and Yobe, which are currently under the siege of Boko Haram Islamic militant movement (BBC, 2013). The unending bloodbath in Nigeria's North-East region, occasioned by the relentless assault by the Boko Haram Islamic militant movement, has left deep scars on Nigeria. By all accounts, Boko Haram is a cellular, hierarchical and ideologically bound movement with a supreme decision-making body known as the Shura Council that meets regularly to make decisions on its targets and activities. It is also safe to say that Boko Haram remains today a lethal movement whose operations have inflicted pain and suffering on many and who have reconfigured and disfigured the North-East region of Nigeria (Owuamanam *et al.*, 2012:1-2).

In Nigeria, Boko Haram has been overwhelmingly local, targeting innocent civilians and security forces. Nevertheless, the extremist jihadist movement's shared ideological

1 Recent Report from United Nations humanitarian office (OCHA), August 2014 indicated that attacks by Boko Haram Islamists in Nigeria's crisis-hit north-east have killed more than 10,000 people since 2009 and 436,608 people have been displaced in the three states-Adamawa, Borno and Yobe.

belief and *modus operandi* with other Islamic militant movement across the African region must be taken on board in seeking solutions to the mayhem (Stewart, 2013). In this article, several central questions are examined. Who are the people that constitute Boko Haram, and where did they come from? What are the justifications claimed by the group for their killings? What are the economic implications of the insurgency? Analytically, there is little hope of discerning how Boko Haram will end if we do not first understand how they began or what drives them. From a normative perspective, the task of prescribing solutions is at worst *ad hoc*, and at best merely palliative, without a proper diagnosis of the origin, justification and the economic impact of Boko Haram on the society. In the final analysis, ending Nigeria's Boko atrocities in ways that will promote genuine peace or stability is highly dependent on analysis of the back and forth, action and reaction, between federal and state governments and terrorists.

The Genesis of Boko Haram Islamic Militant Movement in Nigeria: A Trail of Blood

Nigeria has a long history of religious, and political conflicts, many of which were suppressed only under military regimes. Despite the heavy-handed tactics of the dictators, some of these religious or political conflicts came to the fore, the best example being the 1980s violence in and around the city of Kano that was associated with a Muslim preacher and self-proclaimed prophet, Mohammed Marwa or "Maitatsine" (a Hausa word meaning 'the one who damns'). After thousands of deaths, including Marwa, his movement was largely wiped out in the early 1990s, although some maintain that Boko Haram is an extension of the Maitatsine riots. Many religious conflicts and the movements that fight them found more freedom after the return to civilian rule in Nigeria, in 1999 (Nwanze, 2014). One such movement is *Jama'atu Ahlus-Sunnah Lidda'Awati Wal Jihad* ((People Committed to the Prophet's Teachings for Propagation and Jihad)), which became the Boko Haram Islamic militant movement.

Boko Haram, which translates as "Western education is forbidden" in Hausa, originated in and around Maiduguri, the largest and capital city of the Borno State (Nwanze, 2014). Starting out as a radical Islamic movement at the Ndimi Mosque in Maiduguri, in 2002, they saw society, particularly the government of Mala Kachalla, as irredeemably corrupt. So, in the middle of 2002, the Islamic movement, under its founder, Mohammed Ali, embarked on a *hijra* to Kanama, in Yobe State. In Islam, a *hijra* is a journey from the bad world to go and be closer to God. The Prophet undertook one, from Mecca to Medina. Usman dan Fodio (Fulani religious and political leader of the early 1800s) also undertook his own *hijra*, to Gudu, when Yunfa (a king in Hausa land) wanted to kill him.² The

2 Yunfa (reigned 1801–1808) was a king of the Hausa city-state of Gobir in what is now Nigeria. He is particularly remembered for his conflict with Islamic reformer Usman dan Fodio. Yunfa appears to have been taught by Fulani religious leader Usman dan Fodio as a young man. Though dan Fodio helped Yunfa succeed Nafata to the throne in 1801, the two soon came

hijra to Kanama is probably where Mohammed Ali and his Islamic movement had their first foreign contact. While there, more members joined; some of these new members were the children of influential northerners, such as the son of Yobe's governor at the time, Bukar Abba Ibrahim. Bukar Abba Ibrahim is now a senator, and his son's involvement meant that the Islamic movement was, in a typically Nigerian style, more or less immune from punishment in Kanama (Nwanze, 2014).

Toward the end of 2003, the Islamic movement had a communal clash with the Kanama community over fishing rights, which led to police involvement. In the crisis that followed, they defeated the police, which, in turn, led to the army getting involved, and the revolt was crushed. The founder, Mohammed Ali, was killed, and the Islamic movement scattered. A few of the survivors, including a chap called Abubakar Bin Shekau, went north to the training camps in the Sahara desert. The other survivors of the Battle of Kanama returned to Maiduguri and reintegrated into the Ndimi Mosque, where they were now led by Mohammed Yusuf, then embarked on the process of establishing the movement's own mosque in Maiduguri. This new mosque, named the Ibn Taimiyyah Masjid, was built on land to the north of the center of the town, near the railway station. The land on which the new mosque was built was donated by Baba Fugu Mohammed, Mohammed Yusuf's father-in-law. Baba Fugu Mohammed was an influential, but moderate figure, who was never a full member, and later murdered by the movement. His crime was attempting to negotiate with former President Olusegun Obasanjo after things got out of hand (Nwanze, 2014).

After the death of Baba Fugu Mohammed, Boko Haram was apparently left alone by the federal and state governments, and it expanded into other states. In that time, they started a farm, provided employment for their members, provided welfare for those members who could not work, and gave training to those who could. The Islamic militant movement provided an alternative to the federal and North-East state governments of the day, and this very viability attracted more members and many *zakat* donations from prominent members of the Northern elites. The only incident that brought them to international arena was in 2007, when Sheikh Ja'afar Mahmoud Adam was murdered. Ja'afar had started criticizing the Islamic militant movement and predicted that someday, because of their extremist ideologies, they would clash with the government.

It is generally believed that Mohammed Yusuf ordered his murder. For another two years after the Ja'afar assassination, they were left largely alone, growing and attracting more followers (Walker, 2012). Then, in 2009, the government of Ali Modu Sheriff banned

into conflict over dan Fodio's proposed religious reforms. Fearing dan Fodio's growing power, Yunfa summoned him and attempted to assassinate him in person; however, Yunfa's pistol backfired and wounded him in the hand. The following year, Yunfa expelled dan Fodio and his followers from their hometown of Degel.

riding bikes without the use of helmets. This seemingly innocuous event is what led to the meltdown. Five months later, a prominent member of Boko Haram Islamic movement died, and a large number of them were on the way to bury him (Adesoji, 2010: 97). They were stopped by the police, who quizzed them about their lack of helmets, as the new law dictated. An argument began, and in the process, shots were fired. People on both sides were injured, and violence escalated. Boko Haram attacked in Bauchi, Borno, and Yobe States, killing several police officers. In Maiduguri, they took over the major towns, and they controlled it for days, until the army was called in to help. Eventually, the army regained control and arrested many Boko Haram Islamic militant members, including Mohammed Yusuf (Walker, 2012: 3).

However, while Mohammed Yusuf was in police custody, he died. According to the police, he died "while trying to escape." Boko Haram, on their part, says that he was murdered extra-judicially, in cold blood (Sani, 2011: 17). There is evidence that Mohammed Yusuf's arrest, and an eventual trial, would have exposed some prominent members of the Boko Haram Islamic militant movement. One of the Boko Haram movement members killed at that time was a former Borno state Commissioner, Buji Foi, who was shot in the back by police officers (Walker, 2012: 4). Besides Yusuf and Foi, a large number of people were also shot down by the police without trial. For Boko Haram, the police attacks were the beginning of a war for revenge and survival. Abubakar Shekau, who had returned to Nigeria and who had become Mohammed Yusuf's right-hand man, relocated the movement to the border between the North-East region of Nigeria and Northern region of Cameroon. Abubakar Bin Shekau adopted the Al-Qaeda model and broke the Islamic militant movement into cells that are largely independent of each other.

Sometime in 2010, Boko Haram returned to Maiduguri and started a campaign of assassinations. This campaign began with hit-and-run attacks against police checkpoints in Borno and Yobe states. The movement's favored method was to steal a motorcycle, whereby the pillion rider would kill the police officers and seize their weapons. Gunmen also forced their way into the homes of local religious and political leaders who had cooperated with the police by naming Boko Haram members. The people who had taken over houses formerly belonging to escaped Boko Haram members were also killed if they refused to leave. On Christmas Eve 2010, as many as half a dozen bombs were detonated near churches and a market in two districts of Jos, Plateau State, killing scores of people (Ostebo, 2012: 4-5).

At the time, it was not assumed to be a Boko Haram attack; it was thought to be a nasty twist to the long-standing ethnic-political conflict there. Then, on New Year's Eve 2010, a bomb was detonated in a popular open-air fish restaurant and market inside the grounds of the Mogadishu barrack, just outside Abuja, killing ten. While it sits very close to a military barracks, the market was frequented mostly by civilians and was relatively loosely protected. Initially, it was not certain that either bombing had been carried

out by Boko Haram. There had been a bombing three months before, at a ceremony in Abuja marking the fiftieth anniversary of the country's independence, for which Boko Haram was not implicated.

But in early 2011, an FBI investigation concluded that the Mogadishu barracks bomb was constructed using the same techniques as devices in Jos, and suspicion fell on Boko Haram Islamic militant movement. These attacks showed that the movement was prepared to strike vulnerable spots and cause civilian casualties. It launched its bombing campaign in Jos, a city already tense with Muslim-Christian divisions, and it showed the federal and state governments that it was able to reach them in Abuja (Marchal, 2012). During the first few months of 2011, the Islamic militant movement's targets for assassination operations in Maiduguri widened beyond the original focus on police and other authorities.

In February 2011, for example, a pharmacist in Maiduguri, not believed to have had any previous connection to the movement's treatment by the police, was murdered in a robbery neighbors attributed to Boko Haram. Cash and a large amount of medical supplies were taken from his shop. A member of the Islamic militant movement, who identified himself as "Abu Dujana", said that anyone whom the movement declared an "enemy" would be killed. Abu Dujana also said that the Islamic militant movement had not ruled out the use of suicide bombers in its attacks (Onapajo *et al.*, 2012:347). The Islamic militant movement began to rob banks, cash-in-transit convoys and successful businesses, not only in Maiduguri, but also in Bauchi, where the movement remains strong. The Boko Haram Islamic militant movement claims it is permitted to do this by the Quran, as the money it takes is considered to be the "spoils of war" (Pérouse de Montclos, 2012:148). A source, who has followed the Boko Haram Islamic militant movement closely, estimates that the movement has gained approximately 500 million naira (about \$3 million, or £2 million) from such robberies, but such claims are unverifiable (Onwubiko, 2012:7).

It seems that Boko Haram underwent a dramatic transformation under Abubakar Bin Shekau. In retrospect, its transformation began when Al Jazeera had an interview with Abu Musab Abdel Wadoud (also known as Abdelmalek Droukdel), the Emir of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). The head of Al Qaeda's North African franchise stated that his Islamic militant movement would provide Boko Haram Islamic militant movement with all the necessary support in order to expand its own ambit in the neighboring countries. His intention was not only to gain "strategic depth" but also to "defend Muslims in Nigeria and stop the advance of a minority of Crusaders". At that time, this claim was widely dismissed, both because Droukdel was known for outsized ambitions and because he was having difficulties with some more dynamic southern commanders within AQIM (Onuoha, 2011:143). Droukdel's pronouncement was not as shocking as the unanticipated reappearance of Abubakar bin Muhammad Shekau, who was thought

to have been killed during the revolt in Kanama, when he showed up in a video that could be described as “Classic Al Qaeda.” Having on a headdress and bordered by an AK-47 and a stack of religious books, Shekau announced himself the new head of Boko Haram Islamic militant movement and assured vengeance: “Do not think jihad is over. Rather jihad has just begun” (Thomson, 2012:46).

Significantly, he threatened attacks not only against the Nigerian state but also against “outposts of Western culture”. In an issued manifesto, he linked the jihad being fought by Boko Haram with the global jihadist efforts, especially that of “the soldiers of Allah in the Islamic State of Iraq and Libya” (Usigbe, 2012: 1). Shekau’s reappearance seemed to be the gateway to a series of subsequent attacks from the Boko Haram. This was evident a few months later, in September 2010, when Boko Haram members broke into a Nigerian prison in Bauchi State and freed more than a hundred of their fellow members who had been awaiting trial since the previous year’s uprising. In the process of the assault, which involved the use of bombs and automatic weapons, the Islamic militant movement also released more than 750 other prisoners and scattered leaflets warning of further impending violence. This promise was rapidly fulfilled. Six days to the end of 2010, the Boko Haram Islamic militant movement set off a string of seven improvised explosive devices in Plateau State. The bombings, which targeted Christian communities, left more than thirty dead and scores of others wounded. Boko Haram subsequently carried out a number of other attacks, mainly through small improvised explosive devices thrown from moving vehicles or planted near targets in Maiduguri and Bauchi, aimed primarily at candidates in the 2011 elections that it had denounced (Eveslage, 2012).

