

ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES AND MANAGEMENT OF BOKO HARAM INSURGENCY IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria has had a lot of socio-political and economic consequences in Nigeria. But it has also exposed the failure of the Nigerian state. The deadly Islamic terrorist sect in Northern Nigeria which has embarked on suicide bombing, kidnapping, and all kinds of atrocities all in the bid to impose extreme Islamic ideas on Nigeria has cost more than 4,000 lives, displaced close to a million, destroyed hundreds of schools and government buildings and devastated an already ravaged economy in the North East, one of Nigeria's poorest regions. This paper endeavours to examine the nexus between the economic consequences of the insurgency and the management of the crisis by the Nigerian state. Why has the Boko Haram issue become almost intractable for the Nigerian state? Has the Nigerian government handled the insurgency lightly because of the perceived insignificant economic consequences of the insurgency? What had been done and what should be done to manage this crisis that has further impoverished Nigeria's poorest region of the North East? This paper sets out to provide answers to these questions.

Keywords: Boko Haram, Terrorism, Insurgency, Economic consequences, Nigeria, Crisis Management, Conflict Resolution

INTRODUCTION

"Boko Haram's four-year-old insurgency has pitted neighbour against neighbour, cost more than 4,000 lives, displaced close to half a million, destroyed hundreds of schools and government buildings and devastated an already ravaged economy in the North East, one of Nigeria's poorest regions. It overstretches federal security services, with no end in sight, spills over to

other parts of the north and risks reaching Niger and Cameroon, weak countries poorly equipped to combat a radical Islamist armed group tapping into real governance, corruption, impunity and underdevelopment grievances shared by most people in the region. Boko Haram is both a serious challenge and manifestation of more profound threats to Nigeria's security. Unless the federal and state governments, and the region, develop and implement comprehensive plans to tackle not only insecurity but also the injustices that drive much of the troubles, Boko Haram, or groups like it, will continue to destabilise large parts of the country. Yet, the government's response is largely military, and political will to do more than that appears entirely lacking" (International Crisis Group, Africa Report No 216, 3 April 2014).

The above statement captured the devastating menace of Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria. Different figures of casualties of this insurgent group have been bandied. While the actual figure of casualties may not be known, the undisputable fact is that this group has engaged in several violent acts including but not limited to kidnapping, suicide bombings, jail breaks and the like. While the group's activities have gained ground, the political will on the part of the government to root them out appeared to be lacking for a long while. The government has failed to live up to its part of the social contract that brought about the Nigerian state.

Durotoye (2000) wrote about assaults on the Nigerian state as an institution. "The Nigerian is being challenged from 'above' and 'below' by ethnic, religious and regional groups, and by the state elite itself"(p.5). He listed youth militancy, religious uprising, labour unrest, ethnic jingoism, and political antagonism as some of the catalysts of assaults on the state. Examples of youth militancy include subversive activities of the Ijaw youths, the Odua People's congress (OPC), the Arewa People's Congress, and the Egbesu group in the Niger Delta, among many others. Boko Haram insurgency is the most recent and the most devastating assault on the Nigerian state. The explanation for these assaults on the Nigerian state include the failure of the state to provide jobs for its teeming youths, its failure to protect its citizens making self-protection the only feasible possibility, bottled up anger and emotions due to years of repressive military and political regimes, difficulties in obtaining legal recourse, poverty, lack of adequate education for the youths, and the "instrumentalisation of violence" by the political elite who are excluded and who wishes to regain political power at all cost (Ibid, p.6).

Hence, the Nigerian state has fallen victim on many occasions of ethno-religious, and political assaults. (Jedrzej Georg Frynas (2000), Chris Allen (1998). This paper will discuss the economic consequences of Boko Haram insurgency and the management of Boko Haram insurgency with a view to assess its effectiveness and project the way forward. Content analysis of existing materials will be the fulcrum of this work.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

The multiplicity of armed conflicts and wars in postcolonial Africa had made Africa one of the most turbulent regions. From Johannesburg to Cairo, and from Addis Ababa to Bamako, the African continent has been torn apart by multiplicity of armed conflicts and wars. As Omeje (2008) rightly posited “The end of the cold war, especially the 1990s and the early 2000s, coincidentally witnessed an accentuation in Africa of the incidence of intra-state conflicts- horizontally between different socio-ethnic and cultural aggregates within a national territory, and vertically, between groups who feel excluded and marginalized from existing power structures on the one hand, and the central authority on the other” (Omeje, 2008:68).

Omeje captured the different theories bordering on the root causes of conflicts. Prominent among them is the classical realist and behaviourist notion that human behaviour is motivated by self- interest. Incompatible self-interests result in conflicts, which if not well managed, could snowball into nasty violence. According to the realists, violent conflict is aggravated by asymmetries in the equation of power, which enables actors to explore coercive means in the pursuit of their interests. To be sure, realist’s position is that violent conflicts are rational choices of rational actors in the face of limited resources and competitive interests. (Omeje, 2008). Hence, to the realists and behaviouralists, violent conflicts are inevitable. The divergence amongst realists borders on the issue of conflict resolution. To some realists, conflicts can only be “controlled, managed, contained, mitigated, but not completely resolved” because of the “corresponding inexorability of competition for scarce resources and the asymmetrical structure of power in society” (Omeje, 2008:69).

Critical theorists confronted the above position for being status-quo oriented with regards to asymmetries in power distribution arguing that conflict resolution is both possible in certain conflicts and necessary for change, emancipation and transformation. They emphasised that the role of skilled and powerful third party mediators are central to conflict resolution and transformation.

Some writers have argued that violent conflicts arise out of patrimonial and primordial tendencies, a carryover of past hostilities. Another school of thought called “instrumentalists” acknowledged the existence of primordial factors such as tribalism, ethnic culture and religion, but argued that these primordial factors only instigate and affect conflicts when they are deliberately manipulated and politicised by political actors and local elites for selfish political and economic ends. Other theorists include the political ecology and conflict goods school who argue that conflicts arise as a result of competition for control of natural resources by various local political factions like the Niger Delta conflict in Nigeria, the RUF war in Sierra Leone and

the NPFL rebel war in Liberia borne out of greed by local actors, as well as multinational corporations in the exploitation of available natural resources.

