



Terrorism and Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Africa: Northeastern Nigeria in Focus

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Abstract: The emergence of Boko Haram terrorist organization and its subsequent activities in Nigeria posed egregious security challenges not only to Nigeria but several other countries within Sub-Saharan Africa especially Cameroon, Chad and Niger which are contiguous to Nigeria. The conflict oriented and violent nature of Boko Haram became manifest in 2009 and from then, Nigeria has been battling with this security threat and challenges precipitated by Boko Haram. Terrorism and conflicts are usually characterized with wanton loss of lives and properties, sexual violations and abuses (SEA), refugee's crisis, Internally Displaced Persons and other forms of humanitarian crisis. It is based on the foregoing that this work attempts to investigate and interrogate the relationships between Boko Haram terrorism and conflict-related sexual violence/exploitation in North Eastern Nigeria with a view to examining and ascertaining the factors that propelled this phenomenon. It is the position of this paper that rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced abortion, enforced sterilization, forced marriage, and any other form of sexual violence used by Boko Haram is a violation of Human Rights. The paper further argued that Boko Haram conflict related-sexual violence/exploitation is not only perpetuated by Boko Haram as the Military, Police, Civilian JTF and some staff of NGOs are also perpetrators. Women are sexually violated by soldiers in the process of countering terrorism. Sex is offered in exchange for protection and relief materials. This research relied on secondary materials and Robert K Merton's theory of Anomie as tool for analysis. In the final analysis it

recommends among others the need to include sexual violence in Nigeria's Terrorism Prevention (Amendment) Act, 2013, so as to criminalize rape which furthers the ends of terrorist groups.

Keywords: Boko Haram, Conflict, Forced Marriage, Sexual Violence/ Exploitation, Terrorism

Introduction

The history of acts of sexual violence against women committed during wars and conflicts is as old as the history of war. As in the case of rape generally, this form of sexual violence is subsumed in a conspiratorial culture of silence: The victims do not want to talk about it, while society pretends that it does not exist. The result of this conspiracy of silence is manifested in the low record of prosecution and conviction of men who sexually assault women in conflict situations. The global upsurge in terrorism has led to increasing reports of acts of sexual violence committed against women by members of various terrorist organizations (United Nations, 2016).

Sexual violence continued to be employed as a tactic of war, with widespread and strategic rapes, including mass rapes, allegedly committed by several parties to armed conflict, mostly in conjunction with other crimes such as killing, looting, pillage, forced displacement and arbitrary detention. The strategic nature of the violence was evident in the selective targeting of victims from opposing ethnic, religious or political groups, mirroring the fault lines of the wider conflict or crisis. Patterns of sexual violence have also been seen in the context of urban warfare, during house searches, operations in residential areas and at checkpoint (UN, 2017)

In some circumstances, women and girls are themselves treated as the "wages of war", being gifted as a form of in-kind compensation or payment to

fighters, who are then entitled to resell or exploit them as they wish. The past year has also seen the use of women and girls held in sexual slavery as human shields and suicide bombers, denoting their status as expendable "resources" in the machinery of terrorism. In the context of mass migration, women and children affected by conflict, displacement or violent extremism are particularly at risk of falling prey to traffickers owing to the collapse of protective political, legal, economic and social systems (United Nations, 2017).

Over time, countries in sub-Saharan Africa have been faced with myriads of security challenges, ranging from militancy, ethno-religious crisis, political conflict, human and drug trafficking, to trans-border crimes. In recent times however, terrorism and insurgency have become a major security threat to the sovereignty of these countries, particularly the threat of Boko Haram in the Northeast of Nigeria and countries of the Lake Chad region; hence the formation of the Multi-National Joint Task Force as a military alliance to combat terrorism (Tar and Adejoh, 2017). This has stimulated attempts by scholars in several fields and most especially in social science to x-ray and interrogate the phenomenon of Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria in relations to its impact on national and international security; its impact on trans-national trade and its impact on economic and educational development in Nigeria.

However, the need to examine the sexuality of terrorism as manifested in the activities of Boko Haram is the push and pull factor for this paper. Sexual molestation and forced marriage has become one major strategy used by Boko Haram against female victims. This accounts for the reasons why some of the released Chibok schoolgirls came back either with pregnancy or with children. Apart from the Chibok girls, there several unaccounted cases of sexual exploitation by Boko Haram. It is based on the forgoing that this paper attempts to investigate and interrogate Boko Haram and conflict-related sexual violence in North Eastern Nigeria.

