Security Governance and the Sustenance of Boko Haram Terrorism in Nigeria

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Abstract

For over eight years now, the Nigerian State has been troubled by the activities of the Boko Haram terrorists. In spite of the military offensives by the Nigerian government, the Boko Haram sect, on many occasions, executed reprisal attacks for such operations of the security agencies against its members. It is argued in this essay that the Nigerian military repression of Boko Haram’s July 2009 uprising and the emergency rule imposed by the federal government in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states in north-east Nigeria in 2012 certainly contributed to an intensification of violence and the group’s transformation into a terrorist group. Equally contributory was the extra-judicial killing of Mohammed Yusuf in police custody in July 2009 which led to the enthronement of the more radicalized members of the group headed by Abubakar Shekau. This essay examines the nature and character of the security governance in the country in relation to the fight against terrorism. It also interrogates the various factors that sustained the Boko Haram insurgency within the context of small arms and light weapons proliferation, funding, training and affiliation. It discusses the existing legislation aimed at combating terrorism in the country and other counterinsurgency measures.

Key Words: Security Governance, Internal Insurgency, Arms Proliferation, Funding, Training

Introduction

Throughout history, provision of security and guaranteeing the safety of all the people that live within its domain is any government’s utmost responsibility (Fawole, 2012). The state, according to Okpaga et al (2012:80), exists fundamentally for the protection of life and property and ensuring the wellbeing of the citizens. As such, state-based institutions and agencies have responsibility for the security of the citizens. Security as an essential concept is commonly associated with the alleviation of threats to cherished values, especially the survival of individuals, groups or objects in the near future. Thus, involves the ability to pursue cherished political and social ambitions (Williams, 2008:6). In the frame work of political science, the concept of security according to Bar-Tal and Jacobson (1998 cited in Ogbonnaya, 2013:3) denotes a situation which provides national and international conditions favorable to the protection of a nation, state, and its citizens against existing and potential threats.

The socio-psychological conceptual framework of security on the other hand, acknowledges the military, political, economic and cultural conditions which play an important role in creating situations of security. Specifically, however, the situation of security assures a survival of a state, its territorial integrity, repulsion of a military attack, defense and protection of citizens’ life and property, protection of economic welfare and social stability (Haftendorn, 1991 cited in Ogbonnaya, 2013:3). The Boko Haram fundamentalist Islamic group is the first insurgent organization in Nigeria to be classified as a terrorist organization by the United States of America and its allies. It is, however, observed that the group has gained tremendous grounds because of the country’s ineffectual security apparatus and also government’s insincerity in tackling the menace (Venda, n.d). Thus, this essay examines the nature and character of the security governance in the country. It also interrogates the various factors that have sustained the Boko Haram insurgency within the context of small arms and light weapons proliferation, funding, training and affiliation. It discusses the existing legislation aimed at combating terrorism in the country and other counterinsurgency measures. Security policy of any state derives from its geo-strategic environment and the kind of security threats perceived to be confronting the state (Alli, 2012:40).

Nigeria has a history of the protracted involvement of the security agencies in civil governance. The military in particular had been in control of the Nigerian polity for more than 35 years of Nigeria’s 55 years of post-independent history. The implication is that the military and related security institutions had a profound influence on Nigeria state and society, particularly the institutional governance framework and conflict management mechanism. As a country that has been deeply challenged by conflicts and violence of different character including a civil war, the security sector has always played an influential role in the management or even escalation of such conflicts (Abdu, 2013:133).

The central pillar of Nigeria's national security policy is the preservation of the safety of Nigerians at home and abroad and the protection of the sovereignty of the country as well as her integrity and assets. Other subordinate goals include: i. To safeguard the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Nigerian state; ii. The defence of African unity and independence; iii. Non-intervention in the internal affairs of other states; iv. Involvement in regional economic development, security and cooperation; and v. Attainment of military self-sufficiency and regional leadership. Our focus here is on internal security within the context of counter-insurgency measures of the governments. Nigeria’s security sector, according to Fayemi and Olonisakin (2008:245), comprises the following:

The armed forces (army, air force and navy of approximately 77,000 personnel);

The Nigerian Police Service (of about 360,000 men and women – increased in 1999 from the initial size of 120,000); Paramilitary bodies including customs and excise, the immigration service, intelligence service – including military intelligence and the state security service;

Judicial and public security bodies – judiciary, justice ministry, correctional service (prisons); • Private security outfits; Militia groups – including, for example, the O’odua People’s Congress, Bakassi Boys, Hizba Corps;
Community vigilante groups.

