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A NEW NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY TO COMBAT BOKO HARAM TERRORISM IN NIGERIA

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THESIS

A NEW NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY TO COMBAT BOKO HARAM TERRORISM IN NIGERIA

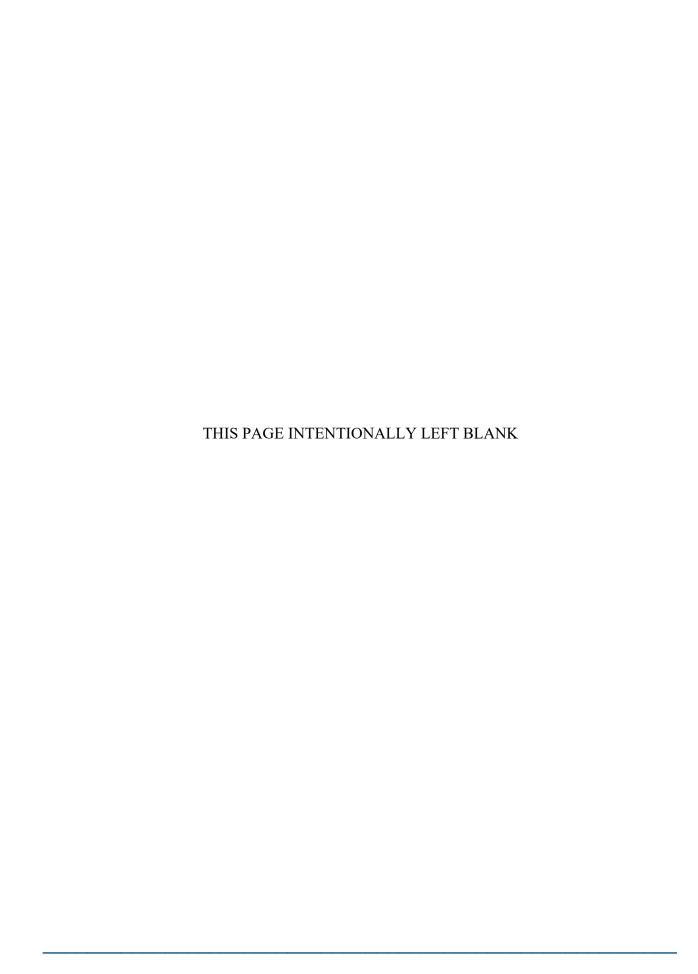by

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13. ABSTRACT (maximum 200 words)

For several decades, terrorism has shaped Nigeria's security paradigm. Many scholars agree that misperceptions of Islamic religious doctrine, poor governance, and socioeconomic difficulties are the root causes of this internal security. To address this problem, Nigeria has devised several strategies such as enactment of National Counterterrorism Strategy in 2004. Additionally, a non-kinetic strategy, which includes Operation Safe Corridor, was initiated to encourage terrorists to surrender and embrace peace through disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration. Despite these laudable initiatives, Nigeria has not adequately addressed the menace of terrorism. Remaining challenges include applying a conventional approach to an unconventional threat, insufficient employment of technology and inadequate intelligence support, and inadequate international cooperation.

This thesis recommends a new strategy that will address the challenges of counterterrorism in Nigeria. Some viable options for Nigeria include involving all related governmental bodies to contribute toward the fight against Boko Haram terrorism, abolishing the Almajiri system of education, and developing social intervention and empowerment programs to eradicate poverty in northeastern Nigeria. Finally, extensive public education is required to support the efforts.

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A NEW NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY TO COMBAT BOKO HARAM TERRORISM IN NIGERIA

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS IN SECURITY STUDIES
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iii

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AQIM   Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb

BH   Boko Haram

CJTF   Civilian Joint Task Force

CT   Counterterrorism

CUAV   Combat Unmanned Aerial Vehicle

DDR   Disarmament Demobilization Reintegration

DVD   radio frequency identification

ECOWAS   Economic Community of West African States

FTO   Foreign Terrorist Organization

GTI   Global Terrorism Index

HUMINT   Human Intelligent

IED   Improvised Explosive Devise

ISIS   Islamic State in Iraq and Syria

ISWAP   Islamic States in West African Province

JAS   Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wal Jihad

JTF   Joint Task Force

LCBC   Lake Chad Basin Countries

MNJTF   Multinational Joint Task Force

NA   Nigerian Army

NACTEST   National Counterterrorism Strategy

NAF   Nigerian air Force

NIC   Nigerian Intelligence Community

NN   Nigerian Navy

NSA   National Security Adviser

ONSA   Office of the National Security Adviser

ORBAT   Order of Battle

SALW   Small and Light Weapon

UAV   Unmanned Aerial Vehicle

UN   United Nations

UNDP   United Nations Development Programme

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I.   INTRODUCTION

Africa is arguably the most insecure continent in the world. Modern insurgency and terrorism appear to have become more pronounced in Africa over the last two decades. Religion-based conflict is one manifestation of this insecurity, including violence by both Islamist and Christian groups.[1] The combination of political violence and weak state security has destabilized Sudan, Mali, Niger, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria.[2]

Nigeria being the most populous nation-state in Africa, is one of the countries that is most affected by terrorism in the world. In the past thirteen years, Nigeria has been waging war against Boko Haram (BH) and has spent billions of dollars funding counter-terrorism operations. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), BH militants have killed more than 350,000 people despite all efforts to destroy the terrorist organization.[3] It is against this backdrop that the thesis seeks to address the fundamental challenges raised by BH's terrorism. This thesis plans to look at three dimensions of the BH problem: the socioeconomic grievances that perpetuate the crisis, the limitations of existing counterterrorism measures, and the regional and global networks that enable BH to persist.

The thesis seeks to assess the current national security strategy against BH. It asks: What security measures is Nigeria using to address the challenges posed by Boko Haram and have they been effective? How can existing security measures be revised and optimized to address the fundamental challenges that make Boko Haram's terrorism thrive in northeast Nigeria?

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[1] Mohammed Ayoob and Danielle N. Lussier, *The Many Faces of Political Islam: Religion and Politics in Muslims Societies*, 2nd ed. (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, 2020), 155.

[2] Ayoob and Lussier, 155.

[3] Nii Ntreh, "How 350,000 People Have Been Killed Due to Boko Haram Scourge in Nigeria," *Face2Face Africa*, June 25, 2021, https://www.cnn.com/2019/01/29/africa/nigerians-flee-boko-haram-violence-intl/index.html.

A.   SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

BH is a major threat to Nigeria's national security. Insurgency, terrorism, and violent extremism have negatively affected Nigeria's socio-economic and political stability. Since the beginning of BH in the early 2000s, many youths from northeastern Nigeria have joined and fought for BH against the Nigerian state. The Nigerian government reacted with internal repression, using aggressive military intervention to counter BH atrocities.[4] The government assumed that the threat of BH had been contained with such repression, however, the group instead re-emerged in a new wave of violent acts. Between 2010 and 2013, BH evolved from a peaceful preaching organization into a hardened Islamist jihadist movement.[5]

The Nigerian crisis in the context of other violent insurgencies in Africa, indicates that there are underlying political deficiencies, social grievances, and economic inequalities that are driving the violence in the country. Additionally, BH is driven by transnational linkages with violent extremist organizations. BH is affiliated with Al-Qaida, the Islamic State, and Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb. Some BH members have skills in suicide bombings, kidnappings, and the handling of sophisticated weapons through these transnational ties.

Therefore, a singular focus on state repression may not work to defeat BH. This thesis seeks to propose a counterterrorism policy that would help to address the problems of insecurity in Nigeria to end this protracted conflict. It analyzes the major causes of terrorism in Nigeria and identifies gaps in the national security strategy. The thesis is promoting a plan that is more encompassing than "just" a military response. Finally, the research is a contribution to the fields of counterinsurgency, counterterrorism, and Nigeria's national security strategy. Hence, complimenting the existing literature in the field and stimulating further research work.

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[4] Audrey Kurth Cronin, *How Terrorism Ends: Understanding the Decline and Demise of Terrorist Campaigns* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011), 11.

[5] Alexander Thurston, *Boko Haram: The History of an African Jihadist Movement* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018), 195.

B.   LITERATURE REVIEW

Within the last three decades, scholarship focused on terrorism in Nigeria has improved and expanded considerably. There are, however, many counterterrorism (CT) lessons that can be learned from other conflicts as well. This review illustrates a broad analytical perspective on CT from a historical experience outside Nigeria. I intend to look at seven different strategies that are important to examine closely. Scholars of terrorism such as Audrey Kurth Cronin, Daniel L. Bayman, Brigitte L. Nacos, Andrew H. Kydd, and Barbara F. Walter demonstrate that there are several measures available to mitigate, contain, and end terrorism. These measures consider the practices that governments have implemented to enable these preconditions. Additionally, since their approaches are based on a global perspective, the prevailing circumstances in Nigeria ranging from culture, socio- economic and political situations, as well as other related conditions, are considered. The practices can be categorized into military, political, economic, and media strategies. The authors also assess the use and results of measures such as the decapitation of the terrorist groups' leaders, the effectiveness of negotiations with the terrorist groups, and the fostering of fragmentation within the terrorist groups.

1.   Military Solutions

Many scholars have argued that military solutions alone cannot win the war on terrorism. There are rare instances where overwhelming military force has eliminated terrorist groups, but not all countries have the capacity or political will to deploy such force, and indiscriminate repression often entails high political costs. For instance, Cronin highlights, "repression, often brutal, wiped-out terrorist groups in Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, Peru, and tsarist Russia; however, the response itself undermined the legitimacy of the state."[6] Byman notes that the total annihilation of terrorist groups by security forces demands tremendous resources.[7] This strategy is exceedingly difficult for developing countries that are often struggling with multiple problems to employ, and a purely military

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[6] Cronin, *How Terrorism Ends*, 142.

[7] Daniel Byman, "What Is Victory and How Do We Achieve It?" in *Five Front War: The Better Way to Fight Global Jihad* (New York: John Wiley & Sons Inc, 2007), 55.

solution is often not possible. Taking this point even further, Byman emphasizes the need to have a massive and outstanding intelligence presence not only within the impacted country, but also within neighboring states that could be breeding grounds for terrorists.[8] Intelligence operatives are required in determining the location of terrorist safe havens, collecting human and signal intelligence, and undertaking covert operations to eliminate threats.

Cronin argues, "it is natural for a state to use repression to protect itself against terrorism, but this should not be the main strategy. In the last two decades states across the globe have in one way or the other used overwhelming force to clamp down on terrorism."[9] Even Europeans, who first experienced contemporary terrorism and who value democratic institutions, continue to respond to this challenge with military measures.[10] It is easier for autocratic states to crack down on terrorists with overwhelming force due to their coercive nature and disregard for human rights, but this option is not readily available for a democratically elected government like Nigeria. Quick military retaliation in the aftermath of an attack can affect the decision-making of other potential terrorists, demonstrating that a state is resistant to intimidation.[11] Cronin stresses that "for a state to avoid suffering from a fundamental mistake, it should not treat its terrorist adversary like another state that could be easily deterred, or defeated terrorist groups often exist as representative of political, ethnic, religious, or ideological grievances."[12]

Military power alone cannot defeat terrorists, but it is one of the components of a comprehensive strategy. Following Nye's recommendation, states facing terrorism need to consider effectively combining hard and soft power.[13]

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[8] Byman, 55.

[9] Cronin, *How Terrorism Ends*, 115.

[10] Cronin, 116.

[11] Cronin, 121.

[12] Cronin, 142.

[13] Bridget L. Nacos, *Terrorism and Counterterrorism*, 6th ed. (London: Routledge, 2019), 252.

4

2. Political Solutions

Terrorists can easily be politically motivated against their own government for a variety of reasons. Nacos emphasizes, "Terrorism often does have political roots and we have to deal with these political roots."[14] Political stability is not achievable by any state suffering from emerging tensions and frequent attacks from terrorist group. Many of the reasons given by the terrorists for their actions are linked to their perception of unjust politics within their territory. Some terrorists further asserted that they used violence to influence regional and international countries' affairs.[15]

One political dimension of terrorism involves territorial or nationalist conflicts. Byman argues, "the Israeli-Palestine dispute, Russia's war in Chechnya, and the Indian-Pakistan fight over Kashmir are the three leading local conflicts that have captured the attention of the Muslim world."[16] In furtherance to this argument, Ayoob and Lussier concur, "Islamism blends with nationalism, particularly in the context of resistance against non-Muslim foreign domination or occupation."[17] This trend is evident by observing Indian-administered Kashmir, Israeli occupied Palestine, and Russian-controlled Chechnya. These situations typically occur when Islam may be used as a marker to designate ethnicity separate from the ethnoreligious identity of the dominating and occupying non-Muslim people, and particularly when ethnicity and Islam coincide to a significant degree.[18] When such Muslim resistance organizations are compelled to take up arms under the banner of ideology that combines religion and nationalism, they are branded "terrorist" groups. As further argued by Ayoob and Lussier, "both Hamas in Israeli-occupied Palestine and Hizbullah in Lebanon have received this label, although they are

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[14] Nacos, 344.