Theoretical and Conceptual Perspectives

The concept of terrorism is plethora and omnibus in nature. Scholars in the fields of social sciences and other related fields of study have tried to conceptualize it. The concept "Terrorism" is a very difficult one to pin down to a strait-jacket definition essentially because the term or concept has come to refer to a gamut of interlocking variables and trends so much so that once the term is mentioned, it evokes a lot of passion and emotion. The difficulty in defining "terrorism" is in agreeing on a basis for determining when the use of violence (directed at whom, by whom, for what ends) is legitimate. These perceptions are at once geographical, ideological and academic (Buba, 2015).

This view was corroborated by Forest (2010:23) when he asserts that:

Terrorism is a highly contextual phenomenon. Indeed, the old maxim that "all politics is local" holds true for political violence as well. We sometimes hear a lot of talk about terrorism as if it were a monolithic, easily understood

term, but it is really the opposite. Terrorism is a complex issue that has been studied and debated for several decades. In fact, there are dozens of competing definitions of the term, not only among scholars but among policymakers and government agencies as well. But one thing holds constant—terrorist attacks do not occur in a vacuum, but are instead a product of complex interactions between individuals, organizations, and environments (Forest, 2010:23).

There are many different kinds of terrorism, defined primarily by ideological orientations like ethno-nationalism, left-wing, religious, and so forth. And just like there are many different kinds of terrorism, there are many different kinds of contexts in which terrorism occurs. Within each context, we find a variety of grievances that motivate the terrorist group and its supporters, along with things that facilitate terrorist activities (Forest, 2010:23).

Shedding more light on the nature of and context within which terrorism occurs vis-à-vis the galaxies of factors that precipitate terrorism, Hoffman (2006) claimed that:

Within each context, we find a variety of grievances that motivate the terrorist group and its supporters, along with things that facilitate terrorist activities. From decades of research on these grievances and facilitators, two primary themes appear most salient for this research monograph on Boko Haram: preconditions, or "things that exist," and triggers, or "things that happen" (Hoffman, 2006:40).

Terrorism is a method of combat in which random or symbolic victims serve as instrumental target[s] of

violence. These instrumental victims share group or class characteristics which form the basis for their selection for victimization. Through previous use of violence or the credible threat of violence other members of that group or class are put in a state of chronic fear (terror). This group or class, whose members' sense of security is purposively undermined, is the target of terror. The victimization of the target of violence is considered extra-normal by most observers from the witnessing audience on the basis of its atrocity; the time (e.g. peacetime) or place (not a battlefield) of victimization or the disregard for rules of combat accepted in conventional warfare... (Schmid cited in Adejoh, 2018).

Bruce Hoffman notes, terrorism is "the deliberate creation and exploitation of fear through violence or the threat of violence in the pursuit of political change . . . [and] to create power where there is none or to consolidate power where there is very little."¹¹

According to Ganor (2008), terrorism is the intentional use of, or threat to use violence against civilians or 'Terrorism is the intentional use of, or threat to use violence against civilians or against civilian targets, in order to attain political aims. Both Laquer and Ganor have similar perception of terrorism looking at it from the angle of threat and violence.

United Nations Secretary General, Guterres (2017) conceptualizes sexual violence is a brutal form of physical and psychological warfare rooted in the gender inequality extant not only in zones of conflict, but in our everyday personal lives. The persistence of such forms of violence undermines peace and security and shatters community and family ties. The prevention of

sexual violence must remain one of our highest priorities. Closely associated with sexual violence is sexual exploitation" and "sexual abuse (SEA). These terms "sexual exploitation" and "sexual abuse" are used to distinguish those who are physically forced to have sex and those who are coerced into it owing to a lack of alternative survival tactics or through ignorance of their rights. "sexual exploitation" is defined as "any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another" and "sexual abuse" as "the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions" (United Nations, 2005).