The character of these bodies and how they operate are influenced by their history and the current political realities of the country. Two important issues are central to the discussion and function of the security sector in Nigeria. First, is the significant loss of legitimacy by the state due to the increasing interface between formal and informal security organisations, each of them attracting varying degrees of legitimacy from different segments of the society. This appears to be a consequence of the failure of the state to respond to strong issues of social and political exclusion due to diminishing capacity or the total lack of it in responding to the escalating spate of crime in the country. The second issue has to do with the complexity of Nigeria’s political structure, which makes decision making on security extremely difficult. There is a huge lack of coherence between the central government and the component units of the federation (state) on security management. Some of these are historical, but must have been compounded by the 1999 Constitution. As result, Nigeria has developed a multiple structure of security management, which has remained a major challenge for effective security governance (Fayemi, 2008).

The police which are the primary institution responsible for internal security in Nigeria have been overwhelmed by the rising wave of insurgency largely because they lack requisite training and expertise in counter-insurgency operations (Francis et al. cited in Odomovo, 2014:49). Consequently, government have relied on the military which are widely perceived to be better trained and equipped to take a leading role in law enforcement and counter-insurgency operations. Over the years, various task forces including Special Task Forces (STFs), Military Special Operations Forces (MISOFs), Joint Security Task Forces (JSTFs) and Joint Military Task Forces (JMETFs) have been established and mandated to carry out counter-insurgency operations in different parts of the country. Although a typical Joint Task Force (JTF) in Nigeria comprises the Army, Navy, Air Force, Police, State Security Services (SSS) and sometimes immigration and custom officials (Francis et al. cited in Odomovo, 2014:49), they are mostly dominated by the Army. The JTF whose counterinsurgency operations were initially limited to Borno and Yobe states had its mandate extended in September 2011 to include a range of states where Boko Haram insurgents are known to be active, excluding Plateau state which falls within the operational domain of the STF.

Two sets of issues are central to a discussion of the functioning of the Nigerian security sector. The first relates to the co-existence along the formal security establishment of non-statutory security providers because they respond to security needs of communities that are far from the view of the state. As such, informal arrangements for security provision have been accorded different degrees of legitimacy by citizens and groups that exercise their demand for security through these informal sources. The second issue concerns the complexity of Nigeria’s federal structure, which further compounds the complexity of decision-making surrounding the provision of security. There are issues of a lack of coherence and coordination as well as contradictions, which hamper the effective functioning of the security sector. (Fayemi and Olonisakin, 2008:245).

It is a fact that the Boko Haram insurgency has constituted a major challenge to stakeholders of the Nigeria’s National Security Agencies such as the Police, State Security Service, the military and other security operatives as the core and traditional agents of national security in Nigeria. These agents are devoid of a viable counter-terrorism policy as all their reactive security attempts are basically inadequate in ensuring a sustainable management or resolution of a value-based insurrection (Ngele and Ukandu, 2012). Indeed, as argued by Agibboa and Maiangwa (2014:84), the growing frustration of the Nigerian government with the deteriorating security situation in northern Nigeria has become increasingly evident in its ‘flipflop’ approach from dialogue about granting amnesty to Boko Haram members to the deployment of military troops and the proclamation of war against Boko Haram in less than a month.

The Nigerian Army is a conventional army in mindset, focused on an external enemy and serving on AU and UN peacekeeping missions. Due to the inability of the police and other segments of the Nigerian security sector to subdue Boko Haram, however, the military has been forced into a domestic security role for which it is ill-equipped and untrained. The Army’s at times heavy-handed responses to Boko Haram attacks have resulted in numerous civilian casualties and have left much of the northern Nigerian population fearful of the military (ACSS, 2015:18). It should be noted that the introduction of guerrilla tactics of hit and run and bombings caught Nigeria Armed Forces off guard because it was something outside the bracket of their training and imagination. This gave the enemy an advantage and chance to execute their heinous acts of terror on their targeted victims with impunity (Vanguard, November 25, 2012).

On the ground, Nigeria’s military has been under increasing pressure to end the insurgency. However, front-line troops have frequently complained of a lack of adequate weapons and equipment, an issue that has only added to the military’s already low morale. The logistics of the insurgents poses a serious question. Some reports indicate that the insurgents have helicopters delivering food and materials to them (The Guardian, Nov 12, 2014). Residents living in towns raided by the Islamist militants have corroborated reports of the Nigerian military being ill equipped, reporting that the insurgents are often armed with rocket-propelled grenades and anti-aircraft weapons mounted on trucks, and in some cases, armoured personnel carriers. In contrast, Nigerian soldiers have at times reported lacking ammunition and being sent out to the bush to fight without basic communication equipment. (http://www.msrisk.com/nigeria/boko-harams-threat-northeast-nigeria-addressing-five-year-crisis).