[15] Hamid Mir, "Interview of Osama Bin Laden, NWF, Pakistan, " March 18, 1997, https://www.rferl.org/a/interview_hamid_mir_last_man_to_interview_osama_bin_laden/16800723.html.

[16] Byman, "What Is Victory and How Do We Achieve It?" 80.

[17] Ayoob and Lussier, *The Many Faces of Political Islam*, 118.

[18] Ayoob and Lussier, 118.

distinctly different from other groups that share the terrorist label, such as Islamic State and al-Qaeda."[19]

History reveals that the prolonged presence and influence of the West in the Muslim world is not always welcomed by most of the indigenous Arab population. Even though the study is about Arab countries, it seems like this knowledge could easily be applied to other places. According to Frykberg's study of the Arab world, the terrorists frequently believe that Western governments are only concerned with employing short-term solutions to problems related to the democracy of their region, and these problems are frequently left for the next administration to resolve.[20] They see the West as an advocate of democracy that seeks to ensure free and fair elections in their regions, yet the West also wants to select and support who comes to power in the Middle East. This treatment is perceived by the aggrieved people of the Middle East as a double standard, and it fuels an atmosphere of hostility and anger that make the society a terrorist breeding ground. This signifies one of the main reasons behind the existence of terrorism in the Middle East and beyond.

Meanwhile, the domestic leaders in these regions are often the core of local problems, but they use the perceived impact of the West to subjugate their citizens. The terrorists use Western interference to justify their actions and also to blame the West for the repression caused by their own government. The aim here is not to criticize the West, but rather to identify the root cause of terrorism and figure out the best way to curtail it. As often emphasized by bin Laden, Zawahiri, and others, the West's support for the regimes that rule Muslim countries is a primary motivator for terrorist strikes against the United States and other Western nations. The populace perceives these regimes as puppets who only serve the interest of the West. The fact remains that these leaders govern their people with repression and subjugation.

The ideals of freedom, justice, and equity in the U.S and rest of the West are the same principles that Muslim societies desire, but these ideals were outrightly denied by

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[19] Ayoob and Lussier, 119.

[20] Mel Frykberg, "MIDEAST: Corrupt Arab Regimes - Who Is to Blame?" *Inter Press Service*, February 2, 2010, http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=50189.

their leaders. For example, the dramatic acts of human rights abuse against the Muslim Brotherhood under Nasser and Sadat, coupled with the intermittent application of repressive tactics under Mubarak in Egypt, gave legitimacy to terrorist actions.[21] Despite Egypt's brutal stance against human rights, it has remained one of the largest recipients of U.S. aid since 1978.[22] Terrorists gain credibility in carrying out their crimes as long as the West continues to support these types of regimes because they think their political stances are based in logical fact.

Moreover, the leaders of what have been labeled as terrorist groups repeatedly voiced out their political grievances. In many circumstances, Osama bin Laden vented out his anger against the West and the Arab leaders in public or via interview. For instance, he warns in some of his notable interviews that "Neither the United States nor he who lives in the United States will enjoy security before we can see it as a reality in Palestine and before all the armies leave the land of Muhammad (peace be upon him)."[23] He further stresses, "If we cut the head of America, the kingdoms in the Arab world will cease to exist."[24] The implication of this statement is that the terrorists want the immediate withdrawal of foreign armed forces from the region they see as their sanctuary. In the same vein, al-Awlaki cries out, "and in my tribe too, U.S. missiles have killed seventeen women and twenty-three children, so do not ask me if al-Qaeda has killed or blown up a U.S. civil jet after all this."[25] Unless these problems of interference and suppression are properly addressed, terrorists will likely keep on recruiting those who share common sentiments with them.

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[21] Ayoob and Lussier, *The Many Faces of Political Islam*, 87.

[22] USAID, "U.S. Aid to Egypt Totals $30 Billion in Three Decades," USAID.gov, April 19, 2022, https://www.usaid.gov/egypt.

[23] Al-Jazeera, "Osama Bin Laden, ―Declaration of Jihad," interview transcript, October 2001, CNN.com archive, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=orawG7vt68o.

[24] Mir, "Interview of Osama Bin Laden, NWF, Pakistan."

[25] "Anwar al-Awlaki, Al-Jazeera Focus Interview," Al-Jazeera, February 7, 2010, http://english.aljazeera.net/focus/2010/02/2010271074776870.html.

3.   Economic Development Solutions

Socioeconomic development in Muslim majority countries generally lags in the global arena. The absence of strong tax structures reduces the outcry of citizens' claims for political accountability from the state. Eva Bellin has argued, "oil wealth has allowed states in the Middle east to develop extensive coercive apparatuses that further hinder citizens from demanding popular sovereignty and accountability."[26] The majority of people in these countries live in extreme poverty, despite these countries having wealthy governing classes. Thus, the gap between the rich and the poor continues to widen. Bayman has argued, "the presumed motivation to terrorism is not lack of political means but the corruption and lack of opportunities in the terrorists' immediate society."[27] He further stresses "once states provide job to its people, their living condition tend to improve and would make the level of anger in them to diminish."[28] Bayman's assertion is evident in the case of West Africa, as many youths who joined BH from Nigeria and its neighboring states were unemployed.

Furthermore, there is a general perception that terrorism is rooted in poor economic conditions, especially if these conditions are imposed by repressive government. For instance, the roadblocks and checkpoints created by Israel in the West Bank have brought considerable hardship to many Palestinians.[29] This hardship has had significant unfavorable effects on the quality of life in Palestine. There are hundreds of roadblocks and checkpoints scattered throughout the West Bank that block access to main roads. These checkpoints convey the perception that a policy of retaining control purposely suppresses the Palestinian economy, and this is in addition to the perceived aggression of the Israeli Defense Force towards Palestinians.[30] These actions contribute to the joblessness and poor

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[26] Eva Bellin, "The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Lessons from the Arab Spring.," *Comparative Politics* 44, no. 2 (January 2012): 127–49.

[27] Byman, "What Is Victory," 80.

[28] Byman, 80.

[29] Amos Harel, "IDF Concerned about Soldiers' Abuse of Palestinian Civilians at Roadblock," *Haaretz*, July 23, 2001, https://www.haaretz.com/1.5341342.

[30] Harel.

condition of Palestinians, and this may eventually condition them towards recruitment by the likes of Hamas and Hezbollah.

Economic sanctions and the freezing of assets are other alternative ways of dealing with the terrorists, their organizations, and their sympathizers. The International Emergency Powers Economic Act and Executive Order 13324 permits state to freeze the assets of anybody found to be associating with international terrorist organizations.[31] For instance, the Terrorist Finance Tracking Program, the Office of Foreign Assets Control, and the Office of Terrorism and Financial Intelligence in the United States can locate and freeze such bank accounts.[32] The executive order gives express permission to states to deter and block any external attempts from foreign powers and diasporas aiming to finance or support terrorism. Stephen D. Collins reveals, "US unilateral economic sanctions on Libya did not fully discourage the Gaddafi government from sponsoring terrorism, but UN-backed multilateral economic sanctions remarkably reduced Libya's sympathy towards terrorism."[33]

4.   Countering Ideology and Media Solutions

What makes terrorists resort to terrorism varies significantly from state to state. The ideological dimensions are derived from radical ideological movements, and understanding these ideological sources is critical to any CT strategy that seeks to contain and defeat terrorist groups. Terrorists often utilize various media sources to broadcast their causes, grievances, and objectives. Nacos cites the Former British Prime Minister, where she says, "publicity is the oxygen of terrorism."[34] This statement implies that frequent media coverage of terrorist activities emboldens the terrorists. Alternatively, media can give more publicity to legitimate religious organizations, liberal religious scholars, and traditional

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[31] Lawyers and Jurists, "Economic Sanctions and Lawsuits against Terrorists," *Law and Ethics* (blog), accessed May 23, 2022, https://www.lawyersnjurists.com/article/economic.

[32] Lawyers and Jurists.

[33] Nacos, *Terrorism and Counterterrorism*, 267.

[34] Nacos, 335.

leaders seeking to enlighten the citizens, especially those with tendencies to join terrorist groups. Media can therefore essentially contribute to the reduction of terrorism.

Additionally, Cronin cited many examples on how terrorists' ideology became irrelevant with time.[35] For instance, the public condemnation by Greek politicians and the prayer services of the Greek Orthodox Church in favor of victims of terrorism made the terrorist group reframed.[36] The combination of these actions reduced the level of the violence tremendously. Christopher Hewitt emphasizes, "information provided by members of the general public played a key role in some cases."[37] Taking this point even further, Bruce Hoffman and Jennifer Morrison argue, "the importance of good government-civil relations is a successful counterterrorism campaign that must not be overestimated."[38] Muslims around the globe have lost their lives in attacks where al-Qaeda claimed responsibility. This assertion contradicts the popular claim made by Islamist terrorists that they are fighting against Muslims oppression. Cronin explains that "there is a growing commonality in the attitude of Muslim and Western public; yet the West focuses on itself and does little to nurture cooperation."[39] King explains, "good CT requires the efforts and collaboration of citizens."[40] In furthering this argument, Cronin suggests "the West needs to understand to work with local societies and local citizens to build up shared goals and increase their separation from this movement, which would serve as a favorable technique for ending terrorism."[41]

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[35] Cronin, *How Terrorism Ends*, 106.

[36] Cronin, 106.

[37] Hewitt Christopher, "Law Enforcement Tactics and Their Effectiveness in Dealing with American Terrorism: Organizations, Autonomous Cells, and Lone Wolves," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 26, no. 1 (2014): 62, https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2014.849913.

[38] Bruce Hoffman and Jennifer Morrison-Taw, "A Strategic Framework for Countering Terrorism," in *European Democracies against Terrorism: Governmental Policies and Intergovernmental Cooperation*, ed. Reinares Fernando (London: Routledge, 2000), 12.

[39] Cronin, *How Terrorism Ends*, 190.

[40] Joseph B. King, "A Comprehensive Strategy for Combating Terrorism," in *Combating Transnational Terrorism*, ed. James K. Wither and Sam Mullins (Sofia, Bulgaria: Procon, 2016), 265.

[41] Cronin, *How Terrorism Ends*, 190.

5.   Decapitation

Decapitation in CT means arresting or killing a famous terrorist leader. Fighting modern terrorists requires a combination of strategies. One of the Byman's criticisms of the five-front war is that "killing terrorists whom we cannot arrest or whose arrest offers little intelligence benefit."[42] Further, he argues that sometimes killing prominent terrorists is necessary even if the popular belief is that killing them is not the best way..[43] In addition to identifying and tracking suspected terrorists, Joseph B. King stresses that "states should focus resources on stopping known terrorists, either by capturing or killing them."[44]

States find it difficult to resist targeting a well-recognized terrorist leader. After the death of a terrorist leader, another one often emerges to succeed him, however, this is not always the case. Nacos claims that "the death or arrest of a strong group leader can also result in internal fights for his succession and weaken or even break up a group" (as elaborated under fragmentation).[45] Capturing or killing a terrorist leader sometimes results in a decisive blow to the terrorist group, however, as Cronin recognizes, "[W]hile many campaigns end as a result, others barely falter and may even gain strength."[46] Notwithstanding the possible negative outcomes, Cronin affirms that successful decapitation strikes shrink terrorist groups dramatically.[47] For instance, when Asahara was arrested and subsequently killed after receiving the death sentence, his terror group shrank considerably from 40,000 to about 1,650 members in Russia and Japan. The truth is that terrorist attacks do not always end with the elimination of the terrorist leader. The state must instead have a thorough understanding of the makeup of the group and the motivations behind it.[48] This argument indicates that an individual state must pay attention

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[42] Byman, "What Is Victory," 82.

[43] Byman, 83.

[44] King, "A Comprehensive Strategy for Combating Terrorism," 258.

[45] Nacos, *Terrorism and Counterterrorism*, 216.

[46] Cronin, *How Terrorism Ends*, 14.

[47] Cronin, 24.

[48] Cronin, 34.

to the kind of terrorist group it is fighting before finalizing the decision to carry out a decapitation.