The term "conflict-related sexual violence", as used in the 2017 Annual Report of the Secretary-General on Conflict-related Sexual Violence, refers to rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced abortion, enforced sterilization, forced marriage, and any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity perpetrated against women, men, girls or boys that is directly or indirectly linked to a conflict. This link may be evident in the profile of the perpetrator (often affiliated with a State or non-State armed group, including a terrorist entity or network), the profile of the victim (who is frequently an actual or perceived member of a persecuted political, ethnic or religious minority, or is targeted on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation and gender identity), the climate of impunity (which is generally associated with State collapse), cross-border

consequences (such as displacement or trafficking in persons) and/ or violations of the provisions of a ceasefire agreement. The term also encompasses trafficking in persons when committed in situations of conflict for the purpose of sexual violence/exploitation.

Theoretical Framework

This work adopts Robert K. Merton’s theory of deviance. Like many sociologists and criminologists, Robert Merton was interested in explaining the root of social deviance; however, unlike most theorists, who posited that crime and deviance arise from individual causes (such as a biological “defect”) (Cullen & Agnew, 2006), Merton argued that certain groups participate in criminal behaviour because they are “responding normally to the social situation in which they find themselves” (Tierney, 2006). His theory of the five personal adaptations to anomie, also known as “strain theory”, arose from the earlier sociological theory of anomie developed by Emile Durkheim (Gomme, 2007).

Borrowing a term sociologically introduced by Durkheim (1893, 1984), Merton adopts the anomie concept as part of his effort to suggest that biological explanations of deviant behaviour are inadequate to explain social reality and that, instead,

structural conditions should be considered as inducing deviation from prescribed patterns of conduct. Anomie is a sort of psychological “state of confusion” in which an individual observes a conflict between the prescribed and commonplace social goals and the culturally-acceptable, “legitimate” ways to pursue those goals (Gomme, 2007).

Merton (1938) delineates five adaptations that would occur, when an individual realizes that not everyone can achieve the American dream of equal opportunity for economic success: The conformist accepts the goals of society and the means of achieving them, such as a college student; the innovator accepts the goals of society, but rejects the means of achieving them, such as a drug dealer; the retreatist gives up on both the goals and means, and withdraws from society, such as an alcoholic; the ritualist rejects the goals and accepts the means, such as a person who has given up on a promotion, nice car, and punching the time clock to keep what he has; and the rebellion type refers to one who rejects both the goals and means of society, and wants to replace them with new goals and means, such as a militant (Merton, 1938).

Five adaptations of Merton’s strain theory

Modes of Adaptation	Culture Goals	Institutionalized Means
I. Conformity	+	+
II. Innovation	+	-
III. Ritualism	-	+
IV. Retreatism	-	-
V. Rebellion	±	±

(Merton, 1938).

Matrix of Theoretical Framework

THEORY	SUBSTANCE/ TENETS	CRITIQUE/WEAKNESSES
<p>Robert K Merton's Theory of Anomie</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. This theory arose from the earlier sociological theory of anomie developed by Emile Durkheim ii. groups participate in criminal behaviour because they are "responding normally to the social situation in which they find themselves iii. that biological explanations of deviant behaviour are inadequate to explain social reality and that, instead, structural conditions should be considered as inducing deviation from prescribed patterns of conduct iv. crime and deviance are caused by an imbalance in social order, when individuals utilize the most efficient and convenient means, including crime, to achieve their goals v. The theory is based on five adaptations which includes: Conformity, Innovation, Ritualism, Retreatism, Rebellion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Merton's seems to have presented two different theories(strain and Anomie) with our clearly showing their differences ii. In addition to the fact that Merto always differentiated clearly anomie and strain, these components have not always well distinguished in the literature. iii. The concept of anomie was borrowed from Durkheim's Anomie yet its usage and applications by Merton contradicts that of Durkheim The conceptual ambiguity over Merton's anomie concept is at least partly a result of Merton's own inconsistent use of the term which has led to conceptual cloudiness

Source: compiled by Adejoh (2018).