Boko Haram Sustenance: Interrogating Arms Proliferation, Funding and Training

It is observable that a modern trend in terrorism is toward loosely organized, self-financed, international networks of terrorists. Another trend is toward terrorism that is religiously or ideologically-motivated. Radical Islamic fundamentalist groups, or groups using religion as a pretext, pose terrorist threats of varying kinds to many nations’ interests. A third trend is the apparent growth of cross-national links among different terrorist organizations which may involve combinations
of military training or funding, technology transfer or political advice. In fact, looming over the entire issue of international terrorism is a trend toward proliferation of weapons of mass destruction –WMD –(Ojukwu, 2011:375).

In 2014, at a summit in Paris intended to hammer out a plan to find and free 276 schoolgirls being held hostage by Boko Haram, the French president, François Hollande notes that “Boko Haram has ample funds, highly sophisticated weaponry and advanced training with some of the world’s most experienced terrorists” (See CBC News, May 17, 2014). In view of Boko Haram’s territorial gains and the fact that the schoolgirls kidnapped from Chibok in April 2014 are still being held by the militants, many Nigerians doubt whether their well-equipped army is truly willing and able to stop the militants from terrorizing the North. People are beginning to wonder about the relationship between the army and the terrorist group. The militants obviously have modern military equipment at their disposal (Deutsche Welle, 2014).

A close observation of the existence and operation of the Boko Harm, according to Onuoha (2012:5), shows that the sect’s survival rests on a tripod: The first strand is rooted on large number of followers or recruits drawn from an expansive pool of Almajiris and other destitute children from neighbouring Cameroon, Chad, and Niger Republics who easily cross into Nigeria’s porous borders. The second is rooted in the financial support from politicians and other wealthy members, which helps to sustain the sect’s operation in the areas of arms and weapons procurement, training, and compensation for those wounded in battle or relatives of suicide bombers. The last leg rests on the influence of local experienced ideologues that frame the violent ideology of the sect and exploit their connections with established foreign terror groups such as Somali-based Al Shabaab and Al Qaeda in the Land of Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) to fanatically indoctrinate or radicalize recruits.

Paradoxically, in spite of the similarities in the modus operandi and ideologies of Al-Qaeda, ISIS and Boko Harm, and in spite of the fact that Boko Haram has killed as many people as ISIS or Al-Qaeda, the group is less often referred to as a terrorist organization and much more frequently regarded as one of the numerous insurgent groups that have contributed to an erroneous and monolithic image of Africa as a continent of instability and conflict (Batty, 2015). This perception held sway, particularly within prevailing western discourses, before the sect pledged allegiance to ISIS in March 2015. However, one of the lingering questions is about Boko Harm’s level of organization and sophistication, in terms of weaponry and financial muscle. Though it was once thought to be a rag-tag, divided, and decentralized group, one cannot be sure that this is the case anymore. The following sections therefore, address issues of arms proliferation, affiliation

**Small Arms and Light Weapons Proliferation**

Generally speaking, the proliferation of small arms that poses threat to peace in any society and becomes a course for concern to the people, bodies, agencies and government is determined by the level of violent conflicts and criminality be, funding and training that have significantly sustained the Boko Harm insurgency against the Nigerian state. ng experienced within that society. It is common knowledge that Nigeria, like many other African countries over the years has continued to experience incessant internal violent conflicts and crime. It is important to point out that apart from the incessant violent conflicts across the country occasioned by communal differences, Nigeria has experienced a civil war that was fought for two and a half years i.e. July 1967 – January 1970.

The proliferation of small-arms and light weapons in Nigeria contributes to the general security threat, which is not limited to the northern region. Throughout Nigeria, small arms are in the hands of states and non-state actors, especially terrorists, ethnic militia groups, kidnappers, arm smugglers, criminal gangs, bandits and vigilantes. The amount of illegal arms and light weapons, frequently deployed for protection and execution in circulation is still statistically unclear. A particularly disturbing and growing trend with potential for a wider future threat is the phenomenon of herdsmen and rustlers brazenly brandishing weapons for protection and attacks in the North and some parts of the South (Adewumi, 2014:4).

Those who have witnessed Boko Harm attacks have also described the militants’ use of Improvised Explosive Devices, petrol bombs, assault rifles, and Rocket Propelled Launchers, all of which cost money and take external connections to get hold of. The fact that the group’s home, Borno State, has a porous border with Chad, Cameroon, and Niger also makes it easier for the group and any of their supporters to move in and out freely (Adesioye, 2014). Arms proliferation in Nigeria originates from trans-border trafficking in arms especially from the North-east and North-west zones. There is a thriving business of local arms manufacturing industry in some parts of the country, particularly in Plateau State and the South-east zone (Essien, 2012:441).