Adekanye (2007) wrote about the dynamics of ethnic conflicts in Africa. He proposed a theoretical framework of analysis that distinguishes between three sets of factors responsible for violent conflicts in Africa. These factors are 'The structural-cum-motivational preconditions for conflict', 'The direct precipitating or exacerbating conditions', and 'some immediate or catalytic events', (p. 63). Under the first variable, Adekanye listed colonial legacy, configuration of society; the problematic and inchoate nature of many African states, their artificiality, the porous nature of their boundaries as well as the structure of the economy which is poor, underdeveloped, vulnerable and over-dependent; elites' control of state power bordering on zero-sum nature and conception of politics; and Socio-psychology of domination fuelled by real and imagined fear of domination. Under the second variable, he listed socio-economic conditions of debt and adjustment, stresses and strains of environmental-cum-human insecurity, pressures of democratisation, as well as growing debt and adjustment burden. According to him, "The conditions of reduced socio-economic resources and opportunities created by debt and adjustment tend to intensify inter-group struggles."(p.68). He went further that the events that finally trigger outbreak of conflicts are sometimes "due to accidental circumstances, and therefore inexplicable in their origins, often unpredictable in their consequences, and rarely amenable to rational analysis". (P.72). Such catalysts of violent conflicts could be outcomes of election contests, military coup d'etat directed at capturing power or preventing the constitutional loss of power, government responses or policy measures such as inflation or austerity measures, tampering with census counts and so on. However, these catalysts do not operate in isolation. "Rather, such triggering events or circumstances are linked to the scheme of things and very often derive their causal significance from being part of other and much broader factors and forces, particularly those variables which we earlier classified as the complex of accelerators or precipitants of conflicts. In other words, these combustible materials must first be there, and what the particular set of events or circumstances we have been analysing here does is only to supply the spark that sets those materials ablaze". (P. 74).

The implication of the categorisation of causes of conflict for the strategy of conflict management and resolution as well as prevention is that working to counteract the sources of conflict at the structural-cum-predispositional level is more difficult and almost unattainable in the short run because it requires overhauling of the society and changing all the conditions predisposing divergent groups toward conflict. Hence, policy and action aimed at conflict prevention, management, and resolution should concentrate efforts at the precipitant level.

Okpoya.Ugwu and Eme (2012) classified four major manifestations of insecurity in Nigeria as ethno-religious conflict, politically-based violence, economic-based violence and organised violent groups. They further stated that "...a complex interplay of religious, socio-economic and political factors that had developed over the years informed the prevailing criminal dimension of the group (Boko Haram)". (P.13). Don Idada-Ikponumven (2012) asserted that government's insensitivity to the prevailing political and economic problems in the country was responsible for the insurgency of Boko Haram.

In their work, Ademowo and Ojo (2012) proffered a solution to the problem of insurgency and overall violence in Nigeria. They concluded that a culture of peace should be popularised within and outside of the classroom."In the classroom, the ideals of culture of peace should be included in the Citizenship Education curriculum for the primary school. At the junior secondary level, the Social Studies curriculum can be developed further to incorporate the ideals. At the Colleges of Education and Polytechnic level, the Citizenship Education curriculum can be developed or enlarged to incorporate the tenets of culture of peace. At the University level, efforts must be made to promote peace education as a General Studies course. Outside of the classroom, the National Orientation Agency should be mandated to develop activities that will engage and educate the leaders and the led (the civil populace) on the ideals of a culture of peace". (P.34).

Okemi (2013) set out to do a comparative analysis between Boko Haram and well known terrorist organisations in terms of motivation, ideology, existence, grievances, and tactics employed to address grievances for proper classification of the group as a terrorist organisation, an international one or a local terrorist organisation. Defining terrorism as "a form of unconventional warfare used to force political change by convincing government or population to agree to demands to avoid future harm or fear of harm, destabilising an existing government, motivating a disgruntled population to join an uprising, escalating a conflict in the hope of changing the status-quo, expressing a grievance or drawing attention to a neglected cause", Okemi concluded that "one can see that terrorist organisations and Boko Haram are similar in history, origin and ideology, hence we can safely classify it as a terrorist organisation.", (p.3).

On the economic consequences of Boko Haram insurgency, there are two divergent opinions. One school concludes that the insurgency has had little and insignificant effect on the Nigerian economy, hence the indifferent approach of the Nigerian government in combating the group headlong at the onset.

Even though the local chamber of commerce estimated that business activity in Kano has dropped by 80% over the past three years, the economic impact on the overall Nigerian

economy has been inconsequential. The only economic impact the group has had so far is in slowing down production in the regions that are already struggling. (Vishala Sri-Pathma, 2015).

The north-eastern states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe where the group held sway make up a small fraction of Nigeria's economy. "Estimates say those affected states account for 7% of the economy, and Boko Haram is only active in a portion of those states. "But this country is still an attractive market for businesses both large and small around the world. The evidence is clear."(Ibid).

However, the economic impact of the insurgency on the overall economy of Nigeria may have been underplayed according to a contrary report. Tochukwu (2013) wrote that since Boko Haram resumed its operations in 2010, foreign direct investment (FDI) into Nigeria has plummeted. Citing the World Investment Report (WIR) 2013, FDI flows into Nigeria dropped by 21.3 percent in just one year — from \$8.9 billion in 2011 to \$7 billion in 2012. “This substantial loss in FDI over a short period of time will have many further consequences for the country. First, FDI into Nigeria has a direct impact on trade, assuring progression of economic growth. Second, FDI inflow supplements the available domestic capital by stimulating the productivity of domestic investments. And lastly — but most worrisome — is the high codependency ratio between the inflow of FDI, the Nigerian oil sector, and the country’s GDP”.(Ibid.)

Besides, the rush to escape from the north is also affecting the profitability of business establishments in that region as banks were reported to be closing down their outlets due to a decrease of economic activities in the area. The massive departure from the northern region constitutes a depletion of economic affairs in the north as well as throwing those who are departing from the north into financial and psychological pressures.

Tochukwu also asserted that a study of the impact of Boko Haram is relevant because of the strategic importance of Nigeria to peace, order and regional security in sub-Saharan Africa as well as the fact that the wellbeing of the region's economies in countries like Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Benin are interlinked and dependent on the Nigerian economy.

