

Combating Violent Conflicts and Terrorism in Nigeria: Some Considered Measures

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Abstract- It is a truism that the strategies of the defense and intelligence communities and the commitment of the present administration in Nigeria to rout out the Boko Haram elements in the Northeastern region, have not halted the violent activities of the sect which have now remained frequent, particularly the perennial bombings of soft targets. This paper basically addresses the task of combating violent conflicts and terrorism in Nigeria from four dimensions, namely; the security institution and international dimension, the socio-economic dimension, the governance and democratization dimension and the rule of law and human development dimension.

Index Terms- Insurgency, Conflict, Terrorism, Measures, Dimensions

I. INTRODUCTION

Conflict is an attendant feature of human interaction and cannot be eliminated; however, its proper management and transformation are essential for peace and progress in human society (Sawyer, 2003). There is an emerging consensus in the scholarly community that local non-state actors can and often do play a critical role in confronting the efforts of armed groups within their communities. Many kinds of non-governmental entities – informal power structures, such as ethnic groups, clans, religious sects or tribal systems – can provide services, help mitigate grievances, and in some cases, address local threats to human security. Indeed, the sobering reality is that while many military and law enforcement bodies in African communities and urban centers have the potential to strengthen over time, they still have long ways to go due to institutional constraints and economic limitations (Forest and Giroux, 2011:12).

It must be stated however, that every conflict situation is unique, and it is obviously not possible to develop an approach that covers every situation. The elements to be included, the order in which the measures are to be implemented, the timing and the amount of effort required will always vary according to the situation (OECD, 2005). A balanced approach toward terrorism must consist of double balances. On the one hand, there should be a better balance between the current focus on terrorism and other old and new threats; and on the other hand, a balance between ways and means must be achieved (Landerholm, 2005:5).

Political scientists and economists advise that we must ask who benefits in every situation of public goods distribution, or why the process of distribution breaks down and results in violence in some contexts and not in others. In the case of Boko Haram, Batty (2015) argues that “we must be prepared to look beyond the limited primordial explanations that have been offered by much of the western media and ask perceptive questions about who is benefiting from, or is likely to benefit from, the breakdown in political order in the northern region of Nigeria in order to begin to understand and find solutions to the problem”.

Security is being more broadly defined in terms of the risks and threats to the wellbeing of whole populations, the need for equitable development and sound inter-group relations, and the human needs of both sub-national groups and individuals within a state’s border (IDEA, 2006:16). Omale (2013:99) contends that given the complexity of the security situation in Nigeria, blended with the economic, political and social strife, projects and programmes designed to counter terrorism should be built around community

resilience against terrorism, enhance cooperation among law enforcement agencies and strengthening judicial institutions. Adibe (2014) notes that there is no quick fix to fighting terrorism anywhere in the world as the experiences in Afghanistan, Somalia, Yemen and other countries have shown. The remaining sections of this paper shall focus of different dimensions adopted by the author to combat violent conflicts and terrorism in Nigeria. Needless to note that there are several other strategies and dimensions that could still be explored.

II. THE SECURITY INSTITUTION AND INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION

It a fact that Boko Haram has grown quickly to be a major security challenge because it taps into wide discontent with bad governance, corruption and official impunity (ICG, 2014:49). While Boko Haram is certainly a Nigerian phenomenon, it has grown in conditions that are typical of many African countries. Nwolise (2013) opines that terrorists must not in any way be allowed to wage battle against popular governments, nor must criminal terrorists be allowed to wage war against society in pursuit of their selfish private ends. He also suggests that both the police and the armed forces need to be trained and equipped accordingly, especially where terrorists apply guerrilla tactics.

In the light of this, there is the urgent need for a complete and total overhauling of the security institutions of the Nigerian state to meet the current security challenges confronting the state. This will entail adequate training, funding and equipping of these security institutions (Ogbonnaya, 2013:11). In his essay, Pérouse de Montclos (2014:5) submits that:

The purpose of the presence of the armed forces in the northeast needs to change: the only sustainable way to combat Boko Haram is to protect civilians. Without a reordering of priorities and visible efforts to regain the trust of communities, Nigeria's military will be caught fighting an interminable insurgency.

