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State Failure, Terrorism and Global Security: An Appraisal of the Boko Haram Insurgency in Northern Nigeria

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The magnitude of the disaster of September 11, 2001 brought to bear a general recognition that terrorism is a global problem that required urgent attention. The response was a war on terror against groups defined as murderous oppressive, violent and hateful and whose. Islamic radicalism is fingered as responsible for the attack and seen as threat to peace, security and prosperity of the global community. However, it has become a common refrain that failed states are the fertile grounds for terrorism which threatens national security and invariably the global security as well. Nigeria, is one such state where elements of failure has given rise to groups like Boko Haram that use terror and violence to make demands on the state. This paper examines how the characterization of Nigeria as a failed state, has impacted in making the country breeding ground of terrorism. Specifically the paper highlights the conditions necessitating the emergence and persistence of Boko Haram terrorist sect. The paper relies on secondary data sourced from books, journal articles and reports of periodicals and employed descriptive analysis to establish the trends, Findings show that features of a failed state as articulated in the literature are present in Nigeria. The paper concludes that these factors create the condition for terrorism to thrive in Nigeria and consequently threaten the socio-economic stability of the country and to an extent the globe. The paper recommends that to deal with these challenges, the Nigerian state need to re-examine its character so as to address the issues that give rise to acts of terrorism as well as re-strategise on how to provide the needs of the vast majority of its citizens.

Keywords: Boko Haram, Nigeria. Islamic radicalism, terrorism, state failure

Introduction

The September 11, 2001 attack on the twin towers in New York and Pentagon building in Washington brought to the fore a general recognition that terrorism is a global problem that required urgent attention. The response was a war on terror against groups defined as a murderous, oppressive, violent and hateful, whose Islamic radicalism is fingered as responsible for the attack and seen as threat to peace, security and prosperity of the global community. What came in consonance with the war on terror is the phrase 'axis of evil' popularized by the former American president George W Bush and as the war assumed global dimension, terrorists were driven from their previous safe heavens as country's were either for or against in this war. Given this scenario, it has become a common refrain that failed states are the fertile grounds for terrorism which threatens their national security and invariably the global security as well. Nigeria is one such states where state failure has given rise to insurgent groups like Boko Haram which uses terror and violence to make demands on the state. This paper examines how the characterization of Nigeria as a failed state has impacted in making the country breeding ground for

terrorism. Specifically the paper highlights the conditions necessitating the emergence and persistence of Boko Haram terrorist sect. This is imperative given the erroneous notion that Nigeria is free of terrorism and Nigerians are not terrorists. This erroneous notion was widely accepted within the academic community and so reflected in the dearth of studies of this nature that is context specific to the Nigerian environment. This paucity of studies on terrorism has also impacted on negatively on administrators and policy makers fashioning out acceptable and effective response to Boko Haram terrorism menace in the country.

Methodology

This paper adopted the position of Merriam (1988) also supported by Marshall and Rossman (1989) that collection of data and analysis in a qualitative research is a simultaneous process. And as Schatzman and Strauss (1973) contended, data analysis in qualitative research entails the classification of things, persons and events as well as the properties which characterizes them. Jacob (1987), however posits that in a typical qualitative

research, the researcher all through the data analysis process, code their data by using as many categories as possible. Further more, patterns and themes are identified and described (Agar, 1996). As such, data analysis in this paper was organized categorically and chronologically. It was reviewed and coded. In aligning with the view of Merriam (1988), there was a chronicling of the list of major ideas that surfaced. The aim was to find out the interplay of interests driving the debate on terrorism in the globe and this approach provides a useful way of understanding the phenomenon. Therefore the major source of data was obtained through literature survey of books, reports of dailies and periodicals, government publications, conference papers and seminar reports among other. Descriptive analysis was employed to analyse the data gathered which was presented in a narrative.

Terrorism and Global Security

According to Oche and Dokunbo (2001), terrorism originates from the Latin word, *terrere*. It is characterized by the desire to attain its goals by frightening those it believe stands on its way. However there are little consensus as to the root causes of terrorism, whether they bear political, economic or social. In terms of political terrorism, Shultz and Sloan (1980) defined it as the threat and / or use of extra normal form of political violence, in varying degrees, with the objective of achieving certain political goals or objectives. This is to influence the behaviour and attitude of certain groups. It has basically political motives. In addition to this Cline and Alexander (1987, p.215) defined terrorism as a deliberate employment of violence or the use of violence by sovereign states as well as some national groups, assisted by sovereign states in order to attain strategic and political objectives through the violation of law.