Proliferation of weapons out of post-Gaddafi Libya traversing their way across loosely guarded borders significantly contributes to the continued destabilization of neighboring states such as Syria, Egypt, Nigeria and Mali (Trofino, 2013). The increased availability of illegal small and light weapons in Nigeria estimated to be in the range of 3 million is also attributed to the rise and proliferation of violent social formations. The relatively easy access to these weapons has promoted a culture of violence and emboldened disaffected groups to mount direct challenge to legitimate authorities (Udeh, 2002, Akinwunmi 2005 cited in Duruji, 2014:335). It appears that despite rising armed violence including ethno-religious clashes and armed criminality since 1999, there is limited information available on how weapons are acquired, and limited Nigerian government activity aimed at checking their spread. As noted by Musa (2013):

Nigeria’s borders are massive with hundreds of footpaths crisscrossing to neighboring countries of Cameroon, Chad and Niger with links to Mali, Libya and Sudan. From conservative estimate by locals, there are well over 250 footpaths from Damaturu/Maiduguri axis that link over land bridges to Cameroon, Chad or Niger. These paths, which are mostly unknown to security agencies, are unmanned, unprotected and have continued to serve as conveyor belts for arms and ammunitions trafficking into Nigeria... Security agencies at the borders and seaports have severally complained of the porosity of the nation’s borders

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and waterways. The problem of porous borders is compounded by inadequate personnel, patrol vehicles, surveillance helicopters and equipment.

The use of small arms and sophisticated weapons in Northern States of Nigeria is by no means new, as they constitute symbols of violent military occupation as means for their self defense, family and community. The popular bow and arrow that is used by most ethnic group in the region even in contemporary times is a pointer to the wide spread ownership of such weaponry. But what has become a source of worry in the region is the transformation of arms and weapons used by the members of the dreaded Boko Haram group that have long driven sleep away from the eyes of residents of the Northern Region, indeed Nigeria as a whole. The members of the sect have been at the vanguard of the pursuit of their political, anti-state and anti-Islamic dastardly. They see the availability of small arms and light weapons as a booster that emboldens their evil activities. Their attacks are increasingly deadly because of the sophistication of weapons involved (Yakubu, 2005 cited in Ngele and Ukandu, 2012).

While Nigeria supports international instruments to limit illicit proliferation and has put in place national laws to restrict the ownership and use of licit small arms, these laws are poorly enforced and as a result largely ineffective in addressing illicit proliferation. The inability of the police to provide law and order in the country, and the resulting insecurity among the population, has led some individuals and communities to acquire small arms for protection (Hazen and Horne, 2007:4).

The military and police are increasing their stocks of weapons in an effort to modernize their forces and to combat rising armed violence in the country, while illegal civilian importation is also continuing (ibid: 24). For the Boko Haram sect, the source of weaponry has been documented by Hathorn and Abbott (2015):

The group’s primary source of weaponry is the looting of police stations and military bases within Nigeria. Attacking en masse and wearing military fatigues, Boko Haram has time and time again been able to overwhelm the Nigerian security forces and raid their bases for weapons and vehicles. The Nigerian military has been forced to buy new weapons and equipment from both the black market and the legal arms trade to advance the fight against Boko Haram

Since the military was fully drafted into the scene through the emergency rule in the North-East, it appears the sector has become even much stronger than ever, parading sophisticated weapons which analysts and critics have said superseded those wielded by the Nigerian military troops. Assorted anti-aircraft guns, General Purpose Machine guns, GPMs, and battleaxes, well equipped Nourmoured Personnel Carriers, APC, Improvised Explosive Devices, IEDs, and other assorted war equipment and weapons have been paraded by the insurgents as they also used these weapons to wreck daily havoc (Ukpong, 2014). It is not unthinkable that Boko Haram benefits from corruption, ineffective border control and smuggling (Brinkel and Ait-Hida, 2012:13).

In addition, Boko Haram is able to purchase weapons from allied militant groups and arms traffickers operating within Nigeria and across the Western Sahara region. Lower-end weaponry is available from the saturated post-conflict markets across West Africa, from Western Sahara down to Benin, plus Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger. The UN Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has reported the seizure of weapons coming overland from Niger and Chad into Nigeria. In recent years, there have also been multiple weapons shipments intercepted coming east out of the Senegal-Liberia cluster and south from Libya and Algeria, suggesting these are major trafficking routes that Boko Haram could take advantage of.

In particular, weapons depots in Libya were looted after the fall of Muammar Gaddafi, and it is thought that some of these weapons made it through Niger to Nigeria (Hathorn and Abbott, 2015).

