



National Security, Boko Haram Insurgency and the International Dimensions of Terrorism

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Abstract: One of the greatest challenges that confront the International Community today is terrorism. In recent times, through the Boko Haram insecurity challenge, Africa seems to have entered the mainstream of global terrorism. From the activities of the Al Qaeda in the Levant and the Islamic Maghreb, to the clearly desperate drive to acquire territory by the ISIS, in the Levant and in diverse parts of Africa as far south as Mali, terrorism seems to have arrived in black Africa. In recent times, terrorism has taken a new and indeed frightening dimension, particularly through the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria. The deadly terrorist activities in the North-East region of Nigeria which range from kidnapping and bombing, through various forms of mindless violence and killings, to outright military confrontation with security agencies in a desperate bid to acquire territory in northern Nigeria, have caused the Nigerian armed forces great losses in human and material resources. This is a study of the international dimensions of the Boko-Haram insurgency in Nigeria. The paper highlighted the immediate and the remote causes of the conflagration that attended the burgeoning politico-religious conflict which now threatens the stability of the entire West African Sub-region. It is a descriptive analytical survey that utilizes archival materials, library research, extant literature, internet sources and particularly content analysis. The paper recommended a convergence of both domestic and international collaboration to tackle and defeat terrorism in Africa, and concluded that within Nigeria itself, the need for

accountability and good governance as a lasting panacea for national security is sine qua non.

Key Words: National Security, Insurgency, Terrorism, Domestic Environment, International Dimensions, Conflict

Introduction

The Nigerian State is a kaleidoscope of rainbow-coloured ethnic nationalities, juxtaposed upon a motley crowd of naturally diverse peoples. It is not only diffracted along its socio-political and ideological cleavages, but also balkanized along lines of hardly-reconcilable religious, linguistic, cultural and ethnic differences. This is clearly a situation that is potentially conflict-generating, and a recipe for domestic insurgency and international terrorism. When to this potpourri of political and cultural diversity is added a deeply ingrained corruption-ridden public space and primordial loyalties, together with poverty and environmental degradation in the perspective of an almost failed state, then the recipe for international terrorism seems complete. It was only a matter of time before the yawning socio-political vacuum was filled by opportunistic power seekers, using pseudo-religious clichés, to mobilize the ignorant, the gullible and the vulnerable and arm them for a violent overthrow of the political status quo in the perspective of power politics. This paper delves into the origins, causes and direction of terrorism in North-East Nigeria, chronicles the structure of destruction and pillage, and highlights the near helplessness of the Nigerian Government to single-handedly deal with the resultant carnage. Given the constituents of the Nigerian State and the inherent contradictions within the socio-political under belly of this African giant, the

internationalization of what began as a domestic conflict, was bound to become unavoidable.

Conceptual Clarification

National Security

The concept of security is a multi-dimensional one, encompassing diverse issues. Although diverse literature on this topical issue do not arrive (contextually) at a universally agreeable definition of the concept, National Security is generally understood to be that indispensable ingredient necessary for the preservation of a state through effective economic, political and strategic means.

According to the 1996 definition propagated by the National Defence College of India;

National security is an appropriate and aggressive blend of political resilience and maturity, human resources, economic structure and capacity, technological competence, industrial base and availability of natural resources, and finally military might (National Defence College, 1996 cited in Ayodele, 2004; 3).

The above definition conceives of national security first from the political angle, which is described as “political resilience and maturity”, second is the economic dimension to national security which it defines as the “availability of natural resources and technological competence, industrial base and economic structure”; and lastly from the strategic angle which it described as “military might”.

Political resilience and maturity is an expression of the willingness and ability of differing elements within a political system to play out the game of interest actualization without necessarily disturbing the working of the system through unhealthy rivalry and a hostile struggle for power. This is thus indeed the expression of harmony within the political system.

The economic dimension to National Security includes the availability of a conducive economic environment within which every individual can pursue and access his daily means for survival without hindrance. It therefore encapsulates the efficient and effective functioning of those structures that are *sin-qua-non* for the attainment of economic prosperity and preservation, already conceived by the Indian National Defence College as “technological competence” and a “strong industrial base”.

The strategic angle which is described as “military might” is about the most fundamental aspect of National Security. In fact, it is that indispensable element without which harmony and discipline would be but a façade. It encapsulates the level of effectiveness of the security forces such as the Police, Civil Defence, the State Secret Service (SSS), the Army, the Navy, the Air force, *inter-alia*, and their level of sophistication in safeguarding human lives and property from external and internal seizure. This, being the most fundamental aspect of National Security, is the salient embodiment of security.

Hence, for the purpose of this paper, National Security would be conceptualized as the existence of

functional, efficient and effective human and non-human structures that are necessary for ensuring, protecting and preserving the order, harmonious working and peaceful co-existence of all elements in the state.