6.   Negotiation

Many government officials believe that legitimate democratic governments do not negotiate with terrorists. Contrary to this claim, Cronin argues that "virtually all democratic governments facing terrorism have been compelled to negotiate with the terrorists at some points."[49] The wise government considers negotiations as a means to handle terrorist violence even if the terrorist organization refuses to cease its operations completely. Taking this point further, Nacos argues, "hostage situations are the most likely cases when governments are willing to deal directly or indirectly with terrorists in order to save the lives of fellow citizens."[50] Even though America professes the principle of "we will not negotiate with terrorists" and opposes the use of negotiation, Christopher Cusano argues that the United States is amenable to some degree of negotiation.[51] One notable example is the arms-for-hostages deals made between the United States and Iran for the sake of Americans held hostage by Hezbollah in Lebanon. There are of course several other less prominent cases where governments and organizations have silently negotiated and fixed deals with terrorists to free hostages.[52] The record of terrorist attacks and government responses shows that they continue to happen while negotiations are ongoing.[53]

Despite their denials, states frequently engage in direct or indirect communication with terrorist organization members. Although the public may find this objectionable, in most situations the government would be violating its obligations if it were to reject communications entirely.[54] States that insist on not negotiating with terrorists, but who are

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[49] Cronin, 35.

[50] Nacos, *Terrorism and Counterterrorism*, 271.

[51] Christopher Cusano, "Understanding Terrorism: Religious & Political Dimensions" (master's thesis, University of Central Florida, 2010), 103, https://stars.library.ucf.edu/etd/4424/.

[52] Nacos, *Terrorism and Counterterrorism*, 271.

[53] Cronin, *How Terrorism Ends*, 37.

[54] Cronin, 37.

later compelled to revise their stance, risk the loss of their reputation of reliability.[55] Terrorist organizations might resort to more drastic measures to force open dialogue in the face of strict non-negotiation policy. Only 18% of contemporary terrorist groups have actually engaged in negotiations, according to the Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism database, which has meticulously analyzed 457 active groups since 1968.[56] The good news is that many negotiating groups either ceased to exist or are still engaged in periodic talks. A government needs to assess the exact goal of the terrorist group during negotiation, as discussions with the leaders alone are not adequate. The affected state can either negotiate in secret, as was done between the British and Northern Ireland; through a third-party, as in the case of America during peace talks between Israel and Palestine; or directly, as was the case between Sri Lanka and the Tamil Tigers (before the interventions of Canada, Norway, and Netherlands). It's critical to remember that negotiations alone cannot put an end to terrorism. The key question is whether the situation has improved or worsened since the negotiations began, and comparing the situation with what it may have been like without the attempts of negotiations.[57] From the government's perspective, negotiations do not necessarily end terrorist operations. Still, if handled properly, they are undoubtedly a sensible and reliable strategic measure for mitigating the aggression of an enemy, shattering the solidarity of an enemy, and accelerating the long-term weakening of an enemy.

7.   Fragmentation

Infighting and fractionalization within terrorist organizations are possible, especially when there is a profound misunderstanding among the prominent members of the terror group. An internal crisis that gets out of control ceases to be inconsequential and instead becomes counterproductive to the group. A prominent example is the split of Nusra Front from ISIS Syria in April 2013 over the disagreement in strategy.[58] Nusra Front, led

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[55] Cronin, 38.

[56] Cronin, 40.

[57] Cronin, 71.

[58] Cameron Glenn, "The Nusra Front: Al Qaeda's Affiliate in Syria," Wilson Center, June 17, 2016, https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/the-nusra-front-al-qaedas-affiliate-syria.

by its leader Julani, opted to break away from ISIS, which al-Baghdadi oversees. Nusra Front also declared loyalty to al-Qaeda, another rival group to ISIS. There have been growing rivalries which have led to several clashes resulting in the deaths of thousands of fighters from both sides. This split made the Syrian crisis an overly complicated conflict. Pro-Assad and anti-Assad groups were both fighting each other. From the Islamist side of it alone, there are three separate groups: Nusra Front, ISIS, and Wal-Ansar. All these groups were fighting each other, fighting Assad, and fighting the United States. In this situation, the state needs to understand the shifting relationships among the terrorist groups and figure out the best way to apply its CT actions to weaken them. Governments may sometimes use strategies to encourage fractions within the group to weaken it, as was the case in Algeria in the mid-1990s.[59]

C.   RESEARCH DESIGN

This thesis undertakes a case study examining the implications of BH to understand the history of the group, its origins and motivations, and the response of Nigeria's security establishment. This thesis considers the period from 2009 to present day. It examines BH inside Nigeria and also in the neighboring states which include Niger, Chad, and Cameroon. Firstly, this thesis explains how BH poses serious threats to Nigeria's national security and stability. It also explains how the activities of this radical group affect the peace and stability of the neighboring states in the region.

Secondly, the thesis looks at Nigeria's responses across the seven different strategies highlighted in the literature review and examines the ones that have been more or less effective. It also gives an analytical descriptive analysis of where the government could do more in fighting BH and it offers a logical conclusion and several recommendations. The thesis relies on existing scholarly studies and journal publications, online sources, news accounts, Global Terrorism Index (GTI), data, and the number of attacks provided by information by ACLED and/or Janes. It also uses government

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[59] Cronin, *How Terrorism Ends*, 100.

documents and reports, news sources, reports from Africa's Center for Strategic and International Studies, and think-tank reports among others.

D. THESIS OVERVIEW AND CHAPTER OUTLINE

This chapter introduced the research questions, discussed their significance, provided the review of the literature and CT strategies, and highlighted the approach of the research.

Chapter II aims at an explanation of Islamism and BH terrorism in Nigeria, and how it brings contemporary challenges not only to Nigeria's national security architecture but also to the neighboring countries' national security.

Chapter III focuses on Nigeria's past strategies in dealing with BH and whether they match up with best practices as outlined in the literature review. It further highlights the history of CT in Nigeria and identifies what activities have and have not been effective. Finally, Chapter IV provides a conclusion and policy recommendations by assessing Nigeria's strategy in relation to the best practices that have been adopted globally.

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II. ISLAMISM AND BOKO HARAM TERRORISM IN NIGERIA

To assess the responses of Nigeria's military to BH, it is first necessary to understand the drivers of BH's terrorist activities. The chapter is divided into sections A, B, and C. Section A provides a brief history and profile of BH, focusing on BH's leadership and organization, its alliances with other terrorist organizations, its recruitment strategy, its modus operandi, and its various means of sustainment. Section B highlights the main drivers of terrorism that are linked to the origin of BH in Nigeria, while Section C sums up the chapter

A. BRIEF HISTORY AND PROFILE OF THE BOKO HARAM

BH was initially part of a peaceful Islamic organization popularly known as Izala. Prior to the emergence of BH, Sheikh Abubakar Gumi, the founder in 1978 of Nigerian Salafism, known as Jama'at Izalat al-Bid'a wa-Iqamat al-Sunnah (the Society for the Removal of Heretical Innovation and the Establishment of the Prophet's Model), served as northern Nigeria's senior Muslim judge. In the 1990s, Gumi experienced geopolitical violence that appeared to have been provoked by intra-sect competition.[60] After Sheikh Gumi's passing, young Izala preachers like Sheikh Ja'afar Mahmud Adam found Izala split upon their return from the Islamic University of Medina.[61] The graduates from Medina established a following outside of Izala by teaching works they had read, capitalizing on the prestige of their degrees. The founder of BH, Muhmmad Yusuf, was one of the young preachers they brought into their network.[62] Yusuf became an open critic of the government both in media and in public. Yusuf became too controversial for the mainstream Salafi movement, and the friction developed between him and Adam served as the source of BH's road to extremism.

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[60] Thurston, *Boko Haram*, 23.

[61] Thurston, 23.

[62] Thurston, 24.

The precise date of BH's origin is uncertain, but it is widely accepted that the group has been around since 2002.[63] In 2003, a small group of Muslims calling themselves the Nigerian Taliban, after the Afghani Taliban, moved from Maiduguri to Kanamma, a rural area close to the border shared with the Republic of Niger in Yobe state.[64] They claimed to live an ascetic lifestyle apart from modern immorality by isolating themselves.[65] These were mostly young urban Kanuri, who make up the largest ethnic group in Borno State. Several of them came from wealthy and privileged Maiduguri Kanuri households.[66] The key objective of BH at its inception was to institutionalize an Islamic state in Nigeria based on a conservative interpretation of Sharia law.

A conflict with the security forces occurred in late 2003 as a result of tension over fishing rights between BH terrorists and the villagers.[67] While carrying out attacks on police stations and other governmental buildings, BH appears to have aspired for the development of a strict Islamic way of life on the isolated Nigerian border.[68] After the gang members set fire to the neighborhood police station, the army besieged the organization's compound in reprisal, killing many of the militants in the process. Early in 2004, Nigerian security forces drove the gang out of the Kanamma region. They then moved from location to location across the states of Borno and Yobe before finding safety in the Mandara Mountains on the Cameroon-Nigeria border, where they were eventually

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[63] Osasumwen O. Faith, "State Failure, Terrorism and Global Security: An Appraisal of the Boko Haram Insurgency in Northern Nigeria," *Journal of Sustainable Society* 2, no. 1 (2013): 20–30, https://doi.org/10.11634/216825851403248.

[64] Scott Maceachern, *Searching for Boko Haram: A History of Violence in Central Africa* (United Kingdom: Oxford University Press), 10.

[65] International Crisis Group, *Curbing Violence in Nigeria (II): The Boko Haram Insurgency*, Crisis Group Africa Report No. 216 (Dakar, Senegal: International Crisis Group, 2014), https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/west-africa/nigeria/curbing-violence-nigeria-ii-boko-haram-insurgency.

[66] Maceachern, *Searching for Boko Haram*, 10.

[67] Suranjan Weeraratne, "Theorizing the Expansion of the Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 29, no. 4 (2017): 611, https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2015.1005742.

[68] Maceachern, *Searching for Boko Haram*, 10.

dispersed later that year.[69] In 2004, the survivors returned to Maiduguri and reconnected with the Alhaji Muhammadu Ndimi Mosque, which was then led by Muhammad Yusuf.[70]

Mohammed Yusuf was a Kanuri preacher who fled to Saudi Arabia in order to avoid being apprehended by Nigerian authorities for his political activities.[71] Yusuf returned to Nigeria in 2005, possibly as part of a deal with Borno State's governor. He transformed the remaining members of the Nigerian Taliban in Maiduguri into the Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wal Jihad (JAS), also known as BH, which in Hausa, the predominant language in the northeast, means "Western education is forbidden."[72] Although the terrorist organization is often known as BH, the term was given by villagers in response to the group's repeated criticisms of Western society rather than by the group itself.[73] Some sect members disagree with this classification, claiming that they support the superiority of Islamic culture above Western culture rather than being against formal education coming from the West.[74]

As BH became more popular, tensions began rising rapidly in Maiduguri. In the brutally hot spring months of 2009, clashes with law-abiding Muslim groups were increasing in number, and these clashes were used to justify BH's war against the peaceful Muslims.[75] The terrorist group accused the mainstream Muslims of siding with the security forces.[76] Nigerian security forces cracked down on the BH members, they both harassed and beat them, as well as fined them for not wearing helmets while riding motorcycles.[77] The incidents became a flashpoint in relations between the authorities and the BH.[78] These

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[69] Maceachern, 10.

[70] Weeraratne, "Theorizing the Expansion of the Boko Haram," 611.

[71] Maceachern, *Searching for Boko Haram*, 10.

[72] Maceachern, 11.

[73] Weeraratne, "Theorizing the Expansion of the Boko Haram," 612.

[74] Weeraratne, 612.

[75] Maceachern, *Searching for Boko Haram*, 12.

[76] Thurston, *Boko Haram*, 217.

[77] Maceachern, *Searching for Boko Haram*, 12.

[78] Maceachern, 12.

activities occurred despite the fact that exceedingly few people in most of Africa, including Nigeria, wear a helmet while riding a motorcycle.[79]

1.   Leadership and Organization of Boko Haram

Careful observation of BH's leadership is important because of the level of loyalty commanded by the leadership. Each of BH's leaders has a unique style of leadership that affects the group's actions in many ways. The group's leadership began with Mohammed Yusuf, followed by Abubakar Shekau, and to the present unpopular leader, Bakura Modu. BH members are not only from the poorest strata, but they also come from the upper classes and many members have attended universities. The common thing these leaders enjoyed from their followers is the loyalty ensured through an oath of allegiance that is tied to the core reason most of them join the group is ideology.

Mohammed Yusuf was a charismatic, even chameleon-like, preacher who presented his teachings in various ways to various groups in order to broaden his support base.[80] Yusuf was also a flexible political actor, and his zeal for armed resistance and readiness to make concessions to secular democracy also changed. Nigerian politicians often recruit criminal youths to harass rivals and their voters.[81] Yusuf gained power in Borno State as a consequence of his massive following, which was part of a bigger pattern where politicians hired shady actors to assist them to win more votes to assume power and then the successful politicians subsequently turned on these supporters.[82] Before engaging in an open conflict with Nigerian authorities in 2007, Yusuf had grown estranged from his political boss, the former governor of Borno State, Ali Modu Sheriff.[83] From the time he first came into the public eye in roughly 2001 until his passing in 2009, his career was characterized by ups and downs. According to Thurston, "Yusuf, at his Markaz, built 'an imaginary state within a state,' administering private justice and delivering social

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[79] Maceachern, 12.

