Boko Haram Activities and Its Implications for National Integration and Development in Nigeria

Sodiq O. Raheem   B.T.A. Babalola
Department of General Studies, Moshood Abiola Polytechnic, Abeokuta

Abstract
Nation building is no simple process. History has demonstrated the difficult, complex, and varied developments needed to unite a people under a government and to create among them a stable cultural, economic, political, and social community. The process has been especially strenuous where the people to be united have included diverse, large groups distinguished by their own customs, language, religion, or separate identity. The unfortunate security challenges currently faced by the country, with its new ethnic and religious dimension, have once again brought to the fore, the internal contradictions of the Nigerian system. The emergence of the militant sect *Boko Haram* and all it represents started like any other protest, but it seems to have come to stay. The battle has been taken to the door step of the government to command attention that breaks across borders. Hence, this paper examines the term *Boko Haram*, beliefs and philosophy, methods of operation and factors aiding their activities. The researcher employs primary and secondary sources of data collection to generate the required data mainly from books, journals, articles, dissertations, internet materials and audio and tapes (interviews). The study adopts a qualitative approach to data analysis to assess the impact of the sect activities and findings indicate that the activities of the religious sect have intense socio-economic, psycho-cultural, political and ethnic and religious implications for national integration and development in Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION
Conflict in Nigeria is as old as the nation itself, but the frequency and the toll on human lives and properties of recent conflicts by the militant sect *Boko Haram* and all it represents   make them more challenging to address. Even though, the activities of the sect *Boko Haram* began in the North-Eastern part of Nigeria and escalates to the other Northern states. The impact of the crisis for national integration cut across the geo-political zones in the country. Hence, we cannot afford to carry out a study on its implication across the federating units in the country.

We interviewed a number of 10 people in Abeokuta, comprising business people, religious leaders and the general public. During the course of the interview, we made use of unstructured questions and mainly both male and female whose age grades range between 23 – 75 years. We believe that these sets of people are mature and conscious enough to identify and evaluate the implications of *Boko Haram* activities for National Integration and Development in Nigeria. Our choice of Abeokuta, Ogun State South-West Nigeria as a place of interviewed people is occasioned by a consideration of certain important reasons. One, Abeokuta is recognized as one of the hospitable and remarkable ancient city in Southwest Nigeria. The city which is known for its heterogeneous nature enjoys a peaceful relationship, particularly with indigenes of other ethnic groups in the country for their commercial and non-commercial activities (Adisa, 2011). However, the recent release of video tape by the *Boko Haram* promised to carry out a series of bombings in Southern cities in a way no one has ever done before…And following the fear that gripped people's mind in the city that the police reportedly arrested some people in Abuja on their way to the southwest to cause havoc (Daniel, 2009). Thus we have noticed that the activities of the sect beyond Northern region have a wider implication for the continued co-existence, unity and integration of the people in the country.

Many authors have written a number of factors militating against national integration in Nigeria while looking at it from different perspective on the current reality of *Boko Haram* crisis. This work probes into implications of the sect activities for national integration and development in Nigeria. It also identifies the factors aiding the conflicts with a view to providing solutions to them in forms of recommendations.

KEY CONCEPTS
In order to adequately articulate the central themes of this paper, two major concepts shall be discussed. These concepts include; National Integration, Development and *Boko Haram*.

National Integration
The literature on integration is replete with different definitions of the term. It is a very broad statement. In anthropological language, integration suggests that various peoples of Nigeria, in pursuing their daily lives, are actually interpenetrating into each other (morphing) in the course of which a new Nigeria is being born. Philip Jacob and Henry Tenue (1964:9), defines it as "a relationship of community among people within the same political entity… a state of mind or disposition to be cohesive, to act together, to be committed to mutual programmes".

National Integration means combing all the people of the nation into a single whole. It is a particular sentiment that binds together all people in one common bond no matter what their religion, language or history is. It is strong cementing force whereby all kinds of people live together peacefully and can identify themselves as a part of a single whole. It reduces socio-cultural and economic differences or inequalities and strengthens national unity and solidarity, which is not imposed by any authority. People share ideas, values and emotional bonds. It is feeling of unity within diversity. National identity is supreme.