Lodge (1981) identified three broad types of terrorism. They are revolutionary terrorism, aimed at political revolution, sub- revolutionary terrorism which has political motives other than revolution and repressive terrorism aimed at restraining certain groups, individuals or forms of behaviour deemed to be undesirable. Shultz and Sloan (1980, p.2) identified international, transnational, domestic and state terrorism as different types of political terrorism. Oche and Dokunbo (2001) identified the broad types as the non- state terrorism, state sponsored terrorism and the state directed terrorism or establishment terrorism. However, our interest is on the domestic terrorism which is an action initiated by an individual or group of nationals within its own borders (Shultz and Sloan, 1980 p.2).

Karen De Young and Dobbs (2001) emphasized that the threats of terrorist attacks are not necessarily from indigenous extreme-left movements but from self determination struggles and struggles against injustices which sometimes coincides with or are given moral justification through the use of religion. Terrorism is an act that is a criminal violation if committed within the jurisdiction of any state. The acts appear to be intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population, influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion, or affect the conduct of a government by assassination or kidnapping. The act of terrorism transcend national boundaries in terms of the means of which they are accomplished, the persons they appear intended to coerce or intimidate, or the locale in which the perpetuation operate or seek asylum. In the past, what we watched and read were the more newsworthy events that have filled the media. In these present days, terrorists have been going about their deadly business aided by the evolution in technology leading the invention of new weapons of mass destruction increasing their destructive capability invariably increasing the threat of terrorism.

Terrorism is threatening the viability of a nation-state, bringing about economic crisis, instability, a threat to tourism, energy-sector, civil-aviation, maritime, transportation and civil transportation. The problem of terrorism has refused to go away instead; it has kept people in perpetual fear, robbing people of freedom and security. Thus the world as a whole is voicing concerns over the menace of terrorism, extremism and radicalism. No country goes unaffected by international terrorism, for these reasons the global community can no longer turn a blind eye on terrorism (Nimma, 2007).

The world now lives in fear. We are afraid of everything. We are afraid of flying, afraid of certain countries, afraid of bearded Asian men, afraid of shoes airline passengers wear; of letter and parcels, of white powder. The countries allegedly harbouring terrorists, their people, innocent or otherwise, are afraid too. They are afraid of war, of being killed and maimed by bombs being dropped on them, by missiles from hundreds of miles away by unseen forces. They are afraid because they have become collaterals to be killed because they get in the way of the destruction of their countries (Mahathir bin Mohamad, 2003).

The above statement brings bare the experiences and changes the world is experiencing that are not only impacting on individuals, but also affecting countries both positively and negatively. According to Agbu (2004), one of the major features of the current conjecture in international politics and the international security is the appearance on

international terrorism in a more deadly and impersonal fashion. Fundamentally the linkage between terrorism and globalization can be more easily examined and explained by focusing on the national security ramifications. It is noteworthy to state that the globalization that has made terrorism what it is today is the integration of countries into the world economy through increased trade, investment, short term capital flows and international migration of skilled and unskilled labour (Chishti, 2002, p.227). Terrorism has been in practice throughout history and throughout the world. It is affecting global security in the 21st century because it is becoming more rampant. Terrorism has a negative impact on global security, which affects every nation because they are all connected. Today, terrorism affects the foreign policy of many nations. A huge number of lives have been destroyed, and properties worth billions also destroyed. People live in perpetual fear of insecurity, because they do not know the next turn of events, where it would take place and the propensity of the effects. As a result of modern and sophisticated technology, the world has become a global village, hence the impact of terrorism on global security.

International terrorism continues to pose difficult challenges to state and human security in the international system. Apart from the fear of insecurity terrorism brings about, it also reflects in economic decline, unemployment, inability to pay salaries of workers, debt burden; it brings about poverty and a general sense of frustration amongst the victims. Crime has had this effect in the inner cities as people. People are afraid to walk the streets at night. Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness are inalienable rights according to the universal Declaration of human right to ensure domestic tranquility; such can not co- exist with a state of terrorism.

One cannot afford the destruction of cars, buildings, and airplanes which are frequent targets of terrorists. Other costs are more hidden, but are just as costly as direct demolition. "During the last decade, it is estimated that U.S. corporations, which have been a prime target of overseas terrorism have paid between \$125 and \$200 million dollars in ransom. Other hidden costs are incurred when government organizations and private companies spend thousands of dollars to upgrade and maintain facilities that are resistant to terrorist attack. Each year billions of dollars are spent to train and equip government and private personnel to deter terrorism (Johnston, 1993).