[80] Thurston, *Boko Haram*, 83.

[81] Ayoob and Lussier, *The Many Faces of Political Islam*, 28.

[82] Thurston, *Boko Haram*, 28.

[83] Thurston, 84.

services."[84] As a result of the government's failure to check the group *ab initio*, BH gradually became a violent group. The group's violent confrontations with the Nigerian forces eventually led to the arrest of Yusuf, who was later killed extrajudicially while in police custody in 2009.[85]

Following the death of Yusuf in custody, the remnants of his followers reorganized under a new leader, Abubakar Shekau, the group's former second in command. Shekau was deputized by Abu Musab al-Barnawi, who was also the group's guerilla commander, with other subordinate commanders like Adam Kambar and Mamman Nur holding strategic positions. Shekau declared himself to be BH's leader in a video statement in April 2010, and the group formally recognized him as such.[86] The group also had a Shura Council, which was thought to be the ultimate decision-making body.[87] The precise number of the Council memberships is unknown but is believed to be about thirty.[88] Figure 1 shows that Boko Haram's fragmented organizational structure enables it to prioritize operational success over survivability. Shura members rarely communicate in person, and they instead talk on their phones most of the time. The council members may be geographically dispersed throughout the major towns and villages where BH is present, with each geographical area being led by a local leader.[89] According to reports, even Shekau, the general leader, is constrained from making decisions without consulting the Shura Council.[90] It is clear that Shekau made a number of judgments on his own, however, undercutting any sense of harmony in the group.[91]

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[84] Thurston, 89.

[85] Abdul Raufu Mustapha and Kate Meagher, *Overcoming Boko Haram: Faith, Society & Islamic Radicalization in Northern Nigeria* (United Kingdom: James Currey, 2020), 87.

[86] Weeraratne, "Theorizing the Expansion of the Boko Haram," 620.

[87] Weeraratne, 620.

[88] Weeraratne, 620.

[89] International Crisis Group, *Curbing Violence in Nigeria (II)*, 18–19.

[90] Weeraratne, "Theorizing the Expansion of the Boko Haram," 620.

[91] Andrew Walker, "What Is Boko Haram?" (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, June 2012), 9, https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/SR308.pdf.

21

Figure 1. Organizational Structure of the Boko Haram under Abubakar Shekau[92]

Shekau and Nur became the group's top two candidates for the position of leadership. Since Mamman Nur was viewed as a moderate willing to reach a deal with the government, many Nigerians felt that factions within the group wanted him to assume the leadership role after Yusuf was executed.[93] Compared to his predecessor, Shekau was ruthless, and he had a rigid ideological belief based on Salafi Jihadism. Because of Shekau's connections to grassroots followers, the majority of whom are from his tribe (Kanuri) in Borno, he ultimately won over most of the group's support, which helped him

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[92] Source: Freedom Onuoha, "The Costs of Boko Haram Attacks on Critical Telecommunication Infrastructure in Nigeria," E-International Relations, November 3, 2013.,https://www.e-ir.info/2013/11/03/the-costs-of-boko-haram-attacks-on-critical-telecommunication-infrastructure-in-nigeria/.

[93] Weeraratne, "Theorizing the Expansion of the Boko Haram," 620.

take the lead.[94] The United States Government declared Shekau a special designated global terrorist in 2021.[95] The $7 million reward offered for his apprehension forced Shekau into hiding, but he continued to communicate with the public through irregular video broadcasts.[96]

The emergence of Abubakar Shekau as BH's leader resulted in the group becoming more violent, especially in northeast Nigeria, as he was a more radical and eccentric character. In 2015, under Shekau's leadership, the Global Terrorism Index (GTI) designated BH the world's deadliest terrorist organization.[97] The group eventually pledged allegiance to ISIS, and it adopted another name, the Islamic States of West African Province (ISWAP) in 2015. Shekau's power as ISWAP leader apparently intoxicated him, as he barely tolerated the opposing views of other terrorist leaders and his subordinate commanders. For instance, his continuous targeting of Muslims and his use of girls as suicide bombers got him into disagreements with the ISIS leader. Thereafter, al-Baghdadi quietly eased Shekau out and replaced him with Abu Musab ibn Mohammed Yusuf Al-Barnawi, the son of the group's late founder, Mohammed Yusuf. This friction marked a major split of BH into two factions, namely Jama'atu Ahli-sunnah lidda'awati Wal Jihad (JAS) and ISWAP.

Eventually, al-Barnawi pulled out his ISWAP loyalists from BH and moved to the Lake Chad axis, while Shekau and the remaining members of BH retained their stronghold located in the Sambisa Forest, Northeast Nigeria. Abubakar Shekau, however, blew himself up on May 19, 2021, when the al-Barnawi-led faction wanted to capture him alive. A 24-year-old Bakura Modi emerged as the group's new leader a month after Shekau's death.

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94 Freedom C. Onuoha, *Jama'atu Ansarul Musilimina Fi Biladis Sudan: Nigeria's Evolving Terrorist Group* (Doha, Qatar: Al Jazeera Center for Studies, 2013), https://studies.aljazeera.net/ar/node/1295.

95 Weeraratne, "Theorizing the Expansion of the Boko Haram," 620.

96 Congress. House. Committee on Homeland Security, *Boko Haram: Emerging Threat to the U.S. Homeland*, Committee Print 112-B (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CPRT-112HPRT71725/pdf/CPRT-112HPRT71725.pdf.

97 Mustapha and Meagher, *Overcoming Boko Haram: Faith, Society & Islamic Radicalization in Northern Nigeria*, 1.

2.   Alliances with Other Islamist Terrorist Groups

There have been indications that BH has some links with other terrorist groups within and outside the African continent. Deep ties with regional Islamist extremist groups are partly a function of the fragmentation within the group.[98] Between 2012 and 2013, there was growing evidence that members of BH travelled to fight alongside Islamist group in the conflict in northern Mali.[99] Terrorist groups within West Africa include Ansarudeen in Mali, Al-Qaeda in the Maghreb, and the Movement for the Unity and Jihad in West Africa. Beyond the African continent, BH derives motivation from other groups like the ISIS and Al-Qaeda.

The numerous public statements made by BH and other Islamist terrorist organizations expressing support for one another serves as evidence of the relationship between the various organizations' growing closeness.[100] BH announced its merger with ISIS after losing most of its territories.[101] Shekau frequently made statements endorsing Al-Qaeda and unequivocally linked BH's struggle with global jihad.[102] Ties between BH and Al-Qaeda were, however, cut by Shekau in early 2015 when he saw ISIS' Al- Baghdadi as a desirable ally while he was making headlines. In March 2015, BH then swore allegiance to ISIS for both tactical and ideological reasons.[103]

BH became more violent because of this new relationship with ISIS. BH's tactics and maneuvers suddenly became identical to ISIS's. These strategies include establishing an Islamic Caliphate, flying the group's distinctive flag over the territory they ruled, kidnapping women and young girls, and publishing films of their victims' grisly

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[98] Weeraratne, "Theorizing the Expansion of the Boko Haram," 622.

[99] Weeraratne, 6.

[100] Weeraratne, 622.

[101] Thurston, *Boko Haram*, 272.

[102] Zachary Elkaim, *Boko Haram: The Rise, Success, and Continued Efficacy of the Insurgency in Nigeria* (Herzliya, Israel: International Institute for Counterterrorism, 2012), https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep09426.

[103] Thurston, *Boko Haram*, 271.

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executions.[104] The terrorists' choice to participate (or not) in an abduction campaign could be viewed as "the result of a learning process".[105] Members of BH were first exposed to kidnappings and suicide bombings by the regional militant Islamist group, which had never before occurred in Nigeria.[106] Since then, kidnapping has become an effective technique for BH.

Regional terrorist groups like AQIM also reciprocate their pledges to support BH. This support became evident as BH has benefited from such links through combat training, logistical, and financial supports. BH militants later became combatant tacticians in guerilla warfare, gained expertise in local bomb-making skills, and were trained in the handling of sophisticated weapons.[107] A sign of the effectiveness of such training is the group's switch from using knives, machetes, and small arms and light weapons (SALWs) to vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and suicide bombers.

3.   Recruitment Strategy and Modus Operandi

BH uses both voluntary recruitment approaches and coercion to find new members. People join the group for distinct reasons, which include ideological misconceptions, revenge against the security forces, bad governance, and chronic poverty. BH is described by close observers as a dynamic and fluid organization that has reshaped and remodeled itself in different periods.[108] Unlike violent transnational Islamist movements like al-Qaeda and ISIS, which go beyond the local regimes to target the far enemy, BH has not emphasized jihad against the far "enemy."[109]

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[104] Timothy Spangler, "ISIS 2.0 in Nigeria," *Orange County Register*, September 19, 2014, https://www.ocregister.com/2014/09/19/timothy-spangler-isis-20-in-nigeria/.

[105] Maria Rasmussen, "Terrorist Learning: A Look at the Adoption of Political Kidnappings in Six Countries, 1968–1990," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 40, no. 7 (July 3, 2017): 551, https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2016.1237226.

[106] Weeraratne, "Theorizing the Expansion of the Boko Haram," 622.

[107] J. Peter Pham, "Boko Haram's Evolving Threat," *Africa Security Brief*, no. 20 (April 2012), https://africacenter.org/publication/boko-harams-evolving-threat/.

[108] Ayoob and Lussier, *The Many Faces of Political Islam*, 156.

[109] Ayoob and Lussier, 156.

The BH method of recruitment is clearly portrayed by Mercy Corps, which conducted forty-seven interviews with ex-BH members in 2015.[110] Sixteen of the interviewees had joined prior to the uprising in 2009, and twenty-six afterward. Mercy Corps could not, however, determine when the remaining five joined the BH movement.[111] The interviews revealed that members who joined prior to the 2009 conflict have different views of BH's message from those who joined later. Many recruits who joined after 2009 did so as they believed the organization may bring change in governance.[112] Another account reveals that some members were paid to join the sect.[113] According to Botha and Abdile, 57% of ex-fighters cited revenge against the security forces as a motivation for joining BH.[114] These fighters attack major prisons to free many of their members who await trials. One of the major prison breaks was the BH attack on Giwa Barracks in March 2014, where Shekau bragged of freeing over two thousand young fighters.[115] At the time of the writing of this thesis, the Islamists recently attacked Kuje prison in Abuja, where 879 inmates escaped on July 6, 2022.[116] Many BH fighters have family ties in the surrounding region as the terrorist group used to recruit beyond Nigeria.[117] BH recruitment seems limited in Chad, but recruitment numbers are significant in Niger and northern

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[110] Mercy Corps, *"Motivations and Empty Promises": Voices of Former Boko Haram Combatants and Nigerian Youth* (Portland, OR: Mercy Corps, 2016), 9, https://www.mercycorps.org/research-resources/boko-haram-nigerian.

[111] Mercy Corps, 11.

[112] Mercy Corps, 10.

[113] Thurston, *Boko Haram*, 246.

[114] Anneli Botha and Mahdi Abdile, *Getting behind the Profiles of Boko Haram Members and Factors Contributing to Radicalisation versus Working towards Peace* (Lisbon, Portugal: Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers, 2016), 5, https://www.kaiciid.org/publications-resources/getting-behind-profiles-boko-haram-members-summary.

[115] Thurston, *Boko Haram*, 219.

[116] Chinedu Asadu, "Jihadis Attack Jail in Nigeria's Capital, 879 Inmates Escape," ABC News, July 6, 2022, https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/jihadis-attack-jail-nigerias-capital-600-inmates-escape-86290654.

[117] Thurston, *Boko Haram*, 244.

Cameroon.[118] A shared Kanuri ethnic identity makes Cameroon a fertile ground for recruitment.[119]

Moreover, BH often recruits through conscription and voluntary membership by those who are sympathetic to the terrorists' cause. There have been cases of recruitment from northern Cameroon, where there is the presence of a severely deprived Muslim majority.[120] For instance, many Qur'anic schools' students across the nation, known as Almajiri, provide a pool of potential members. These people frequently live in substandard conditions and are thus open to recruitment for both material and religious motives.[121] The majority of BH fighters are still young people. While the females participate as suicide bombers or sex slaves, the males are utilized for combat.