However, in the words of Ntalaja, solidarity with one's identity is best mobilized when the group faces a threat, real or imaged, to its interests, security or its very existence as a group. This is why there is an increase in identity based conflicts during periods of economic and political crisis…, the high incidence of intercommunal violence is due to growing competition over scarce resources and the persistence of poverty. Thus are insecurity and poverty intertwined, and their persistence can only frustrate the Nigerian 'national' integration and development process (Ntalaja, 2002).

Karl Deutsch et al. (1966:2) offers a better definition as "the attainment, within a territory of a 'sense of community' and of institutions and practices strong enough and widespread enough to assure, for a long time dependable expectations of peaceful community". Put differently, a security community is a group of people who are integrated. According to Deutsch et al. (1966), a "sense of community is a belief on the part of individuals in a group that they have come to agreement on at least one point, that common social problems must and can be resolved on processes of peaceful change. Peaceful change in this context means the resolution of social problems without resort to large scale physical force".

It is clear that individuals are the units of integration, and members of a nation are integrated as they share a common identity. Thus, the term national integration is not applicable to a single nation, but involves two or more nations. A state is a political entity that is in many cases made of more than one nationality group. Thus, for example, Nigeria is made of about 250 ethnic groups (Enegwea & Umoden, 1993; Coleman, 1986).

Manifestations of National Integration in Nigeria

Nigeria is a political entity made up of various ethnic groups, bound together by common cultural and linguistic affiliates. The spirit of national integration, however, is indispensable in order to form one formidable nation, sharing common goals and interest and doing things together. The following are some of the appropriation or manifestations of the government policy at the centre to foster and promote national integration:

(i) Introduction of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in 1973
(ii) Relocation of Federal Capital Territory from Lagos to Abuja in 1991
(iii) The Nigeria Passport
(iv) The Nigeria Constitution
(v) Establishment of Unity Schools Across the Country
(vi) Introduction of National Sports Festival in 1973
(vii) Institution of the Nigeria Inter-Religious Council (NIREC)
(viii) National Symbols of Unity and Integration such as: The Nigeria National Flag; The Coat of Arms; The National Anthem; The National Pledge

Boko Haram

Although the group has come to be popularity known as *Boko Haram*, it is not clear whether the group actually called itself by this name. Some called them *Yusufiyya* sect, but some called them *Jamaatul Takful Wal Hyra Ahlus Sunna*. Some still called them *Khawaarji* and some called them *Jama'atul Ahlisunnah Lidda'awati wal-Jihad*, which they approved of means in Arabic "People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad" (Sani, Friday, July 1, 2011).

In the town of Maiduguri, where the group was formed, the residents dubbed it *Boko Haram*. The term *"Boko Haram"* comes from the Hausa word *boko* meaning "western education" and the Arabic word *haram* figuratively meaning "sin" (literally, "forbidden") (Chothia, 2012). The name, loosely translated from Hausa, means "western education is forbidden". The group earned this name due to its strong opposition to anything Western, which it sees as contradicting the *shari'ah* laws and corrupting Muslims (ibid).

ORIGIN OF *BOKO HARAM*

Some analysts view the rise of this radical movement, *Boko Haram*, as an extension of the Maitatsine uprising in 1970s and 1980s (Danjibo, 2011). Idowu Samuel posits "it is not in doubt that *Boko Haram* is part of the unaddressed issues on religion which the Maitatsine had attempted to raise in the northern parts of the country, starting from Kano more than three decades ago. An offshoot of Islam called the 'Yan' tatsine' violently rebelled against the authorities and non-members" (Idowu, 2011, p.27). These radical Muslims estimated between 3000 and 5000 were inspired by Mohammed Marwa, an Islamic scholar who migrated from the town of Marwa in Northern Cameroun to the city of Kano in 1945 (Sani, June 30, 2011; Idowu, ibid).

Lubeck (1985) puts: "Maitatsine and his followers became separate from orthodox Islam…by denouncing certain parts of the Holy Qur'an and even criticizing Prophet Muhammad…and condemning the secular elites and the wealthy upper classes-consumption of Western goods during the petrol boom in 1974-81" (Falola, 1990:143). It is very obvious that Marwa exploited the dwindling economic situation and the *Almajeri* system and was able to attract large followers amongst the commoners, who, unable to afford the basic necessities of life, became die-hard patriots of the sect and Marwa himself. He was then referred to as "*Maitatsine*", meaning 'one who curses', and his sect as *Yan'tatsine* (those who curse) (Danjibo, 2011).