Insurgency

With the increasing interest shown by scholars on the subject of insurgency, several issues have been ascribed to the concept. It has thus been impregnated with several definitions which often tend to confuse rather than clarify. This is because varieties of terms (not precisely defined) often fall under the descriptions ascribed to insurgency, such as terrorism, rebellion, uprisings, *inter-alia*.

According to the British Ministry of Defence,

Insurgency could be defined as the actions of a minority group within a state with the intent to forcing political change by means of a mixture of subversion, propaganda and military pressure, aiming to persuade or intimidate the broad mass of people to accept such a change. (BMOD cited in Morris, 2001).

The United States Department of Defence doctrinally defined Insurgency as;

An organized resistance movement that uses subversion, sabotage and armed conflict to achieve its aims. They may also seek to: (1) Overthrow an established government without a follow on social revolution. (2) Establish an autonomous national territory within the borders of a state. (3) Cause the withdrawal of an occupying power. (4) Extract political concessions that are

unattainable through less violent means (USDOD, 2007).

The above definitions invariably deliver a broad description of the antics of, as well as the salient objectives that drive insurgencies. As an organized resistance movement against constituted authority, insurgencies are fueled and driven by ideologies (usually radical) that seek the enforcement of such intended changes.

It is however important to note that the causes of insurgency lie in unfulfilled aspirations and what are perceived as legitimate grievances which may justify armed rebellion. Hence, the British Ministry of Defence (2001) further observed that an Insurgency may be caused by the following:

- i. Economic failure with its attendant dialectical conditions of extreme wealth and extreme poverty
- ii. Unfulfilled expectations especially amongst the middle-class and intelligentsia of the population. It is here that expectations of an improved way of life are usually greatest.

Though, such a tactic as terror may be used by insurgents to attain their goal, the movement is usually induced by oppression, injustice, discrimination and subjugation. In other words, insurgencies are usually violent expressions of frustration with a system that is perceived to be antagonistic and hostile to the survival of a group.

One major distinguishing feature of insurgency is that typical insurgents organize their forces in military fashion as squads, platoons, and companies... and are often overt in nature, especially in zones which they dominate (Morris, 2005).

Therefore, for the purpose of this study, Insurgency would be conceptualized as an overt, radical organized resistance against constituted government by a group or movement within a state that seeks the collapse of an 'oppressive' system through the means of terror and armed conflict.

Terrorism

If there is any concept that can be described as totally defiant of universal conceptualization, it is terrorism. As a phenomenon, terrorism poses quite serious problems at definition and conceptualization (Afinotan, 2010). It is generally agreed that terrorism involves the calculated use of violence or threat of unlawful violence to inculcate or create an atmosphere of fear in a given population in pursuit of political, religious or ideological goals (Colombis and Wolfe, 1986). However, this description ascribed to Terrorism also holds true of such concepts as "insurgency", "guerrilla warfare" or other forms of war. The question hence is; what distinguishes terrorism these?

As it is generally agreed from empirical evidence that terrorism is the systematic use of terror, especially as a means of coercion intended to create fear and cause injuries in pursuit of a definite aim, it has become a widely accepted caption that "one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter." This has thrown all attempts at designing a workable definition of Terrorism off balance. In fact, from a purely Marxist perspective, such a radical or revolutionary group would be described as a liberation movement and their struggle would be perceived as patriotic and nationalistic.

However, in September 2006, Mahinda Rajapakse (who was at pains to emphatically draw a distinction between Terrorism and Liberation) at the conference of the Non-Alignment Movement in Havana, declared that:

Terrorism and Liberation differ from each other as much as the sky differs from the earth. Liberation unlike Terrorism is a creative and humane force. It is a humane vehicle of new visions for the progressive (sic) of power structures on the one side, and socio-economic structures on the other. Terrorism, by contrast is a destructive force, a dehumanizing force that cannot be in anyway justified. Terrorism poses a grave threat to the political and economic being, sovereignty and territorial integrity of nation-states (Rajapaksa 2006 cited in Afinotan, 2010; 5).

Hence, it is germane that for a clarified conceptualization, Terrorism be viewed from two inseparably linked angles:

- i. Terrorism as a methodology of action.
- ii. Terrorism as a social fact.

Terrorism as a methodology simply encapsulates the methods used by terrorist groups, insurgent groups, belligerents, freedom fighters, inter-alia, to achieve their goals. Thus, as a method of actualizing defined aims, terrorism encompasses acts of terror, suicide bombings, and other forms of unlawful violence, whether by individuals, groups, governments or transnational and international organizations, which invariably cause fear, panic, consternation, disenchantment and psychological depression among human collectivities. By implication, terrorism, as a methodology is merely a means to an end, which may be wielded as

unavoidable course of action by liberation movements or insurgents, and/or terrorists, alike.