The group's tactics keep on changing, ranging from hit-and-run operations, suicide bombings, kidnapping, ambush, clandestine attacks on government buildings, and sometimes a combination of these tactics. BH is primarily known to conduct attacks using knives, machete, SALWs, and other locally made weapons. Targets include churches, mosques, offices, police stations, and banks. From their stronghold in Maiduguri, the organization spread out into states including Bauchi, Yobe, and Niger.[122] BH does not completely shun modernity. The group's employment of automobiles, automatic weapons, and chemical explosives proves that it is more than willing to make use of the products of Western education when it is advantageous to do so.[123]

At that time, the sect's signature method of operation involved using shooters on motorcycles.[124] While originally targeting only state security forces, BH has over time

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[118] Thurston, 245.

[119] Weeraratne, "Theorizing the Expansion of the Boko Haram," 625.

[120] Weeraratne, 625.

[121] Amy Pate, "Boko Haram: An Assessment of Strengths, Vulnerabilities, and Policy Options," University of Maryland College Park, National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, October 2014, 16–17, https://www.start.umd.edu/publication/boko-haram-assessment-strengths-vulnerabilities-and-policy-options.

[122] Weeraratne, "Theorizing the Expansion of the Boko Haram," 612.

[123] Walker, "What Is Boko Haram?," 7.

[124] Weeraratne, "Theorizing the Expansion of the Boko Haram," 612.

used violence against a broader range of individuals, including government and political actors, traditional faith leaders, and civilians thought to be in collusion with the Nigerian state.[125] The terrorist group also cracked down on Muslims whom it perceived to side with the state.[126] The group also carries out suicide bombings mostly using child soldiers, women, and car bombs in their attacks. Their most notable car bomb attack was the bombing of the United Nations building in the Federal Capital Territory of Nigeria, Abuja in 2011.[127] In its most extreme incarnation under Abubakar Shekau, the group targeted Muslims who were not in alliance with them.[128] BH decided to slaughter residents in the town of Gwoza when Nigerian forces retook control of it, including some fighters' spouses if the ladies would hinder the group's on-the-run movement or betray it.[129]

As shown in Figure 2, BH's activities are found predominantly in the northern part of Nigeria, especially in the NE, with Maiduguri being the epicenter. This finding reflects the region's reputation as the BH stronghold, with many of its members coming from Borno and Yobe states where both Shekau and Yusuf hailed from.

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[125] Ayoob and Lussier, *The Many Faces of Political Islam*, 157.

[126] Thurston, *Boko Haram*, 181.

[127] Weeraratne, "Theorizing the Expansion of the Boko Haram," 615.

[128] Ayoob and Lussier, *The Many Faces of Political Islam*, 57.

[129] Thurston, *Boko Haram*, 237.

Figure 2.   Map of Nigeria Locating Fatalities as a Result of Boko Haram
Attacks between January 2011 and January 2015.[130]

Kidnapping is another major practice carried out by BH. Maria Rasmussen argues that "the decision to carry out a campaign of kidnappings, or to abstain from kidnapping, should be interpreted as clear evidence of terrorist learning".[131] When a terrorist group believes that kidnappings are effective in attaining targeted goals in the near term, the technique becomes appealing.[132] Over two hundred female students were kidnapped from their dormitory at a secondary school in Chibok town, Borno State in the night of April 14,

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[130] Source: Je Suis Charlie, "Move to Fight Boko Haram: The War Against the West," Word Press, February 8, 2015, https://thewaragainstthewest.wordpress.com/2015/02/08/move-to-fight-boko-haram/.

[131] Rasmussen, "Terrorist Learning," 540.

[132] Rasmussen, 542.

2014.[133] There is growing evidence that many young women including the Chibok girls have been subjected to sexual exploitation by BH terrorists.[134] The Chibok incident showed BH that kidnappings could bring them publicity. The Human Rights Watch estimates that about five hundred women and teenage girls have been abducted by BH terrorists in the last few years.[135] Apart from schools, BH fighters abduct unsuspecting civilians engaged in normal livelihood activities or at worship places. The group murdered many religious and political leaders who opposed their ways. For example, Sheikh Ja'afar Mahmud Adam, Yusuf's teacher, had publicly denounced the group and warned that these ideologues were on the verge of a violent conflict with the state in 2007.[136] The group has killed many more in a similar manner.

4.   Means of Sustainment

BH has a variety of means available in efforts towards sustaining its operations. Notable among these means are domestic and foreign financing supplemented through arms smuggling. Moreover, the terrorists collect ransoms from the abductions of key persons, such as members of non-governmental organizations or foreign workers, and the imposition of illegal taxes/levies on farmers and villagers within their space of influence.[137] It is pertinent to state that northern Nigeria is blessed with fertile land for farming. Usual farming activities have stopped, however, because of BH terrorism. Occasionally, BH seizes trucks carrying fuel, food items, or other supplies of goods. They also receive funding from major terrorist groups like AQIM and use their media for propaganda.[138]

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[133] Weeraratne, "Theorizing the Expansion of the Boko Haram," 619.

[134] Human Rights Watch, *"Those Terrible Weeks in Their Camp": Boko Haram Violence Against Women and Girls in Northeast Nigeria* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2014), https://www.hrw.org/report/2014/10/27/those-terrible-weeks-their-camp/boko-haram-violence-against-women-and-girls.

[135] Weeraratne, "Theorizing the Expansion of the Boko Haram," 618.

[136] Andrew Walker, *"Eat the Heart of the Infidel": The Harrowing of Nigeria and the Rise of Boko Haram* (London: Hurst & Company, 2016), 148, https://clcjbooks.rutgers.edu/books/eat-the-heart-of-the-infidel-the-harrowing-of-nigeria-and-the-rise-of-boko-haram/.

[137] Weeraratne, "Theorizing the Expansion of the Boko Haram," 618.

[138] Weeraratne, 623.

Additionally, BH seems to have access to a robust arms-smuggling network through cross-border transit routes. The group purchases weapons from arms traffickers in illegal markets from contacts allegedly in Libya, Chad, and Cameroon.[139] There have also been cases of weapons carted away from troops and police armories after they were overpowered by BH fighters in isolated locations.[140] On February 4, 2022, the Nigerian financial intelligence unit discovered about 123 companies that were linked to funding terrorism in the country.[141] So far, twenty-six suspected kidnappers and seven co-conspirators have already been arrested.[142] Efforts to arrest more have been ongoing.

B.   ROOT CAUSES OF TERRORISM IN NIGERIA

The root causes of terrorism in Nigeria are multifaceted. Many scholars have identified the origin of BH from bad governance, poor investment in child education, socio-economic activities, inequality, geography, and unequal distribution of natural resources. Historically, indirect rule in Nigeria during the colonial era left a multifaceted legacy with some prominent negative aspects. Northern Nigeria for instance, has a low level of commercial and educational development as opposed to the developed South.[143]

1.   Misconception of Religious Doctrine

Misconceptions of religious doctrine is another problem that contributed to the emergence of BH in addition to the ones highlighted above. Mass education and the emergence of new national and international media outlets have undermined established religious consent, and it has given new voices the chance to contribute to the understanding

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[139] Weeraratne, 625.

[140] Thurston, *Boko Haram*, 201.

[141] Rédaction Africanews, "96 Terrorism Financiers Uncovered in Nigeria," Africanews, February 4, 2022, https://www.africanews.com/2022/02/04/96-terrorism-financiers-uncovered-in-nigeria//.

[142] Rédaction Africanews.

[143] Thurston, *Boko Haram*, 26.

31

of religious knowledge.[144] This idea empowers the likes of Muhammad Marwa and Yusuf to assume that Western education is incompatible with Islam.

The UNDP's National Human Development Report of 2018 reveals that the emergence of BH parallels the long history of the Islamic militant Maitatsine in northern Nigeria.[145] In the early 1980s, under the military regime of General Muhammadu Buhari, Nigeria experienced religious violence led by Cameroon-born Muhammad Marwa, nicknamed "Maitatsine" (meaning "The One Who Curses)."[146] Marwa was established in Kano State, in northern Nigeria, where he preached "Qur'anic-only" doctrine. He cherry-picked verses of the Qur'an out of context as opposed to the usual mainstream practice which requires interpretation in accordance with the Islamic jurisprudence. Marwa encouraged his followers to abandon westernization and modern technology.[147] The Maitatsine group and Nigerian security forces entered into a serious confrontation, which resulted in the deaths of hundreds of people in Kano, Gombe, Yola, and Maiduguri.[148] Marwa died in the process alongside his many followers, and the group became scattered with no central leadership. The ideology still exists despite the ugly incident, but the group never resurfaced in a violent manner.[149] This pattern characterized responses to Maitatsine and several other inter communal and religious clashes in Jos, Kafanchan, Zangon-Kataf, and elsewhere, and was used to suppress BH in February 2009.[150]

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[144] Brandon Kendhammer, *Muslims Talking Politics: Framing Islam, Democracy, and Law in Northern Nigeria* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2016), 13, https://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/M/bo23530296.html.

[145] Mustapha and Meagher, *Overcoming Boko Haram: Faith, Society & Islamic Radicalization in Northern Nigeria*, 8.

[146] Thurston, *Boko Haram*, 62.

[147] Kendhammer, *Muslims Talking Politics: Framing Islam, Democracy, and Law in Northern Nigeria*, 101.

[148] Mustapha and Meagher, *Overcoming Boko Haram: Faith, Society & Islamic Radicalization in Northern Nigeria*, 75.

[149] Mustapha and Meagher, 75.

[150] Thurston, *Boko Haram*, 145.

Nigeria is a secular state according to its constitution, and section 38 (1) of it recognizes the right to freedom of religion.[151] As exemplified by BH, however, religious intolerance exacerbated by the misunderstanding of religious teaching has consistently led to confrontations in the nation. As exemplified by Marwa and Shekau, extremists often twist Islamic teachings by cherry-picking some historic war-related verses out of context and spread a wrong doctrine to their vulnerable followers. For instance, BH argues that western ideology causes massive corruption in the country. Thus, BH advocates for the replacement of Western common law with shariah law without considering the religious diversity of the country.

2. Poor Governance

In order to ensure the rule of law, accountability, and effective management of national resources, good governance requires the exercise of political authority. Many Nigerians see poor governance as the main cause of terrorism and insurgency in Nigeria. The absence of basic amenities, public corruption, large economic differences, and social gaps are all seen as failures of the Nigerian government. Because of the Nigerian government's lack of commitment towards fixing these issues, there is a high prevalence of unemployment, widespread illiteracy, and extreme poverty. As a result, the country's inadequate governance provided the ideal environment for the growth of terrorism and insurgency.

3. Socio-Economic Challenges

Socio-economic challenges are one of the main drivers of terrorism in Nigeria as it encourages others to join terrorist movements. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), between 2018–2019, about 40% of Nigeria's citizens were living below

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[151] Abdulsalami A. Abubakar, *1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as Amended* (Nigerian Federal Ministry of Education, 1999), 15, www.icnl.org/wp-content/uploads/Nigeria_constitution2.pdf.

the poverty line of $1.04 per day.[152] The six northern states of Nigeria, which have a large population and poor literacy rates, are where this problem is particularly severe. In Nigeria's six north-east states, 70% of people on average live in utter poverty.[153] These states, from which BH was born, have been continuously attacked by terrorists for more than ten years. Though some of the group's members come from wealthy families, the leadership of the group took advantage of the poor quality of the education system, unemployment, and the poverty in north-east Nigeria to entice vulnerable youth into joining.

C.   CONCLUSION

To respond effectively to BH, the Nigerian government must keep in mind that poor governance and socio-economic issues are key drivers of BH's violence. By understanding the root causes of BH in Nigeria, its leadership styles, tactics, web of alliances with FTOs, and recruitment strategies, this research can now better assess whether and how the Nigerian government's response to BH is effective or ineffective in addressing the root causes of violence, countering BH's tactics, and preventing their future growth as a violent extremist organization.

The next chapter analyzes and assesses whether resolving the issues of under investment in education and eliminating corruption, things Nigeria would benefit from improving for many reasons, might be most effective measures in preventing radicalization of the population.

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[152] Akintunde Akinleye, "Forty Percent of Nigerians Live Below the Poverty Line: Report," *Aljazeera*, May 4, 2020, https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2020/5/4/forty-percent-of-nigerians-live-below-the-poverty-line-report#:~:text=More%20than%2082%20million%20Nigerians%20live%20on%20less,Akinleye%2FReuters%5D%20Published%20On%204%20May%2020204%20May%202020.

[153] Bankole Abe, "Poverty Rate Worst in Nigeria's North-East, New World Bank Report Says," *International Centre for Investigative Reporting*, November 15, 2021, https://www.icirnigeria.org/poverty-rate-worst-in-nigerias-north-east-new-world-bank-report-says/.