From indications, Maitatsine resurfaced in the garb of *Boko Harram* in 2009 through a 35 year old Mohammed Yusuf. Yusuf was born in Girgir village of Yobe state, a secondary school drop-out who went to Chad and Niger Republic to study the Qur'an. While in the two countries, he developed radical views that were abhorrent to Westernization and modernization. Yusuf got back to Nigeria and settled in Maiduguri. According to Shehu Sani, the *Boko Haram* group started as Sahaba group named Shabaab Muslim Youth Organisation since 1995 under the leadership of Abubakar Lawan who later conceded the leadership to Yusuf to study in University of Medina (Sani, 2012; Ekanem and Ejue, 2012). Yusuf officially founded the group in 2002 in the city of Maiduguri and allegedly opened the group to political influence and popularity with the aim of establishing a Shari'ah government in Borno state under former Governor Ali Modu Sheriff. (In the year 2002 Ali Modu Sheriff was a senator and became governor in 2003) (Gilbert, 2014). He established a religious complex that included a mosque and a school where many poor families from across Nigeria, particularly the Northern states and from neighboring Chad and Niger enrolled their children (Chothia, 2012).

THEIR BELIEFS AND PHILOSOPHY

Boko Haram was founded as an indigenous Salafist group, turning itself into a Salafist Jihadist group in 2009 (Bartolotta, 2011). The group in the words of Sani (2011) emanated from an orthodox teaching slightly resembling that of the *Taliban* in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Their school of thought considers anything western as an aberration or completely unislamic. The group viewed the western influence on Islamic society as the basis of the religion's weakness. It proposes that interaction with the Western World is forbidden (Sani, July 4, 2011, p.50).

Some of the fundamental arguments or beliefs held by the group are that interest in financial transaction, taxation and jurisprudence in the country, unrestricted free speech that led to the proliferation of pornography, immorality, secularism, homosexuality, feminism, and many other ideas that Islamists often oppose are completely infidel. They argue that the mix of boys and girls under the same shade in schools, the propagation of the theory that man evolved from the family of monkeys as well as the static nature of the sky are negative of what Allah and his Prophet had ordained.

Ideologically, any member who fought and died for the cause of an Islamic/Sharia state by destroying modern state formation and government establishment would automatically gain "Aljanna" (paradise or heaven). *Tell* Magazine (August 10, 2009, p.34) aptly captured the ideology and philosophy of *Boko Haram* sect thus: "The mission of the sect was to establish an Islamic state where 'orthodox Islam' is practiced. Orthodox Islam according to him (Mohammed Yusuf, leader of the sect) frowns at Western education and working in the civil service because it is sinful. Hence, for their aim to be achieved, all institutions represented by government including security agencies like police, military and other uniformed personnel should be crushed" (Danjibo, 2011).

In a statement July, 2011 which was written in Hausa and entitled: 'Conditions for dialogue with the Federal and State governments', the sect members maintained and demanded that, the application of strict *Sharia* Islamic law in the Muslim-dominated states of the North; immediate release of all members of the sect detained in Borno State and other northern states; immediate arrest and prosecution of those who served during sectarian mayhem in 2009 and for compromising to kill late leader, Sheikh Mohammed Yusuf, after he was arrested and soldiers handed him over to police in Maiduguri…reconstruction of houses, mosques and schools that were demolished during security operations and Government should not interfere in the genuine worship of their group and ensure justice for all (*The Punch*, *Cover Story*, September 21, 2011).

METHODS OF OPERATION

Murray Last argues that the group was mainly focused first upon withdrawal from society – following the example of Dan Fodio – and establishing small camps and schools in the remote regions of Borno and Yobe states during the years 2002 – 2005. As police pressure against these smaller Islamic groups began to grow toward the end of that period, the group morphed into more of an urban phenomenon practicing al-amr bi-l-ma'ruf wa-l-nahy 'an al-munkar (enjoining the good and forbidding the evil). From such operations, usually against consumption of alcohol and other non-Islamic practices, the group began to shape its identity (Murray Last, 2011).

It is important to note that the group conducted its operations more or less peacefully during the first

seven years of its existence. That changed in 2009 when the Nigerian government launched an investigation into the group's activities following reports that its members were arming themselves (Cook, 2011). Many analysts including Shehu Sani posits "The killing of Yusuf and the violent repression of the group by security forces has played a major role in the escalating violence" (Clair MacDougall, 2012, p.12). After an initial lull caused by his death, they regrouped again and became more violent and more vindicative. They have also gone underground and appear to have no clearly defined leaders that government can negotiate with. There are three factions, each claiming to be the main *Boko Haram*… (Anayochukwu, July 4, 2011, p53).