Nigeria's erstwhile minister of information, Labaran Maku confirmed Tochukwu's thesis when he told journalists in Abuja after the Federal Executive Council Meeting on February 9, 2012 that “When you destabilise Kano, which is the commercial nerve centre of the North, you are threatening the socioeconomic well-being of the North. Kano is the economy of Chad, it is the economy of Niger Republic, and of northern Cameroun, so when you destabilize peace in Kano, you threaten the foundation of economic and social well-being of that region”. (Dauda, 2014: 254).

Joining this discourse is Dauda (2014). “The impact of the heinous activities of Boko Haram terrorism on the social economic and political structure of Yobe State is over-whelming

and devastating. Many businesses in the state have been affected by the activities of the insurgents. Some shops have been taken over by the military personnel who have made it their base, forcing the businesses owners to either relocate or abandon it totally. Small businesses that use to thrive in the night like Tea selling, Restaurants, etc. are no longer operating as a result of the security situation. Banks can no longer travel to local government council to pay salaries due to frequent attacks along the way, staff of the local council have to come down to the state capital for their salaries which is very risky”.(p.253).

Besides loss of job occasioned by business closedown, insecurity in Adamawa, Borno, Yobe, Kano has cost the Nigerian economy N1.3trillion (\$6 billion) as a result of attacks by the Boko Haram group (p.254).

All the authors are in agreement that Boko Haram is a terrorist organisation. They also agree that the root causes of the insurgency could be found in the socio-political and economic configuration of the Nigerian states. At varying degrees, it was also discovered that the insurgency has created serious economic impasse for Nigeria and the West African sub-region. Different panaceas were preferred to mitigate the insurgency.

BOKO HARAM: ORIGIN AND ACTIVITIES

There are many versions regarding the exact origin of Boko Haram in Nigeria. The group called Boko Haram (usually translated loosely as “Western education is forbidden”) is an Islamic sect that believes in establishing an Islamic state in the north with strict adherence to Islamic law called Sharia.

Even though some accounts traced the origin of the group to 1995 when the group operated as Shabaab Muslim Youth Organisation under the leadership of Mallam Lawal (Okemi, 2013), Popular account has it that Boko Haram’s original leader was Mohammed Yusuf. It was reported that around 2002, Yusuf was co-opted by the then Borno state gubernatorial candidate, Ali Modu Sheriff for political support in exchange for full implementation of Sharia and promises of senior state government positions for his followers in the event of an electoral victory. Sheriff has repeatedly denied any such arrangement or involvement with the sect but his appointing a member of the sect into his cabinet would contradict such claim. Mohammed Yusuf fell out with Ali Modu Sheriff when his government refused to implement full Sharia. While Yusuf became increasingly critical of the government of Ali Modu Sheriff and official corruption, his popularity soared, and the group became emboldened to expand into other states, including Bauchi, Yobe and Kano. Boko Haram is therefore a creation of “political instrumentalisation” at least in part. The State Security Services (SSS) arrested and interrogated Yusuf a number of times. Boko Haram soon became violent. A series of clashes between Boko Haram members and police

escalated into an armed insurrection in 2009. Nigerian troops crushed the rebellion, killing hundreds of followers and destroying the group's principal mosque. Yusuf was captured, handed over to the police and shortly thereafter extra-judicially executed.

Boko Haram went underground and a year later launched attacks on police officers, police stations and military barracks, explicitly in revenge for the killings of Yusuf and his comrades. The group has repeatedly demanded prosecution of those responsible, release of their detained colleagues, restoration of the mosque and compensation for sect members killed by government troops. The group's campaign has grown, targeting security forces, government officials, politicians, Christians, critical Muslim clerics, traditional leaders, the UN presence, bars and schools. Some of its activities are recalled in next section.

BOKO HARAM INSURGENCY AND COUNTER-INSURGENCY ACTIVITIES

(2009-2015)

2009

July 26–29: nearly 1,000 people were killed in clashes between Boko Haram militants and Nigerian soldiers throughout northern Nigeria, beginning the Boko Haram Islamist Insurgency in Nigeria.

July 30: Mohammed Yusuf, spiritual leader of Boko Haram, was allegedly summarily executed by Nigerian soldiers. AbubakarShekau takes control of the group.

2010

September 7: Bauchi prison break, 5 people were killed and 721 inmates freed from prison in Bauchi by suspected Boko Haram gunmen.

December 31 - Abuja attack, a bomb attack outside a barrack in Abuja killed four civilians.

2011

May 29: 15 people were killed in Abuja and Bauchi after bombs exploded in several towns in northern Nigeria during Goodluck Jonathan's swearing in as the new president.

June 16: Abuja police headquarters bombing, at least two people, the perpetrator and a traffic policeman, were killed in a failed bombing of Abuja's police headquarters. It was Nigeria's first instance of a suicide bombing.

August 26: 21 people were killed in a bombing attack on a United Nations compound in Abuja.

November 4: Damaturu attacks, between 100 to 150 people were killed in a series of coordinated assaults in northern Nigeria.

December 22–23: 68 people, of whom are 50 militants, at least 7 soldiers, and 11 civilians, were killed in clashes between Boko Haram militants and Nigerian soldiers in Maiduguri and Damaturu.

December 25: 41 people were killed by Boko Haram bomb attacks and shootings on churches.

2012

January 5–6: around 37 Christians are targeted and killed by Boko Haram militants.

January 20: 183 people, of whom at least 150 were civilians and 32 police officers, were killed in Kano State by Boko Haram gunmen.

April 8: 38 people were killed following a bombing at a church in Kaduna.

June 17: 19 people were killed following bomb attacks against three churches in Kaduna.

August 7: Deeper Life Church shooting, 19 people were killed when Boko Haram gunmen raided a church in Kogi State.

December 25: 27 Christians were killed in Maiduguri and Potiskum by suspected Boko Haram militants.

2013

January 1: Nigerian Army raid killed 13 militants.

February 8 - Attack on polio vaccinators killed 9 women.

March 18: between 22 and 65 people were killed in Kano by a car bombing.

April 16: 187 people were killed in Baga in Borno State.

June 9: Children were killed in Maiduguri and 13 students and teachers were killed in Damaturu by Boko Haram.