There is no evidence of coordinated counter terrorism training for officers of higher ranks. The fight against Boko Haram is therefore denied the necessary strategic input that could hasten the defeat of the sect. Training of military officers, especially in the senior service colleges of developed countries, such as the United States Army War College (USAWC), could expose senior leaders in the armed forces to global counter-terrorism and national security management best practices for the long-term success of the war on violent extremism. The Nigerian military should explore additional vacancies (at least two at the USAWC) in senior service colleges that currently accept Nigerian military officers. The U.S. Department of State's Anti-terrorism Assistance program to bolster the capacity of Nigeria's law enforcement agencies also should be expanded and sustained (Udounwa, 2013:17). The fight against international terrorism demands multi-level cooperation between nations with vast experience in counter-terrorism. Nigerian government's strategy should seek assistance from developed countries to employ appropriate capabilities in areas of capacity building, intelligence gathering and sharing, and senior leadership development to strengthen current efforts to end the insurgency.

Complete defeat of Boko Haram Jihadist by the Nigeria Armed Forces despite presidential orders to use all necessary might to liquidate them is proving a hard nut to crack because of the porous nature of the country's borders and hundreds of illegal entry points with neighbouring countries. According to Danfulani (2014), for Nigeria to win its present war against Islamic terror group Boko Haram, the country's borders must be tightly manned to hinder illegal influx and exit of insurgents through usage of over a thousand unofficial routes bordering four different countries. If Nigeria's borders are not properly secured, the war with Boko Haram will linger for an unforeseeable period because of challenges associated with their cross-borders activities because they will continue to use their bases outside the country to hit and run back to their save havens.

Also, to wage the emerging trends of criminality as associated with terrorism and other related security threats to the country, government must dismantle barriers towards free flow of intelligence amongst its security agencies. Intelligence sharing amongst

security agencies within and outside country is a key to waging a successful war against terrorism. However, there seem to be a barrier or show of superiority amongst security apparatus of government towards effective intelligence sharing (Chinwokwu, 2012:436). The government needs to audit its external and internal resources; both diplomatic and human. It is noteworthy, firstly that the national security team appeared not to have laid a strong foundation for the prosecution of the war against insurgents by a poor reading of the crisis. It ought to have a good hang on the external dimension to the crisis.

It has recently become more difficult for governments to defeat insurgencies, as in a more globalised world, cooperation, arms supplies, training and fund-raising are not limited to an insurgency's particular territory of operation. With the globalisation of insurgency, the nation-state alone cannot and should not manage an insurgency. Even powerful states are significantly dependent on their allies for assistance. It is in this context that international efforts to manage insurgencies are as important as ever and, possibly, may prove more effective than ever in stifling the threat and violence produced by insurgent activities (Schnabel, 2006). For instance, the African Union and ECOWAS are strategic multilateral institutions that the Nigerian government should have tapped right from the inception. Government stands to harness their intelligence resources and their goodwill in fending off supplies to the insurgents; after all, the arms being used did not drop from the sky, but are supplied through land and air corridors of neighbouring countries (The Guardian, Nov 12, 2014). As suggested by ICG (2014:46):

In addition to ongoing counter-terrorism assistance, international partners should support comprehensive security sector reform and development at all levels meant to genuinely address widespread poverty, youth unemployment and women empowerment. (Previous efforts failed because they lacked political will and were undermined by systemic corruption.) They should press the federal government to go beyond proclaiming "zero tolerance" for corruption and actually strengthen the agencies – EFCC and ICPC – mandated to enforce that policy. Donors should adjust aid priorities, from a national focus, to encourage enforcement at all levels.