The economic impact of terrorism can be calculated from a variety of perspectives. There are direct costs to property and immediate effects on productivity, as well as longer term indirect costs of responding to

terrorism. Economists and others have tried to calculate the economic impact of terrorism for years in areas beset by attacks, such as Spain's Basque region and Israel. In the last several years, most analyses of terrorism's economic costs begin with an interpretation of the costs of the September 11, 2001 attacks (Zalman, 2011).

In the United States, Defence and Homeland Security spending are by far the largest cost of the attack. The human cost, of course, is incalculable. The direct cost of the September 11 attack has been estimated at somewhat over \$20 billion (Krugman, 2004). Glen Hodgson, the Deputy Chief Economist for the Export Development Canada (EDC) explained the costs in 2004:

The US alone now spends about US \$500 billion annually--20 percent of the US federal budget--on departments directly engaged in combating or preventing terrorism, most notably Defense and Homeland Security. The Defense budget increased by one-third, or over \$100 billion, from 2001 to 2003 in response to the heightened sense of the threat of terrorism – an increase equivalent to 0.7 per cent of US GDP. According to Hodgson (2004) expenditures on defense and security are essential for any nation, but of course they also come with an opportunity cost; those resources are not available for other purposes, from spending on health and education to reductions in taxes. A higher risk of terrorism, and the need to combat it, simply raises that opportunity cost (cited in Kazoun, 2007).

Global Responses to Terrorism

According to State Department figures, "...the number of international terrorist incidents increased 22 percent, from 456 in 1990 to 557 last year." The sheer volume of incidents and the growing number of organizations involved in terrorist activity call for drastic measures to combat this international phenomenon threat covering the entire globe (Johnston, 1993).

Haven outlined the effects of terrorism and weighing the cost over the benefits it is obvious that terrorism is not a friend of man but a destructive force impinging on the growth and development of the economy. International terrorism may be considered the second most serious threat to global peace and security after the fear of a nuclear conflagration by or between the major powers.

One thing has appeared to be true, that the world is a global village tied together by strings or webs of cooperation, dependence and interdependence amongst states. For these reasons most issues if not all, confronting humanity like international terrorism

has not been seen as a single state's own trouble but a concern of all and have likewise made many countries to become conscious of the need to increase internal and international security and has dictated that countries cooperate to counter it. Since September 2001, isolationism has retreated and the U.S. government supported by public opinion and congress has pursued a highly international agenda (Goldstein & Pevehhouse, 2007). Terrorism strikes at the social fiber of a country. "The resilience and viability of the social fabric of a country facing terrorism will be determined by the intensity and extent of the terrorism and the government's ability to maintain legitimacy and suppress the terrorism" (Johnston, 1993). The United States launched the "global war on terrorism"

There is need for collective action because actions taken by single countries or a coalition of countries, without U.N. support, to thwart terrorism outside the boundaries of their countries face ridicule and scorn, even when it aimed at working for the good of all nations. The umbrella of the United Nations sanctions is the only way efforts against terrorism can receive the legitimacy required to defeat this enemy.

The major benefit in having a multi-national force or a national force sanctioned by the U.N. is the force's ability to have credibility around the globe (Johnston, 1993). The counterterrorist forces must have the backing of the world community to ferret out terrorists in all countries. If nations balk at the use of a U.N.-sanctioned counterterrorist forces being used within their borders, other more drastic measures, including the use of conventional forces, must be used to insure compliance in counterterrorist operations. Only by developing collective international synergy can an international counterterrorist force be effective.

Apart from the efforts of single states, some states have formed regional alliance or cooperation to combating terrorism. On the 29th of April 2007 at New Delhi, Heads of the eighth South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC) nations attending the association's 16th Summit began Wednesday in Thimpu, Capital of Bhutan, pledged to jointly combat the challenges of terrorism and climate change. Leaders from the countries, India Nepal, Pakistan, Maldives, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka pitched for collective

approach in dealing with the effects of climate change and terrorism (Johnston, 1993).

Indicators of Failed State and Terrorism

The fallout from the global war on terror demonstrates that the problem of weak and failing states is far more serious. Failed states such as Somalia, Afghanistan and Yemen have become breeding grounds for terrorism that elicit the most concern (Meyers & Choi, 2006). Terrorists operations flourish more in weak or failed states. The breakdown of authority, law and order gives them the ability to conduct their operations without significant interference. Weak and failed states hold a lot of attractions for terrorists. Sometimes, failed states flourish their smuggling and trafficking in order to raise funds (Nimma, 2007).