The intention for their action is not far to seek. The elections, considered by Islamist hardliners to be a forbidden “innovation” [*bid’ah*] imposed by the West, were already contentious in that a significant number of Muslims, especially in the North-East region of Nigeria, deeply resented the candidacy of President Goodluck Jonathan, a southern Christian who succeeded President Umaru Musa Yar’Adua, a northern Muslim, after the latter’s unexpected death. The decision of President Goodluck Jonathan to seek a full term in his own right upset the informal compact within the ruling People’s Democratic Party, wherein the presidency is alternated every eight years between Christians, who dominate the South-South region of the country, and Muslims, who dominate the North. Meanwhile, Boko Haram Islamic militant movement continued to target Muslim figures who opposed their mode of operations and their ideological beliefs.

The mounting toll of victims included the brother of the Emir of Borno Ibrahim Ahmad Abdullahi Bolori, a prominent Maiduguri cleric who criticized Boko Haram, Ibrahim Birkuti, a cleric in the south of Borno State, who was also well known for his criticisms of the Islamic militant movement, the traditional ruler of the Kanuri people of North-East region of Nigeria, and the traditional rulers of South-East of Niger, North-West of Nigeria,

and North-Central of Nigeria. By June 2011, Boko Haram Islamic militant movement showed a significant tactical and operational advance in its capabilities when it launched a suicide attack using a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device against the national police headquarters in Abuja. A car laden with explosives drove into the compound of Louis Edet House, a block of offices previously thought secure in Abuja's government zone, by following a convoy of senior officers through the gates (Bazoum, 2012:12).

It is believed that the driver aimed to put the car near the entrance stairway as the senior officers entered, but he was directed to the back of the building by guards, where the bomb detonated in the car park. At the time, it was questioned whether the bombing was meant to be a suicide attack, because it was possible that the bomber had been delayed in Abuja traffic, but in August 2011 remaining doubts were removed when a man drove a car into the UN compound in Abuja and detonated a massive bomb, killing 26 people and wounding scores more. Interestingly, just a few days before the attack in Abuja, Boko Haram had issued a statement in which it boasted ominously, for the first time, of ties to Islamic militant movement in Somalia: "Very soon, we will wage jihad . . . our jihadists have arrived in Nigeria from Somalia where they received training on warfare from our brethren who made that country indocile" (Nigerian Daily Trust, 2013:18).

The attack on the UN compound, the first by the Boko Haram Islamic militant movement against an international target, as well as the video it subsequently released of the bomber offering praise to slain Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden and referring to the United Nations as a "forum of all global evil," puts it squarely in the ranks of extremist jihadist terrorists who have specifically targeted United Nations agencies in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Afghanistan. Other serious attacks have included bombings on Christmas Day 2011, when bombs were detonated in three states (Niger, Plateau and Yobe) killing 43 people (Nigerian Tribune, 2013:16). The rising toll of these attacks launched Boko Haram into world news and established it as an Islamic militant movement with the technical and doctrinal capacity to produce suicide bombers (Onuorah, 2011:64). Scott Stewart (2013), Security Intelligence analysts at Stratfor, say building successful suicide weapons, like the ones used in Abuja against police headquarters and the United Nations compound, is very difficult.

To perform two successful detonations is a good evidence that there is a foreign hand involved in training Boko Haram Islamic militant movement. The type of explosives the movement uses is common in mining and construction. There are plenty of sources of such explosives in the North-East region of Nigeria. The way the Boko Haram movement contacted the outside world also changed about this time. A local journalist says that Boko Haram tightened its telephone discipline, collecting the numbers of journalists it wanted to contact rather than having journalists call contacts they had made in the organization (Nigerian Vanguard, 2011:2). A Boko Haram spokesman with the *nom de guerre* of "Abu Qaqa" began contacting journalists to claim attacks. The federal govern-

ment later claimed that it had captured him, but Boko Haram says that another member had been captured and that Qaqa is still active. The purported leader of the Islamic militant movement, Abubakar Shekau, Yusuf's former right-hand man, also began to post videos on YouTube at this time.

Since August 2011, there have been almost weekly attacks by militants planting bombs in public places or in churches in Nigeria's North-East region of Nigeria. Boko Haram has also broadened its targets, away from direct revenge attacks, on the Nigerian state to include other representations of authority. This expansion includes setting fire to schools and attacking newspaper offices. Within the same year, 2011, some 12 public schools in Maiduguri were burned down during the night, with as many as 10,000 pupils forced out of education (Nigerian Punch, 2012:12). Three alleged members of Boko Haram were killed while trying to set fire to a school. The Islamic militant movement has told local journalists that these attacks are in retaliation for the arrests of a number of Islamic teachers from traditional "Tsangaya" Quranic schools in Maiduguri.

In the Tsangaya system of schools, clerics teach children to memorize the Quran. These schools, some with only a few children, some very large, operate not only in Nigeria, but also across the whole of the Sahel. The children, known as Almajiris, come to the city from the countryside. Many beg during the day and give their money to the teacher, or mallam, who runs the school. Boko Haram also says that it is attacking the government school system in retaliation for what it says is the government's attack on the Tsangaya system as a whole. There has also been an increase in reports of people being beheaded in public by Boko Haram. It is believed that these might be internal purges of moderate members, or members of the group who have been arrested, and can therefore no longer be trusted. After the attack on the United Nations, there was an intensification of the violence, which included a number of complex operations.

There was the case of a community called Barma in Damaturu, the capital of Yobe State, which involved attacks on various government institutions (Akande, 2011:1-2). There are other reported explosions elsewhere, including the coordinated attacks in Borno state, which left two hundred of people dead and many injured. The attacks in Damaturu and Maiduguri were consistent with the ultimatum that the Boko Haram movement issued, demanding that Christians should leave the North-East region of Nigeria. While Abubakar Bin Shekau asserts success in his evidently proven leadership for organizing a pace of coordinated attacks, the organization still comprises a composite of different actors, ranging from fanatical Islamist movements to disaffected citizens and to opportunistic Boko militants and hooligans, including some who have been encouraged by politicians who are keen on exploiting the ensuing violence and instability to advance their own political agendas (AFP, 2013).

Perversely, both the government and the Islamic militants movement have found it convenient to ascribe as much of the disorder in the North-East region of Nigeria to

Boko Haram. A case in point is the killing of two European hostages in March 2012, following a failed rescue operation by British and Nigerian forces. In January 2012, three groups of gunmen and suicide bombers coordinated attacks on three government buildings in Kano—the police headquarters, the office of the immigration service, and the State Security Service. More than 200 people were killed. Boko Haram has also continued its involvement in the longstanding conflict between indigenous groups and Hausa/Fulani “settlers” in Plateau State. Most of the violence in the area has a connection to Boko Haram, and in February 2012 a suicide car bomb was detonated at a Jos church (Nigerian Vanguard, 2013:24). A few days later, in March 2012, another suicide bomb was detonated outside St. Finbar’s Church in Rayfield, Jos, near the Plateau state government house. Nineteen people were killed in police retaliatory tit-for-tat attacks immediately following those bombings. These revenge killings probably outraged the Muslims, who had not been associated with the bombings.

In August 2013, after having carried out more than half-dozen small attacks on government officials and churches, Boko Haram carried out another major attack by sending gunmen into Izge Rana, a Christian village in Borno. Ninety people were killed, and many were wounded. There have been deadly bombs and gun attacks on the offices of *This Day* newspaper in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja and Kaduna, on the Catholic Chapel in Bayero University Kano, and on a cattle market in Yobe. Dozens were killed in each attack (Nigerian Punch, 2013:18). If more pre-emptive measures are not taken to confront Boko Haram new breadth in areas and strategic styles of operation, the eventual establishment of mini *waziristans* in its domiciled North-East region is a real possibility.

Boko Haram grabbed world headlines in 2014. In February, the group killed more than 100 Christian men in the villages of Boron Baga and Izghe and also later killed 59 students in the same village’s Federal Government College, in the North-East region of Nigeria. By April 14, 2014, Boko Haram Islamic militant movement gained international notoriety by kidnapping approximately 276 female students from Government School in Chibok, a Christian village in Borno State. They broke into the school around 3:00 a.m., shooting the guards and killing one soldier. The students, 400, were taken away in trucks, possibly into the Konduga area of the Sambisa Forest where Boko Haram Islamic militant movement is known to have fortified camps. Houses in Chibok were also burned down in the incidents. Britain, the United States, France and other international actors, including civil society groups, have pledged to channel efforts at rescuing the kidnapped girls.

Boko Haram Islamic Militant Movement’s Jihadist Justification

Both Islamic history and Jihadist perspective are dominated by dichotomies. In Islamic history, in the North-East region of Nigeria, the two principal branches of Islam are separated by a religious conflict between majority Sunnis and minority Shia. Aside from the differences in theological interpretation, their relationship has been charac-

terized by centuries of enmity and armed conflict. Though Islamic extremist jihadists can come from both branches, Islamic militant movement ideology is found to divide along party lines. As an example, the justification used by the Boko Haram Islamic militant movement differs from the predominantly Sunni perspective of other Islamic militant movements such as Al Shabaab, Maghreb, and so forth (Sani, 2011). A clear demarcation between good and evil is central to extremist jihadist reasoning. In their interpretation, “good” is characterized by a rigid fundamentalist perspective of Islamic belief and practice.

Sani (2011) characterizes Jihadist Islamism as a religious totalitarianism: “the phenomenon of Islamism combines a totalizing movement and the ideology of political religion”. Conversely, “bad” is defined by Islamists as nonbelievers who fail to submit to Allah’s will by converting to Islam. In the jihadist parlance, those who reject religious conversion to Islam are “infidels.” More specifically, Islamic militant movements have politically and inaccurately modified the Muslim concept of “kafir” – an atheist – to be synonymous with nonbeliever (Sani, 2011). As Obafemi (2009) noted, demonizing the enemy is a facet of the jihadist mentality. Using a heuristic model to explain the terrorist mindset, Laqueur (2004:54) posits that the development of an extremist ideology involves a four-stage process. In the first “context” stage, the terrorist cites some undesirable state of affairs or condition (i.e., social or economic deprivation), claiming “they are not right”. The second “comparison” stage consists of an allegation that the deprivation created an inequality that is “not fair”. Third, during the “attribution” stage, the extremist blames the perpetrator by professing “it’s your fault”. In the final fourth “reaction” stage, the ideologists demonizes their enemy, declaring “you are evil” in an effort to focus their resentment on the chosen enemy. Islamists demonize and target their near and far enemies (Laqueur, 2004:57). Obafemi (2009) argues that jihadists and Islamists consider the near governments of Muslim nations that are corrupt, secular, or subject to Western hegemony or influence to be adversaries.

Their failure to install an Islamic fundamentalist leadership and establish Sharia legal systems aligns them with Western infidels. Islamists also target the Western nations as enemies, typically blaming them for abuses perpetrated against Muslims and Muslim countries. Moreover, Islamists accuse Western governments of working to destroy Islam (Albert, 2012:8). When taken together, Islamists vilify and target a wide range of adversaries under the aegis of global purification. Given the framework of Islamist jihad, no peaceful compromise is possible. Islamists have launched a dichotomous non-negotiable cosmic war between evil (i.e. Western ideology) and good (i.e. radical Islamic fundamentalism). The eschatological nature of the Islamist and jihadist design bespeaks finality and fatalism. The predisposition ingredients to Boko Haram insurgency could therefore be located largely in the real or perceived discrepancy between the preferred way of life (to maintain the sanctity of orthodox Islam) and the actual state of their existence (secular state).