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III.   NIGERIA'S COUNTERTERRORISM STRATEGY AND ASSOCIATED CHALLENGES

The Nigerian government has adopted multiple strategies employing kinetic and non-kinetic means in addressing the occurrences of terrorism and insurgency impacting its national security. In addition to the significant deployment and structuring of the order of battle (ORBAT) of the Nigerian Army (NA), the country has adopted other means to curtail insurgency and terrorism. The chapter is divided into sections A, B, and C. Section A describes the Nigerian Government's response in addressing BH's terrorism. Section B discusses the most notable challenges faced by the government in neutralizing BH. These challenges include a conventional response against an unconventional threat, deployment of hardware equipment, inadequate regional security cooperation, and insufficient intelligence support.

A.   NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

The Nigerian Government response is categorized into four parts. The section first discusses the development of the National Counterterrorism Strategy (NACTEST). Thereafter, it discusses Joint Task Force (JTF) operations, the strategy for a community-based civilian JTF (CJTF), and finally Operation SAFE CORRIDOR.

1.   National Counterterrorism Strategy

The NACTEST was developed as a strong national policy that fuses a hard military approach, information collection, and the use of force, with a soft approach, which seeks to win the hearts and minds of Nigerians. The NACTEST strategy is designed to be deployed against terrorism and violent extremism, alongside armed banditry, kidnapping, militancy, and piracy, among others. The NACTEST is intended to defend Nigerians against the threat posed by Boko Haram and other violent extremists while also securing the nation's borders.

At the center of the NACTEST is the Nigeria's Intelligence Community (NIC), which contributes to the NACTEST by bringing different intelligence organizations under

the same umbrella. To improve coordination among the security agencies, the NIC has been charged with creating reliable information-sharing platforms. In analyzing the NACTEST, the thesis focuses on two segments.

Effective counterterrorism lies in the timeliness and precision of intelligence support. At the inception of intelligence systems in Nigeria in 1976, the various security agencies operated independently.[154] The creation of the NIC could be traced back to 1986 under section 6 of the National Security Agencies Decree put forth by former Nigerian Head of State, General Sani Abacha.[155] The National Security Adviser (NSA) took over the coordinator of National Security functions. Like the United States IC, the NIC coordinates all the activities of military, paramilitary, and civilian agencies under the direction of the NSA. The rise of BH has posed a severe challenge to the NIC, particularly as the group has become more violent since 2010. This increase in violence necessitated the enactment of Nigeria's NACTEST to contain the activities of BH.[156] The NACTEST is an existing document produced through the TERRORISM PREVENTION ACT of 2011, but it requires periodic review as the issues involved are fluid and constantly evolving.[157]

Moreover, due to the increased number of crimes such as banditry, kidnapping, militancy, and separatist agitations, in addition to the NACTEST, Nigeria's National Security Strategy was produced in 2014 to deal with these significant security concerns of the nation.[158] The Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA) provides leadership and ensures the synergy of all the stakeholders' efforts for the nation's benefit and the citizenry's safety.[159] The ONSA has developed robust information-sharing systems to

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[154] Abdulsalami A. Abubakar, "National Security Agencies Documents" (Office of the National Security Adviser, May 23, 1999), 7.

[155] Abubakar, 10.

[156] Goodluck E. Jonathan, "The National Counter-Terrorism Strategy (NACTEST)" (Office of the National Security Adviser, April 2014), 7.

[157] Jonathan, 1.

[158] Muhammadu Buhari, "National Security Strategy" (Office of the National Security Adviser, December 2019), 9.

[159] Abubakar, "National Security Agencies Documents," 6.

enhance synergy amongst security agencies in fighting insurgency and terrorism.[160] NSA Major General (rtd) Babagana Monguno once declared that some of the nation's security personnel lack the necessary tools to combat insecurity.[161] This leader's testimony and the series of BH's successful attacks imply that the coordination among the NICs has not been effective enough to curb the menace of BH in the country.

2. Joint Task Force Operations.

Since the beginning of BH in 2009, Nigerian security forces have operated under different arrangements organized by the government.[162] These arrangements were either organized under a Joint Task Force (JTF) which is a Nigerian entity, or the MNJTF which is a regional initiative, or a combination of both. Some notable code-named operations under the JTF include the work of the Nigerian Army, Nigerian Navy, Nigerian Airforce, and Nigerian Police. These Operations included FLUSH, RESTORE ORDER, ZAMAN LAFIYA (Let's live in Peace), LAFIYA DOLE (Peace by all Means), and Last Hold.[163] Most of these operations were recorded as successes, but some setbacks were also experienced during their execution. For example, a major shortcoming noted during one of the Operation FLUSH operations was the killing of a number of suspected BH group members at the very beginning of the uprising. Among the numerous casualties was the leader of the group, Yusuf, who was executed without a trial.

Moreover, since the beginning of BH's activities, NGOs have accused the Nigerian security forces of massacring many innocent civilians. Human rights organizations have accused the military of a gruesome human rights violations.[164] This approach used by the JTF backfired when many relatives and friends of the massacred victims cited "revenge"

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160 Jonathan, "The National Counter-Terrorism Strategy (NACTEST)," 37.

161 Ahmed Oluwasanjo, "We Don't Have All It Takes to Fight Insecurity: National Security Adviser," *Peoples Gazette*, July 28, 2022, https://gazettengr.com/we-dont-have-all-it-takes-to-fight-insecurity-national-security-adviser/.

162 Mustapha and Meagher, *Overcoming Boko Haram: Faith, Society & Islamic Radicalization in Northern Nigeria*, 137.

163 Mustapha and Meagher, 137.

164 Weeraratne, "Theorizing the Expansion of the Boko Haram," 624.

against the security forces as a motivation for joining BH, eventually strengthening the group.[165]

Consequently, as part of the strategy to address BH, a regional military alliance known as the MNJTF, created in the 1990s to fight banditry in the Lake Chad Basin, was also mandated to combat BH's terrorism.[166] The MNJTF around the lake is composed of troops from the four countries of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC). These countries include Chad, Cameroon, Niger, and Nigeria.[167] This mandate given to the MNJTF is a laudable strategy as it reduces the movement of BH fighters along Nigeria's borders. For instance, before the formation of the MNJTF, the trend was that BH often launched indiscriminate attacks on various communities along Nigeria's borders and escaped into the neighboring countries of the LCBC.[168] This series of attacks constituted an obstacle to the operation of the MNJTF.[169] Due to the issues of sovereignty and international boundaries, it became difficult for the security forces to deal with these tactics adopted by BH. Civilians across Lake Chad were displaced, creating economic and security hardships on struggling state structures.[170] The primary joint operation between the JTF and the MNJTF was Operation Gama Aiki (Finish Work).[171] Thus, Nigeria's strategy in collaborating with the MNJTF has epitomized the immense benefits of an international military coalition in containing BH activities. As implied by Thurston, there is a need for more coordination between the troops of Nigeria and the LCBC.[172] The GTI report of 2022 indicates that religious terrorism declined by 82% in 2021, however, ISWAP (a faction of

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[165] Thurston, *Boko Haram*, 192.

[166] Thurston, 290.

[167] Micheal Nwankpa, "Boko Haram: Whose Islamic State?," James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy Rice University, May 1, 2015, 5.

[168] Weeraratne, "Theorizing the Expansion of the Boko Haram," 625.

[169] Thurston, *Boko Haram*, 242.

[170] Ayoob and Lussier, *The Many Faces of Political Islam*, 160.

[171] Mustapha and Meagher, *Overcoming Boko Haram: Faith, Society & Islamic Radicalization in Northern Nigeria*, 137.

[172] Thurston, *Boko Haram*, 290.

BH that split during the group's internal fight) began to gain ground in the Niger Republic.[173]

### 3.	Strategy for Community-Based Civilian Joint Task Force

As the Nigerian military intensified its campaign against BH, a focused CJTF was set up in June 2013 by the affected northeastern states to support Nigeria's security forces.[174] The CJTF is composed of patriotic and courageous locals of the affected areas organized as a vigilante group to operate alongside the military forces fighting BH. As indigenes who share the same communities with BH terrorists, the CJTF gave reliable intelligence by identifying BH members, arresting them, and often providing information on the terrorists' impending attacks. Because most of the CJTF personnel are locals who understood languages in the area, they were also invaluable in the infiltration of the BH terrorist cells.

Barely a month into the CJTF operation, the combined efforts of the military and the CJTF had ejected the BH fighters from Maiduguri town, the epicenter of BH.[175] These tactics by the military/CJTF, however, yielded a ripple effect. BH then focused its violence on the peripheral axis of Borno, including LGAs like Bama, Biu, Gwoza, Kaga, and Konduga.[176] In May and September 2014, BH terrorists killed the emir of Gwoza and captured Bama, the second-largest city in Borno.[177] Additionally, BH captured military bases and carted away an uncountable number of weapons and equipment in Baga, Mainok, Metele, Malari among others.[178] In one of his videos, Shekau boasted that President Jonathan and Nigerian governors were in trouble as BH terrorists would continue to attack

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[173] Institute for Economics & Peace, *Global Terrorism Index: Measuring the Impact of Terrorism*, Ninth Edition (Sydney: Institute for Economics & Peace, March 2022), 3–5.

[174] Thurston, *Boko Haram*, 207.

[175] Thurston, 208.

[176] Patricia Taft and Nate Haken, "Conflict Bulletin: Borno State," Fund for Peace, May 7, 2014, 1–2, https://fundforpeace.org/2014/05/07/conflict-bulletin-borno-state-may-2014.

[177] Thurston, *Boko Haram*, 225.

[178] Olusegun Akinfenwa, "The Effect of Boko Haram Stockpiling Weapons on the Lake Chad Basin," *Democracy in Africa*, July 21, 2021, https://democracyinafrica.org/the-potential-effect-of-effects-of-boko-haram-stockpiling-weapons-on-the-lake-chad-basin-region/.

and take over towns.[179] Despite this claim, the Nigerian military recaptured those territories one after another.[180] This military effort pushed BH fighters to relocate to the Sambisa Forest, indicating that the group could no longer hold ground, and the region witnessed a sharp decline in terrorist attacks.

Another major setback faced by the Military/CJTF in 2014 was the lack of financial support from the government. Initially, the Borno state government paid each CJTF member $100 per month before the state went bankrupt.[181] This setback gave BH an advantage over the CJTF as the group began to lay ambushes against the vigilantes in Bama, Dawashi, Mainok, and Monguno. While the BH terrorists fought with sophisticated weapons, the CJTF would arm themselves with aging Dane guns or machetes instead.[182]

4. Operation SAFE CORRIDOR

Operation SAFE CORRIDOR is a non-kinetic strategy of Nigeria's government launched in September 2015.[183] The strategy encourages willing and repentant BH members to surrender and embrace peace. It facilitates easy access and passage for terrorists to submit themselves to security forces for subsequent participation in the Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) program. About a thousand BH combatants, men and women, have undergone the DDR program under the operation.[184] Surprisingly, some BH fighters who submitted themselves for repentance are Christians who voluntarily joined the group out of poverty.[185] This revelation shows how

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[179] Thurston, *Boko Haram*, 229.

[180] Thurston, 229.

[181] Thurston, 211–12.

[182] Thurston, 217–18.

[183] Michael I Ugwueze, Elias C Nwgu, and Freedom C Onuoha, "Operation Safe Corridor Programme and Reintegration of Ex-Boko Haram Fighters in Nigeria," *SAGE Journals: Journal of Asian and African Studies*, October 11, 2021, https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/00219096211047996.

[184] Jorge Gutierrez Lucena, "An Exit from Boko Haram? Assessing Nigeria's Operation Safe Corridor," *International Crisis Group*, March 19, 2021, https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/west-africa/nigeria/b170-exit-boko-haram-assessing-nigerias-operation-safe-corridor.

[185] Bamidele Shafa, "Some Boko Haram Members Are Christians –Gen. Shafa, Coordinator, Operation Safe Corridor," *The Sun: Voice of the Nation*, March 14, 2020, https://www.sunnewsonline.com/some-boko-haram-members-are-christians-gen-shafa-coordinator-operation-safe-corridor/.

complicated fighting BH has been for decades. On January 16, 2020, two hundred and forty-four persons were declared and released to the state government for reintegration into society.[186] The success of this strategy over the years has encouraged individuals to surrender. Many Nigerians criticize the program, however, arguing that the repentant terrorists do not deserve forgiveness as they killed uncountable innocent people, including women and children.[187]

B. CHALLENGES OF COUNTERTERRORISM IN NIGERIA

The challenges of counterterrorism in Nigeria are multifaceted as the terrorists keep adopting different methods of operations. Notwithstanding, the security forces often encounter four significant challenges in their fight against BH: the ineffectiveness of a conventional response against an unconventional threat, a lack of appropriate equipment, inadequate regional security cooperation, and insufficient intelligence support and gaps in Nigeria's intelligence community.