But what does it meant to say that a nation are "failed" state? Williams (2007) admits this is exactly the true meaning of the phrase -- a morally reprehensible government that breeds terrorism. Indeed, there is theoretical support for the idea that a failed (or collapsed) state, from the standard Weberian (Max Weber, a famous sociologist) point of view, is one that has lost control of its monopoly over coercive violence or the legitimate use of coercive instrument. However, Call (2008) argues that the concept has little utility, having come into the lexicon via the 2002 National Security Strategy of the United States (published after 9/11) which saw any failed, fragile, stressed, weak, or troubled state as a possible seedbed for al-Qaeda terrorism. In the strictest sense, a failed state should mean the same thing as a collapsed state (where a recognizable government doesn't exist), and there has only been one example in the 20th century -- Somalia, from 1991-2004 (and perhaps also Lebanon, Mexico, and others, but the point being Africa provides more than its fair share of failed states by anyone's country). Zartman (1995), is clearer on the meaning of a "collapsed" state, says that collapse refers to the disintegration of government functions (when the public sector disappears).

Like other concepts in the social sciences that have no singularly acceptable definition, nobody seems to know the true meaning of a "failed" state, but definitional attempts abound (as stated above), and "indicators" are often taken as proxies for definition. Some well-known indicators appear in the table below:

Table 1: Rotberg (2004) foreign policy indicators of failed state.

Rotberg's Indicators	Foreign Policy's Indicators
1. Civil war(s)	1. High population density
2. Disharmony between communities	2. Communal group violence
3. Loss of control over regions	3. "Brain drain"
4. Growth of criminal violence	4. Institutionalized political exclusion
5. Cessation of legislature and judiciary	5. Drop in GNP
6. Informal privatization of social services	6. Rise of private militias or guerrillas
7. Corruption	7. Corruption
8. Loss of legitimacy	8. Higher poverty rates for some ethnic groups
9. Declining per capita GDP	9. Human rights violations
	10. Fragmentation of ruling elite

Source: O'Connor (2011, p.1)

Rotberg (2004) appears to have a definition that focuses on a failed state as one in anarchy. The picture one gets from their indicators emphasizes loss of control over people and territory. What some people may mean by failed state is the status of "rogue state" which generally refers to an expansionist nation (expansion by terror or asymmetric warfare) which intends to do some harm in the world. Then, there is the more diplomatic term, "pariah state" which refers to those who abuse their population but do not seriously threaten anyone beyond their borders. What's causing the confusion, quite possibly, is henpecking over the notion of territory, or scope of the problem. A failed state involves more than loss of territory.

When any type of problem, from poverty to disease, from corruption to ethnic cleansing, from unemployment to environmental disasters, is mentioned, the name "Africa" is used as a worst case scenario. Some people even employ the name "Africa" as if it is one country, pushing the reality that it is a continent comprising of 53 sovereign nations aside. Nonetheless, they are correct, in some sense, in that most of the nations of the continent are extremely poor, devastated by unjustifiable wars, ravaged by corruption and lack of good governance, failing to meet basic needs for their citizens, and governed by authoritarian dictators. Provided that, the region is the "hotspot" of horrific things in the world - frequent wars, violations of human rights, terrorism and lack of justice. Somalia, Darfur, Libya, Egypt, Ivory Coast and others. There are also many active conflicts in Angola, Algeria, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and they have remained political disasters of the world as they get more chaotic each day to the extent that the world worries that it might turn out to be a "safe haven" for terrorist groups like Al-Qaeda. Terrorists have found sanctuary or have operated in many countries around the world. They have the ability to strike in any country where it promotes their cause (Teklemariam, 2010).

The Boko Haram Militia Sect

Northern Nigeria has been a hotbed of religious uprising, most often between the dominant Muslims and minority Christian in the region. Nigerian Islam has become heterogeneous with the springing up of many Islamic sects. The notable examples are the Izala movement, the Shiite movement and many local Islamic sects that have limited expansion. These sects are opposed to the traditional Nigerian Islamic teachings of the Sufi brotherhood and are gradually alienating themselves from the main Islamic body. The religious crises including the *Maitasini* uprising of the 1980s to the sharia riots of 2000-2001, as well as recurring Jos religious crisis since the fourth republic dispensation has mostly been spontaneous and contained through massive deployment of security operatives who are ordinarily taken unawares by these developments (Philips, 2010)

The emergence of Boko Haram sect and their operation is a departure from the trend of religious uprising in northern Nigeria. For instance in July 2009, the group which had been lying low before now, unleashed a dimension of violence that has never been seen in Nigeria, this Taliban like attack is the most serious outbreak of another kind of religious violence (The Economist 2009). The fighting lasted from 26 to 30 July 2009, affecting five northern states. In the aftermath of the July 2009 revolt, over 3 500 people were internally displaced, more than 1 264 children orphaned, and over 392 women widowed. In addition, 28 policemen and five prison warders, as well as an undisclosed number of soldiers, had been killed. Properties destroyed include 48 buildings, three primary schools, more than 12 churches and a magistrate's court.