In addition, the advances in technology have to be harnessed to produce new and novel means to deal with the internal security problem. Use of non-lethal weapon should be explored. The intelligence group must be given greater impetus and more funding. Good intelligence will always be the bedrock of a viable counter-terrorist strategy (Tripathy and Singh, 2011:61). As Okereke (2013) suggests:

There is need for a coordinated response to terrorism/insurgency in Nigeria and across the West African sub-region. The recent Westgate Mall attack in Nairobi, Kenya in which Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility, may be a harbinger of things to come. Nigeria's National Intelligence Agency (NIA), the State Security Service (SSS), the Directorate of Military Intelligence (DMI), the Police, Customs, Immigration etc must dissuade inter-agency rivalry and work together for a common good. There is need for active and seamless information sharing and harnessing the capabilities of the various security agencies in Nigeria

At the regional level where Nigeria is a leading actor, Bolaji (2010:220) avers that the solution to the terrorist threats facing the region lays in the fusion of both governance and collective security strategies. The relative underdevelopment of military strategy to combat terrorism in West Africa would appear to be a blessing in disguise because of its tendency to ignore the material and sociological root of terrorism and throw up more vicious, violent and radical elements. According to Bolaji, the governance framework on the prevention of terrorism needs to be reinforced as complement to the security architecture in the region. More important is the reform of the governance of the security sector and the reinforcement of security of the governance architecture at the member-states level. This entails making sure that security organs should function with the ultimate goal of assisting the political leadership realise human security for the people. Efforts to prevent terrorism should be more holistic, systematic and address the human security dimension. It should involve inter-governmental and inter-departmental activities involving as a single whole working together.

Fundamentally, the key to stopping Boko Haram is working with the Nigerian government to formulate the proper intelligence collection sharing plan in order to prevent attacks before they occur. Intelligence gathering on this sect has to be made a priority for

the safety of future targets. It is vital that Nigeria work with other countries as a team in order to make any progress against Boko Haram; this includes intelligence gathering and sharing, military cooperation, and the development of effective counter terrorism measures. Once missions become more and more unsuccessful, it should deter the group from continuing in such acts of terror. Nigeria has to work with its allies to devise a plan to derail Boko Haram's anti- government movement. This of course goes in partnership with working to create a strengthened legitimate Nigerian Government in order to deter its citizens from participation in such anti-government uprisings. The Nigerian Government needs to move in a direction of learning and understanding the needs and interests of its citizens (Connell, 2012:92).

Also, Nigeria needs novel techniques targeted at restructuring and evolving effective security strategies that have robust human intelligence elements with sustainable developmental components. Such tactics must illustrate practicable and realistic engagement with the local population that are vulnerable to the sect's extremist radicalisation. Also, the underlying political and socioeconomic problems in the affected areas must be addressed as well as specific and holistic strategies on a short, medium and long-term with time frames for realisation. Government's brute force strategy and an insufficient knowledge of the adversary have been counterproductive and have failed to reduce tension in the affected areas significantly (Amaraegebu, 2013:81).

The strengthening of institutions strategic to a government's primary objective of ensuring the protection of lives and properties of its citizenry is critical to short and long-term transformation. While the Office of the National Security Adviser is saddled with the responsibility to co-ordinate all security and law enforcement antiterrorism activities, the Ministry of Interior whose mandate is 'to foster the maintenance of internal security and citizenship integrity for the promotion of good governance' could be complementary if strengthened. Apart from overseeing paramilitary formations, the role of the Ministry of Interior could be reinforced to develop internal security strategies, regularly network with local communities, including civil society groups and house a long-term integrative mechanism for managing and preventing internal conflicts or insurgencies (Adewumi, 2014:10). This will give visibility for some measure of internal control with regular briefings on threats and counter mechanisms in place for internal security rather than the apparently limited role of declaring public holidays in Nigeria.

Given the huge security challenges facing the country, it is important that Nigeria as a nation devises effective strategies that will stem the insurgency and create conditions for the protection of human rights and the deepening of democracy. The armed forces have a significant role to play in this regard. Nigerians are particularly concerned about the rules of engagement for military operations within the civilian population (Ibrahim, 2013). This realisation may have informed President Muhammadu Buhari's warning to members of the Nigerian Armed Forces against human rights abuse and violation in the cause of their duties:

While I applaud the integrity and sterling record of the Armed Forces as an institution, this administration will insist on the rule of law, and deal with any proven cases of deviation from laws of armed conflict (LOAC), including human rights abuses. In operational conduct Nigerians expect our Armed Forces to keep law and order and not to behave like bullies. The objectives of our fight against terrorism cannot be realised without a credible and effective military. On your shoulders therefore lies the mechanism to drive the junior leadership in our Armed Forces. The Armed Forces of Nigeria have a world-acclaimed reputation for valour, resilience and loyal service (See *The Nation*, September 13, 2015).