On the other hand, terrorism as a social fact focuses on the main intent, goal and objective that drive the actions of terrorist movements. It distinguishes terrorists from insurgents or liberation movements. As a social fact, Terrorism is a political phenomenon. In other words, Terrorism as a phenomenon is directed towards the attainment of a (solely) political objective (Afinotan, 2007). The implication of this is that the fundamental political motive may be hidden behind the mask of religion or ideology. According to Morgenthau (1948) however, the political objective is woven around the attainment of power either by an individual, by states, groups, or movements. The above argument thus suggests that the singular goal of terrorism lies in the pursuit of power.

Consequently, for the purpose of this paper, Terrorism may be described as the systematic and patterned use of terror by movements, groups, organizations or governments, aimed at causing fear, panic, consternation, confusion and disenchantments, and directed towards the attainment of a political objective that is defined by power.

Although this definition may not provide a perfect conception of Terrorism, it serves as an analytical tool for conceptualizing this pressing problematique- National Security, Boko Haram Insurgency and the International Dimensions of Terrorism.

Conceptual Framework

In the course of seeking to devise a workable framework for analysis of National Security, Boko Haram and the International Dimensions of Terrorism, several theories and models were considered. Among those considered were; the Political Economy Approach, Frustration-Aggression Theory by John Dollard, and Tedd Gurr's Theory of Relative Deprivation.

However, the variegated manifestations of National insecurity in Nigeria at different points in its history have all seemed to have their primordial roots in its internal social, political, economic and ethno-religious contradictions. Thus, if the Boko Haram threat to National security in Nigeria is viewed in a single wave of thought largely as just another erupted bubble in the murky waters of National Insecurity in the state (heated up by the consuming fires of political, social, economic and ethno-religious imbroglios), then Political Economy may have been the most suitable framework for analysis. At least, the concept (which today has assumed the Marxian persuasion) embraces (in the general sense) the social, political, economic, religious forces that may account for certain political phenomena or upheavals, where economic contradictions are taken as the sole foundation (sub-structure) upon which political, social and ethno-religious upheavals and revolutions are built. It would thus indicate that, what may have accounted for past insurgencies in the country also accounts for the Boko Haram security challenge. And this may be misleading.

At least, if the thought that the Boko Haram security challenge has deep roots

in the social and economic marginalization of a large section of the northern states is anything to go by, then John Dollard's Frustration-Aggression Theory, and Tedd Gurr's Theory of Relative Deprivation may have been suitable frameworks for analysis of the Boko Haram security menace. It would then place such occurrences as the rise of Niger-Delta militias, and the consequent eruption of the Niger-Delta crisis at the same level, rank and profile as Boko Haram security challenge.

However, the plot to force the Nigerian government and the State at large to unconditional accept the "supremacy" of Sharia Law (a condition that has hitherto never reared its head in Nigerian history), reveals some element of relentless and audacious hunger and struggle for power with the Nigerian State. This has been absent, or more liberally expressed, less pronounced in other security challenges experienced in Nigeria's history. Perhaps, a theoretical focus on this germane but quite silent aspect of the Boko Haram security challenge could unravel the actual problem, and aid the study in the correct assessment of the peculiarity of the nature and character of the National Security question posed by the Boko Haram sect in Nigeria and its wider dimensions and implications. Hence, the choice of the Power-Politics framework, otherwise known as the Realist perspective of Hans Morgenthau as the preferred framework for analysis of this problematique.

The Power Politics Model

This approach, also known as Political Realism, is credited to Hans Morgenthau, in his famous work titled *Politics Among Nations* (1948), where

he sought to develop a comprehensive theory of international politics. In spite of the fact that political realism (the Realist Approach) is largely claimed to be a theory of International Relations, Keaney, a graduate of the University of South Florida observed that as significant as the theory of Realism has proved to be in the practice of (domestic) politics, its importance within International Relations has consistently declined (Keaney, 2006; 1). The basic foundation upon which Morgenthau built his power paradigm was his submission that International Politics, like all politics, is the struggle for power. Accordingly, politics, like society in general, is governed by objective laws that have their roots in human nature, which is unchanging (Morgenthau 1948 cited in Keaney, 2006). Human nature however, as described by Hobbes in his Leviathan revolves around the perpetual and relentless struggle for power after power (at any cost and by any means) that ceases only in physical death. Hence one can develop a rational and consistent measurement of human political actions, and offer an overarching analysis of the character of human social interrelationships (in whatever form it may manifest), that reflects these objective laws.