State security forces succeeded in arresting some members of the sect, who were later detained in prison facilities in the affected states. Many of those arrested were held at the Bauchi prison pending trial. Surviving members of the sect had promised to

avenge the killing of their members and on 7 September 2010, over 300 members of the Boko Haram Islamic sect did launch an attack on Bauchi central prison and freed their members detained since the July 2009 revolt (JWVG 2010). After freeing other inmates of the prison, they later set the facility and vehicles packed within the premises ablaze. The group leader, Malam Muhammed Yusuf was killed on July 30, 2009. Footage obtained by Aljazeera and published in several Nigerian newspapers showed Mohammed Yusuf mutilated body still wearing handcuffs (Aljazeera, 2010). Even though authorities in Nigeria were hopeful that the execution of Muhammed Yusuf said to be a charismatic leader would eventually lead to the disintegration of the group, evidence emerging proves the contrary as exemplified with the September 7 attack on the Bauchi prisons by the group to free its members. Since then, other attacks by the group had been staged against government interests and security operatives not only in Borno and Bauchi states but in most northern states including the Federal Capital Territory.

The exact date of the emergence of the Boko Haram sect is mired in controversy, especially if one relies on media accounts. The group is known to the Nigerian authority to have existed since 1995, under the name of *Ahlulsunna wal'jama'ah hijra* (Taiwo, 2008). The sect has subsequently flourished under various names like the Nigerian Taliban, Yusufiyah sect, and Boko Haram (literally meaning 'Western education is a sin'). The name 'Nigerian Taliban' is used in a derogatory sense by the local people who despise the philosophy and teachings of the sect. Although the sect is fashioned like the Taliban in Afghanistan, it is widely believed that it has no formal links with its Afghan counterpart.

Boko Haram first took up arms against state security forces on 24 December 2003 when it attacked police stations and public buildings in the towns of Geiam and Kanamma in Yobe State. Members occupied the two buildings for several days, hoisting the flag of Afghanistan's Taliban movement over the camps. A joint operation of soldiers and police called 'operation flush' dislodged the group after killing 18 and arresting dozens of its members (Suleman, 2007). On 31 December 2003 Boko Haram left the village and dispersed into other northern states after inscribing the word 'Taliban' on a captured vehicle¹. In 2004 it established a base called 'Afghanistan' in Kanamma village in northern Yobe State, on the border with the Republic of Niger (Afowadeji, 2009).

On 21 September 2004 members attacked Bama and Gworza police stations in Borno State, killing several policemen and stealing arms and ammunition.

Members later set the Gwoza police station ablaze. Apart from a few isolated skirmishes with the police, the sect received marginal attention until the middle of 2007 and again in 2008 when their militant activities came under surveillance by security operatives in Abuja.

On July 2009, members of the sect staged the most spectacular attacks on all institutions that represent the Nigerian state. The uprising affected five northern states, namely Bauchi, Borno, Kano, Katsina, and Yobe. A military campaign led to the killing of over 700 members of the group including the leader Muhammed Yusuf, while several others were arrested and detained for formal trial.

In terms of organization, late Muhammad Yusuf was then the Commander in Chief (*Amir ul-Aam*) or the leader of the entire group. He has two deputies (*Na'ib Amir ul-Aam I & II*). Each State where they exist has its own *Amir* (Commander/Leader), and each Local Government Area where they operate also has an *Amir*. Below the Local Government *Amirs* are the remaining followers. They also organized themselves according to various roles, such as Soldiers and Police, among others (DCCN, 2009).

The philosophy of the sect is rooted in the practice of orthodox Islam. Orthodox Islam in their interpretation abhors Western education and the civil service bureaucratic system. This explains why the sect is popularly known as the Boko Haram, literally meaning 'Western education is a sin' (Boyle, 2010). However, a statement allegedly released on August 2009 by the acting leader of Boko Haram, Mallam Sanni Umaru, rejected such a designation. The sect in a pamphlet circulated in front of the Bauchi Prison and on major streets in Bauchi after 7 September attack again frowned at the name "Boko Haram", stating that its name is "*Jama'atu Ahlissunnah lidda'awati wal Jihad*", meaning a group advocating for righteousness and holy war (Daily Trust, 2010).² Their ideological mission is primarily to overthrow the Nigerian state and then impose strict Islamic Sharia law in the entire country (Sunday Vanguard, 2010). Boko Haram draws its members mainly from disaffected youths and unemployed graduates, including former *Almajiris* (Street Children) who migrated from the rural areas to urban areas in search of better means of livelihood or to study under renowned Islamic teachers in cities like Kano, Zaria, Kaduna, and Maiduguri. The sect also has some well-educated, wealthy and influential people as members. The sect is estimated to have over 280 000 members across the 19 states of northern Nigeria, Niger Republic, Chad and Sudan.