Boko Haram is evidently inspired by the establishment of external linkages with ideologically – driven Islamic terrorist groups in Somalia, the Islamic Maghreb and possibly, as recent well-informed reports widely-quoted by the international press indicate, the PAKISTAN/Afghanistan axis which is acknowledged to be the global headquarters of terrorism (Phillip, 2012; Gilbert, 2014). While affiliating itself with the Islamic States (ISIS) in March 7, 2015, *Boko Haram* has at the same time not distance itself from Al Qaeda (Ostebo, 2015).

Its major operations since that time can be divided into the following attack categories: the security forces; banks and markets; beer drinkers and hotels, card-players, restaurants etc; schools at all levels; attacks on Christian preachers and churches as well as selected mosques; and targeted assassinations involving political figures and prominent Islamic clerics who challenged the sect activities. While the major methodologies of drive-by shootings and bombings from motorcycles have not changed, the group has demonstrated in its incarnation a considerable range, carrying out operations in North-East, North-West and a number of states in North central and Abuja city (Cook, 2011).

Most dramatic has been the transition of *Boko Haram* toward the use of suicide attacks, a rare asset, starting with the attack on the police General Headquarters in Abuja on June 16, 2011 and then culminating with the attack on the United Nations headquarters, also in Abuja, on August 26, 2011. *Boko Haram* members at times disguise as soldiers in uniform or as women in a veil or as religious preachers to carry out attacks or escape security forces. The threat female bombers pose is another dimension to the evolving tactics of the sect… (Ejiofor, 2015). The sect recruits, abducts and train teenage girls and youths for suicide missions. The 276 female students that were abducted on April 15, 2014 from the Government Secondary School in the town of Chibok in Borno State and other massive abductions in parts of northern states have come to symbolize an insurgency that doesn't need a large footprint to terrorize a population.

Notably, *Boko Haram* adherents are young, able bodied, unemployed with no prospect of hope in the horizon. Increasingly, their sermons were taking the form of liberation theology, commenting on the ills, injustice and inequalities, prevalent in their immediate environment.

FACTORS AIDING THEIR ACTIVITIES

Among the factors aiding the violence is a cross section of reasons: from the socio-economic and political to the more basic squabbles surrounding issues such as the country's porous borders 'illegal arms', extra-judicial killings, defective security apparatus, and psycho-religious induced violence.

IMPLICATIONS OF *BOKO HARAM* ACTIVITIES FOR NATIONAL INTEGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Socio - Economic Implications

It is disheartening that Nigeria is being lumped together with Somalia, Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan and other ill-reputed nations. Terrorism is a disincentive to potential indigenous and foreign investors and the *Boko Haram* problem continues to hurt Nigeria. The evidence and fast changing indices (in form of changing migration patterns, cost of insurance in the North, mass repatriation of funds, dearth in skilled labour etc) speaks volumes.

Historically, each region in Nigeria compliments the other. What the North lacks in access to the sea, the South provides. The north wields 78 percent of Nigeria's land which supports most of Nigeria's agriculture (food, cash crops and livestock). The South-West's terrain supports both domestic and international commerce and provides an import/export rout. While the South-South and some parts of the South-East wield Nigeria's oil wealth (*Business Day*, April 18, 2012, retrieved).

With increased intensity of bombings in the North, the gripping tension, insecurity, and suffering occasioned by the sect members and the military actions, subjecting innocent civilians to humiliation, brutalization, extortion and undue hardship led to the mass exodus of people from the violent zones. On July 2009, for instance, over 3,500 people were internally displaced, more than 1,264 children orphaned, and over 392 women widowed… Properties destroyed include buildings, three primary schools, more than 12 churches and a magistrate court (Onuoha, 2010).