In insight into the rebellion type of adaptation clearly shows that the Boko Haram terrorist group and their activities is a rebellion against the Nigeria state. As it was mentioned earlier, the theory proposes that disjuncture of the institutional means and culturally approved goals create strain, which is the basic reason for high rates of crime. Terrorists also reject the cultural goals and the idea of attaining them with legitimate means. Then, they develop their own goals and illegitimate means. The Boko Haram terrorist groups in Nigeria are rebellious groups who rebel against the entire state

system and structure in Nigeria hence their quest to put in place their own system by establishing an Islamic caliphate through means that are considered illegitimate by all legal standards in Nigeria (Adejoh, 2018). Cases of Boko Haram-related sexual violence clearly show that the group is a non-conformist group. They are non-conformist because they are against societal principles of goal attainment. In fact their goals are dialectically opposed to that of the state. Sexual violence which is one of the means and tactics of Boko Haram also contradicts the constitution which is the law of the

land. Sexual violence is a violation of human rights as contained in both municipal and international law yet Boko Haram employs it as a strategy. These clearly justify them as a rebellious and non-conformist group. Any group that carries arms against the state and its ideologies contradicts that of the state is not only rebellious but also non-conformist.

Boko Haram and Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in North-Eastern Nigeria

Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati Wal-Jihad which in English means "People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad. The group which is popularly known by its Hausa name 'Boko Haram' was a local radical Salafist group which transformed into a Salafi-jihadist terrorist organization after 2009. It is based in the northeast of Nigeria, in the areas predominated by the Kanuri people. Loosely translated from the local Hausa language, Boko Haram means, 'Western education or civilization is forbidden.' Put differently, 'Western education or civilization is a sin.

There are divergent views and conflict in the literature as to the actual date of origin and formation as well as the leadership of the Boko Haram sect. Alozieuwa (2012) documented that the confusion not only reflects in the narratives about the exact date, and who the actual founder was, but also as to the true source of these expositions. 'According to Ekwueme (2011), the group came into existence in the 1960s but only started to draw attention in 2002. This view tallies with Imasuen's, 2015; Okpaga, Ugwu and Eme, 2012; Eme and Onyishi, 2014 who maintained that Boko Haram is a

fundamental Islamist sect, formed in 2002 in Maiduguri, capital of Borno state by Mohammed Yusuf.

Though the group first became known internationally following sectarian violence in Nigeria in 2009, it does not have a clear structure or evident chain of command. It has, however, been severally alleged that the group has links with several terrorist networks such as Al-Qaeda, Hezbolla, Taliban etc. Boko Haram has posed a lot of security threat nationally and internationally bearing in mind the spread of its activities to states such as Cameroon, Niger and Chad. There have been series of human rights violations by Boko Haram manifested in the forms of destructions of lives and properties, kidnappings, detentions, force marriages etc. in addition to these is the issue of sexual violence/ exploitations that has characterized the activities of this terrorist group. Sexual violence is both a tactic of war and a tactic of terrorism and this tactic have been manifested and are associated with most terrorist organizations. Sexual violence has variously been described as 'one of the most horrific weapons of war, an instrument of terror used against women (Storr, 2016).

This and some other factors precipitated the UN Secretary's Annual Report on conflict-related sexual violence. Terrorists have also realized that rape can be used effectively as a weapon of terror, without attracting any legal penalty, even in the midst of existing laws which criminalize and prescribe penalties for rape, as is the case in Nigeria. In examining the relationship between terrorism and sexual violence, the United Nations states thus:

The effect of sexual violence employed as a tactic of war or terrorism is to spread fear among the civilian population, with a range of economic consequences, including facilitating the capture of land and property by forcibly displacing residents, with high levels of sexual violence seen during flight and in displacement settings. In addition, this fear restricts women's freedom of movement to continue vital economic activities. The suppression of women's employment and education increases their risk of being exposed to sexual violence, whereas economically empowered women have been shown to provide a buffer against the recruitment and radicalization of their children and other family members and thus against widening and repeating cycles of violence. Livelihood support and structurally transformative reparations can help to break the cyclical connection between poverty and sexual violence. However, despite being the measures that survivors themselves most often demand, they are precisely those least seen in responses to date (United Nation, 2017:7).