July 6: more than 42 were killed by Boko Haram gunmen in a Yobe State school.

August 12: 56 people were killed by Boko Haram in a Maiduguri mosque.

September 12: Ambush by Boko Haram left 40 soldiers dead.

September 12–18: An offensive by Nigerian Army left 150 Islamists and 16 soldiers dead.

September 19: Benisheik attacks, 161 were killed in attacks blamed on Boko Haram.

September 29: Gujba college massacre, more than 50 students were killed in Yobe State by Boko Haram gunmen.

October 10: An attack at Damboa left at least 20 killed (15 suspected militants and 5 civilians).

October - Government forces raid rebel camps, killing around 101 Boko Haram fighters.

October 29 - Boko Haram raided Damaturu. At least 128 people were killed (95 militants, 23 soldiers, 8 policemen, and 2 civilians).

2014

January 14: 30 people were killed in a bombing by Boko Haram militants in Maiduguri, Borno State.

January 26: January 2014 Northern Nigeria attacks, 138 killed in total

January 31: 11 Christians killed in Chakawa by Boko Haram militants.

February 14: 121 Christian villagers killed by Boko Haram militants in Konduga, Borno State.

February 15: 106 killed in the village of Izghe, Borno State by Boko Haram gunmen.

February 15: 90 Christians and 9 Nigerian soldiers killed in Gwosa by Boko Haram.

February 24: Dozens killed as Boko Haram again raided Izghe.

February 25: Federal Government College attack, 59 students killed in a school massacre in Yobe State.

March 14: Boko Haram attacked the heavily fortified Giwa military barracks in Maiduguri, freeing comrades from a detention facility. The military then executed about 600 unarmed recaptured detainees, according to Amnesty International.

April 14: over 88 people killed in a twin bombing attack in Abuja.

April 15: Chibok schoolgirls kidnapping, 276 female students in Borno State kidnapped by Boko Haram.

May 1: 19 killed in Abuja by a car bomb.

May 5: 2014 Gamboru Ngala attack, at least 300 people killed in the twin towns of Gamboru and Ngala in Borno State by Boko Haram militants.

May 20: at least 118 villagers killed by car bombs in the city of Jos.

May 21: 27 villagers killed by Boko Haram gunmen in Northeastern Nigeria.

May 27: BuniYadi attack, 49 security personnel and 9 civilians killed during a Boko Haram attack on a military base in Yobe State.

May 30: The third emir of Gwoza, Idrissa Timta, assassinated during a Boko Haram ambush.

June 1: at least 40 people killed by a bomb in Mubi, Adamawa State.

June 2 - Gwoza massacre, at least 200, mostly Christians killed in several villages in Borno State by Boko Haram.

June 20–23: 70 people killed and 91 women and children kidnapped by Boko Haram militants in Borno State.

June 23–25: around 171 people killed in a series of attacks in the Middle Belt of Nigeria.

June 26: Over 100 militants killed by the Nigerian military during a raid on two Boko Haram camps.

June 28: 11 people killed by a bomb in Bauchi.

July 18 - At least 18 killed by a Boko Haram attack in Damboa, leaving the town almost destroyed.

July 22: 51 people killed by Boko Haram in Chibok.

September 19: Around 30 people killed by Boko Haram militants at a busy market in Mainok, Borno State.

October 31: At least 4 people killed, 32 injured and 13 vehicles destroyed by an explosion at a bus station in Gombe.

November 2: Kogi prison break, 99 inmates in Kogi State freed by suspected Boko Haram rebels.

November 3–10: a double suicide bombing in Yobe State killed 15 Shiites on the 3rd and 46 students on the 10th.

November 25: Over 45 people killed by two suicide bombers in Maiduguri, Borno State.

November 27: Around 50 people killed in Damasak by Boko Haram militants.

November 28: 2014 Kano bombing, at least 120 Muslim followers of the Emir of Kano, Muhammad Sanusi II, killed during a suicide bombing and gun attack by Boko Haram. The 4 gunmen were subsequently killed by an angry mob.

December 1: 5 people killed by two female suicide bombers who detonated explosions at a crowded market place in Maiduguri, Borno State.

December 6: 270 prisoners freed from a prison in Minna.

December 10: At least 4 people killed and 7 injured by female suicide bombers near a market in Kano.

December 11: 30 people killed and houses destroyed by Boko Haram militants in Gajiganna, Borno State.

December 13: 2014 Gumsuri kidnappings, between 32 and 35 killed and between 172 and 185 kidnapped by Boko Haram in Borno State.

December 22: at least 27 people killed at a bus station by a bomb in Gombe State.

December 28–29: 85 civilians, 94 militants, and 2 Cameroonian soldiers killed following a failed Boko Haram offensive into Cameroon's Far North Region.

2015

January 2: Boko Haram militants attacked a bus in Waza, Cameroon, killing eleven people and injuring six.

January 3–7: Boko Haram militants razed the entire town of Baga in north-east Nigeria. Bodies lay strewn on Baga's streets with as many as 2,000 people having been killed..

January 3: Fleeing villagers from a remote part of the Borno State reported that Boko Haram had three days prior kidnapped around 40 boys and young men.

January 5: News emerged that two days prior hundreds of Boko Haram militants had overrun several towns in northeast Nigeria and captured the military base in Baga.

January 9: Refugees flee Nigeria's Borno State following the Boko Haram massacre in the town of Baga. 7,300 flee to neighbouring Chad while over 1,000 were trapped on the island of Kangala in Lake Chad. Nigeria's army vowed to recapture the town, while Niger and Chad withdraw their forces from a transnational force tasked with combating militants.

January 10: A female suicide bomber, believed to be aged around 10-years-old, killed herself and 19 others, possibly against her will, at a market in the northeastern city of Maiduguri, Nigeria.

January 11: More female suicide bombers, this time two, and again each believed to be around 10 years old, killed themselves and three others at a market in the northeastern city of Potiskum, Nigeria.

January 12: Boko Haram militants launched a failed raid on Kolofata in Cameroon. The Cameroonian military claimed the army lost only one officer while the Islamic group lost between 143-300 rebels.

January 16: The Military of Chad entered Cameroon to assist in fighting against Boko Haram insurgents.