These objective laws that bear and reflect the human nature first indicate that, interest, which is the singular driving force behind all human actions and inactions, is defined in terms of power (Morgenthau, 1948; cited in Keaney; 2006). In consonance with this fact, George Washington, former president of the United States of America, once emphasized that:

A small knowledge of human nature would convince us that with far the greatest part of mankind, interest is the governing principle, and that almost every man is more or less under its influence... it is vain to exclaim against the depravity of human nature on this account, the fact is so, the experience of every age and nation has proved it, and we must in a great measure change the constitution of man, before we can make it otherwise. No institution, not built on the presumptive truths of these maxims can succeed (Washington cited in Knopf, 1978).

And power (as the sole definition of political interest) covers the domination of man by man and comprises anything that ensures and establishes control of man over man. Thus power covers all social relationships, which serve that end, from physical violence to the most subtle psychological ties by which one mind controls another (Morgenthau; revised 1978). This sets the political sphere apart from other spheres of action such as economics (which defines interest in terms of wealth and its accumulation), and religion (which defines interest in terms of morality and righteousness). Morgenthau further posited that power covers the domination of man by moral ends (too), and controlled by constitutional safeguards as in Western Democracies, and when it is that untamed force finds its laws in nothing but its own strength, and its sole justification in its aggrandizement.

Hence, political realists believe that the sole underlying motive behind any political action, by either individuals, movements, sects, states, or international organizations, is woven

around the attainment and preservation of power where any means defined as rational and justified within the boundaries of time and space are devised. Power becomes not only a means to an end, but also an end in itself.

Although Political Realism is aware of the moral significance of political action, it is also aware of the ineluctable tension between the moral command and the requirement of successful political action. And it is willing to gloss over and obliterate that tension and thus to obfuscate both moral and political issues, by making it as though the stark facts of politics were morally more satisfying than they actually are, and the moral law more exacting than it actually is (Morgenthau; revised, 1978). By implication, where conscience or moral dictates clash with the political goal (power), the political (always) supersedes the moral. As such, Political Realism portrays man as the “political man”.

Power Politics (Political Realism) has been criticized for defining the interest of man solely along selfish lines. For instance, Tickner Ann (2012) observed that Morgenthau’s abstract “political man” lacks moral constraints and lives in a Hobbesian state of war and thus Morgenthau principles as well as his language and delivery in general provide only a partial and one-sided view description of local and international politics. By narrowing down the interest of man solely in the political (defined as power), Morgenthau’s thesis ignores the economic, moral, and religious man, whose interests may be completely at

opposite parallels to the accumulation and preservation of power.

In spite of these criticisms, however, Power Politics has served as a useful framework for analysis of diversified, intricate and multi-faceted political phenomena. For example, Parastar Uptal (2012) of Hindustan Times used the framework for analyzing the fierce rivalry among political elites and political parties in the Republic of Nepal. Since indicators point to the struggle for power among Nigerian elites as the core of the Boko Haram menace and the question of National security in Nigeria, Power Politics thus serves as the most suitable framework for analysis of National Security, Boko Haram Insurgency and the International Dimensions of Terrorism.

The Ecology of Terrorism in Northeast Nigeria

According to Roland (2012), the social ecology of recruitment, from what can be observed explains Boko Haram’s relative success. One thing which can be observed is the existence of very porous international borders in the Northern region of the State. These porous, literally non-existent borders facilitate the movement of arms and mercenaries from neighbouring countries and from the Islamic Maghreb. The conflict in Mali where Islamists fleeing the assaults of French troops found safe havens in Northern Nigeria and neighbouring states of Niger and Chad is an instance worthy of note. Boko Haram recruits are drawn from among migrants from Chad, Niger, and other neighbouring countries who are in precarious economic situations, because of the collapse of the industrial sector and commercial farming (Roland, 2012; 4). This they

believed, of course, to be an unfortunate outcome of the liberalization programmes enforced under the advice of Bretton Woods institutions from the 1980s. At least, these homeless migrants could easily serve as loyal and potent disciples of the teachings of Yusuf against western education and its accompanying “economic injustices”.

Also worthy of note, is the fact as stated by Allison (2011) that Boko Haram typically uses Ak-47 rifles in its attacks, but the exact number and types of weapons utilized in their arsenals are unknown. However, Boko Haram is thought to have several weapon caches that were brought into Africa’s Sahel region by weapons-smugglers after the fall of Libya’s leader, Muammar Gaddafi. He further reported that these weapons include: surface-to-air missiles, rocket-propelled grenades, vehicle mounted anti-aircraft machine guns, automatic rifles, grenades and explosives.