The voice of the few elements that initially reacted to the perceived dissonance has garnered popular support. In effect, the personal dissonance grows to become group-level grievances and discontentment. By this means, a micro-level dissonance is transformed into a macro-level phenomenon that agrees with what Sani (2011b) refers to as relative deprivation and largely provides an explanation to what Sani (2011b) refers to as precipitating or accelerating factors. The discrepancies could manifest within economic, social, cultural, political and religious spheres as these issues form the micro level of analysis that could be regarded as the structural background conditions operating at the individual level. Islamization of Nigeria under the Sharia law has always been the motive behind Boko Haram Islamic militant movement in the North-East region of Nigeria. Indeed, Sani (2011a) noted that Islamization of Nigeria was the major disposition factor behind the Jihad of Usman Dan Fodio in 1804. Sani also reported that Boko Haram Islamic militant movement believed in the Quranic verse that states, "Anyone who is not governed by what Allah has revealed is among the transgressors" (Quran 6, 49) (Sani, 2011a). For this reason, Abubakar bin Muhammad Shekau submitted that:

We would continue to fight until Islam is well established and the Muslims regain their freedom all over Nigeria. We would never be ready to compromise, and we don't need amnesty. The only solution to what is happening is for the government to repent, jettison democracy, drop the constitution, and adopt the laws in the Holy Qur'an (Sani, 2011b).

The Economic Implications of Boko Haram Islamic Militant Movement in Nigeria

There is no doubt that the burden of Boko Haram on the Nigerian people has been extremely heavy. First of all, Nigeria had lost more than a thousand of people in the last four years. This number includes both victims of the terrorist attacks-civilians, police officers and military personnel, as well as terrorists killed in shootouts. In addition to the casualties, the economic burden of Islamic militant movement has been significant. Nigerian government has increase his security budget to 668.54 billion naira to deal with the Boko Haram Islamic militant movement in 2014.³

3 According to the report from Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), the War on Terrorism in Nigeria raised military expenditure to a staggering \$2.327 billion (N372.3 billion) in 2012 alone, ranking Nigeria among countries at war in Africa. For example, while government spent \$1.067 billion in 2006, when there was relative peace, though the Niger Delta militancy had begun to take its toll on the country, by 2009 when the Boko Haram crisis erupted in the North-East, the expenditure rose to \$1.825 billion. In 2010, a huge sum of \$2.143 billion was spent in procuring military hardware, and the figure rose to a soaring \$2.386 billion in 2011. In 2012, the total budget for security was N921.91 billion, close to a record of N 1 trillion, which attracted much criticism from various segments of the society,

When this sum is compared with the former national security budget for Nigeria (as of 2008, it equaled 100 billion dollars), the significance of this cost can be better understood. Considering additional resources that were paid out to deal with other criminal Islamic militant movements, the loss of tourism revenue, structural losses to terrorism and other uncalculated burdens, it is quite apparent that Islamic criminal militant movement forced Nigeria to allocate most of its economic resources to deal with Boko Haram Islamic militant movement, thus weakening its economy.

In addition to the many casualties and the enormous financial burden, the sociological and cultural effect of Boko Haram Islamic militant movement on the Nigerian population is another vital aspect of Islamic militant movement criminal atrocities. The high number of terrorist incidents caused fear and panic especially between 2009 and 2014. Also, the numbers seem high after the year 2012, despite military crackdown and declaration of a state of emergency in three major states in the North-East region of Nigeria. During those years, the Islamic militant movement deeply affected Nigerian society, and terrorists made advances toward reaching some of their goals of spreading fear and panic, weakening Nigeria's economy and making Nigeria an unstable country in the international arena, which, in turn, significantly diminished tourism revenue. In fact, to ensure this, Boko Haram Islamic militant movement carried out many terrorist attacks against tourists between 2011 and 2014 (Williams, 2012:8). Consequently, in accordance with the goals and objectives of Islamic militant movement, Nigeria received its share of different kinds of both short and long-term losses and burdens because of Boko Haram Islamic militant movement, and there is no doubt that Boko Haram Islamic militant movement criminal activities is weakening the Nigerian economy for the past four years.

Boko Haram Islamic militant movement's has affected the economy of north-eastern Nigeria, and by extension, the economy of Nigeria significantly. Boko Haram is very closely linked to the declining economic conditions and high rates of illiteracy prevailing in the north-east region. The poor and illiterate become easy prey to ideological in the north-east region, fundamentalist masterminds who can brainwash, train and use them in whatever way they want. The region's economy has suffered on three accounts: first, large amounts of money are being expended on the War On Terrorism (WOT),

especially when compared to the sum of N348 billion allocated to defence in 2011. In 2013, when the military began massive procurement of security equipment to fight Boko Haram insurgency that had begun to spread from the North-East to North-West and some parts of the North-Central, the Federal Government spent some \$2.327 billion. In 2013, the trend continued, as the allocation to Defence hit N668.54 billion. The report, indicates that the country's military spending is the 6th highest in Africa, and competed with the expenditures of countries like Libya (\$2.9 billion), Morocco (\$3.4 billion), Angola (\$4.1 billion), South Africa (\$4.4 billion) and Algeria (\$9.3 billion).

which could have gone to development; second, many foreign investors and markets have been lost due to the insecurity; third, local businesses, industries and livelihoods have been lost.

Energy crises have further crippled the already tumbling economy. It has almost jammed the industrial wheel of the region. Owing to frequent power outages, many industrial units have been closed. Closure of industries has occasioned loss of jobs and competitive edge on a large scale. An energy-starved economy fails to attract foreign investment. The poor economic condition of the north-east has not only kept foreign investors away but the local ones as well. When the investment climate for businesses and the industrial sector are not healthy, the inflow of foreign exchange is checked, which may lead to a decline in foreign reserves. Decline in foreign reserves compels the country to seek loans from other countries and international financial institutions.

Another major problem is the north-east's huge debt inchoed by incumbent governors from their former governors and its continued dependence on financial aid from international donors. Moreover, the tax system in the north-east is inefficient and unsatisfactory. The ratio of direct taxes is more than indirect taxes. Tax evasion is common. The rich are reluctant to pay tax, while the poor are paying tax even on the purchase of a matchbox. With unhealthy conditions, the region is likely to face low exports and high imports. This is also the case with the industrial sector. Due to inconsistent supply of electricity to the industrial sector, industries fail to give optimal output let alone surplus production. The production of goods in lesser quantities has affected exports from our industrial sector. This makes federal and north-east state governments import goods and solicit for billions of naira in order to meet the needs of the masses -this causes inflation. Inflation provides an important insight on the north-east states of the economy and policies that govern it. Stable inflation not only provides impetus for economic growth, but also helps uplift vulnerable stratas of society. The north-east in recent years has been in the grip of high inflation, which amongst other things has adversely affected the economic health of the region. The overall Consumer Price Index (CPI, 2013), a key indicator of inflation, has swelled by 33 per cent in the last four years, eroding the purchasing power of the people as the overall economy has not performed in line with ever-increasing prices (CPI, 2013).

Moreover, people living in areas affected by domestic terrorism are migrating to other relatively safer areas in the region. The north-east has seen the largest internal displacement and migration since the beginning of Boko Haram insurgency in 2009. 650,000 of people have abandoned their homes, businesses, possessions and property. This influx of people into new areas and their rehabilitation and provision is an economic burden for federal and state governments. Unemployment is already prevalent, and now the need to provide employment and productive engagement to these migrants has also become a serious concern. This displaced portion of population is contributing little or nothing worthwhile to the national economy, yet they have to be provided for from it.

Last but not least, loss of vibrancy in the tourism industry is also a cause of decline in the economy. The region has long been a place of great tourist attraction. The beautiful hills, game reserves, the lush green valleys, shimmering lakes and flowing waterfalls brought many a tourist to the north-east region. This contributed to foreign exchange. The tourism industry was one of the booming sectors of the north-east. Besides attracting foreign exchange, it also provided employment to local people. Also, the tourism industry was a source of friendly relations with other countries. Local as well as foreign media have projected the region as a dangerous and unsafe place.

Conclusions

Boko Haram Islamic militant movement is, undoubtedly, a criminal and juridical phenomenon requiring a corresponding reaction from the Nigerian state. Therefore, part of the policy of counteraction to terrorism is criminal and legal policy. Boko Haram Islamic militant movement, no doubt, still harbors ambitions to conduct operations in North-East region of Nigeria, its name no longer adequately explains its current strategy. Governments in Nigeria should acknowledge this reality and work more closely to prevent the Boko Haram Islamic militant movement from further entrenching itself. Better intelligence, mobility, and community focus by the North-East region's security sectors are needed to respond to attacks and target Boko Haram Islamic militant movement bases. At the same time, the governments need to protect livelihoods and create economic opportunities so as to maintain the divisions that historically have separated indigenous North-East communities from Islamic militant movements, which Boko Haram Islamic militant movement is actively seeking to bridge.

Removing the roots that Boko Haram Islamic militant movement is setting down in the North-East region of Nigeria is the only way to contain and reverse the growing threat it poses to the North-East region. The fact that Boko Haram Islamic militant movement has not only survived the harsh reprisals of 2009 but has also since been able to expand both the reach and scope of its operations ought to be a wakeup call to both the Nigerian government and the international community. The suicide bombings targeting symbols of Nigerian state authority and international engagement represent a major advance in Boko Haram movement's capabilities and a significant shift in its message. The effect not only discredited the efforts of Nigerian security officials to trivialize the Islamic militant movement as an insignificant localized problem but also called into question the assumptions of security analysts abroad who have long minimized the risks violent Islamists posed to Nigeria. The upsurge in attacks in Nigeria, when coupled with developments elsewhere in Africa, are a vivid reminder that extremism and violence cannot easily be contained by arbitrary divisions, whether on maps or in analytical frameworks. Consequently, the emergence of Boko Haram and its burgeoning capacity for violence ought to be recognized as both a national and transnational problem and should be addressed as such.

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Security Crisis in Nigeria: Boko Haram Insurgency and the Prospects of Peace

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Abstract.

Insecurity is a difficult subject about which to generalise, considering the variations in context, actors and actions involved. This article, however, analyses cases from Nigeria that enhance understanding of the contextual and structural conditions that underline the phenomenon. Using secondary data that are content analysed and descriptively presented, the article investigates and offers insight into the conundrum of security threats in Nigeria, with a particular focus on the Boko Haram insurgency. It examines the nature, trends and dynamics of the Boko Haram insurgency, and its impacts on the Nigerian state. The article argues that threats to Nigeria's security are diverse, affecting inter-ethnic cohesion, territorial integrity, unity, stability and sovereignty of the country, as well as the wellbeing of the people. In particular, the Boko Haram insurgency in the north-east, which metamorphosed from a localised threat to a national and sub-regional security problem and an issue of global concern, had serious and deeply severe impact, having caused the death of tens of thousands and displacement of millions of people particularly women and children in Nigeria and the Lake Chad sub-region. The multiple dynamic forms/manifestations and highly reticent nature of the insurgency contributed to the impact it had. The article, however, argues and concludes that the Boko Haram insurgence and security threats in Nigeria are better understood within the context of the character and the political economy of the country, which encourages and predisposes people to radicalisation, extremism and violent crimes, and that of the international system.

Keywords: Security crisis, Boko Haram, Insurgency, Security Threats, Terrorism, Nigeria.

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Introduction

Universally, security is the heart of sovereign political entities. This is the reason why national security, construed as the “socio-economic, political, cultural and military strategies that would promote, preserve and maintain the interest of a nation, including its citizens’ interests” (Pogoso, 2013:10)

and the protection of all the values, including political independence and territorial integrity of a state (Baldwin, 1997), is a central element of the national interest and policy objectives of all sovereign states.

In Nigeria, national security, as articulated by President Olusegun Obasanjo (1999-2007), is “the aggregation of the security interests of all individuals, communities, ethnic groups and entities, and institutions, which make up Nigeria” (Pogoso, 2013:22). The aim, Obasanjo noted, is to strengthen the country, promote national interest and goal, enhance human development, contain instability and control crimes. In the same vein, Nigeria’s national security has been explained as the protection of the country from external aggression, containing internal upheavals, enhancing genuine development and improving the general wellbeing of the citizens (Ibid). These conceptualizations are plausible because they recognise that national security in Nigeria encompasses the physical/state security (defence of sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity) of the country, as well as the security of the people from hunger, crimes, diseases, social conflicts, unemployment, political repression, and environmental hazards (otherwise called human security) (Booyesen, 2002; UNDP, 1994).

These conceptualisations of Nigeria’s national security draw from the country’s federal constitutions since independence in 1960, in which the defence of sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity, together with the welfare of the people are highlighted and emphasised. The 1999 [amended] Constitution, for example, like its predecessors, establishes, on the one hand, the security architecture for ensuring the physical/state security of Nigeria, including internal policing and protection from internal and external aggression, and, on the other hand, mandates the government to promote the welfare of the people. The security architecture, according to sections 214 and 217 of the Constitution, includes the police and the armed forces, consisting of an army, a navy, an air force and such other branches of the armed forces that may be established by an Act of the National Assembly (Federal Republic of Nigeria [FRN], 2010).