January 17: Following the January 16 Chad authorities decision to send troops to Nigeria and Cameroon to fight Boko Haram militants, the Russian ambassador to the country pledged to supply Cameroon with more modern weapons to combat the Islamist insurgents.

January 18: Boko Haram militants kidnapped 80 people and killed three others from villages in north Cameroon.

January 20: Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau claimed responsibility for the attack on the town of Baga, Nigeria in which an unknown number of civilians were killed.

January 24: 15 people killed as Boko Haram gunmen attempted to burn down the village of Kambari near Maidaguri.

January 25: Boko Haram rebels launched a large offensive against Nigerian forces in Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State, leading to the deaths of at least 8 civilians, up to 53 militants, and an unknown number of soldiers. Although the attack failed, the militants managed to capture the nearby strategic town of Monguno. The status of the 1,400 soldiers stationed in Monguno was unknown.

January 28: Boko Haram fighters killed 40 people while on a rampage in Adamawa State.

January 29: The Nigerian military, in collaboration with Chadian soldiers, captured the border town of Michika from Boko Haram rebels.

January 31: The African Union pledged to send up to 7,500 international soldiers to aid Nigeria's fight against Boko Haram. Chadian forces claimed to have killed 120 Boko Haram fighters while losing only 3 soldiers of their own during fighting in the north of Cameroon.

February 1: Boko Haram attacked the capital city of Borno State, Maiduguri. This time, the city was attacked from four out of the five sides. The attack was unsuccessful, but many civilians inside the city panicked. Also, a suspected Boko Haram suicide bomber killed himself and eight

others at the residence of a politician in Potiskum. Another suicide bomber killed five people outside a mosque in Gombe.

February 2: A female suicide bomber attacked minutes after the President of Nigeria left an election rally in the city of Gombe resulting in at least one death and eighteen people injured.

February 4: Boko Haram militants reportedly raided the Cameroonian town of Fotokol in Cameroon's Far North Region with scores of people killed. Also on February 4th, the Chad Army claimed to have killed 200 militants and lost nine soldiers while capturing the border town of GamboruNgala.

February 6: Boko Haram forces launched raids on the towns of Bosso and Diffa, both in Niger, marking the first time that the group has attacked the country. The Chadian military assisted the Nigerien Armed Forces in repelling the attack. 5 Nigeriens were killed while the government claimed 109 Boko Haram militants were killed as well.

February 7: Nigeria postponed its general election for six weeks to allow its armed forces take control of parts of the country being controlled by Boko Haram.

February 9: Boko Haram launched a raid on a prison in the town of Diffa in Niger. Authorities repelled the attack.

February 12: The West African Allied Forces, led by Nigeria and supported by Cameroon, Chad, and Niger, invaded the Sambisa Forest in Borno State, a stronghold of Boko Haram, killing scores of the insurgents. Elsewhere, the town of Mbuta, 15 miles northeast of Maiduguri, was raided by Boko Haram, resulting in the deaths of 8 residents. A dozen people were also killed in a suicide blast at Biu, 100 miles southwest of Maiduguri.

February 13: Boko Haram militants attacked Chad for the first time after 30 fighters crossed Lake Chad in four motorboats and attacked the village of Ngouboua. Chad had joined Nigeria, Niger, and Cameroon in a military coalition against Boko Haram.

February 14: Boko Haram forces attacked Gombe, the capital city of Gombe State. The Nigerian military repelled the attack, although the militants managed to overrun a checkpoint on the edge of the city before retreating. The attack coincided with the beginning of a Nigerian offensive to rollback Boko Haram forces around the northeast.

February 15: A suicide bomber killed 16 and wounded 30 in the Nigerian city of Damaturu.

February 16: Nigeria regained the key town of Monguno from Boko Haram. The town had previously fallen to the militants on January 25th.

February 18: The Nigerian Army claimed to have killed 300 militants in northeastern Nigeria. A warplane bombs a funeral ceremony in Niger killing 37 civilians. The warplane remained unidentified, with the Nigerian government denying responsibility.

February 20: Boko Haram militants killed 34 people in attacks across Borno State, 21 from the town of Chibok.

February 21: Nigerian army retook Baga, which had fallen to Boko Haram on January 3rd.

February 22: A suicide bomber killed five and wounded dozens outside a market in Potiskum.

February 24: Two suicide bombers killed at least 27 people at bus stations in Potiskum and Kano.

February 24: Chadian soldiers killed over 200 Boko Haram fighters in a clash near the town of Garambu, close to Nigeria's border with Cameroon. One Chad Army soldier was killed and nine were wounded.

February 26: At least 35 people were killed in two attacks targeting the cities of Biu and Jos.

February 28: Two female suicide bombers killed up to four civilians near Damaturu.

March 2: A senior military officer claimed that 73 Boko Haram militants disguised as herders were killed near Kondunga town in Borno State. In addition, the Chadian military recaptured the town of Dikwain Borno State.

March 7: Five suicide bomb blasts left 54 dead and 143 wounded in Maiduguri. After the explosions, Boko Haram formally declared allegiance to Syrian terrorist group; Islamic State.(ISIS)

March 8: Forces from Niger and Chad launched a ground and air offensive against Boko Haram Islamist militants in northeastern Nigeria.

March 9: Chadian and Nigerian forces retook the towns of MalamFaturu and Damasak in northeastern Nigeria.

March 13: The Nigerian government admitted to using foreign mercenaries in the fight against Boko Haram.

March 16: Nigeria, Chad, and Niger began a battle to liberate Damasak from Boko Haram militants.

March 17: The Nigerian military reclaimed the small city of Bama from Boko Haram.

March 18: Niger and Chad captured the city of Damasak following a successful battle. A mass grave of 90 people was discovered in the city.

March 21: Chadian forces established a presence in the border town of Gamboru following attacks there by Boko Haram gunmen that killed 11 people.

March 27: The town of Gwoza was recaptured by the Nigerian military.

March 28: Voters in Nigeria went to the polls for a general election. Gunmen killed at least 15 voters including an opposition house of assembly candidate for Dukku in Gombe.

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline_of_Boko_Haram_insurgency).