A significant proportion of the Boko Haram sect is drawn from the “Almejiri” (pupils and students learning Qur’an (Roland, 2012). Forest (2012; 61) further described the Almejiri as the “ragged boys” sent by their parents to Islamic boarding schools in Northern Nigeria, where they receive little education beyond note memorization of the Qur’an. They receive money and are forced to beg in the streets in order to survive. Some teachers at these schools have been known to abuse these children, in some cases, taking a portion of whatever people give them, and in some other cases, using them as foot soldiers in religious clashes (Forest, 2012; 62). Little wonder that these could easily be used as effective tools for the

actualization of radical Islamic ideologies. This was the kind of school that was established by Mohammed Yusuf (Forest, 2012; 62).

The North-Eastern region of Nigeria is also populated by school leavers and graduates who have been unable to find employment, and are attracted by the messages of the charismatic “Yusufist” ideology.

According to the Vanguard Newspaper of 21st April, 2016:

It has come to the knowledge of the Defence Headquarters that Boko Haram terrorists have now devised another means of recruiting unsuspecting youths into their fold. In this clandestine dispensation, Boko Haram terrorists have resorted to providing loans to young entrepreneurs and artisans in the North East as a way of inducing them for recruitment. The major targets of the unholy engagements are youths in the North East, especially butchers, traders, tailors, beauticians and other vocational entrepreneurs who could be easily enticed with such loan without paying attention to sundry inherent dangers associated with the acceptance of such goodies from the satanic group or unfamiliar source (Vanguard, April 21, 2016).

Boko Haram has also appealed to people like university lecturers who come from middle-class homes, and who reject all Western and Christian influences (Forest, 2012; 62). Consequently, due to the peculiar character and pattern of the social ecology of the North-East, the Boko Haram is made up of a combination of aggrieved citizens who have become psychological victims of the poor socio-economic state of the

country, and of individuals who through extreme Islamic education and socio-economic conditions in the region, have seen themselves as having no stake in life, and as a result, lack the desire to develop themselves and become productive members of the wider community and the Nigerian state at large. They can thus be easily used as potent instruments for the actualization of anti-western ideology, which the “Yusufist” teachings advocate.

The Structure of Terrorist Violence in Northeast Nigeria

Boko Haram’s pattern of violence appears to be highly stratified and ramified. It began with the killing of civil populations in Maiduguri and environs, especially occasional and well-coordinated attacks on Christian worshippers in churches and prayer houses. With the intervention of the police however, the violence began to escalate, resulting in the arrest and eventual extra-judicial killing of Yusuf, the founder and leader of the Boko Haram sect by the police. The group began to attack police stations, government offices and prominent politicians as well as natural rulers. This later snow-balled into blood-curdling assaults on schools, media and mosques, using all manner of lethal weapons and home-made bombs, described as IEDS. Hundreds of innocent citizens were murdered in their homes and work places as well as in the streets of major cities, bus stops and motor-parks across the northern half of Nigeria.

The year 2012 saw a radical escalation of violence with the bombing of the Yanya motor-park and the United Nations Building in Abuja. This was then followed by the introduction of

suicide bombing on a larger scale, deploying men, women and children to wreak havoc on civil populations across the land. On the heels of this happening was the plan and eventual decision to establish a Caliphate on Nigerian soil, taking and keeping territory, and hoisting their banner in a clear and unmistakable push to wrest power from the legitimate government of the Nigerian Federation. Announcing formally their alliance with, and allegiance to the Al Qaeda network and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), they expressed their objective of ruling Nigeria as an Islamic State governed by Sharia Law. This therefore became clearly recognizable as no genuine Islamic Jihad, but a struggle for control of the Nigerian State in an all-out war in the perspective of Power-Politics. The linkage with ISIL, Al Qaeda and the Hezbollah amounted to the internationalization of what began as a domestic conflict.

On April 14th, 2014, the group attacked a female school in Chibok and abducted 219 secondary school girls, an action which attracted international outreach and world-wide condemnation. The Federal Government consented to a cease-fire proposal to allow for conditional release of the Chibok girls due mainly to pressure from foreign governments and domestic civil society. On Friday, 17th October, 2014, government negotiators met with their counterparts, negotiating on behalf of Boko-Haram in the Chadian capital of N’Djamena (Sunday Punch, 19th October, 2014). Following the negotiations which allegedly took place in Saudi Arabia, Nigeria’s Chief of Defense Staff, acting on the

understanding that the sect had agreed to a cease-fire, ordered the Nigerian troops to respect the agreement and not fire at the sect's fighters, especially as the release of the Chibok girls was on the cards. Everyone had expected that after the talks being mediated by Chadian President Idris Derby would have been fine-tuned in N'Djamena, the girls would be released (The Nation, 13th October, 2014). This did not happen.