Established terrorist organizations and states that sponsor terrorism were behind most international terrorism in the 1970's and 1980's. But in recent

years, ad hoc groups of terrorists, sometimes loosely linked, and often claiming to act on behalf of Islam, have been the most dynamic elements in international terrorist attacks. These are deviants and fanatics who are betraying the tenets of Islam, just as other terrorists who have sometimes used Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, and other religions to justify violence and in the process distort and abuse their faiths (Wilcox, 2000). The Nigerian situation is a localized but with great potential international ramification.

New Radical Islam and the Boko Haram Movement in Nigeria

Islam in Nigeria has witnessed a rise in the numbers of radical Islamic sects notably among them, the Boko Haram, Maitatsine, Darul Islam among others (Orintunsin, 2010). These sects have sometimes resorted to the use of violence in a bid to realizing their ambitions on the wider Islamic and Nigerian populations as a whole. The rise of this radical movement has been attributed partly to the poor socio economic infrastructures and poor governance in Nigeria. Secondly, the rise of these sects has been linked to the increase and aiding of religious extremist by politicians for their selfish ambitions.

The activities of some of these sects has in recent times led to the loss of lives and properties as they move about destroying government facilities which they see as legacies or replica of western cultures in their various communities. These religious campaigns have seen an increase in gun battles between the members of these sects and security forces with loss of lives witnessed on both sides. In Nigeria, states to contain with the activities of these militant Islamic sects include Bauchi State, Borno State, Yobe State, Kano State and Katsina State.

The term "Boko Haram" comes from the Hausa word 'boko' meaning "Western or non-Islamic education" and the Arabic word 'haram' meaning "sin." This literally means "Western or non-Islamic education is a sin" (Austin, 2010). This group is a controversial Nigerian militant Islamist group that seeks the imposition of Shariah law in the northern states of Nigeria, rejects western influences and values, modern science and seeks to overthrow the federal government. In a 2009 BBC interview, Yusuf stated that the belief that the world is a sphere is contrary to Islam and should be rejected, along with Darwinism and the theory that rain comes from water evaporated by the sun. It becomes known internationally following sectarian violence in Nigeria in 2009. The group was founded in 2002 in Maiduguri by Ustaz Mohammed Yusuf. It is loosely modeled on

Afghanistan's Taliban movement and wanted sharia, Islamic law, more widely applied across the country (Simon, 2009).

The authenticity of a statement published by the Nigerian daily newspaper Vanguard, in which the "acting leader" of Boko Haram, Mallam Sanni Umaru, declares that "Boko Haram is just a version of Al Qaeda" and that the sect has "started a Jihad in Nigeria" and will carry out bomb attacks in major Nigerian cities soon, requires further examination (Schulze, 2009). The group is unrelated to rebel movements in the country's Niger Delta region, but despite the common depiction of the conflict as being a religious one, several commentators point to its political nature. However, many of those clashes have in fact had a much stronger political background than often suggested, concerning more the uneven distribution of power and wealth, rather than religion per se. The fact that the sect owned heavy and sophisticated weaponry and that among its members are highly educated former university lecturers feeds those allegations. According to Schulze (2009), Yusuf "clearly received some outside help." it estimates that some of the weapons used by the sect were "carried through Chad.

Its members are often armed with machetes, bows and arrows, shotguns and home-made bombs, its members attacked symbols of authority in Maiduguri, including police stations, prisons, government offices and schools during a five-day uprising (Simon, 2009). The group includes members who come from neighboring Chad and speak only in Arabic. In 2004 it moved to Kanamma, Yobe State, where it set up a base called "Afghanistan", used to attack nearby police outposts, killing police officers. Yusuf is hostile to democracy and the secular education system, vowing that "this war that is yet to start would continue for long" if the political and educational system was not changed. After a confrontation between the Boko Haram sect and the military the sect's leader, Mohammed Yusuf was captured and was shot dead in police detention on 30 July, 2010. However, the International rights groups condemned what they said appeared to be an extra-judicial, execution-style killing.

The causal factors of terrorism

The charisma of Yusuf attract young jobless people to his cause is a big factor to outbreak of terrorism in Nigeria but the socio-economic environment in the country created the condition, for instance Meles (2009) argues that Yusuf broke ties with the mainstream Sunni scholars on the pretext that they advocate for democracy and secular education at the expense of true Islam. Within a few years, he was

able to draw thousands of supporters without any material possession to lure them. All commentators are unanimous that poverty, corruption with impunity and profound ignorance are the undeniable principal causal factors, not only of this crisis, but most of such in different parts the country.