Similarly, how to decentralize the police organisation, structure and operations becomes imperative too given the problems that have attended the centralized control of the police force and the use to which it had been put under previous regimes. The police force cannot be trusted within the community if it retains a structure that is only accountable to the president and celebrates a 'fire for fire' culture, rather than a crime prevention strategy. If a crime prevention strategy is chosen as the primary purpose, then what gets emphasised is police intelligence and investigations, not the extent of its brutality and use of force. This is what has emboldened

citizens' campaigns for community policing and neighbourhood vigilantes, and many states are responding to the citizens' clamour by employing the services of ethnic militias for policing duties (Fayemi and Olonisakin, 2014:260).

It is noted that there is no amount of money spent on security that can be said to be too much because without adequate security, human activity-business, governance, education etc cannot thrive. However, there must be good outcomes when huge investments are expended in Security. Of particular interest is the need to adequately patrol the country's extensive porous land, sea borders to forestall spin-off from events in countries like Mali, Somalia, Sudan, Kenya, Central African Republic, D.R Congo etc. Analysts believe the growing sophistication and audacity of Boko Haram suggests they have links with foreign terrorist networks like Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and Al-Shabaab (Okereke, 2013). Since they do not have the capacity to win a conventional war involving constant battles out in the open, they must be able to hide themselves and their equipment from the army in between surprise attacks. They must also recruit people into their ranks. Both of these require some level of local support. Boko Haram certainly has this. The only way to defeat an insurgency is to drain it of this support. The battle, then, is primarily political rather than military (Noakes, 2014).

III. THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DIMENSION

There is a widespread assumption that poverty is a source of violence, despite there being no direct causal relationship between the two. Although today most violent conflicts take place in poor countries, they do not necessarily occur in the poorest of them, nor are all poor countries involved in conflict (OECD, 2005). For Boko Haram insurgency, it has shown that poverty and socio-economic conditions are germane factors to be tracked in any counterterrorism strategy because they are very key conditions that can easily drive 'good' people to seek solace or refuge in radicalized groups. Apart from the fact that such groups will enable them survive, they also provide them with an identity.

In this light, in addition to ensuring that the general economic conditions are reasonably okay, governments in the sub region should endeavor to identify those who might be marginalized. Such persons should be taken care of through special programmes to prevent them from slipping into potential terrorist groups or cells. The role of foreign religious and non religious entities in community based social interventions should also be critically looked at. Some of these organizations prop radical groups and use their social activities to conceal their true intentions, which is usually the spreading of socially unacceptable radical ideas (Okai, 2014:222).

If homegrown terrorism is the product of segregation, resentment, and public malaise, then investing in reintegration programs should help stifle its development. Akinlotan (2015:72) contends that military victory and economic empowerment will not be sufficient to end the fascination for Boko Haram ideology or similar extremist ideologies. The government must urgently seek to replace the passion for Boko Haram and other such ideologies with a unifying national essence or *raison d'être*. This is the biggest challenge facing Nigeria today; how to instill a unifying and inspiring concept of Nigeria into the minds of Nigerians, how to infuse into them the powerful and overriding doctrine of Nigerian exceptionalism. To replace Boko Haram's fervency and ideology in the hearts of Nigeria's boisterous youths, and to supplant its irresistibly isolationist, exclusionist and parochial attractions, will involve subsuming the North's main religions under a national ideology in a multi-ethnic and multi-religious pastiche. For Alamu (2015:3), President Buhari's announcement of a multi-billion naira rehabilitation plan for the ravaged northeast is a step in the right direction. He, however, submits that:

This project must now include a holistic plan for the compulsory education of northern youths and the economic empowerment of its underclass which will wean its desperate peasantry and disoriented *hoipolloi* away from the sedulous and seductive lore of the paradisiacal paeans of Islamic militancy