Training and Affiliation

Boko Haram has admitted to sending its members to train with al-Qaeda Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and al Shabaab terrorist organizations. During training with AQIM, Boko Haram members mastered the skills of bomb making practices. Prior to the United Nations building attack and perhaps in preparation for it, Boko Haram militants also attended al Shabaab owned training camps in Somalia. Members were taught how to construct and detonate improvised exploding devices, as well as employ the use of suicide bombers, which until participating in the training camps, Boko Haram did not engage such practices. Similar use of communication technology and media began to emerge in the organization’s tactics. Boko Haram began using internet forums as a means for expansion and recruitment as well as a source of information sharing. After the joint training, there is an obvious change in both targets and techniques used by Boko Haram (Connell, 2012:89).

When one takes an in-depth comparative analysis of Boko-Haram and mainstream terrorist networks on the global political landscape, it is quite evident that the locally based terror group has more in common with Al-Qaeda as the international terror group on the global political landscape. Such a comparative framework stems from commonalities in strategies and techniques in terms of operations, and the nature or type of operation carried out by both groups. Even the leadership of both groups is at the operational level in terms of Al-Qaeda’s international level, a fundamental driving mechanism for these commonalities largely stems from the ideological vanguard characterizing the two groups; one purely based on religious factors geared towards saving the soul of Islam at all cost (Minteh and Perry, 2013).

In another development, the foreign affairs minister of the Niger Republic, Bazoum stated that sufficient link existed between Boko Haram and Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, stating further that the Boko Haram got weapons and training from abroad (The Punch January 26, 2012). At the end of the July 2009 uprising, the remaining members of the group reportedly fled to neighbouring countries ‘where they attracted the attention of local, national and international terrorism groups’ (Walker 2012:4 cited in Agbiboa and Maiangwa (2014:68). According to the UN Security Council report, Boko Haram members received training in a Tuareg rebel camp in Mali during the group’s hibernation (Thurston 2011).

Accordingly, the inflow of arms and ammunitions from Libya, Mali and other neighboring nations further serve as effective
enabler to sustainer of Boko Haram terrorism. However, in 2013 the group was proscribed and designated a terrorist organisation by the US (US State Dept. 2013).

It remains highly documented that members of Al-Qaeda (AQIM) and the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG) who fought among the Libyan rebels directly received arms and logistical support (The New York Times, August 21, 2011 cited in Bowie, 2012) from NATO bloc countries during the Libyan conflict in 2011. Clear connections can be made through various Boko Haram members to these associated groups, such as Mohammed Nur. He is believed to have been the leader in the 2009 UN bombing in Abuja, Nigeria killing 26 people. He then fled to Somalia and pledged allegiance to Al-Shabaab, returning to Nigeria a year later with another sect member, who had gained Al Qaeda bomb training in Afghanistan (ICG, 2014 cited in McFall, 2014). Members of Boko Haram received training from al-Qaeda bomb development. This is visible in the shift from their initial weapons derived of crude materials, to the more than 30 suicide attacks that occurred in 2012. In addition, suicide packs were further discovered in a 2013 raid on a Boko Haram facility in Kano, Nigeria (ibid).

The movement’s ability to use this situation to present itself as a significant threat of substantial capacity, together with the public messaging by its leader, Abubakar Shekau, and the criss-crossing of borders by its members, have led to speculation over the nature of its international links. But while a more internationalized and networked Boko Haram may evolve, viewing the problem through an international prism risks inappropriate policy response. Boko Haram is strongly rooted in its domestic context and grew out of confrontation with the Nigerian state: it is host to a multiplicity of domestic actors and interests and operates in a complex political environment. Any external actors seeking a more active engagement in the crisis, for whatever reason, risk becoming entangled in what is ultimately a Nigerian crisis.

Funding

The Inter Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA) and the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) collaborated on a typologies research project to identify the methods used by terrorists, terrorist groups, and their supporters in the West African region to collect, transfer and utilize funds. Based on these case studies, the research project identified four main categories of typologies of methods and techniques used by West African terrorist and terrorist groups to support terrorist activities: terrorist financing through trade and other lucrative activities; terrorist financing through NGOs, charity organizations, and levies; terrorist financing through smuggling of arms, assets and currencies by cash couriers; and terrorist financing through drug trafficking.