Attah (2016:385) corroborated the above view by domesticating it within the context of Boko Haram in Nigeria when he says:

Over the centuries rape has been used effectively by terrorist groups as a weapon of terror. In this context, women's bodies are used by terrorists as battlegrounds, serving the dual purpose of spoils of war and a means of terrorising the populace. The Nigerian fundamentalist group, Boko Haram, has

employed sexual terrorism in its campaign of terror against the Nigerian state and its people. Boko Haram has since 2013 embraced this tactic, which has led to the abduction of hundreds of women and girls, the most outrageous being the abduction of 276 'Chibok girls' that has attracted global concern

Shedding more light on this phenomenon Nossiter (2015:6) claimed that:

This group has embarked on the deliberate use of sexual violence against women as one of its tactics in the terror campaign against the Nigerian state. The sexual violence which humiliates the Nigerian state and its people and also destroys the social fabric of society, where a high premium is placed on the chastity of its women, has had a devastating impact on the victims – physically as well as psychologically. While some of the women rescued from the camps of Boko Haram militants have tested positive for HIV, majority of the rescued women were found to be pregnant.

In an attempt to further analyze and examine the relationship between Boko Haram and sexual exploitation in North Eastern Nigeria vis a vis the effort of the state to counter Boko Haram, the 2017 eighth Annual Report of the Secretary-General on Conflict-related Sexual Violence, states that:

Despite military gains made against Boko Haram, women and girls remain exposed to the risk of sexual violence and other crimes, including being used as suicide bombers. Efforts led by the Government to secure the release of the girls abducted from Chibok and others held in captivity

continued in 2016. Hundreds managed to escape or were rescued, with many returning pregnant or with babies, some having contracted HIV. Their accounts corroborate information received about forced marriage, forced pregnancy and sexual slavery by Boko Haram. Those living in Boko Haram-controlled areas that were compelled to marry insurgents face acute stigma and discrimination. Additional concerns have been raised when women and children released from Boko Haram are held for prolonged periods by the national security forces for screening and detention, often on the grounds that they were married to fighters. Children born to abducted women and girls face ostracism and guilt by association. While religious and traditional leaders have become increasingly open to accepting these women and children, many displaced communities remain deeply distrustful of returnees (United Nations, 2017:12).

Awosusi and Ogundan (2016) were of the opinion that one may never know the full extent of the sexual violence unleashed on Nigerian women by members of the Boko Haram terrorist group, due to the prevailing culture of silence on matters relating to rape in Nigeria. Most victims are not willing to talk about their ordeal because of a fear of stigmatization by other members of society.

Even though it is an established fact that sexual violence/exploitation is one major tactics and strategy used by Boko Haram, it is also possible to ask this question 'to what end' is sexual violence employed? There are contending perspectives on the above question. Some school of thought feel

that since sexual violence is manifested in conflict situations especially because of male dominance of War and conflicts, it is possible that sex abuse by Boko Haram is a way to ease tension, satisfy sexual desires and molest their victims. Sexual violence during conflicts and wars historically evolved from the practice in ancient times when women were regarded as part of the 'spoils of war' to which soldiers are entitled (United Nations, 2016). A dialectical view to the above is the school that sees sexual violence by Boko Haram as a strategy for recreation and perpetuity of their mission, vision and ideology.

This perspective tallies with Nossiter's (2015) when he posits that:

The general opinion regarding the high number of pregnancies among the rescued female victims of Boko Haram's sexual terrorism is that these pregnancies resulted from a deliberate plan by Boko Haram to ensure that the women produce offspring that will continue the insurgency. This viewpoint has been expressed at various fora by government officials and individuals who point at the organised nature of Boko Haram's sexual violence' which 'appeared to point to a deliberate self-perpetuation plan.

United Nations News Centre (2016) captures Zainab Bangura, Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on Sexual Violence in Conflict when she says:

I am appalled by reports that hundreds of the recently released female captives were repeatedly raped by Boko Haram militias and compelled to 'marry' their captors. In order to give rise to a new generation raised in their own image, they (Boko Haram

militants) are waging war on women's physical, sexual and reproductive autonomy and rights.

An examination of the entire socio-economic and political architecture of the North East in relations to the standard and quality of lives shows a serious shortfall in Human Development Index. Apart from a geometric increase in population and arithmetic increase in food supply, Nigerians in North East lack basic infrastructures and amenities that can enhance the quality of life in addition to the high degree of illiteracy (Adejoh, 2018). No wonder the UN Secretary General's Report linked sexual violence to economic security when it states that:

There is a demonstrated link between economic security and autonomy, and physical security and autonomy. The present report finds that the vast majority of victims of conflict-related sexual violence come from marginalized, destitute and often displaced communities. Cross-national patterns show a strong correlation between economic desperation and exposure to sexual violence/exploitation, including trafficking, forced prostitution, and resort to harmful coping mechanisms, such as child marriage (United Nations, 2017:5).