As noted by Sodipo (2013), lessons of de-radicalization and disengagement programs undertaken by Saudi Arabia, Singapore, and Indonesia, among other countries, provide insights into the rehabilitation of individuals who are already under the influence of radical ideologies. By seeing radicalized youth as “misled” or victims rather than irredeemable miscreants, this approach undermines extremist views and disrupts the activities of those who promote violence. These programs expose radicalized Islamists’ flawed understanding of fundamental Islamic tenets by waging campaigns about Shariah principles, and the true values of the Islamic faith, and the importance of tolerance. Sodipo explains further:

In Saudi Arabia, this is done through media, national campaigns of solidarity against terrorism, strengthening public education, the monitoring of preaching, national dialogue conventions, establishing standards for charities, and increased international cooperation. In Bangladesh, the government works through the country’s extensive network of nongovernmental organizations to ensure the program is grassroots-led and responsive to each community’s specific situation. Many countries also host interfaith dialogues- a framework in which policymakers, scholars, and religious leaders exchange views on religious, social, and cultural issues in the spirit of respect, mutual tolerance, and understanding.

In Nigeria therefore, a roadmap for de-radicalisation and reintegration of the ex-Boko Haram members should also be part of the wider reconciliation process. The provision of further education and skills training which enable young people to earn a living would form a pivotal part. Moreover, child soldiers in particular who have been kidnapped and forced to fight should not be considered as perpetrators, but as victims of Boko Haram who require substantial psychological support. However, leading individuals who bear the most responsibility should be excluded from any amnesty provision and tried within local and civil courts (Hauschildt and Malik, 2014:5). In his view, Kantiok (2014:7) opines that:

For peace to reign in Nigeria, we must educate each other and ourselves in ideals of human conduct. It is unquestionable and ultimately true that humankind itself is the insurmountable barrier in the accomplishment of peace, since alternatives of war and peace, of progress and regress, of construction and destruction are matters of human choice and not historical processes. We are our own worst controversial enemies. If we want peace in Nigeria and in the world generally, we must imbibe creative qualities or virtues such as love, friendliness, self-control, sacrifice, modesty, non-violence, forgiveness, tolerance, compassion, gentleness and self-contentment

On a long term basis, the government needs to re-engage the National Orientation Agency (NOA) to do its work with re-energized focus than it had been done before. A federation in a socio-political crisis as Nigeria cannot afford to have a national agency like the NOA operating but is hardly heard or seen. NOA should put in place a national re-orientation programme through which they can regularly interact with the idling Nigerian youths. NOA needs to learn how to deepen the use of inspirational leaders from across the world to calm the raging nerves of the youths and gradually identify what else the youths can do to earn a living and channel them there. NOA should be able to discover the talents of these youths, retrain them along their talents through a robust free education system (Dibia, 2012).

IV. THE GOVERNANCE AND DEMOCRATISATION DIMENSION

In line with the liberal democratic tradition, failure by government to afford the people requisite protection from arbitrariness and illegal use of force by criminal elements and social delinquents could quite easily warrant a change of the government through the ballot-box at the next available opportunity. In light of this, however, terrorism should be considered as constituting an affront to democratic praxis and is, therefore, a deliberate and calculated attempt to bring about change in society in an illegal, untoward and illegitimate fashion. Accordingly, terrorism is frowned against by all who espouse a belief in democracy and the rule of law (Oyebode, 2012:2). For instance, the democratic peace thesis assumes that liberal states do not fight wars against other liberal states. This theory was first enunciated in a keynote article by Michael Doyle in *Journal of Philosophy and Public Affairs* (Doyle, 1983).

From security point of view, the recommendations of democratic peace theory are clear. According to this theory, security largely depends on encouraging liberal institutions to discharge their responsibilities creditably; and a security policy must have as its long-term the spread of liberalism (Doyle, 1998 cited in Nwagboso, 2012:246).

While not a conventional security topic, governance is a central feature in the often internal or societally based threats Nigeria faces. From ethno-religious faultlines to rising extremism among marginalized communities to weak military professionalism, a common theme for virtually all of Nigeria's security challenges is poor governance (ACSS, 2015:21). The *DAC Network on Conflict, Peace and Development Co-operation* (2005) affirms that some of the underlying or triggering causes of conflict are illegitimate or weak institutions, corruption, insufficient respect for human rights, lack of good governance, and the perception that the administrative and political channels are not adequate or that they are inaccessible. Such underlying or triggering causes of conflict have to be addressed through the following: ,,

- ❖ Support for political and administrative authorities and structures may be necessary in a transitional period in order to help rebuild and strengthen governments and state institutions so that they can perform sovereign functions effectively and responsibly. This may also include support for the transformation of armed movements into political parties and members of a new government.