Significantly, terrorist groups and their financiers drive funds from both licit and illicit activities, and move them through formal and informal channels to support their activities (FATF, 2013:17). For Boko Haram, in addition to any limited funds the group receives from allied militant groups, the sect is thought to generate the bulk of its income – an estimated $10 million a year from various criminal activities (Hathorn and Abbott, 2015). It conducts terrorist financing activities outside of Nigeria as evidenced by the arrests of some members of the terrorist organisation by security forces in Burkina Faso and along the Nigeria-Niger border. In these two cases, it is reasonable to conclude that funds seized by security officers may have been the result of ransom payments for the release of hostages (FATF, 2013:17). When Boko Haram was an above ground movement before 2009, it had wealthy members who served as intermediaries between financial sponsors, such as local government officials or wealthy Salafists abroad, and Muhammad Yusuf (Zenn, 2014).

Boko Haram is also heavily dependent on extortion as a means of funding its day-to-day operations. Government officials, contractors and small private entrepreneurs are often forced to make payments to the militant group or face severe consequences. This has particularly had a strong negative effect on smaller pirate entrepreneurs in the northern region, with many either forced to pay a percentage of their income to Boko Haram or forced to close their businesses and lay off workers. The latter is an especially alarming issue in a country that already has a high unemployment rate of 23.9 percent. Boko Haram militants have also been known to target banks located in the northern region of the country as a means of funding their operations. In 2011, roughly 100 banks were attacked, with officials indicating that over thirty of those were directly attributed to Boko Haram. It is estimated that Boko Haram gains from bank robberies are at US $6 million (See http://www.msrisk.com/nigeria/boko-harams-threat-northeast-nigeria-addressing-five-year-crisis).

According to a survey of academic, governmental and journalistic accounts, Boko Haram funds its escalating acts of terror through a diverse network of black market dealings, local and international benefactors, and links to al-Qaeda and other well-funded groups in the Middle East. Analysts say its fundraising apparatus is intricate and opaque. But even such alleged financial connections with al-Qaeda do not explain Boko Haram’s money. Like a river sucking water from many tributaries, Boko Haram draws funding from other sources as well. The group reportedly also gets cash from Islamic terrorist groups such as al-Shabaab in Somalia and local al-Qaeda affiliates (See The Washington Post, June 6, 2014).

While Algerian intelligence confirms a direct link between Boko Haram and western-financed AQIM, Boko Haram spokesman Abu Qaqa claims to have visited Mecca with Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau, where the group received financial and technical support from Al Qaeda in Saudi Arabia (AQAP) (Reuters, November 13, 2011). Information revealed that the group also known as Al-Muntada Trust Fund with headquarters in the United Kingdom is financially assisting the sect. Besides, the sect is also receiving funds from Islamic World Society with headquarters in Saudi Arabia (Tribune, February 13, 2012 cited in Bamgbose, 2013:133-134).

Also, it is observed that the Boko Haram sect may be funded with money originating from crude oil thefts. This has prompted President Muhammadu Buhari to launch an investigation with the help of the international community. The comment was made by US congressman Darrell Issa during a meeting in the capital Abuja with the Bring Back Our Girls group, which advocates for the release of some 219 Nigerian girls kidnapped by the terrorists in the restive Borno state in April 2014. As part of an anti-corruption campaign Buhari undertook after gaining office in May, he banned 113 vessels
from lifting crude oil from some 27 Nigerian ports amid suspicions the vessels had been implicated in illicit activities. He also replaced the whole board of state-run oil company Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC). According to Government spokesperson, Mike Omeri, “Boko Haram has multiple primary and secondary sources of funding. These should not be subject of speculation since there are ongoing active investigations towards verifying the real sources and possible culprits aiding or abetting this heinous crime against the Nigerian state and its people” (International Business Times, 2015). Issa (Newswatch Times, 2015) submits that:

As long as billions of dollars in oil is being sold, you have a black market that funds many things. Boko Haram can be a clandestine beneficiary of that money too. Some of these areas are within the power of the Nigeria government. So, when they end corruption, they may also reduce the flow of that kind of money that comes into sponsoring terrorism.

According to Jacob Zenn of West Point's Combating Terrorism Center, kidnapping has become one of the group’s primary funding sources, a way to extract concessions from the Nigerian state and other governments, and a threat to foreigners and Nigerian government officials. It has been a lucrative source of cash, too. In 2013, Boko Haram secured $3 million and the release of 16 prisoners in exchange for a French family of seven it seized in northern Cameroon. The group has claimed credit for a few kidnappings since then, but they are widely suspected of carrying out dozens of other abductions-for-ransom in northern Nigeria (Weber, 2014). Along with ransom money, “Boko Haram has partly financed its militant operations by attacking and robbing banks,” says David Doukhan at the International Institute for Counter-Terrorism. The group has robbed hundreds of banks in its home province of Borno and two other northern regions of Nigeria, and nabbed convoys and successful businesses (ibid).