By October 29th, 2014, the town of Mubi in Adamawa state was attacked and seized by Boko Haram. The 234 Nigerian Army Battalion in the town was overrun, hundreds of residents were killed, and thousands displaced (The Nation, October 30th, 2014). The sect hoisted their flag at the palace of the Emir of Mubi and burned down the Mubi prison after releasing all prisoners therein, and the police station (The Nation, October 30, 2014). By this time, the sect had sacked the Nigerian Military from Michika, and overrun the entire territory from Madagali to Bazza. This structure of violence thereby revealed a character of the sect as well as the fundamental objectives for which they fought. They wanted territory and lebensraum in the perspective of ISIL in the Levant and the Hezbollah in the Islamic Maghreb, from where to consolidate and overrun the Nigerian state. They wanted power to prosecute on an international scale, a narrow and selfish agenda, probably for their oft-stated purpose of establishing yet another fundamentalist Islamic state, this time in Black Africa. Below is a detail of some atrocities committed by the sect in Northern Nigeria and Cameroon between 2010 and 2016.

- _07 September 2010, the group attacked Bauchi prisons, killed five security guards and an estimated 800 prisoners were released, including at least 120 terrorists or supporters who were awaiting trial.
- _ 31 December 2010, Mammy market explosion at Mogadishu Barracks in Abuja; an estimated 10 lives were lost.
- _ 28 January 2011, killed six politicians and a gubernatorial aspirant of ANPP – Madu Fannami Gubio, Senator Modu Sheriff's Cousin.
- _ April 8, 2011, Bomb explosion at Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) office in Suleja, Niger State. The lives of 8 serving Youth Corps members, including the suicide bomber, were claimed.
- _ 12 May 2011, kidnapped two engineers Chris McManus from Northwest, England and Franco Lamolinara, an Italian from BirninKebbi. They were eventually murdered on 08 March, 2012.
- _ 16 June 2011, Four children were killed in a church playground during an explosion in the southern part of Maiduguri, Borno State. That same day, there was a bomb explosion of Nigeria Police headquarters (Louis Edet House in Abuja, killing eight people died, shattering the glass windows of the seven storey building and destroyed scores of vehicles in the parking lot.
- _ 26 August 2011, bombing of the UN building in Abuja by a suicide bomber. The suicide bomber drove into the compound by ramming a

- gate, then maneuvered his vehicle into the parking garage before detonating the bomb. 50 persons died.
- _5 November, 2011, there was a series of patterned attacks in Borno and Yobe States, primarily around Damaturu, killing about 70 people and razing a new police headquarters and State Government burned. According to reports, a Boko Haram spokesman informed Daily Trust that his sect was responsible for the attacks, and promised more.
 - _25 December 2011, bomb blast at St. Theresa Catholic Church at Madalla, Niger State on Christmas Day. 50 people died.
 - _20 January 2012, Kano coordinated bomb attacks, 250 people were killed.
 - _10 June 2012, in the central city of Jos, a suicide bomber blew himself up outside a church, wounding at least 50 people.
 - _28 October 2012, at least seven people were killed and dozens injured in a suicide bombing during a Mass at a Catholic Church in Kaduna, Kaduna State. An explosive-laden vehicle drove in to the church and detonated its load, ripping a hole in the wall and roof.
 - _ On 02 December 2013, about 200 Boko Haram members dressed in military uniforms and armed with sophisticated weapons like rocket launchers attacked the air force base and military barracks in Maiduguri and destroyed property worth millions of naira
 - _ 17 September 2013, Boko Haram insurgents burnt houses and killed 142 people at Benisheikh in Borno state.
 - _ 28 September 2014, Boko Haram terrorists invaded College of Agriculture at Gujba in Yobe state at night and killed at least 63 students who were sleeping at their hostels.
 - _ 02 December 2013, about 200 Boko Haram insurgents deceitfully dressed in military uniforms and launched coordinated attacks on a military barracks and an airforce base in Maiduguri. About 7 aircraft and several other property were burnt and an unconfirmed number of civilians and soldiers were murdered.
 - _ 20 December 2013, the military barracks at Bama in Bornu state was viciously and ruthlessly attacked.
 - _ 27 January 2014, Kawuri village in Konduga local government area of Borno state was attacked by Boko Haram. Several houses were razed and 85 people killed.
 - _ 11 February 2014, a group of Boko Haram insurgents invaded Konduga in Bornu state and burnt down about 2000 houses, killed 39 people and wounded several others.
 - _ 15 February 2014, Boko Haram gunmen killed 9 soldiers and 90 civilians in a village at the Gwoza Local Government area of Borno state. That same day, Bama, the third largest town in Borno state was attacked. Boko Haram operated here unhindered between 3.30am and 12noon. At the end of their operation, 98 persons were