- ❖ Lasting and sustainable peace depends not only on the commitment of political leaders, but also on social acceptance of peace by the population. Peace-building requires reconciliation and the promotion of non-violent conflict resolution at all levels of society: in the military, among political, religious and business leaders, in middle management and at grass-roots levels. ,,

- ❖ Assistance to institutions and processes that promote good governance, democracy and human rights is equally important. Special attention must be given to ensuring the inclusion of marginalised and informal groups in political processes, i.e. to promote a culture of peace. ,,

- ❖ Support to governments must be complemented by support for the peace-oriented elements of civil society, including the media. ,,

- ❖ The issue of legal action and truth commissions must be addressed. An appropriate balance needs to be found between truth, justice, punishment, reconciliation and impunity.

At the grassroots level, Paden (cited in Schwartz, 2010) suggested a number of reforms that could be put in place to stem the cycle of violence in the country:

- Resolve the “settlers” and “indigenes” distinction at a constitutional level.
- Institute police reform so that police are accountable at the local level, well trained and in touch with realities on the ground in order to proactively prevent violence, rather than react in the aftermath.
- Expand the role of local universities and nongovernmental organizations to train communities in conflict prevention and resolution.
- Enact electoral reform that establishes a level playing field and provides a non-violent method for citizens to express their frustration with corruption and abuse of power and vote for accountability and transparency.

- Empower traditional leaders, who are currently underutilized, to play a constructive role in interfaith dialogue and conflict mitigation. While traditional leaders were stripped of their political power long ago, they remain a major institution that has eyes and ears on the ground.

Also, the establishment of an early warning system on terrorism to successfully deter terrorism, and the creation of systems that secure and protect assets and provide early warning of terrorist attacks are necessary steps. Platforms such as the Para-Legal in Conflict Management System with support from the Nigerian Stability and Reconciliation Project should be further scaled up in other conflict prone states as added strategy in gathering early warning information (Hassan, 2014:27). While canvassing for a synergy among stakeholders, the former National Security Adviser, Dasuki Sambo (2014) suggests that:

Local governments, which are closest to the people, must be re-focused on the important issues of good governance. Working with traditional institutions, community based organizations and the police, local governments must be proactive in building community resilience and good governance. It is time we leverage on our democratic processes to increase access to decision making for a majority of our citizens. Inclusive, non-discriminatory and participatory governance is more likely to detect discontent before it erupts. The goal of politics must be to lift our people out of poverty and provide them with the enabling environment to compete favorably.

Though, it is idealistic to assume that democracy-building is in itself a conflict-free process and that democracy as an end goal is effortlessly realized, or provides the panacea to a post-conflict society (Coexistence International, 2008:8), research underpins the empirical observation that well-functioning democracies are less likely to be involved in intra-state violent conflicts. However, rocky and especially rapid transitions are associated with an increased risk of violent conflict. Or, more precisely, semi-democracies seem to be more prone to intra-state conflicts than mature democracies or stable suppressive autocratic states (OECD, 2005).

Most violent conflict-the most immediate and acute threat to human security and to human development-is internal to states. Many analysts see the ultimate 'causes' of conflict in economic deprivation, social exclusion and deep-seated social structures that give rise to group grievances-often exacerbated by cross-border spillover influences. Human security threats emanate from weak state environments. There is therefore an imperative for focusing on improving democracy's capacity to address the underlying sources of human insecurity (IDEA, 2006:13). In other words, democracy is not only about elections. It is also about distributive and social justice. If democracy fails to provide for justly distributed socio-economic development, human security is likely to be threatened

In Nigeria, therefore, a major task to be fulfilled remains the consolidation of civilian democratic structures, mechanisms and procedures, accompanied by a democratic political culture that will be able to strengthen civilian rule. This must include military accountability to a democratically elected civilian government and the subordination of the military to the primacy of the civilian political system. Given Nigeria's long history of military rule, this cannot be easily achieved. But chances seem to be better than in previous decades, since the military has factional and other problems of its own. In order to prevent new forms of military or authoritarian rule, it will be important to strengthen and support democratically oriented moderate groups within civil society. The development of a strong civil society sector is crucial to Nigeria's future democratization process.