Legislation, Law enforcement and Counterterrorism Strategies

A recurrent feature of counter-terrorism responses in Nigeria is the frequent deployment of soldiers in aid of civil authority. As Amnesty International reports, the military are widely perceived to be better trained and better equipped and, including when part of a Joint Task Force, is increasingly taking a lead role in the law enforcement response to Boko Haram. However, the military also faces its own capacity challenges: on several occasions, senior military figures have publicly indicated a lack of resources, modern equipment, accommodation or training. Additionally, although the military are increasingly carrying out law enforcement functions and exercising police powers, especially the powers of arrest and detention, they are failing to bring people to justice.

Moreover, if one take into account the different approaches to the use of force by the police and military in the contexts in which they operate—under law enforcement standards that should reflect an international human rights framework, whereas the military are generally trained for operations in situations of armed conflict, where more permissive standards for use of force typically apply under international humanitarian law—, it is questionable whether military equipment and training corresponds to the requirements of law enforcement (Dakas, 2014:24).

There is a common consensus in the Nigerian public sphere that Government’s response to Boko Haram insurgents has been reactionary rather than proactive. Those who share this sentiment argue that Government usually waits for the insurgents to launch attacks on Churches, Schools, Police Stations and other public institutions, before it reacts. While stating the reasons for the seeming failure of Government’s counter-offensive measures, Akpan et al (2014:152) observe that the federal government is using the same methods (force, administrative panel and negotiation) it used in addressing the Niger Delta militancy to tackle the Boko Haram insurgency. This is a wrong approach because both insurgent groups follow different trajectories. The Niger Delta militants had visible leadership and were ever ready to engage the government to drive home their demands. The second finding indicates that the government seems to be treating the insurgent group like freedom fighters with legitimate demands, rather than as a terrorist group. This explains why the government wants to negotiate with them. However, this approach has also failed to yield any significant result. As rightly pointed out by Niaz Murtaza (2013 cited in Akpan et al, 2014:152):

Historically, peace negotiations succeed more easily with militant groups pursuing legitimate identity-based grievances. It is easier for government to accept their core demand, which actually strengthens democracy and good governance. From every indication, the demands of the Boko Haram insurgent group are not legitimate and compatible with the country’s constitution. This in part explains why they have refused to negotiate with the government. Therefore, Government should stop treating them like freedom fighters.

Hussein (2012) points out seven factors responsible for the seeming failure of government’s counter-terrorism against the Boko Haram sect. The abridged version is presented below:

- First, even within this narrow counter-terrorism lens, Abuja's approach to Boko Haram is problematic. It is indeed hard to fight an organisation when one does not even know its name, let alone its organisational structure. This also points to the dearth of human intelligence assets the Nigerian state has on the sect.
- Second, and a concomitant of this first point, not much is known about the financial support networks of Boko Haram. Speculation on Boko Haram's financial supporters points to prominent northern businessmen and religious leaders, as well as various Gulf charities. Unless these financial support networks can be disrupted, Boko Haram will continue to grow.
- Third, the current upsurge of Boko Haram activities is intimately related to the spread of radical Islamist ideologies in the form of Tablighi clerics from Pakistan and Wahhabist missionaries from Saudi Arabia. Radicalisation amongst Nigeria's Muslims is also growing apace as a result of the Internet and jihadi chat forums. This, in turn, also contributed to the difficulty experienced by the state's intelligence apparatus in penetrating...
Boko Haram: recruitment seems to be taking place amongst disciples of a particular religious leader in a particular area. These bonds of loyalty between disciple and religious leader are notoriously difficult to break.

- Fourth, counter-terrorism efforts are crippled by the incapacity of the Nigerian Police Force to gather intelligence and undertake forensic investigations. According to Amnesty International, most police stations do not document their work. There is no database for fingerprints, no systematic forensic investigation methodology, only two forensic laboratory facilities, few trained forensic staff and insufficient budgets for investigations.

- Fifth, counter-terrorism efforts are also proving counterproductive on account of the brutality unleashed by the security forces – losing hearts and minds in the process. Such excesses on the part of the security services can only contribute to the further alienation of citizens from the state and its security forces. This situation is further compounded by the fact that the Nigerian soldiers and police patrolling in northern states are national, not local, and therefore unlikely to share either ethnic or cultural background with the local population, who view themselves as being under siege – in an occupation by foreign forces.

- Sixth, counter-terrorism is also failing since it does not recognise the wider context – the potential assets that extremist groups have at their disposal. A case in point is the existence of armed gangs throughout northern Nigeria. These number in the thousands and include such groups as the Almajirai, Yan Tauri, Yan Daba, Yan Banga and Yan Daura Amariya. These gangs provide a ready pool of recruits for extremists. The authorities therefore need to neutralise these armed groups as part of the broader fight against Boko Haram.