Put differently, West African Islam is overwhelmingly moderate but sects such as Boko Haram are able to build a following because poverty, unemployment and a failed education system have left millions of youths angry and frustrated. The calibre of people joining him is largely people who had never attended schools and who are not employed by the government. Perhaps he has wanted to see a stream of youths giving up schools and public service as was witnessed in the first two to three years of his mission (Onuoha 2010).

Corruption

Nigeria is a country where leaders are involved in the most horrendous form of corruption one can imagine. What is even more obscene is that they do all these with utter impunity. The much celebrated democracy in the country is slowly turning into a perfect aristocracy. A tiny fragment of the society is gnawing on the huge oil fortune of the country amid decaying public and private sector infrastructure and institutions. Politics is drifting away from the democratic concept whereby the minority opposition parties call those in power to order in the parliaments. All indications show that the politicking at the moment is geared toward creation of a one-party polity (Mele, 2009).

Though largely in principle, there are attempts in recent years to curb this menace. New institutions had been established to fight corruption but still, there are some hidden corrupt forces bent on extinguishing this flicker of hope. The bottom-line is that corruption is inarguably institutionalized in the system and it will take nothing short of a revolutionary overhauling to change this situation and this gives a good food for thought to people with revolutionary instincts (Odunfa 2010).

Here, the intention is not to explain whether or not there is corruption in Nigeria but to say, candidly, that it has the effect of disillusioning and frustrating the public, especially the youth who see their erstwhile hopeful lives falling to pieces because of the negligence and selfishness of their leaders.

Poverty

Poverty has been seen as the major catalyst leading to the rapid increase in the membership of these religious extremist groups. That the crushing

destitution most lived in drew them to a group that promised a more prosperous life at the end of a Kalashnikov rifle. Authorities already have their hands full in the military conflict with Boko Haram. Now that the rhetorical conflict is becoming militarized, preachers will be thinking twice about whether to combat Boko Haram in the mosque (Thurston, 2011). "People are living in absolute poverty," Abdullahi told the AP in November 2010. "Whenever people are living in this type of poverty, if you start saying to them, 'Look, come let us bring about change,' ... people must listen to you" (Thurston, 2011).

Ignorance

Another causal factor is ignorance. It is an underlying factor which aids and provides a fertile ground for all other ills of the society including corruption. There is profound religious ignorance among the people. Religious knowledge is never promoted by the government, and because people could never be compelled to relinquish religion, they try to learn it on their own and consequently build erroneous interpretations on the little they know. This is why the deviant teachings of 'khawarij' (extremists) writers like Abu Basir at-tartosi of London, Abu Qatadah, Omar Bakri Muhammad, Faisal, Abu Hamza and others who partly inspired Muhammad Yusuf and his followers hold firmly in the hearts of so many Muslim youths who have true faith in Islam and the zeal to understand the truth. But the inability of most youths to make good use of their faculty of reasoning makes them fall prey to such deviant teachings, which often contradicts the mainstream of the very sunni path from where they commence their journey to extremism. In the whole of the 'boko haram' camp, one seldom gets a real scholar or even an elderly person, let alone a 'mufti' who can rightly issue verdicts on religious matters. Most of them are aged below forty, and most of them had severed links with their previous scholars on accusations that the later are too moderate or scared of the authorities (Schulze 2009).

Nigeria is still a superstitious society submerged in an abyss of ignorance. We need massive public enlightenment and re-education to change public attitude. Take, for instance, how most people tried to explain the Muhammad Yusuf phenomenon superstitiously saying that he drew people to his side with some magic charms and that his fighters are immune to bullets. Many would say, in the traditional rumour style that is the basis of information in our society, that his fighters were seen shaking bullets off their clothes as they approached the soldiers. All these are absurd claims based entirely on rumours but

no tangible evidence whatsoever. To clarify this, challenge whoever hold such belief to produce a single eye witness to this and they would never. Most people do not appreciate the power of faith and beliefs (Mele, 2009).

It is worthy of note to state some of the terrors this radical group have inflicted in the northern part of Nigeria.