In the same vein, chapter II, sections 13-21, enjoins and expects the government to promote and guarantee the aspect of Nigeria’s national security relating to the social, political, economic, cultural and environmental interests of the people. Section 16(2b), for example, requires the Nigerian government to direct its policy towards ensuring “that the material resources of the nation are harnessed and distributed as best possible to serve the common good”, while section 14(2b) states that “the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government” (FRN, 2010). In line with this, Nigerian government allocates a percentage of its yearly budget to social, economic, cultural and environmental sectors of the economy in order to promote the human security aspect of the country’s national security. For example, the aggregate government expenditure on key primary welfare sectors in 2013, which include education, health and agriculture, amounted to 2.7% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and

accounted for 19.5% of the total government expenditure in the year (Central Bank of Nigeria [CBN], 2013).

Similarly, in a bid to safeguard and guarantee national security, particularly the aspect relating to territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence, as well as public order/internal peace of the country, the government allocates funds to the security/defence sector, comprising the military (army, navy, air force, and Ministry of Defence), the police (Ministry of Police Affairs, Police Formations and Commands), the Office of the National Security Adviser, and the civil defence, among others. In recent years, specifically between 2000 and 2015, matters under the defence/security sector took a large share of the country's budgets. In 2014, the defence/security sector received about 20% of the total budget (Udo, 2014), and got the second highest of the allocations for recurrent (non-debt) expenditure in 2015 budget (Tsan & Odemwingie, 2015). Likewise, the Police Formations and Commands/Ministry of Police Affairs got 8.7% of the total capital vote in the 2009 budget (Budget Office of the Federation, 2009). In addition, military expenditure was not at any time less than 0.4% (it oscillated between 0.4% and 1.6%) of the country's GDP, and 2.2% (it was between 2.2% and 4.9%) of the share of government spending between 2000 and 2014 (SIPRI, 2015). These figures, for the defence/security sector and key primary welfare sectors, clearly show the centrality of security (physical and human) in Nigeria.

However, despite huge government spending, Nigeria's political history is replete with serious security threats that endangered inter-ethnic cohesion, unity, stability, and territorial integrity and/or sovereignty of the country. The latest is the cum insurgency terrorism by the radical Islamic group Boko Haram, since 2009. This article, therefore, investigates the crisis of security in Nigeria. It particularly focuses on the Boko Haram insurgency. In doing so, the paper examines the trends, dynamics and implications, as well as the local and global dimensions of the Boko Haram insurgency. The thrust of the article is that threats to security in Nigeria are best understood from the character of the Nigerian state. What exacerbates the situation, however, is the transnational nature of the security threats, regarding the role of external actors in fuelling the crisis through provision of funds, weapons and logistical assistances.

Character of the Nigerian State and Security Crisis

The crisis of security in Nigeria will be better understood if placed within the context of the political economy of the Nigerian state. Since the colonial period (1914-1960), the Nigerian state has been the dominant force in the national economy due to the underdevelopment of the private capitalist sector. Though there have been efforts to transform into a full market economy, the Nigerian state has remained a central force in the economy. Among other things, the Nigerian state is the major facilitator of the capitalist development process in the country, as it is the principal owner of the means

of production and employer of labour. The centrality of the state in the national economy is sustained by the increased oil revenues since the 1970s (Obi, 2010:447), making it dominate all aspects and spheres of the national political economy. As a result, the state dominates and controls all national resources, turning it into a primary instrument of primitive accumulation.

Given the ubiquity of state power, the political elite in Nigeria place much emphasis on its acquisition in order to use it for personal advancement and to promote narrow group interest (Ake, 1996; Joseph, 1991). This makes access to the state a platform for primitive accumulation. This character of the Nigerian state promotes corruption, patronage, and clientele politics, which makes politics in the country to mean more than competition for political power, but a desperate and vicious struggle for political positions and access to those in government because of the socio-economic benefits and incentives in state power.

It is within this context of the overriding role of the Nigerian state in the national political economy, and the socio-economic benefits of access to state power, that one can explain the attitude of Nigerian political elite to politics and to governance as evidenced in intense struggle for state power with total disregard for the fundamental issue of security of the country and its people. Due to its profitability, which arises from its ubiquity, Nigeria's political elite place significant emphasis on access to and acquisition of state power to the extent that socio-economic development of the country is neglected and promote narrow personal, ethnic, religious and communal interest. This, in practical terms, contributes to and fuels situations that threaten Nigeria's security.

The Boko Haram insurgency

Among the threats to security in Nigeria's fourth republic, the insurgency by Boko Haram, a radical Islamic cum terrorist sect/group, is the most unnerving and unparalleled. This is because of four reasons. First, there is uncertainty about the origin of the sect, as there are multiple accounts of its evolution and exact date of emergence. While an account gave the establishment of the group as 2002 (Adegbamigbe, 2012), another claimed it has been in existence since 1995 (Onuoha, 2010:55). Research has also shown that the group clandestinely developed over a period of time under different names such as *Ahlulsunna wal'jama'ah hijra*, Nigerian Taliban, and the *Yusufiyyah* (Onuoha, 2010:55), making it difficult for the government to effectively track its existence and mission.

Secondly, members of the group have a radical philosophy that rejects Western education and science, including opposition to the theory of Darwinism, the idea that the world is round and the scientific explanation of the process of rain formation (Onuoha, 2010:56). As a result, the sect demonstrates and displays behaviours that are barbaric and unacceptable in civilised societies. There are however some contradictions in the

sect's abhorrence and rejection of the western education and science. For example, despite the rejection of western science, the sect relies on and uses the internet, the social media, including the YouTube and Twitter, and mobile phones to relay its messages and threats to the Nigerian government and public. Moreover, the weapons and ammunition the sect uses are products of science.

Thirdly, the objective of the sect is frightening and unprecedented in the history of security threats to Nigeria. This is because the goal of the sect is to "overthrow the Nigerian state and impose strict Islamic *Sharia* law in the country" (Onuoha, 2010:57). Based on the goal, the sect commenced armed attacks against the Nigerian state in 2003 in Yobe state in the north-east (Onuoha, 2010:55), aiming to use it as the platform for the establishment of an Islamic caliphate over the whole country. However, the sect's goal is totally incongruous to the spirit and letter of the 1999 (Amended) Constitution, which recognises Nigeria as a secular political entity. Section 10 of the Constitution is unequivocal about the fact that "the Government of the Federation or of a State shall not adopt any religion as State religion" (FRN, 2010). The fourth reason the Boko Haram insurgency is unnerving is because of the nature of its activities and impacts on the Nigerian state and people. These are analysed below.

Trends and dynamics of Boko Haram insurgency, 2009-2014

While the origin and the exact date of the emergence of the Boko Haram sect/group are mired in controversy (Onuoha, 2010), what is not controversial is that the nature and character of the sect's activities has broadened over time. Beginning in 2003 with pockets of attacks on police stations and public buildings in the towns of Geiam and Kanamma in Yobe state (Onuoha, 2010:55), armed attacks by Boko Haram has burgeoned. The Nigerian public was particularly inundated with local and international media reports of the activities of the sect between 2009 and 2014. For instance, *The News*, a national weekly magazine, carried reports on the sect in not less than sixty percent of its publications between 6 February 2012 and 4 February 2013 (covering vol. 38, no. 5, vol. 40, no.4).

An analysis of media reports showed that private citizens, both Christians and Muslims, and security agents in the states in Nigeria's north-east, particularly Yobe, Borno, Gombe, Adamawa and Bauchi, the north-central state of Kaduna, Kano in the north-west, and Abuja – the federal capital, were targets of armed attacks by Boko Haram between 2009 and 2014. The group's terror activities were in different forms, including pillaging of villages and communities, abduction, displacement and wanton killing of innocent people. While an estimated 5,000 people were killed between 2009 and 2014 (Human Rights Watch, 2014a), about 3,750 civilians were killed by the group in 2014 alone (Human Rights Watch, 2015). Armed attacks by the sect also led to internal displacement of nearly a million people in the north-east of the country (Human Rights Watch, 2015).

Similarly, several women and girls were kidnapped during the period. An account estimated that over 500 women and girls were kidnapped and subjected to various abuses such as rape, forced labour and forced marriage by the group (Human Rights Watch, 2014a). On April 14, 2014, for example, over two hundred schoolgirls in the town of Chibok, in Borno state, were abducted. This attracted national and international condemnation, including from the United Nations (UN) and world leaders, such as the US president, Barak Obama. However, despite the international condemnation and promises of early rescue by the Nigerian government, the group refused to release the girls. Reports indicated that while some of the abducted school girls were trafficked to neighbouring countries, where they were sold into prostitution, some of them were forced to marry members of the sect, and a number of them were killed for refusing to convert to Islam (Human Rights Watch, 2014b).

Also, Boko Haram expanded the scope of its operations from the sporadic attacks on police stations in 2003 in Yobe state, to military barracks, military/police checkpoints, markets, churches, mosques, schools and private social gatherings, such wedding and burial ceremonies, in some of the states in the north-east, north-central and north-west parts of the country between 2009 and 2014. The Zone 1 headquarters of the Nigeria Police Force in Kano, in the north-west, and a police station and a military checkpoint in Marar Rabar Liman Katagun area of Tafawa Balewa in Bauchi state, in the north-east, were attacked on 20 and 21 January 2012 respectively (Johnson, 2012:14-15). Several churches and mosques were also attacked across the north. These include St. Fibarr Catholic Church Rayfield, Jos, Plateau state, in the north-central, in March 2012 (Bankong-Obi, 2012:16), and Catholic fellowship at the campus of Bayero University Kano (BUK), Kano, on 29 April 2012 (Nmeribeh & Adaji, 2012:12).

Another aspect of the Boko Haram insurgency relates to the means, strategies and tactics the group used in carrying out its operations. Apart from such munitions as AK47 assault rifles, anti-aircraft guns, armoured tanks and artillery guns (Agbo, 2015:22-24), some of which were stolen or seized from police and military officers/stations (Onuoha, 2010:59), the group deployed suicide bombers as part of its warfare strategies against the Nigerian state. However, the use of suicide bombers by the sect became common after 2009. The sect used suicide bombers in some of its attacks between 2010 and 2015, including the attack on St. Fibarr Catholic Church, Rayfield, Jos, Plateau state, in the country's north-central part, in 2012 (Bankong-Obi, 2012:16), and the attacks on the Nigeria Police Headquarters and United Nations building in Abuja, the federal capital, in 2011 (Adi, 2012a:15; Adegbamigbe, 2012:15). The suicide bomb attacks by the group were perpetrated by adult members of the group, who drove cars laden with explosives and rammed them into selected targets. By 2014, however, the group broadened its combat strategies to include the use of young boys and girls as suicide bombers. The child/teenage suicide bombers used by the group range from 10 to 18

years old. There was, however, an instance when a girl, as young as seven, was used as a suicide bomber in multiple bomb attacks in Potiskum, Yobe state, on February 21, 2015 (The Guardian, 2015).

As part of its strategies, some of the child/teenage suicide bombers carried the Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) on their bodies and detonated them after securing their targets, while others had the IEDs on them remotely detonated. Some of the bombings by the group, including the bomb attacks on bus stations in Potiskum, Yobe state, and in Kano, Kano state on February 24, 2015, for example, were carried out by female teenage suicide bombers aged 17 and 18, who concealed the IEDs, in the case of Kano, under their veil, and in the case of Potiskum, in bags, and detonated them after securing their targets (Abuh *et al*, 2015:1-2; Adeyemi & Joel, 2015:1). However, in the suicide bomb attacks on Kano Central Mosque, in November 2014, the IEDs carried by the child/teenage suicide bomber were remotely detonated (Osun Defenders, 2014).

Also, the sect's combat strategies between 2009 and 2014 included coordinated multiple, concurrent bombings and gun attacks, as well as isolated, sporadic attacks. The group, for example, carried out multiple and simultaneous armed attacks in Kano state on January 20, 2012 on different targets, including the headquarters of the State Security Service (SSS), Zone 1 headquarters of the Nigeria Police Force and the Passport office of the Nigerian Immigration Service (Johnson, 2012:14). A similar strategy was adopted in November 2011, when the sect simultaneously attacked police stations, offices of the SSS and the Nigerian Immigration Service, the Damaturu Prison and a number of churches in Damaturu, Yobe state (Johnson, 2012:15). However, some of the sect's attacks, though deadly, were miniature, as they involved sporadic gun shots or lone/isolated bomb attacks on targets.