The movements were of unprecedented kind since both Southerners and Northerners simultaneously moved from *Boko Haram* strong holds. The implication is that "there will be significant dearth in professionals, artisans and commercial professionals in the region" (Olasile, 2014). Olasile's view cannot be far from the truth. For instance, a doctor at the University of Maiduguri teaching hospital says that many professionals in the

service sector and doctors have sought for transfer out of affected zones in the North. Some whose requests are not being honoured and feel they cannot continue in the apprehension resign on the back of pressure from relations. Those who remain do so because opportunities are few (Business Day, April 18, 2012, retrieved). Business activities are gradually fizzling out, with social activities grounded due to frequent hurling of explosives into restaurants by members of *Boko Haram*. Hotels up North are enjoying a patronage of dissertation and so are markets. Blessing Essien, a hotelier in the city of Maiduguri said "We are no longer opening our restaurants because people don't come out to socialize for fear of losing their lives. Thousand of local businesses close down and residents are forced to migrate to greener pastures. Rent in major metropolises in Kano, Borno, Bauchi, Kebbi and Yobe reduced significantly as the crisis unabated" (Olisemeka, 2009). A resident in Kaduna, Kabir Sobowale reveals that the majority of the non-natives, especially Igbo, have resorted to selling their houses and other landed property at ridiculously cheaper rates, saying that they no longer feel safe to carry out their businesses in the violent prone states (Sobowale, 2013).

However, *Boko Haram* activities is responsible for the hike in the food items in the South, particularly, food items cultivated in the Northern states. In the words of Amodemaja "food items like tomatoes, onion, beef, beans, and carrots are at high cost in the market. Many of them hardly go to farm and those who could go find it difficult to transport it down South. While some of us who sometimes travel to the Northern region for business transactions are sceptical and afraid of been attacked by *Boko Haram*… Since we cannot identify nor differentiate the sect members from the innocent Hausas/Fulanis, we generalize our perception and consequently affect our contacts… Even when the items are brought to the South themselves, we are carefully suspicious not to be attacked because we have been told that *Boko Haram* proposes to attack the Yoruba (southwest) people and further circulated rumour that some of the food items are been poisoned by the *Boko Haram*…" (Amodemaja, 2014; Dairo, 2014; Oluseye, 2014).

Dare Dairo argues further that the socio –economic implications of *Boko Haram* activities is not limited to the Northern region as some State Governments in the South are already regulating the activities of the Hausa/Fulani in their States. For instance, in Lagos State, commercial activities of Hausa in Magodo and Iseri areas are been restricted and denied in some cases, while some have been suspiciously arrested without legal trial. This no doubt portends threat to national integration. He opined further "many of the internally displaced persons, IDPs, reluctantly begin a new life and manage to survive. Those who could not earn their living will be desperate and thus becomes threat to their host community. As a result, different forms of social vices and criminality will set in and consequently are treated with suspicion, discrimination and resistance by the host community. By implication, the thirst for national integration is doomed" (Dairo, 2014). Such consequences include; social disintegration and disruption (among kinship groups, family systems, trade linkages, formal and informal associations, disruption of education, gender discrimination and abuse especially rape and sexual violence often manifest), increase in crime, orphans and street begging, joblessness, marginalization, food insecurity, increased mortality (social stress and psychological trauma). It inadvertently affects the economic well being and integration of people in the country" (Olasile, 2014).

Psycho-Cultural and Political Implications
Boko Haram's indiscriminate violent activities and successes make the security agencies look inept. As a result, there is a growing perception that the police and their allied organizations are weak, corrupt, and poorly trained. Evidently frustrated by the lack of progress made in countering the threat, President Jonathan recently spoke about supporters of the sect saying that "*some of them are in the executive arm of government, some of them are in the parliamentary/legislative arm of the government, whilst some of them are in the judiciary. Some are also in the armed forces, the police and other security agencies*"(*BBC News*, January 8, 2012, retrieved).

The real trouble lies in the constant anxiety it is causing Nigerians and the discord it is sowing. The panic was not an exhibition of paranoia, but an admission that in the contest between *Boko Haram* and the state, the sect is leading... The realization of this grim fact is what is responsible for the change in attitude. Hotels screen guests for bombs and other weapons. Churches and schools do the same. Entertainment and sports stadium concerns, even in places far away from the North, have adopted the same measure (Nkrumah, 2012, p. 16; Omojola, 2011, p.56). According to Olorode, stop and search policy have unnecessarily becomes routine in many church in the city of Abeokuta. She puts "I go to church for service at least three times a week and we are always subjected to search before entering, particularly on Sundays, and that is the same experience in many other churches in the city. Our Pastor said that is the only way to ensure our safety during service" (Olorode, 2013). Pastor Karunwi, and Fasasi, further states "the phobia of not been attacked by the *Boko Haram* has created suspicion among members of their denomination and that is not good for our relationship and integration. This also led to the recent evacuation being conducted by various states, particularly in the south that fear for their indigenes' lives in the region (Karunwi 2012, and Fasasi 2012).