- killed, 400 vehicles were burnt and over 400 people were wounded.
- _ 14 April, 2014, there was a bomb explosion at the Nyanya motor park in Abuja leaving not less than 75 people dead, 215 wounded and several vehicles burnt.
 - _ April 14-15, 2014, Boko Haram insurgents invaded Government Girls Secondary School in Chibok, Borno state and kidnapped over 200 girls writing their Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE).
 - _ On 05 May 2014, Boko Haram insurgents invaded Gamboru-Ngala Local Government Area in Borno state and killed 300 people (including 16 policemen).
 - _ 22 May 2014, a twin bomb explosion at Jos Terminus market in Plateau state, leaving at least, 122 people dead, several critically injured and property worth inestimable fortune brutally destroyed.
 - _ 20 July 2015, suspected Boko Haram gunmen raided Buratai, the native village of the Chief of Defence Staff, Major General Tukur Yusuf Buratai.
 - _ 21 July 2015, suspected Boko Haram attacks left more than 50 people dead. There were also reported twin suicide attacks in Maroua, Northern Cameroon, killing at least 11. In addition to this, some 42 people lost their lives in a series of blasts at two bus stations in Gombe.
 - _ 9 August 2015, Boko Haram shot dead four people and abducted five others during an ambush on a highway in Borno State.

_10 December 2015, Boko Haram killed seven civilians in the Kamuya village, located along the border between Borno and Yobe States. The terrorist burned down the entire village.

_19 April, 2016, the Acting General Officer Commanding (GOC), 7 Division Nigerian Army, Brigadier General Victor Ezugwu and his convoy were ambushed by suspected Boko Haram terrorists during the General's visit troops in Bama Local Government area of Borno State, leaving one soldier dead and two others injured during the ambush

(*Source*: Researched and compiled by the authors from various Nigerian newspapers and television stations between 2010 and 2016).

The International Dimensions of the Terrorist Activities

The Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria assumed international proportions within the first few months of its inception. This became easily discernible from the methodology of its operation which resembled very closely the manner of operation of exiting extremist Jihadist movements in other parts of the world such as the ISIL, Al Qaeda and the Hezbollah. Its later declaration of direct affiliation with, and loyalty to ISIL, was regarded by analysts as merely a painful elaboration of the obvious. But with his declaration and further evidence garnered by security agencies, Boko Haram signaled to the world its link with the world-wide network of terrorism. Evidence garnered by Nigeria's security agencies in 2013 from arrested Boko Haram suspects indicated that Hezbollah, the Lebanese

militant group and other terrorist organizations may have chosen Nigeria as a base from which to launch terror attacks on their targets. (Tell Magazine, June 17, 2013). The situation which played itself out in the arrest and conviction Abagani and Jega in Kano in 2013 showed very clearly that there were international connections in the Boko Haram scourge ab initio. Abagani and his Nigerian collaborator as well as Abdulaasad Tahini were found to be veterans of the Hezbollah organization sent out to carry out specialized tasks in target countries.

In November 2013, the United States Department of State designated Boko Haram as a terrorist organization believed to have links with Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb. But, what really constitutes the international dimensions of terrorism in this context really concerns the transformation of the conflict from an internal affair into a regional crisis embracing Nigeria's immediate neighbours, Chad, Niger and Cameroon. This may really be considered natural as these countries all share borders with Nigeria. It probably is the most important impediment to complete military victory over the insurgents by the Nigerian state, as the foreign sources of financial logistics and military hardware which include sophisticated modern weapons of war, flow through these neighbouring territories. According to Gilbert (2014):

Boko Haram insurgents collaboratively fought with AQIM and Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa in Northern Mali in 2012. They thus have access to the psychological motivation, ideological inspiration, technological exposure, military

training, logistic facilities, financial empowerment, and perhaps personnel of these fundamentalist Islamic groups. The porosity of Nigeria's borders also facilitates the fluidity and movement of members of the group from one neighbouring country to another. Abubakar Shekau for example reportedly fled to Gao in Northern Mali with a thigh injury after he was almost caught by security forces on September 24, 2012.

On the side of the Nigerian Government, there has been foreign assistance by friendly states to help handle the Boko Haram threat. The United States of America for example, did deploy 80 military personnel with drone aircraft facilities to help in the search for the Chibok girls (Gilbert, 2014). Besides, the French president Francois Hollande had hosted an unprecedented regional security summit in Paris for leaders of contiguous states around Nigeria to fashion out collaborative strategies to defeat the Boko Haram menace. Britain, the European Union and the United States were represented at the summit. Other nations like China and Isreal, among others, have indicated interests in supporting Nigeria, especially in the search for the Chibok girls.

Besides, the conflict had since taken a regional dimension when Boko Haram launched coordinated attacks also at civil and military populations in Niger, Chad and Cameroon from their bases in Sambisa forest in Nigeria. Nigeria under President Mohammedu Buhari has also paid state visits to Chad, Cameroon, Niger and Benin Republic to canvass military and logistic support for the

battle against Boko Haram in Northern Nigeria. On this issue, there is a congruence of interest between all countries in the region, and in Black Africa at large. This is probably why the African Union (AU) waded into the conflict by putting together a multinational African force to be based in N'Djamena to help combat and defeat the Boko Haram monstrosity. Perhaps it was this need to put together a coalition to defeat Boko Haram that informed President Buhari's decision to pull Nigeria into membership of the Islamic Coalition against terrorism during his state visit to Saudi Arabia in March, 2016.