The impacts of Boko Haram insurgency on Nigeria

The Boko Haram insurgency has compromised security in Nigeria. This is because it has caused massive destruction of private and public property, disruption of socio-economic activities, death and displacement of people, and because it attempted to restructure the country into an Islamic caliphate, thereby threatening its unity, territorial integrity and stability. In particular, Boko Haram's combat strategies, especially the use of suicide bombers, undermined the peace and stability of the states in the north of Nigeria. This, however, was not limited to the north, as the possibilities of suicide bomb attacks by the group created palpable fear and apprehension across the country. The fear of Boko Haram suicide bombers underlined increased security awareness and extensive security checks in financial and tertiary institutions, and also during social engagements, such as wedding ceremonies, in many parts of the country. For example, as a result of the fear of armed attacks and possible deployment of suicide bombers by Boko Haram, the authorities of University of Ibadan, in the country's south-west, introduced unprecedented strenuous

security checks at the university's entrances on September 14, 2011, subjecting students, staff and visitors to physical, metal and bomb detector inspection.¹

Similarly, given its rejection of Western education and science, most of the group's armed attacks, particularly in the north-east, were against educational institutions. The attacks were aimed at discouraging people from receiving Western education. This underlined the violent attack on the Government Secondary School in Chibok, Borno state, leading to the abduction of over two hundred schoolgirls in April 2014, and several cases of gun attacks and bombings of schools. These include armed attacks on Federal College of Education, Kano on 17 September 2014, where 15 students were killed and thirty-four others wounded (Adeyemi & Alabelewe, 2014:4). Also, as part of the strategy to disrupt schooling and discourage people from receiving Western education, letters of armed attacks on schools were on various occasions sent to school authorities. Government College and Mount Saint Gabriel Secondary School, both in Makurdi, Benue state in the country's north-central, for example, received threat letters from the group on May 14, 2014, of an impending armed attack (Soriwei & Adepegba, 2014:2).

Though the attacks were not carried out, the fact that similar threats by the group to media organisations, including *This Day* newspaper in January 2012, whose offices in Abuja and Kaduna were bombed in May 2012 (Felix, 2012:42-43), underscores the seriousness of the threats to the schools. The cumulative effect of Boko Haram's anti-western education sentiment was the withdrawal of students from schools and the near-collapse of the school system in the states in the north-east (IRIN, 2013). A report by the United Nations Children's Fund in 2014 gave credence to this, showing that at least 15,000 school children in northern Nigeria stopped attending schools between February and April 2014 (Akinloye, 2014:3). The figure is significant, given the fact that the north, particularly the north-east, is traditionally the least educationally developed region in Nigeria.²

Furthermore, Boko Haram insurgency contributed to ethnoreligious tension in Nigeria. This was in two ways. The first relates to palpable tension between the Christians and the Muslims in the north and in other parts of the country at the time when Christians and Christian institutions, including churches in the north, were increasingly attacked

1 Personal observation by the author, September 14, 2011. It is to be noted that the management of University of Ibadan gradually scaled down the security checks at its entrances when it was sure that the Boko Haram threats had subsided.

2 The states in the region had the highest percentage of persons aged 15years and above that cannot read a simple letter in English language in the 2009/2010 Standard Survey on Nigeria's Core Welfare indicators. See National Bureau of Statistics, (2012) *Harmonized Nigeria Living Standard Survey (HNLSS) 2009/2010-Core Welfare Indicators* (Abuja: National Bureau of Statistics), p. 7.

by the group. There were threats of reprisals, and in some cases actual reprisal attacks, on Muslims by Christians in the north. An example was the religious violence in June 2012, in Plateau state and southern Kaduna, in Kaduna state, between Christians and Muslims, caused by Boko Haram attacks on churches (Adi, 2012a:14-15; Adi, 2012b:14-16). This trend, however, changed when it became clear that Boko Haram is anti-Islamic, because of its increasing violent attacks on Muslims and lack of respect for Islamic practices and institutions, including mosques.

The second is that Boko Haram's violence in the north strained ethnic relationship (north-south relations). This was evident in the calls by southern community leaders/leaders of thought to people of southern ethnic extractions in the north to relocate back to the south. Some of the southern community leaders who made the calls were Gani Adams, leader of the militant Yoruba (southwest) ethnic militia, the Oodua People's Congress (OPC), Orji Uzor Kalu, former governor of Abia state in the south-east, and Ralph Uwazuiruike, leader of MASSOB, an Igbo (south-east) ethnic militia (Johnson, 2012:15-16). The calls were predicated on the brutality of Boko Haram and the fact that the group had, on January 2, 2012, given the southerners a three-day ultimatum to vacate the north of the country (Johnson, 2012:15-16). Though there is no empirical evidence to suggest that the calls were heeded, continued violence by Boko Haram and the government inability to curtail it, led some southerners to relocate from the north to the south (Nmeribeh, 2013:14-18).

Also, Boko Haram insurgency contributed to political tension during the 2015 general elections. This is because it was on account of the insurgency that the elections, slated to commence on February 14, 2015, were postponed for six weeks. Being inundated with security reports from the military, police and security agencies, the country's electoral body, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), postponed the general elections in order to allow the military to restore normalcy to the north-east (Suleiman, 2015; *The Guardian*, 2015). The postponement, however, heightened political tension, generating heated arguments among the political class, with some political parties, particularly the All Progressive Congress (APC), interpreting it as a ploy by the ruling party, the People's Democratic Party (PDP), to rig the election and perpetuate itself in power. The proponents of the postponement, including the federal government and the ruling party, based their arguments on the possible disenfranchisement of eligible voters in the fourteen local governments of the north-eastern states badly affected by the insurgency.

The disagreement heightened tension in the country as some feared that the elections would not hold. This was in addition to the fact that the insurgency had become a critical issue in the electioneering campaigns of political parties, with some politicians using it as a strategy for securing electoral leverage. For example, the media director of the PDP presidential campaign organisation, Femi Fani-Kayode, described the APC presidential

candidate, Muhammadu Buhari, as a Boko Haram apologist (Godwin, 2015). This was aimed at discrediting the APC presidential candidate in order for the PDP to secure the sympathy of Christian voters. What this shows is the lack of political ideology and political culture by Nigeria's political elite who unashamedly politicised the Boko Haram insurgency for the purpose of securing political supports from the electorates. This, however, was due to the profitability of access to and control of state power in Nigeria, which, to the political elite, is an instrument of primitive accumulation; an instrument of accumulating wealth, property, social influence and meeting narrow group interests.

Boko Haram and Security crisis in Nigeria:

The local and global factors/dimensions

Two logics are at play in the complex security crisis and the Boko Haram insurgency in the north-east. The first relates to the character of the Nigerian state, typified by the dominant and overriding role of the State in the national political economy, which makes competition for the control of state power by the political elite a desperate and vicious struggle. The struggle for state power by the political elite in Nigeria has been to the detriment of socio-economic development. This accounts for the country's low level of development, evidenced in poverty incidence rates of 54%, 69%, 71.5% and 72.5% in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 respectively, and high unemployment percentage rates of 19.7, 21.4, 23.9 and 25.7 in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 respectively (Central Bank of Nigeria, 2013:liii). This, however, plays a critical role in the security crisis in the country as the case of the violence in the Niger Delta demonstrates. This is because the violence in the Niger Delta, which seriously affected the country's oil production before the Yar'Adua and Jonathan presidencies (2007-2010 and 2010-2015 respectively) introduced the amnesty programme, was started by youth reacting to the socio-economic underdevelopment of their region as a result of years of government neglect.

Furthermore, the Nigerian state is typified by dysfunctional public institutions and structures. These, according to Ujoma (2004), contend compromise the territorial and national integrity of Nigeria and make the people vulnerable to unnecessary fear, deprivation and chaos (cited in Pogason, 2013:25). The ineffectiveness of public institutions, such as the police, arising from being poorly equipped, trained and motivated, for example, contributes to the security crisis, as it, on the one hand, renders them incapable of preventing and mitigating major internal threats to national peace, and, on the other hand, predisposes some of the people to violence that compromises the security of others.

The second point relates to the transnational character of the security threats to Nigeria. The Boko Haram insurgency clearly highlights this. Though started as a localised issue, the Boko Haram later extended its operations to Nigeria's immediate neighbours, with armed incursions into Cameroon, Chad and Niger. In the face of increased brutality of

the group in Nigeria and its immediate neighbours capable of undermining the peace and security of the West and Central African sub-regions, the international community led by the West, particularly France and the United States, was drawn into finding a solution to the insurgency. However, what also lies at stake are some concerns relating to the possibility of the sub-regions becoming havens for grooming and training of terrorists and for a terrorist to strike against Western interests in Africa. The concerns were reinforced in 2014, when Boko Haram pledged allegiance to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), a violent terrorist group in Syria and Iraq. These concerns underlined international efforts, including France which hosted a summit involving the governments of Nigeria, Cameroon, Niger, Chad and Benin Republic in Paris, in 2014, on how to counter the insurgency (Suleiman, 2015).

The concerns have also contributed to the forging of closer military ties at bilateral and multilateral levels between Nigeria and its neighbours, as demonstrated by the formation in January 2015 of a multinational force, the Multinational Joint Task Force (MJTF), by Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger to confront the insurgency. This has led to tremendous military success against the Boko Haram, evidenced in the destruction of its grip on the states in the north-east, the rescue of several women and children that had been kidnapped, and the return of relative peace to the affected states (Ibid). Besides, the insurgency affected Nigeria-US military relationship as Nigeria had to purchase the military hardware required in the fight against the insurgents from Russia and China (Ibid). This was because of the US reluctance to sell arms to the Nigerian government under the Jonathan presidency on the grounds of pervasive corruption in the government and the poor human rights record of the Nigerian military (The Nation, 2015).

Aside from Boko Haram insurgency, other major threats to Nigeria's security are transnational in nature as they involved external actors. The activities of Niger Delta militias, particularly the NDPVF under Asari Dokubo, for example, were facilitated by organisations in South Africa and Equatorial Guinea (Oyeniya, 2009:52). Likewise, the *Muhajirun* movement (the Nigerian Taliban), an Islamic religious fundamentalist group in northern Nigeria, between 1999 and 2007 had links with the al-Qaeda network (Akanji, 2009:61). The international networks afforded the local militias and radical religious groups the opportunities to receive funds, weapons, training and logistical assistances from groups and networks that are beyond the constitutional reach of the Nigerian government and its security agencies (Pham, 2006). Also, buoyed by a porous border, poor border control and corruption of security agencies (IPCR, 2002), mercenaries and proliferation of small arms and light weapons contribute to insecurity in Nigeria. These have made it difficult for the Nigerian government to tackle the Boko Haram insurgency, as evidenced in reports, including IRIN (2014), of unhindered cross-border movement by members of the group under the guise of religious proselytization, resulting in the recruitment of non-Nigerians, particularly Cameroonians, as mercenaries.

Conclusion: Any prospects for peace in Nigeria?

There is no doubt that some qualified success has been achieved in the effort to tackle insecurity in Nigeria. These include the purchase of new hardware in 2014 for the military to combat the Boko Haram insurgency, some improvement in the welfare condition of military/security personnel, particularly in the area of refurbishment of barracks and increase in and timely payment of salaries, and the introduction of amnesty programme in the Niger Delta, which has contributed to relative peace and reduction of threats to oil production by militants. Yet, security in Nigeria has remained suspect, as it continues to be highly susceptible to pernicious security threats, making it an unsecured political economy.

Continued violence by Boko Haram, threats of the revival of militancy in the Niger Delta because of the shortcomings in the government amnesty programme, and low level of socio-economic development, evidenced by widespread poverty and high level of unemployment, have contributed to continued precarious security condition of the country. This is in spite of high budgetary allocations to the defence/security sector. Among the unnerving challenges facing the sector is the issue of corruption. Major security projects in the sector have been tainted by corruption as the recent scandal involving the impoundment by the South African government of \$9.3million which Nigeria had wanted to use to purchase military hardware from South Africa (The Punch, 2014; Eyoboka & Omonobi, 2014). There have also been evidence that military personnel deployed to the north-east lacked necessary motivations to combat the Boko Haram insurgency, largely as a result of poor welfare condition (Ameh, 2014:2).

The situation has been further compounded by poor governance at all levels, and the increasing privatisation of security as shown in the emergence of community vigilantism and increasing dependence of the people on private security companies (PSCs) for protection from hoodlums, miscreants and armed robbers, indicative of the inability of the Nigerian state and its security apparatuses to guarantee security. What the evidence also suggests is that the high budgetary allocations to the defence/security sector have benefitted a few 'powerful' military top brasses (and their civilian friends in government), while the majority of Nigerians have experienced a considerable fall in their quality of life.