Oluseye opined that "the incessant attacks would adversely affect intra and inter-marriage relationship between the South and the North. The Muslim South and the Muslim North would find it difficult to allow

contacts of their children on the one hand, and to a large extent within the Muslim fold in the South who does not belong to the same religious denomination on the other hand, more or less Muslim-Christian marrying to one another. Evident reveals that Southerners particularly among Yoruba people are members of the *Boko Haram*." (Oluseye, 2014; Mbega, 2014; Adebukola, 2013).

Moreover, Olasile argues that the daily trouncing of the security and intelligence services is likely to have a demoralizing impact. Low ranking members may begin to doubt the ability of their leaders to make the right calls; and the senior ranks too may begin to doubt the vision and the ability of their superiors. These and other factors are likely to have a negative impact on the cohesiveness of the security and intelligence agencies. Thus disintegration set in within the sector. In addition, civilians and even non-civilians are begun to doubt the leadership capability of the government (Olasile, 2014). A government that can't, or that is unable to secure lives and property, will find it difficult to govern or command respect that could promote integration of the electorate. This may consequently lead to a crisis of leadership and when the center is in turmoil in the face of ethnic and religious bigotry, integration of these groups within the context of national identity and cultural unity is a mirage (Kehinde, 2013; Olasile, 2014; Dairo, 2014).

Furthermore, Nigeria is now regarded as a terrorist state and another axis of the devil. Prof. Sagay argues that "the country's image had already been damaged…" The implication is that Nigerians will be subjected to inhuman treatment within and outside her boundary and entire Nigerian will be a suspect to one another. No wonder David Cameron, the British prime minister, had to meet with President Jonathan in Lagos (South-West) instead of the Federal capital Abuja.

Kehinde opined that the crises in the North may have psychological implication causing anxiety, suspicion and sowing discord and could affect political relationship between Christians and Muslims on the one hand and Southerners versus Northerners on the other hand in future political dispensation (Kehinde, 2013; Olasile, 2014).

Ethnic and Religious Implications

Boko Haram's major attacks, aside from unconfirmed rumors of minor incidents in the South, have so far not extended further South than Abuja, which is technically part of the North. But the group seems to pose indirect threat to attack Southern cities like Lagos and Ibadan, or to oil production in the Delta. The threats *Boko Haram* poses to the South are more indirect: first the potential for an escalation of inter-communal ethnic and religious tensions and second, the continued erosion of Nigeria's faith in the central government.

Dairo posits "the security situation in Northern Nigeria has become frightening, especially the dimension which it has taken. The wave of violence in the North has led to an escalation in the rhetoric of some Southern groups who perceive *Boko Haram* as anti-South and anti-Christian movement and are aimed at provoking its adherents to action" (Dairo, 2014). Dairo's argument could be justified based on the following press release:

Following the killings of Mubi, an Igbo group christened Biafran Liberation Council, BLC in a statement signed by Amaechi Nwaofia, the group's spokeman, states;

> "The callous murder of innocent Biafrans was carried out just a few days after the warning by *Boko Haram*, that all Christians and Southerners in the North should leave within three days. This call by *Boko Haram* and the murder of the Biafrans, Southerners and Christians further confirms our long held view that we can no longer co-habit with the Northerners and we should therefore, be allowed to secede as the sovereign state of Biafra" (*Newswatch*, Monday, January 23, 2012 retrieved).

The Oodua Nationalist Congress, ONAC and Oodua People's Congress, OPC, in a statement:

> "Yoruba nation was greatly disturbed by the recent killings of two Yoruba professors, Jerome Ayodele and Andrew Leo Ogbonyomi, in Bayero University, Kano. It had run out of patience with the attitude of the government to the attacks on Nigerians by the Boko Haram sect and the Yoruba nationalist groups would soon embark on a reprisal if nothing was done urgently" (*Nigerian Tribune*, May 1, 2012, retrieved; The*NEWS*, March 26, 2012, p.20).

Ayo Oritsejafor, president of Christian Association of Nigeria, CAN, said

> "Christians in the North should find ways of defending themselves to prevent further loss of lives. They do it on Sundays and attack only places of worship attended by Christians…" (*Tell*, January 23, 2012, p.20).