On their part, the citizens must cooperate with the security agencies by supplying them with prompt, useful and relevant information on likely security breaches. This can be facilitated by the existence of a well-coordinated biometric database of Nigerians and non-Nigerians alike indicating where people live, their nature of jobs and background. This will assist in fishing out the bad eggs in the society. If anything, a safe, secure and peaceful environment is what the present democracy needs to be strengthened and sustained; as such the government and people of Nigeria cannot afford to leave this to the whims and caprices of miscreants

V. THE RULE OF LAW AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT DIMENSION

It has been affirmed that governance and human rights are inextricably linked with peace and security; inefficient and weak governance and rights abuses can cause conflict which can weaken governance and human rights protection. Thus, the rule of law operates so as to prevent any abuse of the state's monopoly on legitimate use of force. The basic rule is that public authorities can interfere with citizens' rights only if duly and legitimately authorized to do so. According to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (2008:1):

Security of the individual is a basic human right and the protection of individuals is, accordingly, a fundamental obligation of Government. States therefore have an obligation to ensure the human rights of their nationals and others by taking positive measures to protect them against the threat of terrorist acts and bringing the perpetrators of such acts to justice. In recent years, however, the measures adopted by States to counter terrorism have themselves often posed serious challenges to human rights and the rule of law.

States cannot be expected to rapidly address all issues of socio-economic exclusion and marginalisation, youth job creation, or any of the other conditions in which the risk of terrorism might (but never automatically) become more likely to emerge. Yet what states can control to a greater extent is whether their law enforcement and criminal justice systems adhere to principles that reduce the prospect of disenfranchised groups going outside normal political forms of expression and resorting to indiscriminate violence aimed at blackmailing the state and instilling general fear in the wider population (Ford, 2013). In order to effectively contain violence in Nigeria and to fight Boko Haram, tactical counterinsurgency should be paired with economic development and increased support for the rule of law. The Nigerian government should realize that Boko Haram has emerged from the shortcomings of the government's own system and start dealing with that fact.

The Nigerian government has adopted a number of legal measures in the wake of Boko Haram's terrorist activities, including the 2013 proscription notice, which officially declared the acts of Boko Haram and Ansaru illegal and labelled them acts of terrorism. It also makes any support for the organisation (material and financial assistance, incitement, or information-sharing) subject to criminal proceedings under the Terrorism Prevention Act of 2011 which could carry a sentence of at least 20 years. For the Nigerian judicial system, terrorism is a relatively recent concept (Barna, 2014:15).

In the short term, countering terrorism within the framework of the law will remain a major challenge in Nigeria. However, the situation is likely to improve in the long run in light of several on-going initiatives by governmental and non-governmental organisations to build the capacity of the security and intelligence agencies, although funding remains a major challenge. The personnel of these agencies are likely to act within the framework of the law when they appreciate the fact that those who perpetrate impunity, involving human rights and humanitarian law violations, risk trial for Mass Atrocity Crimes (MACs) before domestic courts and international tribunals. In this respect, it is worth recalling the fact that Nigeria has domesticated the Geneva Conventions and is a party to the Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC). In August and November 2013, the ICC Prosecutor's Office issued reports to the effect that the actions of Boko Haram and some security agents have humanitarian law dimensions and that the ICC is prepared to step in, pursuant to the principle of complementarity, if the Nigerian government does not take steps to hold perpetrators accountable (Dakas, 2014:3).

Boko Haram has become a part of the transnational movement across the Middle East and Africa. This has become an issue of international security affecting much of the world. Jihadist terrorism cannot solely be fought with arms. The government of Nigeria needs to address the development of the state by concentrating on reconciliation of the country, before they can start addressing the expansive issue of terrorism. Development, along with the education of human rights, can combat terrorism's common rhetoric. The state of Nigeria needs to diminish the ethnic and religious differences in order to delegitimize the influence of extremists. This can

further be done by addressing the extra judiciary force that the police frequently abuse, and rebuilding the confidence and trust of the Nigerian people in their government (McFall, 2014).