The foregoing presents a number of challenges. The first is that the prospects for durable peace and security in Nigeria will, as a matter of fact, remain inextricably tied to the level of socio-economic development of the country. The second is that the possibilities of sustainable peace in Nigeria, and for Nigerians, lay both in the hands of robust state security apparatuses encrusted in well-equipped, motivated, trained and professionalised security personnel, and the ability of the political elite to reconfigure the character of the Nigerian state by subsuming their own narrow personal interests under the general aspirations and interests of the people, for whom they govern,

and place considerable premium on the socio-economic development of the country over acquisition and control of political power. The inherently 'anarchic' nature of the international system, marked by its vulnerability to arms proliferation, and conflict entrepreneurs, such as mercenaries, both of which contribute to escalation of internal security issues, poses another critical challenge.

However, although the prospects for sustainable peace and security in Nigeria seem difficult, they cannot be entirely foreclosed. A lot would depend on the emergence of a crop of ruling elite and leadership capable of prioritising the security of the generality of the people over the current situation where, according to Adebayo Olukoshi, the nation's "security thrust is directed towards the interests of the governing class and their propertied allies, while most Nigerians are alienated from the security process that ironically turns on them from time to time" (cited in Pogoso, 2013:25). This could serve as a strong basis for social transformation that would involve an equitable participatory socio-political context for all Nigerians, the recognition and acceptance by the political elite that state power is meant to promote the welfare and development of the people, and, a comprehensive reform of the defence/security sector. The reform should involve total professionalisation of the sector; development of sustainable mechanisms for regular training and retraining, boosting the morale of security personnel, strategies for proper management, maintenance and regular provision of the sophisticated arm and ammunitions, modern information and communication technology equipment for intelligence gathering and sharing. The reform should also involve ensuring and promoting accountability and transparency in the sector, and synergy in the activities of the security operatives. These are necessary for effective policing of the country's borders and territorial landscape and to checkmate the influx of mercenaries.

Also, there is a need for social reforms in Nigeria. First and foremost, it has become imperative for the Nigerian State to develop and keep a comprehensive record of all religious institutions in the country and ensure proper monitoring of religious teachings and activities at schools and religious centres. This though raises the question of the right to privacy of the people; the need for security agents to nip in the bud any act of religious radicalisation makes this important. In particular, churches, mosques and *madrasas* in highly volatile areas of the country should be under close watch and scrutiny of security agents. To this end, the country's legal frameworks, including the Terrorism (Prevention) (Amendment) Act 2013, should be amended to allow security agents to covertly and overtly monitor activities at all religious institutions without infringing on the human rights of members of such institutions, except where and when necessary.

Similarly, sources of income/funds of religious bodies in the country should be monitored by security agents/the government so as to be able to monitor the internal and/or external sponsors/funders of religious organisations, and by extension radical religious groups in the country. In essence, religious institutions in Nigeria have to become

more accountable to the public, with proper government scrutiny of how they generate their incomes and what they use the income for. Also, it is pertinent that the Nigerian government articulates a de-radicalisation program as part of the country's counter-terrorism strategy. The de-radicalisation program should aim at preventing religious and ideological radicalisation in the first place, as opposed to efforts to de-radicalise after exposure to radicalisation has occurred. This is to reduce the vulnerability of the people, especially the youth, to religious and ideological radicalisation by extremists. As a result, the de-radicalisation program, which should highlight the value of human life/human existence, peaceful co-existence, and the danger of and what constitutes wrong religious doctrine/ideology, should be included in the country's educational curricula, and introduce to religious institutions and organised social groups to form part of their teachings and activities.

Lastly, while pragmatic reforms may be useful, only by redirecting the resources of the country to the construction of a more just, equitable and egalitarian society, through continuous and persistent demands for accountability, transparency and good governance at all levels and in all sectors of the civil society, will Nigeria experience lasting peace and security.

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Winning Boko Haram with Restorative Justice

Jean-Marie Kasonga MBOMBO

Abstract. *For more than a decade, Nigeria has not been able to militarily defeat the Boko Haram insurgency even with the logistical support coming from the neighbouring countries. This study adopts a case study model and critically appraises the merits of hard power in fighting domestic terrorism on the basis of secondary data. Guided by the theory of restorative justice, it contends that a viable alternative consists of rebuilding relationships between the victims and offenders with the help of their base communities. In other words, sustainable peace requires that atrocities are acknowledged by those who commit them (offenders); victims are empowered to reconcile with their offenders and constructive steps are taken to ensure that further atrocities are prevented.*

Keywords: *Terrorism, Restorative Justice, Negotiation and Reconciliation.*

“What can be done against force without force?” (Cicero)

Introduction

In the aftermath of 9/11 terror attack, it did not take too long for the CIA to name Osama bin Laden as the brain behind the 15 hijackers of the airlines that hit the twin towers in New York City and a section of the Pentagon. The leader of Al-Qaida had earlier on vowed to bring the war into the United States if the government did not yield to his demands (RAND, 2010). The American people were made to believe that the only way to deal with evildoers was to bring them to justice on the American soil or kill them in retaliation for more than 3000 civilians who lost

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their lives. Two months later (Nov 12, 2001), the UNSC adopted the 1377 Resolution, calling on all nations to become parties to International Convention and Protocols relating to the war on terror. Even though the terror attack took place on the American soil, the US government decided to externalise the battlefield in the regions deemed to harbour the leadership of terrorist network and so spared the US citizens the scourge of warfare. As earlier as November 30, 2001, the Americans had started bombing the caves in Afghanistan and dismantled the *Al-Qaeda* training camps and facilities which they once funded in supporting the Taliban fighters against the Soviets in the 1980s (Burke, 2004). The illegitimate invasion of Iraq by the coalition of willing in 2003 laid the foundation for the hard power strategy which eschews both causation of terrorism and negotiation with the enemy. Going by this dominant approach, a military response is believed to rid the world of terrorism and any attempt to negotiate with terrorists is interpreted as a sign of weakness. The killing of Osama Bin Laden not only represented the triumph of retributive criminal justice but also won a second term in office for President Obama to the satisfaction of the electorate.

However, despite the use of cutting-edge weaponry, the number of casualties recorded among the allied troops coupled with the heavy loss of lives among the civilian populations in the invaded countries does not call for any celebration. According to Bilmes *et al.* (2011), America's costly war machine has actually drained the treasury by \$2.5 trillion over a ten-year period. Moreover, the public record of violent deaths since the 2003 invasion of Iraq counts 219,000 bodies including combatants (Iraq Body Count, 2015). In May 2014, the Obama administration announced that the troops in Afghanistan would fall from 33,000 to 9,800 by January 2015 and by 2017 will settle to the Embassy presence of about 1,000 (Belasco, 2014). Special prisons for terrorists such as Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay have only exposed the flaws of retributive justice, given the fact that suspected criminals are exposed to all sorts of human rights abuses on a daily basis. Even though the US government does not in principle negotiate with terrorism, secret deals of swapping terrorists with US hostages around the world are common. Recently, the Obama administration has been criticised by Republican lawmakers for securing the transfer of Sgt. Bergdahl in exchange for the release of five Taliban terrorists from Guantanamo Bay in May 2014 (Campbell, 2014).

This paper adopts an interpretive case study method which relies on secondary sources about counter-terrorism in Nigeria. It contends that the practice of restorative justice (RJ) offers a viable alternative to winning the war against the Boko Haram insurgency (BH) by ways of engaging with the 'terrorists' on the basis of our common humanity. RJ is an enduring process of restoring the humanity of both offenders and victims of atrocities with the aim of empowering them so that they can work together to mend social relationships. The argument is thus articulated around four headings. First, the conceptual framework opens a brief discussion around key concepts such as Terrorism,

Boko Haram and Restorative Justice. Second, the question as to whether it makes sense to negotiate with BH is meant to expose the limits of the no-dialogue-with-terrorists principle when it comes to fighting domestic terrorism. Third, reconciliation matters because it empowers victims and survivors of atrocities to regain their common humanity and live in peace. Finally, the study recommends the creation of Peace Corps to counter terrorism with peace messages instead of lethal weapons.

Conceptual framework

Terrorism

One person's terrorist is another's freedom fighter, goes the saying. Yesterday terrorists may be freedom fighters today just as the underground Jewish became 'freedom fighters' during the Holocaust and prompted the world leaders to carve the state of Israel out of the Palestinian land (Ahmad, 2010). The Webster Dictionary defines terror as an intense, overpowering fear and terrorism as the act or practice of terrorising by violence committed for political purpose, either by the government seeking to intimidate a populace (terrorism from above) or by nonstate actors in a bid to overthrow a government (terrorism from below). It is a form of intimidation meant to cause others to do things they would otherwise not do. Bruce Hoffman, an outstanding authority on the subject matter, proposes a definition that captures the linchpin of what constitutes terrorism:

The deliberate creation and exploitation of fear through violence or the threat of violence in the pursuit of political change... It is meant to instil fear within and thereby intimidate a wider target audience that might include a rival ethnic or religious group, an entire country, a national government or political party, or public opinion in general. Through the publicity generated by their violence, terrorists seek to obtain the leverage, influence and power they otherwise lack to effect political change on either a local or an international scale (RAND Corporation, 2010: 116).

Whether the government commit it (terrorism from above) or private people (terrorism from below), the definition highlights the illegal use of coercive violence. As such, there can be state terrorism, religious terrorism, criminal terrorism, pathological terrorism and even political terrorism. Terrorism can also be domestic, international, or both, depending on the origin of the individuals or groups responsible for it. It is, however, difficult to distinguish between domestic and international terrorism because citizens of a particular country may participate in domestic terrorism with the support of foreign sponsors. As an illustration, the terrorists who killed cartoonists in Paris (7 January, 2015) were French citizens who had joined the Free Syrian Army and brought home their terrorising skills. External influence may also come in through Internet surfing and access to information about terrorism in the world. Actually, no conflict can be rightly described as domestic because shared ideas do not respect national boundaries.

Unfortunately, it took many years before the Nigerian government finally admitted that Boko Haram was not just a homemade insurgency. What is it basically?

Boko Haram

Boko is a corrupted English word for 'book' which in the Hausa Muslim community stands for Western education while the Arabic word *Haram* means anathema. Brought together, BH can be translated as 'Western Education is taboo.' However, the original name for the group is the *Jama'atul Ahlus-Sunnah Lidda'Awati Wal Jihad* (JASLIWAJ): People committed to the propagation of the teachings of the prophet and radical jihad (Animasaun, 2013:395). From a humble beginning in Borno, the group under the leadership of Muhammad Ali attracted many young Muslims with radical inclinations who were popularly known as the 'Nigerian Taliban' and declared the state corrupt and irredeemable. The next step was a traditional Hijra (a withdrawal before the jihad) which took the group to Yobe state. In December 2003, the religious sect clashed with the residents of Kanama over incompatible lifestyles (N.I.O. *et al.*, 2014). Resistance to the law enforcement agents led to a shootout in which Muhammad Ali was killed along with close to 200 members of the group. The escapees quietly left Yobe and settled in Maiduguri, the capital city of Borno State where the new leader, Muhammad Yusuf began the process of rebuilding the group in 2004. Yusuf's radical teachings that contrasted Western knowledge made the people in Maiduguri to eventually dub his group Boko Haram. While in Borno, M. Yusuf decided to build strong ties with the state government. One of his strongmen was a Commissioner of Religious Affairs. Many other influential politicians bought into the new sect and became its early financiers with the intention of using the group for political gains. N.I.O *et al.* (2014:19) contend that

After recruiting a large number of followers, JASLIWAJ built a huge support base in Borno, Yobe, Bauchi, Gombe, Niger, Kano and Katshina states. The governors of these states saw Yusuf as a power broker who they should court and support. It is on record that up to eight state governors were giving JASLIWAJ a monthly subvention.

Rich Muslims in northern Nigeria also identified with the group because of its Shari'a overture. Financial support also came in from foreign countries such as Libya and Algeria. Accordingly, Muhammad Yusuf established a Mosque in Bornu in 2002 to propagate his radical views of Islam and attracted many followers. Soon, the religious site became a recruiting ground for the training of jihadists (George, 2013). Yusuf also built a powerful base in Borno (schools, farms and social services to cater for the widows, the orphans and the unemployed youth) from which he was able to carry out his 'Islamic propaganda and jihad' with an army of sympathisers. In particular, he took care to prepare for the jihad because his group is said to have stockpiled weapons for years and his members have received training in Afghanistan, Libya and Iran under the pretext of studying abroad. A second clash with the police on June 11, 2009 triggered a series

of gun battles involving the Joint Task Force (JTF) whose operations led to the killing of more than 800 insurgents and the capture of Muhammad Yusuf in the morning of July 30, 2009. By afternoon on the fateful day, he was found dead in the police custody. Almost one year after Yusuf's death, another leader made himself known in a video show as Abubakar Shekau. Since 2010, BH has unleashed regular bombing, shooting and abduction of women and school girls mainly in northern Nigeria and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja (Asuquo, 2013:274-280). The following paragraph provides a theoretical framework of Restorative Justice to guide the remainder of the study.