In the words of Bishop Emmanuel Chukwuma, South-East CAN Chairman asserts:

> "…henceforth the Christians will retaliate every action against Christians by *Boko Haram* anywhere in the country" (*Blueprint newspaper*, June 19, 2012, p.1-3).

Matthew Hassan Kukah, the Catholic Bishop of Sokoto Diocese, during a National Summit on the Freedom of Information Act stressed:

> "I warned him about the future of Nigeria; I am convinced that Nigeria is running out of

time. There is an impending war between Muslims and Christians in the country" (*Blueprint Newspaper*, June 19, 2012, p.1 – 3).

Killings by *Boko Haram* and the fear of becoming targets of retaliation has also led to the exodus of Muslim northerners from the southern parts of the country since the beginning of 2012, especially Delta and Edo States where mosques were allegedly attacked. Attacks on mosques and a Islamic school in January 2012, in the Southern communities of Sapele and Benin city suggest that some retaliatory violence has already begun in the South. In Sapele, Delta State, a mosque, a Quranic school and several persons have been attacked by unidentified people who claimed to be retaliating attacks on churches in the northeastern parts of the country. In Edo State, soldiers and mobile policemen were reported to have evacuated northerners from their residences to military and police barracks in the state capital for fear of being attacked. Despite the appeal by the Southern state governors, northerners still could not sleep in their homes with any eye closed for fear of the unknown (Tajudeen, January 23, 2012, p.20).

CONCLUSION

Boko Haram has triggered a national crisis in Nigeria, but the manifestations of this crisis differ from region to region. What began as a Northeastern problem has threatens to spread to the rest of the North, to fuel inter-communal violence in the Middle Belt, and to touch off retaliatory violence in the South. In this religiously and ethnically divided country, many eyes will remain fixed, fearfully, on the militants in the North. The longer *Boko Haram* attacks go on, the greater the potential for such vigilante actions, the persistent reminder that crisis is pervasive and threatening national integration. And if the bombing and counter-bombings are prolonged, it will give rise to nationwide political instability deepens disunity and disintegration of Nigerians.

RECOMMENDATION

Having examined the *Boko Haram* insurgency in Nigeria and its implications for national integration and development, we put forward the following recommendations:

1. The Nigerian government should as a matter of urgency declare a full state of emergency in all affected states in the north and declare full scale war against terrorism devoid of political and ethnic sentiments.
2. Sponsors and sources of funding for the *Boko Haram* insurgency should be traced. The best way to defeat a man in a battle is to cripple his economy. The Biafran experience is a clear example. All *Boko Haram* sponsors and sources of funding should be brought to book and crippled.
3. The Nigerian government should intensify surveillance of her borders with the neighboring countries to control influx of illegal migrants, curtail all unauthorized routs and weapons links.
4. The government of Nigeria should partner with the international community in addressing the *Boko Haram* insurgency. Terrorism is a global phenomenon, therefore, it is advisable that it should also be addressed through global collaboration.
5. The government should match words with action in dealing with the security challenges in Nigeria. This should include equipping the military, re-organizing the police force, settlement of political, economic and religious disputes without favouritism.
6. The government should put machinery in place through a collaborative effort between national and state orientation agencies, local government areas, traditional rulers, youths, women and religious groups in carrying out re-orientation and enlightenment campaign, particularly in the northern region. Islamic scholars should be engaged to condemn terrorism and preach true tenets of Islam. This will help to address the misconceptions about western education, government activities and other issues used by *Boko Haram* in convincing the youths to support them.
7. In addition, poverty should be address across the country through employment generation by governments at all levels, collaboration between government and the private sector, revamping ailing firms and empowering youths and women through skills acquisition programmes and agricultural practices. Pursue of economic growth and other indices of development will promote national integration. These measures cannot be achieved without government addressing the issue of corruption which is the major cause of poverty in Nigeria.
8. Finally, peace education, whichever angle it is perceived, has the tendency to change the physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual abilities of people within the context of their cultural, political and social milieus for peaceful and harmonious living. It is a holistic education that moderates unwanted behaviour in a society. It is based on philosophy that teaches non-violence empathy, trust, tolerance, accountability, rejection of direct violence and respect for differences and people. Hence, Peace Education should be introduced into the

Nigeria Education Curriculum at all levels.

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