STATE-CENTRED CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND THE NIGERIAN STATE'S RESPONSE TO BOKO HARAM ACTIVITIES

This paper is about the role of the State in the management of religious conflict in Nigeria with special reference to the Boko Haram menace. It goes without saying that most of the African conflicts are state-centred-conflicts that tend to challenge the sovereignty of the state in both territorial and juridical terms including insurgencies and civil wars. As stated earlier, most of the state-centred conflicts are instigated in most cases by poor economic performance and underdevelopment, corruption, bad governance, political exclusion, real or imagined sense of marginalisation, as well as the arbitrariness and artificiality of colonial state structures and boundaries.

Many states in Africa resort to military reprisal to manage conflict which in most cases tend to accentuate the conflicts. They often also resort to elite co-optation through which African leaders aim to placate, disorganize, silence or weaken opposition through offers of strategic appointments, government contracts, amnesty and other patronage benefits.

Adekanye (2007) spoke about the “increasing loss of state capacities” in grappling with the issue of conflicts in Africa. “One common feature of most ‘states’ in Africa today is their sheer inability to discharge most.... basic functions. An increasing number of central authorities have long ceased performing even the most elemental functions of government, such as the control of political territory.....maintenance of law and order, and guaranteeing minimum security for their inhabitants..”, (p.139). The loss of state capacities could be attributed to acute economic deprivations, combined with pressures of ecological disasters, years of armed conflicts and wars, as well as large-scale population movements. P.140

Third party intervention has always occurred when the resolution of conflict goes beyond the capacity of the state or warring parties.

How has the Nigerian state grappled with the Boko Haram insurgency? The government employed a multi-track approach but that was at a later time after the sect had ravaged the Northern part of the country. Initially, the government underestimated the sect and felt it was just a flash in the pan that will soon fade away like the issue of introduction of Sharia in some Northern states during the Obasanjo's administration.

President Goodluck Jonathan confessed that he underestimated Boko Haram in an interview published in Vanguard Newspaper on February 22, 2015. According to him “Probably at the beginning, we, and I mean myself and the team, we underrated the capacity of Boko Haram,”

The multi-track approach will be briefly discussed below;

- **State of Emergency**

A state of emergency is a governmental declaration that may suspend some normal functions of the executive, legislative and judicial powers, and alert citizens to change their normal behaviours. It can be used as a rationale for suspending rights and freedoms, even if guaranteed under the Constitution. Such declaration usually comes during a time of natural or man-made disasters, during periods of civil unrest or following a declaration of war or situation of international or internal armed conflict.

In May 2013, President Goodluck Jonathan declared a state of emergency in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states and deployed additional troops that with the help of vigilantes drove Boko Haram from most cities and towns. Earlier, a state of emergency was imposed in some local government areas in states like Borno, Plateau, Gombe in December, 2011. This was due to sporadic terror attacks by Boko Haram in Borno and Gombe states and the continued attacks by suspected Fulani herdsmen in certain parts of Plateau State coupled with the tension between Christians and Muslims in the State.

The President declared a state of emergency in those states pursuant to section 305 (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Under subsection (3), the President is empowered to proclaim a state of emergency only when:

- (a) the Federation is at war;
- (b) the Federation is in imminent danger of invasion or involvement in a state of war;
- (c) there is actual break-down of public order and public safety in the Federation or any part to such extent as to require extraordinary measures to restore peace and security;
- (d) there is a clear and [present](#) danger of an actual breakdown of public order and public safety in the Federation or any part thereof requiring extraordinary measures to avert such danger;
- (e) there is any other public danger which clearly constitutes a threat to the existence of the Federation;
- (f) the President receives a request to do so in accordance with the provisions of subsection (4) of this section;

and in extreme situation where the Governor fails to make the request (as provided for in subsection (5)).

While Section 305 of the 1999 Constitution provides for the imposition of a state of emergency in the country or any part of it, the section also empowers the president to issue the declaration by way of official gazette. It added, however, that a two-thirds majority of the National Assembly must ratify the executive proclamation within two days, if the legislators are in session, or 10 days, if they are not.

The President shall immediately after the publication, transmit copies of the Official Gazette of the Government of the Federation containing the proclamation including the details of the emergency to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, each of whom shall forthwith convene or arrange for a meeting of the House of which he is President or Speaker, as the case may be, to consider the situation and decide whether or not to pass a resolution approving the Proclamation.

Jonathan's state of war declaration was counteracted by those who argued that he had acted unconstitutionally because the insurgents' activities did not amount to the country being in a state of war. The position of this paper is that at the time of declaring the state of emergency, some northern parts of Borno state have been taken over by the group while allegiance was to different flags other than Nigeria's. Such actions could amount to a declaration of war and a deliberate attempt to undermine the authority of the Nigerian state and threaten its territorial integrity. No responsible government will tolerate such.

In furtherance to the state of emergency, more troops were deployed in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states to fight Boko Haram. The troops and other security agencies involved in the operations were to take all necessary action, within the ambit of their rules of engagement, to put an end to the impunity of insurgents and terrorists. The declaration of the state of emergency was not effective going by the level of the sect's activities as soon as the state of emergency was declared. (see subsection 4 above.)

Since 2012, the Goodluck Jonathan government has increased the defence budget from 100 billion naira (\$625 million) in 2010 to 927 billion naira (\$6 billion) in 2011 and 1 trillion (\$6.25 billion) naira in 2012, 2013 and 2014. (See "FG spends N3.38 trn in 4 years on security", Leadership Newspaper (Abuja), 10 March 2014.) The increase was targeted at acquisition of weapons to boost the capacities of the military and other security agencies in order to combat Boko Haram.

- **Negotiation**

President Jonathan also established a committee to negotiate a settlement with the Boko Haram leadership with little success. On 18 March 2014, National Security Advisor Mohammed Sambo Dasuki announced a "soft" approach to addressing the root causes of terrorism. Earlier In late May 2013, following a sweeping military offensive, ten Boko Haram commanders held a peace meeting with the Dialogue and Reconciliation Committee in Côte d'Ivoire with Shekau's blessing. It ended with an apparent peace agreement that was to begin with ceasefire. According to a report by the International Crisis Group dated 3 April 2014, Shekau seemed particularly impressed by the treatment accorded his representatives and reportedly asked a

lieutenant to go to Abuja to announce the ceasefire to a select group of reporters. However, on 3 June, the U.S. placed a \$7 million reward on Shekau upsetting the prospective deal. The next day the Nigerian government outlawed Boko Haram. The declarations by the two governments foreclosed any room for talks, truce or amnesty. On 13 July, Shekau released a ten minute video in which he ruled out any further dialogue with the government and declared support for the recent attacks on schools.