1. Conventional Response Against an Unconventional Threat

Constitutionally, the Nigerian Armed Forces are expected to interfere in domestic tension only when it becomes necessary. As enshrined in section 217 of the constitution of the FGN, the armed forces intervene in domestic conflict as a last resort when the local police fail to address the situation.[188] The military, however, is often used for almost all internal disputes which result in new challenges. One of these challenges is fighting unconventional BH with a conventional approach. The changing tactics of the terrorists' asymmetrical warfare make it difficult for the armed forces to contain the terrorist threat. BH combatants launched guerrilla attacks on communities, ambushed military troops along the main supply routes, and planted improvised explosive devices (IEDs) among other hostile actions. These terrorists' unconventional tactics and techniques have been one of

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[186] BBC, "Nigeria Releases Boko Haram Suspects after Rehabilitation," *British Broadcasting Corporation*, January 18, 2016, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-42705381.

[187] QueenEsther Iroanusi, "Nigerians Oppose Commission for 'Repentant' Boko Haram Members," *Premium Times*, March 3, 2020, https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/380026-nigerians-oppose-commission-for-repentant-boko-haram-members.html.

[188] Abubakar, *1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as Amended*.

the significant challenges for the military to contain.[189] The Nigerian military's response became more effective and less conventional overtime. Thus, the need for the security forces to continue to be adaptable to the terrorists' changing strategy is paramount.

2. Deployment of Hardware Equipment

There has been overwhelming evidence that the Nigerian troops have been fighting BH with obsolete equipment since the beginning of the crisis. Billions of dollars earmarked by the Nigerian government to purchase sophisticated equipment for fighting BH went missing due to systemic corruption. This corruption is evident in misappropriating funds allocated to buy military hardware.[190] As a result, many soldiers have become demoralized and lacked the motivation to fight the terrorists. The present government, however, has acquired some military hardware from the United States, including the Super Tucano aircraft.[191] The security personnel operating the new platforms require vigorous training that can enhance coordination with the ground troops. The training would help to avoid bombing friendly or civilian targets like refugee camps, as the Nigerian Air Force regrettably did in 2017 when over fifty people died.[192]

3. Inadequate Regional Security Cooperation

Acts of terrorism continue to thrive within the countries in the Lake Chad Basin. The 2022 GTI ranks Nigeria and Niger among the top ten on its latest list.[193] This revelation necessitates broader regional cooperation to contain BH and ISWAP in the region. The UN global CT strategy demonstrates the need for international cooperation to

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[189] Freedom C Onuoha, "The Islamist Challenge: Nigeria's Boko Haram Crisis Explained," *African Security Review*, July 12, 2010, 54–67.

[190] Yusuf Alli, "Nigerian Troops Fighting Boko Haram with Obsolete Equipment, NSA's Claims Must Be Investigated Says Recently Retired General," *Abuja Reporters News*, March 25, 2021.

[191] Yomi Kazeem, "The U.S. Just Sold Half a Billion Dollars Worth of Military Gear to Nigeria," *Quartz Africa*, July 20, 2022, https://qz.com/africa/1064752/boko-haram-nigeria-has-purchased-593-million-worth-of-military-gear-from-the-us/.

[192] Dionne Searcey, "Nigerian Jet Mistakenly Bombs Refugee Camp, Killing Scores," *The New York Times*, January 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/17/world/africa/nigerian-jet-mistakenly-bombs-refugee-camp-killing-dozens.html.

[193] Institute for Economics & Peace, "Global Terrorism Index: Measuring the Impact of Terrorism," 85.

combat terrorism across the globe.[194] The geostrategic position of Nigeria, its populations, and contributions to other African countries in the past accorded a window of opportunity for the government to call for greater collaboration in defeating terrorism. This practical cooperation with the neighboring countries, however, is inadequate in Nigeria's efforts to address the BHT activities.

4. Identified Gaps in Nigeria's Intelligence Community

Historically, Nigerian Defense Forces have been statutorily structured and trained to fight conventional wars, and they have been especially trained for the confrontation of adversaries with the purpose of securing the territorial integrity of the Nigerian state. As a result, the NIC has traditionally focused heavily on collecting technical intelligence to meet the requirements and difficulties inherent in competing with the sophisticated levels of near-peer adversaries. In a bid to address the asymmetric nature of the internal terrorism threat, the Nigerian government incorporated the CJTF as an additional strategy for fighting BH. The CJTF establishment was mostly welcomed in some quarters because youths that made up the composition of the JTF are indigenes of the area, who can potentially help in providing local HUMINT to the military, as well as identify BHTs or their supporters amongst the populace. There is need, however, for CJTF members to undergo a vetting process to avoid infiltration within the Nigeria's security forces.

Despite the successes recorded, the NIC seems incapable of effectively addressing the changing nature of contemporary terrorist threats. The NACTEST expects to completely account for and counter BH's terrorist actions in Nigeria. The strategy aims at reducing the risk of terrorist attacks against the country from domestic and international domains. An inability on the part of the NIC to connect the dots in information gathering, however, has been a major obstacle in CT. For instance, the NIC came under severe criticism from 76 non-governmental organizations and civil society activists for BH's successful attacks on military and civilian targets across the country without providing

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[194] United Nations, "UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy," United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, May 2019, http://www.un.org/terrorism/workgroup8.shtml.

adequate information.[195] There were several failed CT operations where BH terrorists overran or dislodged defense forces' locations. To some extent, interagency rivalry with regards to the timely sharing of technical intelligence has had its own adverse impact on the success of intelligence-based operations against BH.[196] For instance, The military is also tasked with assisting civil authorities in reestablishing order and preserving domestic security as may be required by the National Assembly. Even the UN performs this function as part of Military Assistance to Civil Authority (MACA).[197] Despite the aforementioned, security organizations in Nigeria have always been intolerant of one another, and they are regularly involved in heated arguments and clashes.

As discussed, BH has been concentrated in the Sambisa Forest, a region devoid of adequate intelligence gathering methods for the NIC to utilize against BH. Sometimes the terrorist organization operates for hours without facing any challenges from security forces. The group has launched several attacks on military and civilian targets, ambushed troops, and kidnapped many victims with minimal or no response from Nigeria's security forces. For example, the repeated successful attacks on various prisons and the freeing inmates across the country demonstrated this problem. These attacks show weak institutional intelligence, reconnaissance, and surveillance capability; poor coordination; and a lack of trust between local HUMINT sources and agents.[198] Nigeria fights terrorism with its old model of unilateral intelligence gathering and sharing. Sometimes, the rivalry between agencies leads to a slow CT response. Terrorism in this era of globalization takes local, national, international, and transnational scopes, making it difficult for the NIC to manage or curb the menace of BH alone as it lacks the modern requisite capabilities.

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[195] Vanguard, "Boko Haram, Banditry: Group Blames Intelligence Failure for Killing of General, Others," *Vanguard Newspaper*, November 25, 2021, https://www.vanguardngr.com/2021/11/boko-haram-banditry-group-blames-intelligence-failure-for-killing-of-general-others/.

[196] Okechukwu Innocent Eme, *Inter-Security Agency Rivalry as an Impediment to National Counter Terrorism Strategy (NACTEST)*, Series Report (Nigeria: African Heritage Institution, November 19, 2018), https://www.africaportal.org/publications/inter-security-agency-rivalry-impediment-national-counter-terrorism-strategy-nactest/.

[197] Okechukwu Innocent Eme.

[198] Thurston, *Boko Haram*, 152–53.

As discussed under the development of NACTEST, the attempts of Nigeria to combat insurgency and terrorism have been hampered by inadequate technology capabilities and failure in intelligence-led counterterrorism operations. Nigeria's creative approach to countering insurgency and terrorism has been hampered by a lack of durable network-centric capabilities with integrated information technology platforms, UAVs, databases, satellite-based monitoring, and fusion centers. The effectiveness of Nigeria's counterterrorism efforts has also been hampered by the lack of human intelligence penetration into the ranks and files of the BH for intelligence gathering.[199] For the kinetic approach, credible intelligence, supply of appropriate equipment, and training of security personnel can play a significant role in determining how best to limit the terrorists' freedom of action and disrupt their communication and supply lines.

C.   CONCLUSION

For a long time, the military operated under an ORBAT for internal security operations. Obsolete equipment, lack of specialized training, and lack of coordination among the troops contributed immensely to the protracted conflict with BH that resulted in human rights abuses and the avoidable bombing of friendly targets. This adoption of a conventional warfare approach to fight BH is contrary to the policies of other affected countries like the United States, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. Despite some recorded successes by Nigeria's security, the adopted method seems ineffective in containing the BH activities. The next chapter discusses tackling these identified gaps in fighting the BH.

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[199] Osumah Oarhe, "The Responses of the Nigerian Defense and Intelligence Establishments to the Boko Haram Security Challenge," *E-International Relations*, November 6, 2013, https://www.e-ir.info/2013/11/06/the-responses-of-the-nigerian-defense-and-intelligence-establishments-to-the-boko-haram-security-challenge/.

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IV. CONCLUSION AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Nigeria is currently facing internal threats to its national security as a result of terrorism, which has continued to slow down socio-economic prosperity and national development. Despite having a huge economic potential and a population of more than 200 million, comprising a vibrant labor force, the country still ranks low in the Global Peace Index 2021 rating.[200] For the past decade and a half, BH has threatened the stability of Nigeria by seeking to establish an "Islamic Caliphate" in the Northeast area of the country, as well as adjoining parts of Cameroon, Chad, and Niger. Since 2009, BH has carried out vicious attacks on public and private properties, killing thousands of people and displacing more than 2 million civilians. Thus, this chapter suggests addressing the BH challenges through focusing on non-kinetic solutions, effective regional and international cooperation, enhanced intelligent sharing and technical support, and collaboration among various ministries, departments, and agencies.

A. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

In terms of its fundamental ideologies, philosophies, and methods of operation, BH appears to be a powerful terrorist group in Nigeria. The importance of adaptability was highlighted by a closer examination of the organizational structures of BH. By effectively evading prosecution, penalties, and observation, the group continually evolves, making it far more difficult to combat. BH has regularly modified its methods and strategies, demonstrating its versatility. The group has proven over time that it is able to function in many diverse areas and states. At the same time, Nigeria has made tremendous efforts to combat BH that led to some successes. Nevertheless, there is need for improvement in combating the BH terrorism threat. This research has therefore identified those areas and proffered some policy options for addressing terrorism in Nigeria.

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[200] Solomon Odeniyi, "Nigeria Ranks 143 in 2022 Global Peace Index," *Punch*, June 20, 2022, https://punchng.com/nigeria-ranks-143-in-2022-global-peace-index/.

B.   FOCUS ON NON-KINETIC SOLUTIONS

As a counter measure, the Nigerian government has continued the deployment of troops in BH-occupied areas. Such efforts by the government against BH have not yielded appreciable degrees of success. Nevertheless, the conventional response using kinetic operations has been the government's preferred approach, but more is required in terms of intelligence-based operations. A good strategy for addressing the BH involves a whole-of-government and a whole-of-society approach incorporating both kinetic and non-kinetic strategies to deal with the underlying grievances of the local populace. The non-kinetic approach includes respect for human rights through improved civil-military-relations (CMR), poverty alleviation programs, and the abolishment of the Almajiri system, which can make an impact to curb the menace of BH. Operation SAFE CORRIDOR recorded tremendous success, but it did not, however, address some other challenges such as the need for education, development, and winning the hearts and minds of the civilian populace. The government should continue to support Operation SAFE CORRIDOR and provide all the required logistics for its performance. This method would encourage many terrorists to have confidence in the initiatives and embrace peace. Adoption of this approach would contribute to CT in Nigeria.

According to Andrew Kydd and Barbara Walter, "citizens of democracies, their fears stoked by media reports and warnings of continued vulnerability, are more likely to demand an end to the attacks."[201] Since the terrorists frequently compete with the government for public support, eliciting/incentivizing public cooperation is clearly one of the keys to successful CT.[202] The involvement of traditional rulers and clerics to counter the misconceived ideology of BH would contribute to preventing the recruitment of more members from the society. These highly esteemed people could help the government win over the hearts and minds of the aggrieved people within their sphere of influence. Additionally, a framework might be created to support the traditional leaders and mainstream clerics in encouraging their people to practice peace and conciliation. Furthermore, the government

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[201] Andrew H. Kydd and Barbara F. Walter, "The Strategies of Terrorism," *Quarterly Journal: International Security* 31, no. 1 (Summer 2006): 62.

[202] Kydd and Walter, 66.

should proscribe any religious group that counters the actual teaching of tolerance, peace, and harmonious coexistence.