Theory of Restorative Justice

Restorative justice (RJ) is a noble concept that was first introduced in the criminal justice literature in the 1970s, but its roots reach as far back as ancient Greek and Roman civilisations. It is a new way of looking at justice as a means to repair the harm done to people and their relationships instead of just punishing the offenders at the end of a court case. The following paragraph borrows from Gavrielides (2007:21s) and set a background to the restorative justice theory with the contribution of a few scholars in the field of criminal justice. To begin with, it is believed that Albert Eglash first coined the term in 1977 as an alternative paradigm. According to him, retributive (punitive) and distributive justice focus on the criminal act, require passive participation by offenders and deny the victim of a full participation in the justice process. In the course of the same year, Martin Wright (1977) introduces the idea that the victim be helped by the offender while the latter makes amends to the former and the larger community as well.

Howard Zehr (1990) understands crime not as a violation of law which brings the offender into conflict with the state but a violation of the relationship between peoples within a community. Accordingly, RJ is understood as a process of restoring human bonds by ways of encouraging the victim and the offender to treat one another as persons in a relationship. John Braithwaite is another name in the discipline whose work (1990) goes beyond the criminology debate and centres on the notion of shame as key to controlling all types of crime, construed as stigmatising and reintegrative. Guided by the idea of 'hating the sin and loving the sinner,' Braithwaite (1997) contends that stigmatisation (bad shame) increases crime and destroys the moral bonds between the offender and the community while reintegrative shame stems the tide of criminality by way of giving the offender a second chance (a fresh start) as a law-abiding member of the community provided that he or she expresses remorse over past misdeeds, apologises to the victims and repairs the harm caused by his actions. The work of British scholar Tony Marshall (1992) suggests that RJ is a problem-solving approach to crime involving the parties themselves together with the community in an active relationship with legal agencies. In short, RJ has at its core, the idea that crime is an injury more than an infraction. Justice, therefore, is about repairing or addressing the harm caused to people and social relationship when wrongdoing occurs.

In an attempt to conceptualise a theory of RJ, McCold *et al.* (2003) premise their research on three distinct structures, namely the Social Discipline Window, Stakeholder Roles and Restorative Practices Typology. Each structure is designed to address the key questions as to who is harmed, what are their needs and how such needs can be met. First, the Social Discipline Window focuses on the way social discipline is maintained with the combination of two continuums: control and support. Such a combination produces four behavioural approaches: punitive, permissive, neglectful and restorative. The punitive (retributive) approach stigmatises the offender: a higher level of control (punishment) with little or no regard for the offender. The opposite of it (a higher degree of support and low control) is permissive (rehabilitative) in the sense that the authority does everything for the offender while making excuses for the wrongdoing. Whereas low control and low support characterise a neglectful behaviour, inaction and indifference on the part of the one in charge, the restorative approach is a combination of higher control and higher support. According to the scholars, the restorative approach which subscribes to a collaborative problem-solving strategy “confronts and disapproves of wrongdoing while affirming the intrinsic worth of the offender” (McCold *et al.*, 2003:2).

Second, the structure of Stakeholder Roles helps to distinguish between primary and secondary stakeholders. The primary stakeholders are the victims, offenders and to a large extent parents, siblings and friends. Together they constitute a community of care because they are directly affected by the harm committed. They are in need of empowerment to be able to express their feelings as well as their views on how to repair the harm. On the other hand, secondary stakeholders are those indirectly affected: the whole of society (civil society organisation and government officials). Because they are not emotionally connected to the victims and offenders, they don’t need to come in-between by way of interfering with the process of healing and reconciliation. Their role as second stakeholders is rather “to support and facilitate processes in which the primary stakeholders determine for themselves the outcome of the case” (McCold *et al.*, 2003:2).

Third, Restorative Practices Typology reflects the level of interaction between three primary stakeholders: victims, offenders and their communities of care (family members and friends). In the case of one group is given attention (government’s support for the victims), the process becomes partly restorative. It is mostly restorative when victims and offenders meet face-to-face in a mediation setting without involving their respective communities of care.

As the figure 1 illustrates, a process is fully restorative only when the three sets of primary stakeholders interrelate actively. So far, the criminal justice deals mercilessly with offenders but it sidelines victims and their loved ones. In contrast, RJ reduces crime by rebuilding relationships. As we move beyond retributive justice, reconciliation stands out as a long-term strategy of conflict transformation anchored on three pillars, namely

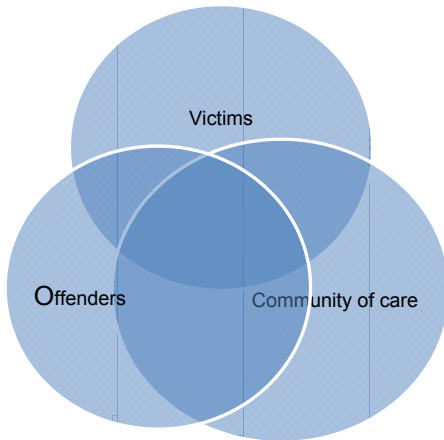


Figure 1: Restorative Justice as a correlation of three Primary Stakeholders

Source: Adapted from McCold *et al.* (2003).

truth, justice and mercy. According to Lederach (2010: 200), the truth sets his eyes on the past (what to remember and how to remember it) while justice focuses on the present (what can make wrong right and what can restore broken relationships) and mercy deals with the future (how will start a new and coexist). Before proposing RJ as an alternative strategy of winning the war against BH, the next heading discusses the flaws of counter-terrorism revolving around the mainstream position (we don't negotiate with terrorists) as it applies to the Nigerian government.

Negotiating with Boko Haram?

The dominant strategy of going after faceless people with maximum force has so far proved to be counterproductive given that the military personnel are trained in the traditional way of fighting a positioned enemy, wearing a distinct uniform and committed to the defence of national flags. However, the government's persistent rejection of negotiation (dialogue) with BH suggests that the country strongly believes in winning the war on domestic terrorism with lethal means. Since then, the terrorist conflict has claimed the loss of thousands of lives and the destruction of basic infrastructure (schools, health care centres, and businesses among other things) mainly with the strategic weapon of suicide bombing. Many people have been forced to seek refuge in neighbouring countries while a good deal continues to endure the hardship of living in the camps as internally displaced persons (IDPs). On top of it all, the abduction of more than 200 school girls in April 2014 attracted international condemnation upon BH with big voices such as Michelle Obama, Malala of Pakistan and Gordon Brown, to name but a few. It also mobilised international support to help Nigeria fight the war on terror. The counter-terrorism in northeast Nigeria seems to have caused more harm than good and the terrorist conflict is far from reaching a ripen stalemate (Zartman, 1995). Despite government efforts to contain what was initially regarded as an internal conflict, the military seems to confront a well-disciplined, equipped and funded armed group. Little wonder that the delay in winning the unconventional war is being attributed to the poor funding of the security agencies, particularly the military and police forces. In the meantime, Nigerians continue to kill Nigerians whether with bullets or explosives and there seems to be no end to it. Recently Amnesty International has drawn the world's

attention to serious human rights violations and abuses committed by the uniformed men in northeast Nigeria but the 2014/15 Report was quickly dismissed by the army chief as a plot to blackmail the gallant forces (Olukolade, 2015).

Ending BH in a short time was a recurrent theme which dominated the presidential debate ahead of the 2015 polls. The politicisation of the BH was such that the then ruling party (People Democratic Party) and the opposition (All Progress Congress) pointed accusing fingers at each other (Jega, 2014). Eventually the former lost credibility for mishandling the insurgency among other things while the latter won the trust of the electorate mainly on the basis of campaign promises of routeing the Islamist sect by all means available, including dialogue. So far, scholars in the field of conflict studies have come up with five ways of managing conflicts (Fisher *et al.*, 2000). These include confrontation, accommodation, compromise, avoidance, and collaboration. In a competition of unequal forces (confrontation), one party controls and overcome the other and the win-lose outcome reflects the 'do it my way' strategy. In fighting the insurgency, the government is believed to defeat the enemy militarily sooner or later and it is not prepared for to dialogue with the enemies of state. In the case of accommodation, one party ignores the fundamental disagreement but decides to let her counterpart get away with whatever they want in order to allow a façade peace to prevail.

Initially, tacit accommodation on the part of political leaders in northern Nigeria has led the insurgents to control a big chunk of land and eventually caused the conflict to perdure. Protracted conflicts are usually the replay of unresolved disputes not necessarily by initial stakeholders. In other words, there is no guarantee that the power imbalance will remain the same indefinitely: the shift may force yesterday accommodator to reopen the conflict by reclaiming her right today. In a compromise style, each party is a winner and loser at the same time and both keep the end of the conflict in the horizon. In community conflicts for instance, disagreement between indigenes and settlers implies that community leaders did not foresee the danger of using an errand people as additional manpower in farming during peacetime and military allied in wartime before allowing them to settle. Many generations later, the imbalance of power may force the host to revisit the peace settlement given that their once weak settlers are about to outnumber them.

A compromise is sought after in an attempt to reach a written agreement while the fighting is still ongoing, which is nothing more than a short-lived settlement among the elites. Such peace through blood-tainted agreements is unsustainable as long as the community of survivors and their potential killers (terrorists) are sidelined. Given that no conflict can be resolved halfway, the quick fix of compromise may turn out to be just a strategic withdrawal whereby conflicting parties wait for the opportune time and space to strike back in an attempt to turn the losses into gains (competition). In fact compromise parallels avoidance as conflict management style because lack of interest

in resolving the conflict today only makes matters worse in the long run. Eventually, the two parties may resort to the zero-sum approach (confrontation) where the winner takes all.

Collaboration (joint problem-solving) has been the best approach to solving conflict because each party stands to win, with the help of a third party (mediator). However, since most conflicts revolve around the satisfaction of human needs, the win-win approach can be misleading as long as conflicting parties hold unequal powers (asymmetric conflicts). Regarding the high level of poverty in northeast Nigeria being regarded as one of the root causes of insurgency, the Federal Government may opt for an increase of the revenue accrued to the geopolitical zone for development purposes without improving on the institutions of control (checks and balances). Such a palliative response (quick fix) is likely to be followed by an intense degree of grievance and aggression by the affected populations because no amount of money is big enough to soothe the suffering inflicted upon the survivors of violent conflicts.

However, fighting domestic terrorism in Nigeria has transformed the northeast into a battlefield where the JTF is expected to use brute force to dislodge the Islamist sect (Animasaun, 2013). While ignoring the early warning signals, the Federal Government (FG) downplayed the fundamental issues revolving around the satisfaction of human needs of the majority of people living in the northeast of the country but chose to jump on the bandwagon of mainstream counter-attack strategy (George, 2013:318). By establishing a linkage between Islamist sect and terrorism, it swiftly turned a social conflict into a crime and made any form of negotiation with 'criminals' illegitimate. Attempts to rescue the Chibok schoolgirls in exchange for the BH detainees have failed because no one is prepared to negotiate with 'faceless people.' Even though a good deal of Nigerians would support the option of dialogue with BH, the government now faces the biggest challenge of breaking the mainstream rule that outlaws terrorism: 'we don't negotiate with terrorists.' How can the FG replace the terrorist label with a decent one?

Some high-ranking officials justify the military's inability to flush out BH by presenting a three-face portrait of the terrorist group. While in opposition then, President Buhari was quoted as saying that BH was made of a sect, a criminal group and the Federal Government being the third and biggest one (Jega, 2014). The religious face of BH is committed to the dream of creating an Islamic state under the Shari'a Law. Whereas the criminal face is associated with criminal activities such as harassment, extortion, ransom taking, armed robbery, the political BH operates behind desperate politicians that give weapons to jobless youth for the purpose of terrorising their opponents and gaining political power. Political BH also colludes with the religious branch by ways of bankrolling its leadership. Immediate past President Jonathan corroborated this view when he conceded that secret financiers of the dreadful sect were among government and security officials (Mark, 2012). Going by this categorisation, it is likely that the se-

curity agents would target the criminal wing of the movement with force while showing some degree of sympathy and tacit support towards familiar faces of both political and religious BH. Even the BH criminals that are sent to jail to rot in the name of criminal justice have their personal identities established.

However, such a familiarity with 'terrorists' can pave the way for negotiations. As Zartman (1995:23) contends, there is often temptation for one side to play politics within the other side, thus causing division within a conflict party by making a separate peace with factions and winning away pieces: "such tactics can be useful in isolating either the radicals of a movement who may have been preventing a solution, or a leader in chief whose personality would be indigestible in a new government-opposition coalition." It seems, therefore, inconsistent to treat BH members as 'faceless' criminals *in toto* and unfit for dialogue when these same bad guys actually rub shoulders with the elites at different levels of government.