Boko Haram's difficulties in agreeing and coordinating on positions have also undermined dialogue. It was reported that soon after SamboDasuki's June 2012 appointment, the National Security Adviser made phone overtures directly to Shekau. He appeared interested but asked for time to consult his executive. That body could not agree, and Shekau reportedly told Dasuki that he would have to back out of any possible negotiation with the government.

On 2 August 2011, the government set up an eight-member committee led by UsmanGaltimari, its former envoy to Chad, to study the Boko Haram security challenge and advise on ending the violence. Its report, submitted on 26 September 2011, recommended talks and amnesty for sect members who renounce violence. It was published in May 2012 according to the International Crisis Group report. On 16 September 2011, former President OlusegunObasanjo held talks in Maiduguri with Boko Haram members, who laid out conditions for a temporary ceasefire. These were and remain an end to arrests and killings of sect members; compensation for families of members killed by security personnel; and prosecution of police responsible for Yusuf's extrajudicial execution. Mohammed Yusuf's brother-in-law who was at the meeting with Obasanjowas shot dead outside his Maiduguri home on 18 September 2012, apparently by a member of a Boko Haram faction opposed to dialogue.

On 17 April 2013 and under mounting pressure from northern elites, including the Sultan of Sokoto, Muhammad Sa'adAbubakar, Jonathan set up a 26-member amnesty committee headed by Special Duties Minister KabiruTanimuTuraki. It was given a three-month mandate (later extended) to engage in dialogue and convince Boko Haram to lay down arms. The report of the committee, renamed the Dialogue and Reconciliation Committee, submitted to the president on 5 November, said many insurgents "positively responded to contacts and have accepted the dialogue options [as being] capable of full resolution of the conflict"; but Boko Haram and others dismissed the report as a farce.

- **Strengthening anti-terrorism legislation**

President Jonathan signed the Terrorism (Prevention) Act in 2011. It was amended in 2012 to designate the Office of the National Security Adviser (NSA) to coordinate anti-terrorism activities in order to stem the in-fighting among security agencies. It stipulates that the NSA "will be the

coordinating body for counter-terrorism measures in the country; to ensure timely and well-coordinated response by all law enforcement and security agencies which are to continue to perform their statutory roles with respect to counter-terrorism and other violent acts in the country". (See "Anti-terrorism bill: Nigeria's Senate endorses life sentence for terrorists", Information Nigeria, 18 October 2012).

In addition, on 4 June 2013, the government proscribed Boko Haram describing its activities as terrorism, and warned that any persons associated with the group was liable to prosecution. Mohammed Bello Adoke, the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice, announced eleven convictions of Boko Haram members in 2013. On 4 December 2013, Defence HQ recommended the immediate trial of over 500 suspects arrested in the north-eastern states of Yobe, Borno and Adamawa. (See "Defence HQ okays trial of 500 Boko Haram suspects", The Guardian, 5 December 2013).

Among those recommended for trial were paramilitary personnel and a medical doctor who allegedly offered the militants direct logistical support; others who trained them in weapons handling; and those who confessed that they were trained in Mali and other countries.

- **Military operations and civilian vigilantes**

Starting in early 2011, the government deployed some 3,600 personnel to Maiduguri and other major north-east towns as part of the Joint Task Force (JTF), a special formation of military, police and SSS units. They were supplemented by small contingents from Chad and Niger, members of a Joint Multi-National Task Force (JMNTF) initially created to combat smuggling. The troops, however, were stretched too thin to control the large region.

On 11-12 May 2013, the government sent 2,000 additional troops, accompanied by heavy military equipment including fighter jets, to Maiduguri. On 14 May Jonathan declared a state of emergency in the North East (Adamawa, Borno and Yobe). In a national broadcast, he ordered the troops to "take all necessary action ... [to] end to the impunity of insurgents and terrorists".²⁰⁴ The next day, fighter jets began bombarding Boko Haram camps in northern Borno, and a day later troops sealed parts of the borders with Chad, Niger and Cameroon. Phone networks were taken down on 16-17 May in Yobe and Borno and remain down. On 19 August, a new army division, the 7th, codenamed BOYONA and headed by a major general, took over counterterrorism operations in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa.²⁰⁵ Since June 2013, operations in Maiduguri have been supported by civilian vigilantes, youths from city neighbourhoods who initially organised themselves into groups to patrol streets in search of Boko Haram. They stormed homes of known, and suspected, members, hacking them to death or manhandling and then handing them over to the military. Armed with machetes, axes, bows

and arrows, clubs, swords and daggers, this “Civilian JTF” (CJTF) became instrumental in the anti-insurgent campaign. The vigilantes are organised into neighbourhood “sectors” under the supervision of JTF sector commands.

Even though military measures have diminished Boko Haram’s ability to conduct the coordinated campaigns, it has not been defeated, as it continues to carry out daring attacks on civilian and military facilities especially in Northeastern Nigeria.

- **Third party Intervention**

The Nigerian government invited third party intervention in August 2014 in the efforts to rescue the over 200 Chibok school girls who were kidnapped from their school by Boko Haram on April 14, 2014.

The USA, the UK and France offered to assist Nigeria in the anti-terrorism battle. France, UK and the US all agreed in Paris to assist Nigeria, Cameroun and Niger to fight terrorism. The US, for example, promised to assist with intelligence.

The Nigerian government has accused the US of insincerity when the US refused to sell military equipment to Nigeria. The US explanation was that Nigeria does not have the capacity to operate the equipment and that the human rights record of the Nigerian military was not impressive. However, the Chadian and Niger military have been very active in the counter insurgency operations.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Nigeria’s government handling of the Boko Haram insurgency has been less than effective and politicised. How does one explain why the Nigerian military, renowned for outstanding performances at various international peace-keeping missions, could not frontally rout a rag-tag insurgent group operating within three states, and in few Local governments of the federation?