It is very apt to point out here that conflict related-violence in North Eastern Nigeria is not only perpetuated by Boko Haram as Security personnel (Soldiers and Police men), Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) and civil Societies Organizations (CSOs) and some NGOs have also taken opportunity of their offices to sexually abuse victims of terrorism that they are supposed to guarantee their safety

thereby taking advantage of their vulnerability. This scenario is manifested both in the cause of counter terrorism and in Internally Displaced Person's Camp (IDPs) where sex is exchanged for food and for protection. The vulnerable victims are manipulated by Soldiers, Police men other non-states actors to get free and cheap sex in exchange for food and other materials being shared in the camps.

In late July, 2016, Human Rights Watch documented sexual abuse, including rape and exploitation, of 43 women and girls living in seven internally displaced persons (IDP) camps in Maiduguri, the Borno State capital. The victims had been displaced from several Borno towns and villages, including Abadam, Bama, Baga, Damasak, Dikwa, GamboruNgala, Gwoza, Kukawa, and Walassa. In some cases, the victims had arrived in the under-served Maiduguri camps, where their movement is severely restricted after spending months in military screening camps (HRW, 2018).

Human Rights Watch (2016) further claimed that:

Government officials and other authorities in Nigeria have raped and sexually exploited women and girls displaced by the conflict with Boko Haram. The government is not doing enough to protect displaced women and girls and ensure that they have access to basic rights and services or to sanction the abusers, who include camp leaders, vigilante groups, policemen, and soldiers.

Irregular supplies of food, clothing, medicine, and other essentials, along with restricted movement in the IDP camps in Maiduguri, compounds the vulnerability of victims – many of them widowed women and unaccompanied

orphaned girls – to rape and sexual exploitation by camp officials, soldiers, police, members of civilian vigilante groups, and other Maiduguri residents.

It was in respect to the above that the Inspector General of Police, Ibrahim Idris, set up a special investigation team to immediately probe all cases of alleged sexual abuses, exploitation, harassments, gender-based violence and professional misconduct on Internally Displaced Persons, IDPs, in some North-East states. A statement from Force Headquarters by Force Public Relations Officer, DCP Don Awunah, said:

The IGP, who is irrevocably committed to the protection of all Nigerians, especially vulnerable group such as internally-displaced persons, IDPs, has expressed concern over the submissions in the report and has directed the Special Investigation Panel to carry out a discreet and unbiased investigation into all the cases of abuse and misconduct alleged in the report. “However, the IGP called on Human Rights Watch officials to avail the team more facts that will assist investigation into the alleged 43 cases mentioned in the report (<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2016/11/hrw-report-ig-raises-team-probe-sexual-abuse-idps>).

Over a year that the investigation committee was setup Nigerians still skeptically awaits the findings and report of the committee even though Nigerians have lost confidence in the state especially whenever probe or fact finding committees are set up.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Women and children are usually the most affected victims of terrorism and other forms of conflicts. Apart from being victims of war because of the

masculine nature of conflict, they are also victims of conflict-related sexual violence and exploitations. An examination of the nature and activities of Boko Haram terrorism shows its implications for national and regional security; the paper concludes that Boko Haram conflict has brought about high rate of political instability and socio-economic dislocation in the North East. It also maintains that sexual violence is a strategy used by Boko Haram to ensure continuity and perpetuity of the organization against the will of their victims.

- i. There is need for the Nigerian government and the parties that make-up the Multi-National Joint Task Force to be more committed in the fight against Boko Haram;
- ii. There is the need for government to ensure accountability for sexual violence crimes, improve service delivery and enhance protection measures both in communities and in settings where women and girls seek refuge;
- iii. Socioeconomic reintegration support should be provided to women and girls returning from Boko Haram captivity, who should be considered victims, not affiliates;
- iv. Government should ensure that security personnel engaged in sexual violence are adequately sanctioned to serve as deterrence;
- v. The Terrorism Prevention (Amendment) Act, 2013 is silent about rape and other forms of conflict-related sexual violence hence the need for further amendment;
- vi. There is an argent need to educate security agencies involved in counter terrorism and conflict resolutions the implications of

conflict-related sexual violence both on the victims and on the

image and integrity of the force.

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