Why Reconciliation matters

The military intervention has its merits in any violent conflict. Just as firefighters put off the fire and preclude further damage, the uniformed men are deployed in conflict zones to overpower the enemy and create a political space for dialogue. As far as fighting the BH is concerned, the rain of live bullets will stop anytime soon but that does not mean that the springtime of peace will follow automatically. Relying on the efforts of the military to fight the terrorist group, President Buhari observes that the end of conventional attack, whereby BH uses war machines, is around the corner. He, however, cautions that it will take a long time to stop occasional bombings by the use of improvised explosive devices (Akinkuotu, 2015). The terrorist conflict has created a new fault line that divides the people of northeast between survivors and perpetrators. It is uncommon for disillusioned members of BH to desert the movement and on their own integrate the community. Some analysts suggest an explanation for what seems to be a life-long commitment to the BH movement by comparing the latter with a secret cult in which members are bound by oath taking not to divulge the secrecy surrounding the organisation. The truth is the first casualty of warfare and once it is buried, the rest of fighting becomes a matter of deception on both sides of the fence. The terrorist conflict is not in any way an exception when it comes to sacrificing the truth on the altar of secrecy.

At the heart of every terror act is the need to be heard, to pass a message, to communicate, using any available means. Very often, the elite in power usually ignore the message but when kidnapping, abduction and bombing take place, the whole world gets mobilised for action. According to Ahmad (2010) politics is made when the cause, the instruments of coercion and the instruments of communication are put together. Thus, terrorism likewise war can be construed as a continuation of politics by other means:

“an act of violence intended to compel our opponents to fulfil our will” (Clausewitz, 1780-1831). In the BH case, some critics contend that the extrajudicial killing of the sect’s leader has served to conceal the truth about the brains behind the insurgents (Animasaun, 2013:401). Two pillars support the altar of secrecy, namely the central government and the local communities.

On the one hand, the FG has been in the denial mode from inception. Having recorded success in its laudable peacekeeping operations in West Africa in 1990s, Nigeria found it difficult to seek logistical support from her close neighbours in the name of national pride. In other words, it is politically incorrect for incumbents to publicly expose the weakness of their administration and join the list of failed states. In keeping with the mainstream doctrine – we don’t negotiate with terrorists – the giant of Africa has nevertheless allowed a harmless movement to metamorphose into a cancer that now threatens to destroy the social fabric of Nigeria. As George (2013:320) puts it, “the actions of the government were considered to be late as early warning signs were neglected.” On the other hand, local communities have a share of blame in supporting the altar of secrecy in the northeast. Because insurgents don’t come from another planet, they adopt the camouflage strategy (guerrilla warfare) to inflict terror upon the community to which they once belonged in order to hide their identities and protect their loved ones from public embarrassment. This may explain the fact that no Nigerian has come out freely to expose the identity of a brother or sister who is believed to fight under the black flag of BH. However, the price to pay for promoting the culture of secrecy is that, in the end, everyone becomes survivor and perpetrator of terrorism at the same time. The vicious circle is such that suspect BH terrorists constitute a permanent threat to peace: as they are awaiting trials in the name of punitive justice, they are likely to turn prison cells into training spaces for more terrorists in the future.

Political and religious brands of BH seem to stick to a political agenda of power sharing but combat troops being deployed in northeast Nigeria are not trained to negotiate a political settlement with the enemy of state. Instead, security agents are expected to track down the camouflaged Nigerians. The more they go after faceless criminals, the more the latter choose suicide bombing as the highest price to pay before entering the heavens. Pape (2010:138) observes that “suicide terrorism has become the most deadly form of terrorism.” By criminalising the insurgents, the government is not only radicalising them but also putting decision makers in a ‘straightjacket’ position. It seems therefore that the only way of breaking the trap of secret-keeping is for government to legitimise rather than demonise the so-called enemies of state. Using Northern Ireland and the southern Philippines as case studies, Toros (2008) argues that the label of terrorist reduces human beings to their violent actions without paying attention to their proper motives. In contrast, the legitimisation of ‘terrorist’ groups has the potential to transform a conflict away from violence while complexity may open up new possibility

for engagement. Quoting a number of scholars, he identifies three processes in which legitimisation helps terrorists to change their violent behaviours.

First, negotiations may eliminate one of the reasons why the insurgents may have engaged in violence in the first place (lack of a legal outlet to voice their grievances). Second, they may strengthen the faction in the insurgent group that is in favour of nonviolent engagement. Third, they may draw insurgent groups down a path of change or transformation towards nonviolence (Toros, 2008:413).

Legitimation of BH applies mainly to its political branch that seems to push for a political solution. President Jonathan knew that the financiers of BH had infiltrated his government but fell short of naming them. This would have not only torn the veil of secrecy that covers the movement but also prepared the ground for negotiation toward a political solution by way of legitimising one important section of the group while treating the rest as spoilers. As such, legitimisation does not in any way turn a country into a failed state; it rather strengthens its democratic qualities “by drawing groups away from violent opposition and toward compliance with the state’s norms” (Toros, 2008:414).

The fire-fighter approach deals with the symptom (violence) while wasting the resources that are enough to tackle the root cause of terrorist conflict, which in many ways boils down to the dissatisfaction of human needs. Fighting a well-known enemy with a minimum force would minimise civilian casualties should the aggrieved party choose the path of dialogue and reconciliation. This begs the fundamental question as to how ready-to-die terrorists can integrate their respective communities and be accepted back by their family members without being stigmatised for life. Legitimation gives faceless peoples their lost humanity back and prepares them to embrace dialogue and reconciliation. At the heart of restorative justice is reconciliation: to come back into the council and work together. The concept has its origin in major religions that have impacted on people’s political cultures around the world (Santa-Barbara, 2007:173). However, in the world dominated by competition over positions, interests and needs, reconciliation has been relegated to the realm of personal piety. It is sometimes wrongly associated with accommodation as conflict management strategy whereby a party concedes a defeat for fear of losing one’s face.

Before the violent conflict finally become history, there is a need to build a bridge between potential terrorists and survivors that would preclude future atrocities. The study has identified the BH sect and the community of survivors in the northeast Nigeria as primary stakeholders and partners in a joint problem-solving. In fighting domestic terrorism, the bleeding party is not the government but the local community. De-radicalisation in this regard must come from the victims rather than the party to the conflict (government). Just as building a bridge begins with the construction of its solid bases on the riverbanks, reconciliation requires that the two primary stakeholders are identified and taken on board by a neutral, impartial and trustworthy third party as

suggested by Galtung (2007). According to the father of Peace Study, “it is better for the peace worker (mediator) to enter the process being ignorant of the culture and customs of the place where he will mediate, so he will have to ask and receive ‘inside information’ from the parties in conflict” (Horowitz, 2007:58).

Reconciliation implies that the bleeding party (community) makes room for peace with the enemy by sending out a different message: drop your mask and stop dehumanising yourself by taking the life of your fellow human beings. It takes place when the apparent loser refuses to be a permanent victim but decides to bring the conflict to a permanent end by separating themselves from the scene of the conflict and reclaiming their common humanity. The figure 2 below illustrates BH as a violent movement that threatens the territorial integrity of Nigeria. The red arrow indicates that security agents have been deployed mainly in the northeast with a clear mandate of flushing terrorists out of Nigeria without taking the local communities along. As an alternative, the green arrow suggests that the government empowers the local communities (survivors) to reach out to their perpetrators with a message of peace and reconciliation (restorative justice). The FG is also expected to legitimate the movement in order to prepare the ground for a negotiation not with enemies of state but lawful interlocutors.

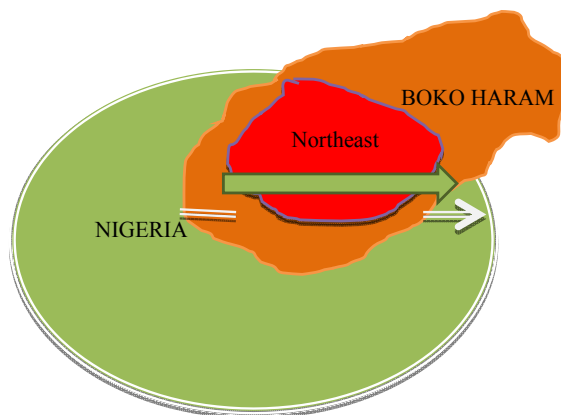


Figure 2: Boko Haram in Nigeria

Source: Author

A way forward

The major wars were won on the battlefield when one army overrun the other, leading to retreat, surrender and peace treaties. Unlike conventional warfare, the war on terror seems to follow the template of the no-winner-no-loser outcome. Even the coalition of willing that fought the war in Iraq has not told the world that victory has been achieved. The insurgents are aware of fighting the Leviathan with little or no hope of winning and, as a result, they embrace the death option (suicide). But BH is also made of human beings and community members. The claim of local communities supporting

them in many ways is difficult to dismiss. As reported in the tabloid press, the troops invaded the BH den and arrested 33 suppliers of foodstuff and drugs to the terrorist group (Soriwei, 2015). Granted that the so-called enemy is not a permanent state of being, it is not unrealistic to reach out to the masked fighters with a different message of friendship, using social Medias. Though laudable, the *Bring Back Our Girls* campaign targeted the Presidential Villa (ASO Rock) rather than the Sambisa Forest where these innocent girls were being held captives. A different approach would have been more effective had the government stood behind the mothers of the victims and the good people of Nigeria, marching peacefully toward the Sambisa forest with a corporate determination to not only recover the girls but also reach out to their captors who are were once bonafide members of the same Nigerian society.

The study, therefore, recommends among other things that a special unit of Peace Corps be put in place nationwide to stand against terrorism. Such a specialised unit does neither carry guns, nor wear a particular uniform, unlike the Nigerian Security Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) which seems to be a duplicate of the Nigerian Police Force (Alao, 2015). Known elsewhere as Unarmed Civilian Protection (Laurila, 2015), the anti-terrorist squad is made of community members and it expected to work closely with their respective community leaders in gathering intelligence that can be processed and act upon accordingly. Sharp (2010) advocates the Civilian-Based Defence model to support the efforts of security agents in the defence of state against foreign aggression with nonviolent methods (protest, non-cooperation and intervention). Similarly, unarmed members of the community would be fighting faceless people pre-emptively by acting on early warning signals while building bridges between different people, religions and cultures.

Conclusion

The classic manner in which so-called terrorists are dealt with reflects the one-size-fit-all approach: they are tried in a courtroom and punished according to the law of the land. It seems that retributive/penal justice does not have a final word because it leaves behind negative forces that specialise in bombing, kidnapping, ransom taking and the likes on daily basis. The South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission enabled perpetrators to seek amnesty with the approval of their victims so as to restore the broken humanity during the apartheid regime while the government takes care to ease the pain by putting some oil in their open wounds (Tutu, 1999). But in Nigeria, the top-down approach of government conditions the offer of amnesty to BH on the release of Chibok girls that have been in captivity since April 14, 2015 (Akinkuotu, 2015). Because no amount is enough to pay for the suffering stemming from the loss of a dear one in tragic circumstances both the victims and perpetrators have to be liberated from the loss of humanity and that is where the leadership role of government in Africa today lies.

No matter what they claim to have achieved through the use of indiscriminate violence terrorists are human beings that need to be rescued from the addiction of violence.

As a facilitator (not a mediator), Government at the centre will empower not the military to engage in a robust response but the survivors of the atrocities at the grassroots level to come out peacefully and extend the hand of friendship to the perpetrators of the crimes. Put differently, the government supports the efforts of the people by showing compassion with the victims through rehabilitation efforts while occupying the back seat and encouraging the victims to drive the reconciliation process. By sending out the message of solidarity, forgiveness and peace which transcend religion, race and culture, the victims become survivors and heroes. On their part, faceless terrorists are likely to throw away their masks and come to the negotiating table, confident that they will face not the wrath of punitive justice but the welcoming community that is concerned with peace and reconciliation.

A kind of bombardment of peace messages over the conflict zone is needed so that those who are still in the business of self-immolation get to know that the world out there is ready to welcome them back if they decide to renounce their illogic means. As such 'a new concept of victory' as suggested by Pape (2010:139) will emerge when the real winner is no longer the perpetrator of atrocity but the survivor who alone has the credibility of redeeming his enemies by helping them to change their worldviews. He, or she, thus becomes the hero and the perpetrator discovers that he needs the approval of the human community to regain his lost humanity. Therefore, what matters most is not the rebuilding of damaged infrastructures (schools, housing, bridges and so on) but the reconciliation between victims and perpetrators if future occurrences of violence are avoided.

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