The genesis of terrorism could be addressed through good governance and accountability in the country. In this context, practical measures to stop the ongoing growth of terrorism include raising the literacy rate and tackling the extreme poverty in northern Nigeria. This proposal can be put into action by making education free and mandatory for all children up until they earn their secondary school certificate and by ensuring the safety of schools in the affected areas. Accordingly, in the impacted states of Nigeria, the government should create initiatives to end poverty. Hence, the government should consider promptly responding to the areas that were damaged by terrorists, restoring civil authority, rehabilitating the IDP camps, and ensuring an overall improvement in the general social conditions of the region.

Furthermore, to reduce poverty in the affected areas, the governments of the several northern Nigerian states should, as a matter of priority, support the efforts of the federal government by actively diversifying their economies in order to avoid total reliance on federal government oil money. The government should also develop initiatives and foster partnerships between private companies and relevant ministries like agriculture and mining to develop solid minerals and agro-based industries for mechanized farming and exploitation of untapped resources in the northeastern states. This development efforts will create job opportunities and absorb the unemployed youths who have been tools for terrorism. Consequently, BH will be thwarted in its effort to recruit new members. In terms of strengthening security, the government should provide the sophisticated military gear, training, and other logistical support needed for successful counterterrorism operations to various security organizations.

Moreover, the Nigerian government should institutionalize CJTF as part of the state security architecture, especially in the affected states. This consolidation will complement the government efforts and also grant the members of the CJTF relative job security. The smooth execution of NACTEST requires robust synergy and dedication by all ministries, departments, and agencies responsible for the war on terror in the country.

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C. EFFECTIVE REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Strong international collaboration in the fight against terrorism is imperative. Nigeria has so far spearheaded the formation of the MNJTF from the four neighboring LCBC. Their role in combating terrorism at the fringes of Nigeria's border area has been commendable. However, there have been some challenges to holding ground that has been recaptured from BH. Chadian troops, for instance, accused Nigerian military of not taking over the recaptured territory.[203] Nigeria should leverage the various alliances and defense pacts it has, especially with the neighboring countries. A clear-and-hold tactic is the better course of action since it restricts the terrorists' access to possible targets and undermines their strategy.[204] Furthermore, Nigeria can leverage its leadership role in ECOWAS and various peace enforcement operations it has led within the continent, which has given the country the clout to call for collective CT support from the sub-region. The Nigerian government should strengthen the capacity of the ongoing CT effort with the affected neighboring states and the international community through effective collaboration. This development would resolve the issue of border sovereignty and international financing of BH.

The government should also capitalize on the gains of the MNJTF and solicit further cooperation beyond sub-regional countries. Nigeria should, for example, leverage its diplomatic influence to solicit for broader military alliances and support from other African countries in combating terrorism. On this basis, Nigeria should champion both the AU/ ECOWAS counterterrorism summits to sufficiently fund the operation of the existing MNJTF for combating terrorism in the sub-region. Similarly, Nigeria might compel various aid organizations, such the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), to help the terrorism-affected nations' overall socioeconomic conditions. In the end, Nigeria should ask its international allies for assistance in tracing terrorist financing and gathering and analyzing satellite images of ungoverned areas along its northern border.

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[203] Thurston, *Boko Haram*, 544.

[204] Kydd and Walter, "The Strategies of Terrorism," 68.

D. ENHANCED INTELLIGENCE SHARING AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Intelligence obtained directly from human sources either in the form of penetration of terrorist groups with agents/assets or recruitment of cell members and related associates is an operational matter of great importance that can contribute to the disintegration of a terrorist network. Unfortunately, many of CT's more specific tools to counter individuals, like breaking into terrorists' cells and capturing suspects, are not readily apparent to the people they are meant to safeguard.[205] Although BH is less sophisticated than Al Qaeda or ISIS, it changes its tactics frequently. The BH employs both traditional and advanced techniques to sustain aspects of its operations such as propaganda, recruitment, and fundraising amongst others. Within the terrorists' communication systems, HUMINT can provide an additional advantage of obtaining local firsthand knowledge of the terrorists' intentions, plans, and other activities. The IC can encourage the former terrorists to provide information about BH operational plans and its organizational features.

Ultimately, any fight against terrorism is essentially a cause for winning the hearts and minds of local inhabitants—and failure to do so can make it less likely to obtain firsthand human-sourced intelligence that could have a bearing on the success of the war on terror. In this sense, the success of a CT effort lies in the effective conduct of intelligence operations to thwart the activities of the terrorist group. Intelligence is an essential element of CT that can produce critical information about terrorists and their plans or intentions as well as their tactics, techniques, and procedures.

Furthermore, there is need to establish various intelligence fusion centers across the country where all relevant intelligence agencies can share and maintain the database of arrested terrorists. Kydd and Walter noted that the ideal reaction to terrorists' provocation is the selective tactic that causes the least amount of collateral damage.[206] However, this kind of response demands large amounts of credible intelligence. Acquisition and employment of sophisticated UAVs and CUAVs in addition to the existing ISR platforms will enhance the battlefield intelligence and significantly improve the ongoing efforts in fighting BH.

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[205] Kydd and Walter, 71.

[206] Kydd and Walter, 72.

To address the rank-and-file of BH, the government must continue to provide an avenue for de-radicalization, supporting and encouraging conditions for the terrorists to surrender. The international community has continued to express concern over Nigeria's response in addressing the menace of the group. Professors Matei and Halladay observe that "balancing security with transparency remains a work in progress."[207] For the government to get the support of the international community, it must orchestrate all its CT campaign under the ambit of law and avoid activities that would be viewed as unjust or a war crime.

Strict monitoring of terrorists' financing would contribute considerably to addressing the external influence and support from international terrorist sponsors. In Nigeria, people normally obtain sim cards and communicate without formal registration, and the BH terrorists often exploit this to communicate and perpetrate their vile acts without detection. As mandated by the Ministry of Communication, every citizen must register his/her sim card. However, this mandate has not been effectively implemented. The government should implement the registration of purchased cards and ensure that same should be linked to the individual's bank account number and the national identity card for easy identification and recognition.

Similarly, Nigeria requires technological approaches to fighting terrorism and intelligence-led operations. This method of targeted killing is proven to be effective in eliminating most wanted terrorists. Therefore, Nigeria's government should consider purchasing surveillance equipment such as UAVs and Combat UAVs. This equipment would contribute to timely decimation of terrorists and at the same time reduce risk to Nigeria's security operatives.

Finally, the establishment of the CJTF by the Nigerian government in the fight against BHTs has served as a promising strategy that improved intelligence collection from civilian sources. The CJTF proved its worth by contributing towards attaining an appreciable level of

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[207] Florina C. Matei and Carolyn Halladay, *The Conduct of Intelligence in Democracies: Processes, Practices, Cultures* (United Kingdom: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2019), 17, https://www.rienner.com/uploads/5cc34ebfcc2a4.pdf#:~:text=2The%20Conduct%20of%20Intelligence%20in%20Democracies%20Paradoxically%2C%20however%2C,open%2C%20free%20society%20that%20democracies%20seek%20to%20sustain.

success in the fight against BH. Since its inception, reports have revealed that efforts of the CJTF provided credible HUMINT, which led to the decimation of several BH members. Although satellite technologies like GPS and other locating devices are extremely useful tools to support CT, they have limitations; as such, their accuracy often cannot compare with credible HUMINT. Some of the CJTF members who were formerly hunters, for example, fully understood the geography of Sambisa Forest (the stronghold of BH), and thus vectored defense forces who were able to conduct successful raids on the terrorists' camps.

E.   COLLABORATION AMONG VARIOUS MINISTRIES, DEPARTMENTS, AND AGENCIES

From the analysis conducted in this thesis, it is counterintuitive for the military alone to fight terrorism. The ONSA needs to formally revise and update CT policy to fit with present moment. Various ministries, departments, and agencies should be involved in and be responsible for the overall national action plan to address terrorism. For instance, looking at the three contributing factors to insecurity in Nigeria—drugs, motorcycles, and SALW—it is evident that none are manufactured in Nigeria. They come through Nigeria's borders illegally. Thus, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should therefore liaise with countries such as Turkey, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia to monitor, expose, and prosecute some alleged BH sponsors, while the Ministry of Interior that oversees paramilitary organizations like police, customs, and immigration should work thoroughly and responsibly to stop the flow of those items into Nigeria.[208] This effective collaboration would drastically reduce the importing of arms and ammunition through the Nigeria's borders.

From an internal perspective, the Nigerian government must address the issue of corruption through the cooperation of Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and Ministry of Justice to prevent misappropriation of funds budgeted for fighting terrorism without interference. The worst form of corruption is a fake fight against corruption. The EFFCC must be determined and transparent enough to bring those who misappropriate funds to book irrespective of their status. For instance, many soldiers fighting BH deserted the

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[208] The Sun Newspaper, "Boko Haram and Foreign Sponsors," *The Sun: Voice of the Nation*, December 8, 2019, https://www.sunnewsonline.com/boko-haram-and-foreign-sponsors/.

military because they were not equipped properly despite the billions of dollars being spent for fighting BH terrorism. Unless major corruption is addressed in Nigeria, terrorism and insurgency will continue to flourish.

The Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs should step up public awareness initiatives in favor of CT in Nigeria by working with the Ministries of Culture, Youth, and Development, as well as National Orientation Agency (NOA). Religious leaders should also be invited to participate, but it should be acknowledged that individual clerics' contributions will vary according to their goals, methods of action, intensity, and regularity.[209] Most clerics have not aided in the radicalization of people; in fact, they can be significant resources in CT efforts. As Mohammed Hafez argues, "human bombs can make last minute changes to ensure their operation is successful. Their psychological effect on those observing the act of "martyrdom," whether friend or foe, is powerful."[210] In this regard, mainstream religious clerics and traditional rulers should be encouraged to sensitize the society on the danger of joining BH and their suicide mission. Likewise, scholars should discourage the ongoing practice of the Almajiri system, which is common in the north, especially in Maiduguri, the epicenter of BH.[211] Accordingly, the Nigerian government should abolish the Almajiri system of education, as the majority of BH members come from the youth exposed to that system.

The Ministries of Information and Communication also have a role to play in CT. Media and terrorists, although not accomplices, are involved in a symbiotic relationship. Sensitizing those media outlets to refrain from reporting any news that directly or indirectly supports terrorism should be a priority. These efforts would assist in containing the BH media propaganda. Monitoring terrorists' communications instead of cutting them off, increasing incentives for terrorists to fight for the government, or inserting misinformation into the terrorists' communications via online forums used by these organizations can be useful

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209 Mustapha and Meagher, *Overcoming Boko Haram: Faith, Society & Islamic Radicalization in Northern Nigeria*, 34.

210 Mohammed Hafez, "The Symbolic Dimension of Suicide Terrorism," in *Root Causes of Suicide Terrorism: The Globalization of Martyrdom* (New York and Oxford: Routledge, 2006), 54–80, https://1library.net/article/mohammed-hafez-pedahzur-root-causes-suicide-terrorism-bokos.zl21lw2q.

211 Mustapha and Meagher, *Overcoming Boko Haram: Faith, Society & Islamic Radicalization in Northern Nigeria*, 226.

tactics.[212] Exploiting BH's weaknesses, disrupting their daily activities by making them harder to do, would be one of the most effective ways of fighting terrorism. However, balancing between achieving CT goals and protecting civil liberties values should be maintained when intercepting communications.

Since the time that BH introduced kidnapping for ransom as one of their tactics, many farmers in the affected areas abandoned farming. This lack of farming, coupled with the Covid pandemic, created food insecurity in Nigeria. As a result, the prices of food items have been continuously increasing. While the military continues to provide security in the northeast, the Ministry of Agriculture needs to empower the northern farmers through anchor borrower programs and mechanized farming to utilize the fertile land in the north. This approach would engage the unemployed youths in a productive activity and serve as a source of food production for the society and the nation at large.

F. CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing analysis, the most critical and feasible recommendations for combating BH successfully are to establish effective regional and international cooperation as well as collaboration among various ministries, departments, and agencies in the Nigerian government. These recommendations could complement the efforts of the Nigerian government in curbing the menace of BH terrorism. By working together, local and national government entities in Nigeria can ensure border security, while the government of Nigeria can partner with its neighbors and the international community to choke the flow of external resources that enable the terrorists, as first steps in a comprehensive approach.

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[212] Jacob N. Shapiro, *The Terrorist's Dilemma: Managing Violent Covert Organizations* (Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2013), 262, https://press.princeton.edu/books/hardcover/9780691157214/the-terrorists-dilemma.

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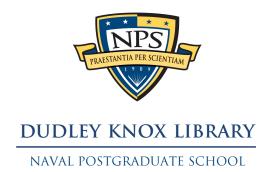
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