The Way Forward

Given our analysis so far of the realities of the Boko Haram security challenge in Nigeria and the entire sub-region, it is fairly obvious that the capacity to defeat Boko Haram conclusively, does not lie within the competence of any single state in the region, no matter how powerful (militarily) that state may be. This is because the Boko Haram imbroglio has not only been internationalized; it has become fundamentally a regional conflict, requiring the concerted action of all the states in the region and indeed in Black Africa. The ongoing collaboration between contiguous states to battle Boko Haram in the region is quite good, and must be carried on to its logical conclusion.

It is also important to stress the fact that evidence all over the world have shown that terrorism cannot be resolved at the negotiation table. This has never yet been accomplished anywhere on earth. It would therefore seem futile and naïve to think of negotiating with terrorists,

and especially fundamentalism-driven terrorism. Therefore, the defeat of Boko Haram must and can only be achieved in the short run through military operation in the battlefield. In the long run however, a total and sustainable victory over terror would only be achieved if and when the ecological circumstances that breed terrorism in the North East are removed and perhaps almost completely resolved through long-term policy options. The source of local personnel in the form of the readily available army of unemployed youths and almejiris must be permanently removed, not only within Nigeria, but throughout the entire sub-region

Secondly, the high level of illiteracy in the Northern Nigeria must be sustainably dealt with through formal education and a programme of human capital development in the region. In fact, the sustainable development indices must be pursued with extreme vigour and determination by successive governments in Nigeria. National integration through a politics devoid of hate and bitterness must be employed to evolve a new political socialization and mobilization process to reduce primordial loyalties and develop a truly Nigerian political culture and orientation.

The new thrust worldwide of aggressive pursuit of SDGs must be internalized by the political elites, and pursued with vigour. But all of this can only be attained if the anti-corruption war now beginning in Nigeria is upheld and sustained. Thirdly, Nigeria must follow up very quickly on the resolutions agreed upon at the Paris Summit by constructive diplomatic engagements with her neighbours to begin the

implementation of the synergistic security agreements aimed at checkmating the insurgency.

Fourthly, it is extremely important that the Nigerian state aggressively equips its army, the security establishments and the immigration service with modern surveillance and patrol gadgets for effective monitoring of her borders. And since it was recently reported that Nigeria has developed the technology for the production of drones, it is recommended that drones be acquired or be produced and deployed for effective monitoring of all the country's land borders.

Finally, the urgent necessity for diversification of the Nigerian economy, the encouragement of Agriculture and Food Production, as well as raw materials for an effective programme of industrialization must be pursued vigorously to reduce unemployment among youths, and thus also reduce poverty in the land.

Concluding Remarks

The Boko Haram challenge in Nigeria should be seen as an eye opener in regard to the past calls for the development of a strong, virile, well equipped modern and mobile military that is second to none in Africa. And which should at least compare with a middle-level European power like France. This call which was made long ago by Professor Akinwande Bolaji Akinyemi and known as the Strategic Doctrine needs to be revisited and taken seriously.

Finally, Nigeria is constitutionally a secular state, and must not only remain such, but also seen to be so. The State's sponsorship of religious pilgrimages and

affiliation with international religious groupings must be discouraged. Nigerian children and youths should be properly socialized to imbibe secular values of loyalty and patriotism through the right kind of education to inculcate national, instead of religious and sectional values. Religion itself should be left in the private and personal realm which in other climes has brought immense benefit to state and citizens. One of the most invidious blights that has plagued the Nigerian nation for many years now, and which has taken new and very frightful dimensions in recent years is the problem of corruption. The current administration of President Muhammadu Buhari has committed itself to a war against this malaise. This battle must be won, for Nigeria to emerge from the doldrums of economic, depression, social Darwinism, and political regression towards the status of a failed state. These are the ingredients for preparation of an ideal soil for international terrorism. To conclusively defeat international terrorism, Nigeria must defeat this malaise, and reduce corruption to the barest minimum.

Finally, the Country must invest more vigorously in youth education, to reduce illiteracy and the phenomenon of youth unemployability, and thus reduce the number of young people from among which terrorists and their sponsors can recruit their foot soldiers. The phenomenon of almejiris tends to produce a ready-made pool of indoctrinated youths who can easily be instigated and incited to violence. Youth unemployment and poverty reduction should be made a national pet project, and above all, accountability and good

governance must be entrenched at all

levels.

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