People have a right to participate in decisions that affect their lives. Political, social and economic priorities need to be based on broad consensus within a community, country or society. The voices of people living in poverty and the most marginalized must be heard in decision-making over the allocation of development resources. In addition, people-led activism and the mobilization of collective action can be effective drivers of change. The government must realise that where development and poverty are understood as multidimensional phenomena that go beyond economic or material well-being, effective governance is also not just a means for more economic growth or effective service delivery but also an end in itself. Odo (2015:48) captures this more succinctly:

Despite the impressive official growth figures being touted by the authorities, the national economy has not experienced any meaningful transformation. Thus, the underlying causes of the present security challenges remain joblessness, hunger and disease, illiteracy, social inequality, poor leadership, among others. The challenge before the Nigerian nation in the fight against Boko Haram insurgency therefore, is about removing the north's infrastructural deficits and ending its peoples' abject and dehumanizing poverty. Accordingly, government, at all levels, should aim to embark on programmes and projects, which have direct bearings on the people's welfare

If states are to escape from a spiral of insecurity, crime and underdevelopment, the theoretical links between development and security must be translated into greater co-operation and coherence between security, diplomacy and development policy communities. Kantiok (2014:52) observes that the country's leaders continuously live under the illusion that the country is growing economically. He opines that a nation that cannot feed its population, provide basic medical needs and a vibrant educational system is a nation that is building a bridge to nowhere. Until the economic woes of this nation are addressed, until the health sector, the educational sector and every sector can be addressed, it will be difficult to address the problem of terrorism.

According to Isa (2010), the government can turn around this negative trend by strengthening its capacity to provide public good, proactively responding to the needs of its citizens, and strengthening democracy as well as free and fair elections to guarantee the rights and security of citizens. The state must distribute national resources equitably and transparently, and has to be accountable to the population for how it uses these resources. The state must pursue a social and economic policy that will ensure the realization of right, equity and justice for all Nigerians, regardless of their identity: religious, ethnic, regional and or other affiliations. Yet, Obadina (2008) warns that as long as politics is dominated by predator elites, it is difficult to see how meaningful democracy or economic development can be sustained. The challenge facing those who want better governance, according to him, is how to make those in power accountable and ultimately rescue the state from them to transform it an agency for positive change.

The international community could assist Nigeria through the use of foreign aid earmarked to create economic opportunities in the country's northern regions. But for countries to give aid, they would have to be sure that the money is being used in its intended manner (*Bartolotta, 2011*). As noted by Antwi-Danso (2012) Boko Haram is a menace that deserves attention not only from Nigeria's government, but also from the Economic Community of West African States, the African Union and the entire international community. However, Nigeria must look within itself to fix its social, economic, and political problems. Boko Haram is a symptom of alienation in Nigeria's north, something the U.S. and other countries can do little to address. Extremism is bred in inequality and insufficient economic opportunity, and the government of Nigeria must deal with these problems to achieve peace and security within their country.

VI. CONCLUSION

Official impunity, as noted by ICG (2014:44), is a major grievance for many and an effective recruiting tool for Boko Haram and other militant groups. Thus, the government must investigate and prosecute not only crimes committed by militants, but also those perpetrated by political leaders and security personnel. Military authorities must ensure greater adherence to rules of engagement, accountability and timely redress for violations and abuses. They must spare no effort to convince citizens and communities that they will enjoy better security and peace by cooperating with federal and state authorities (ibid:45). For Nigeria to retain its geostrategic importance as regional power house that set the pace in Africa's security governance, it must take development and human security deficits in northern Nigeria, just as in other regions, seriously as a means of growing the seed of peace and of defusing insurgency. Also, the empowerment and meaningful participation of individuals and civil society in governance systems are necessary to tackle inequality and promote social inclusion. A key building block of good governance is empowerment, with enhanced and meaningful participation in decision-making processes.

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