The Nigerian military has suffered from years of corruption despite the millions of dollars pumped into the sector over the years. Even Senior security officials have admitted that their agencies are ill prepared for the security challenges of the Boko Haram terrorism due to under-funding brought about by corruption, lack of training and equipment, poor intelligence, corruption, complicity, inter-agency rivalries and lack of effective political leadership.

The police force is even more ill-equipped to address the Boko Haram threat than the other security agencies. “It has been grossly underfunded – less than 5 per cent of the budget – since military rule ended in 1999 and needs reform. The 2012 budget allotted 1.6 million naira (\$10,000) per soldier but only 870,000 naira (\$5,400) per police officer. At current levels , police

colleges “can only turn out demoralised, frustrated and dehumanised policemen”. Many residents accused police of selling informants’ identities to Boko Haram. Given the urgency of the situation, the police are in no fit state to answer the Boko Haram challenge, but to truly achieve stability in the long term, Nigeria will need to address the shambolic state of law enforcement and carry out systematic police reform”. (See Crisis Group African Report No. 216, 3 April 2014 “Curbing Violence in Nigeria (II): The Boko Haram Insurgency).

Also the use of vigilantes (volunteers), even though met with relative success has accompanied by human rights abuses in most cases. It has been advised that the federal government needs to develop a coherent policy for dealing with the vigilantes, to avoid unwittingly creating militias that could trigger more violence in the future.

Negotiations have failed to yield dividends due to Boko Haram’s suspicion of the authorities’ intent. Boko Haram has accused the government of using dialogue as bait to arrest sect members.

Dialogue has also failed because of lack of credible political and traditional leaderships at state and national levels, leaders who will show greater will and determination to stop local support for the sect (see “Leadership vacuum makes Boko Haram difficult to solve”, *The Sun*, 5 June 2012).

The lack of political will to prosecute collaborators and sponsors of Boko Haram has also been a major bane in resolving this problem. Since the government claims it knows who the prominent northern politicians sponsoring the Islamist group are, it should go after, expose and prosecute them.

The timing of the state of emergency may also have hampered the work of the amnesty committee because it made it inconvenient for Boko Haram to come out and dialogue with the committee for fear of being arrested or killed. The measure sent conflicting signals to Boko Haram on government’s sincerity in negotiations as revealed by the Crisis Group’s interview with retired police commissioner AbubakarTsav, Kano, 15 May 2013.

Continuous sabotage by officials and defence contractors are believed to consistently undermine and sabotage any effort that will bring an end to the violence. Security chiefs have been accused of deliberately worsening and prolonging the violence to profit from security allocations.

President Jonathan’s approach and body language have been confusing. For instance, he initially claimed the Chibok girls’ kidnap was a ruse. It took the intervention of 17-year-old Pakistani child right activist, Malala Yousafzai, for the President to eventually agree to meet with the distraught parents of the Chibok girls (see, LateefRaji, Jonathan’s Phony War Against Boko Haram March 2, 2015 by PM news).

How does one explain President Jonathan's open rapport with Ali Modu Sheriff, former Borno state governor who had been repeatedly accused of being a Boko Haram sponsor, even attending a meeting with the Chad president together in 2014?

According to Nigeria's nobel laureate, Wole Soyinka, the refusal of other countries to continue to help Nigeria in the fight against terrorism was because the foreign countries were cynical of President Jonathan's claim to fight insecurity.

Australian negotiator, Stephen Davis, who for four months was involved in negotiations on behalf of the federal government with commanders of Boko Haram for the release of over 200 schoolgirls kidnapped by the sect last April named a former Governor of Borno State, Senator Ali Modu Sheriff, and a former Chief of Army Staff, Lt.-General Azubuikelhejirika, as sponsors of Boko Haram. He was reported to have said that candidates for governorship elections often funded gangs and heavily armed them with AK 47, RPGs and after the elections they abandon these people who are heavily armed. Hence creating a population of armed, angry and hungry youths looking for whom to devour.(See Australian Negotiator Names Ihejirika, Sheriff as Sponsors of Boko Haram, ThisDay, 29 Aug 2014).

Other issues raised by Stephen Davies as responsible for failure of the anti-insurgency efforts include fear of reprisal by Boko Haram members because the sponsors will set up those who are getting into the peace deal for attack; the fact that Boko Haram camps are on the border making it easy for them to slip back and forth between two countries; Human shield strategy as the sect move around with 40 or 50 girls on board with them, insincerity of the UK and the US among many others.

Some have even argued that the ruling party and the presidency feel that sustaining the insurgency was going to be helpful to them in 2015 elections as long as the country remained divided along religious and ethnic lines.

Resolving the Boko Haram menace will be a twin-track approach of both immediate and remote measures. In the immediate, the present offensive by the joint task force should be continued until the sect is weakened enough to bring about surrender.

Once this is achieved, heavy-handed military and police methods that risk pushing yet more restless, jobless and frustrated youths into violence and extremism should be discontinued. The government should then work with northern political, traditional and religious elites to disarm, de-radicalise and re-integrate Islamist militants.

In addition, efforts should continue to build bi- and multinational security ties and networks in the region. Appropriate government agencies should also intensify mixed patrols at Nigeria's borders to curtail the movement of armed groups and criminals.

Remote measures should include provision of jobs for the youth and implementing a Far North Development Commission, similar to the Niger Delta Development Commission, with a mandate that includes coordinating anti-desertification campaigns, developing large-scale irrigation, agriculture, power and road projects and promoting small businesses that could create jobs for youths; and do so in a transparent, consultative and accountable manner. These tally with the recommendation of the Crisis Group Africa Report N°216 of 3 April 2014.

Other recommendations of the group to which this paper subscribes include; taking steps to change the climate of secrecy and fear around radical Islam by encouraging greater public discussion on the causes of and ways to address radicalism; reforming the Quranic educational system by introducing a dual curriculum and paying teachers' salaries so as to relieve pupils of the need to beg for their upkeep and using the Northern Governors' Forum to set high standards of transparent and accountable state governance.

Nigerian international partners should support programs at all levels of government that address poverty, youth unemployment and women's lack of empowerment; encourage and support the federal government to genuinely implement a national policy of zero tolerance for corruption.

Finally, peace education should be introduced into the primary and secondary school curricular to imbibe the culture of peaceful resolution of conflicts in the youth right from a tender age. Further research should look into the nexus between the impact of social media and insurgency in Nigeria.

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