- Finally, counter-terrorism efforts also suffer as a result of the credibility gap that arises from the divergence between promise and performance, between rhetoric and reality. Whilst promising to curb or eradicate the terrorist scourge, government actions do not seem to reflect this urgency.

Under international human rights law, states have a duty to protect the life and physical integrity of those within their jurisdiction, and this duty includes the enactment of legislation to repress acts of terrorism (Redress Trust, 2012:8). The Nigerian government has, therefore, put in place legislation aimed at combating terrorism in the country. The Terrorism (Prevention) Act, 2011 was revised by a joint Senate-House of Representatives conference committee in December 2012. These amendments were enacted into law on February 21, 2013, and the law subsequently was called the “Terrorism (Prevention) Act of 2011 (as amended). “The law appointed the National Security Advisor (NSA) as the coordinator for all counterterrorism intelligence activities, and the Attorney General as the lead official for enforcement. However, it is noted that among the problems that deter or hinder more effective law enforcement and border security by the Nigerian government are:

A lack of coordination and cooperation between Nigerian security agencies; a lack of biometrics collection systems and the requisite data bases; corruption; misallocation of resources; the slow pace of the judicial system, including a lack of a timely arraignment of suspected terrorist detainees; and lack of sufficient training for prosecutors and judges to understand and carry out the Terrorism (Prevention) Act of 2011 (as amended) (See: http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2013/224820.htm).

To effectively counter a security threat such as terrorism and insurgency, a combination of multidisciplinary, multi-agency and multilateral tools are required. This presupposes that the tools employed by the countering outfit must be ‘proactive’, ‘superior’, ‘consistent’, and to a larger extent, ‘transformative’. Intelligence gathering, acts of insurgency and terrorism by a group could be difficult to counter with chiefly isolated, weak and inconsistent tools. The operations of the terrorists have signaled a notorious group which uses intelligence with the capacity to expand its networks under the cover of religion and the psychological imbalance resulting from counter-terrorism. Apparently, before planting a bomb, engaging in suicide bombing and attacking a vulnerable or key point, they are aware of when the security is non-existent, relaxed and ineffective (Adewumi, 2014:3).

Civilians trapped in the theatre of violence, especially in the north-eastern part of Nigeria have fallen victims to violent attacks by both security forces and insurgents – attacked by security forces for allegedly harbouring insurgents, and killed by insurgents for assisting security forces with information that often leads to the arrest of their members. The host communities have thus become the common target of both the JTFs and the insurgents who carry out retaliatory attacks on civilian at the slightest suspicion of giving assistance to their adversary. Violent confrontations between operatives of JTFs and insurgents have therefore resulted in a cycle of human rights abuses, extrajudicial executions, forced disappearance of civilians and wanton destruction of human habitation and sources of livelihood (Odomowo, 2014:58).

It is affirmed that the defence and security sector is the nation’s biggest spender but it also requires its own sets of rules around public accountability because several laws on public accountability are not fully applicable to the sector. For example, the law which requires probity and accountability in the procurement and contracting process is inapplicable to defence procurement processes. Section 15(2) of the Public Procurement Act 2007 provides that “the provisions of this Act shall not apply to the procurement of special goods, works and services involving national defence or national security unless the President's express approval has been first sought and obtained.” In essence, the process of awarding defence related contracts is by law, expressly excluded from scrutiny (Nyager, 2015).

Similarly, the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2011 exempts from disclosure information that may be injurious to national defence. Section 11(1) of the FOIA provides that a public institution may deny an application for information, the disclosure of which may be injurious to the conduct of international affairs and the defence of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Although both legislations limit the level of probity and accountability in the defence sector, both have a window
within which public accountability ought to be attained. One of the mechanisms required to make this functional are clear rules guiding disclosure within the security and defence sector (Nyager, 2015).

Conclusion
It is affirmed that terrorism, transnational crime, drug trafficking, piracy and kidnapping in the West African region present a unique chance to better confront local security challenges. Thus, Nigeria should intensify relations with the Lake Chad countries and continue to build security ties and networks with, among others, Cameroonian, Chad, Niger, Mali and Mauritania (ICG, 2014: 44). Also, to overcome the state security forces’ fractured coercive capacity, the Nigerian government must establish a level of moral and political legitimacy that will help them gain the support of local Muslim communities in the north (Forest, 2012:92). It is noted in this essay that pivotal to the survival of any society is its law and order which are predicated on national security. Insecurity leaves in its wake tales of woe which the country and its citizens have had to contend with over the years. While urgent efforts are being made to improve the counter-order which are prerequisite to a more comprehensive response.

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