- For instance, in July 2009, following the confrontation between the group and the Nigerian security forces like the police, the deaths of an estimated 700 people was recorded.
- On September 7, 2010, Boko Haram freed over 700 inmates from a prison in Bauchi State.
- The sect attacked a police station in Nigeria's northern state of Bauchi on 26 July 2009. The incident led to a four-day armed struggle between state security forces and members of the militant group, spreading to three other states (Yobe, Kano and Borno) and leaving as many as 800 dead, many of them members of the sect. The militant attacks, which followed the arrest of several of its members, targeted mainly police stations, prisons, government buildings and churches in the four states (Schulze, 2009).
- Boko Haram said on its website that was behind Christmas Eve bombings in Jos that killed at least 86 people (Thurston, 2011).
- Also, in December 2010, Boko Haram was blamed for a market bombing, following which 92 of its members were arrested by police.
- In January 2010, the group struck again in the Nigerian state of Borno, killing four people in Dala Alenderi ward in Maiduguri metropolis.
- Mohammed Yusuf, the slain former leader of the "Nigerian Taliban" sect called Boko Haram, ordered the beheading of three Christian pastors during the uprising earlier this month. Witnesses said Yusuf had become enraged after the pastors had refused to convert to Islam and one had preached the gospel to Yusuf (Roggio, 2009).
- Radical Islamist sect Boko Haram has been blamed for a spate of attacks on local government officials in Borno state in the remote northeast, while sectarian clashes around the central city of Jos have killed more than 200 people since December (Shuaib, 2011).
- The Boko Haram group, which transformed to Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati Wal-Jihad, yesterday, claimed responsibility for last Friday's assassination of the Borno state All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) governorship candidate, Alhaji Modu Fannami Gubio though the group's claim has contradicted the earlier position of the Borno state Governor, Ali Modu Sheriff and that of the state

police command, saying that, Gubio's murder was purely, politically-motivated. However, the group, led by Imam Abu Muhammad Abubakar Bin Muhammad, popularly known as Shekau, the second-in-command of the late leader of Boko Haram, Mohammed Yusuf, in a statement, written in Hausa and pasted at strategic locations of Maiduguri metropolis, including the railway terminus junction, insisted that they were behind the murder of Gubio. The translated version of the statement reads in part: "Definitely, we the warriors, under the leadership of Imam Abu Muhammad Abubakar Bin Muhammad, popularly known as Shekau, were responsible for the Friday attack in Maiduguri, claiming the lives of Alhaji Modu Fannami Gubio, the gubernatorial candidate of the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP), and the brother of Governor Ali Modu Sheriff and the security men attached to them. "As we have been telling the world, the series of attacks we have been carrying out, comprising the Christmas ones in Maiduguri and Suldaniyya (Jos) and the ones we did in Bauchi, were actually perpetrated', in order to propagate the name of Allah, to liberate ourselves and our religion, from the hands of infidels and the Nigerian government. "We are therefore, calling on Muslims in this part of the world, to be wary because, very soon, we would launch a full scale war. We also call on the people not to sit close to where security agents or politicians are living because; such people are behind the illegalities being meted on the Muslims. "As you can see, security agents have been deployed to Churches, to guard them, while the same security agents are the ones harassing and assaulting Muslims. We therefore, call on you, to rise up against this tyrant leadership, so that Sharia legal system can be established in the country, in order to guarantee justice and fairness. "Finally, anyone of you that assists them, will face similar punishment like them, as shedding his blood becomes legal," it concluded (Administrator, 2011).

On Tuesday February 8, 2011, Boko Haram gave conditions for peace in Borno State. The radicals demanded that the Borno State Governor, Senator Ali Modu Sheriff, steps down from office with immediate effect and also allow members to reclaim their mosque in Maiduguri, Borno State capital. Despite all these atrocities, former president Umaru Musa Yar'Adua ordered national security agencies to take all necessary action to contain and repel the sad and shocking attacks by extremists, written statement by the Nigerian government stated Nigerian police arrested 36 suspected members of Boko Haram in Zuba. Two members were Niger nationals (Gorman, 2009).

In conclusion, the bombings in Abuja, combined with the unrest in the Niger Delta and the troubles

with the Boko Haram group, are destabilizing the security environment in Nigeria. Nigeria has suffered from violent agitation since the beginning of the First Republic and terrorism has been used as the method for achieving demands. The militancy in the Niger Delta is a prime example of the use of terrorism as a method for making demands. MEND has received international attention even before the Nigerian Government was able to contain the group and ever since, the group has spread terror throughout the country (Mishabu, 2010). Historically, responses to eruptions of violent agitations have been the reasons for the first military coup and the civil war fought between 1967 and 1970. Violent agitation is used to achieve resource control, freedom from political domination, freedom from imposition of a mode of worship and non-recognition of constituted authority that can be seen with the Boko Haram or Yusufari group (Mishabu, 2010).

Conclusion

Conclusively, in recent times, Nigeria has emerged as a terrorism haven in the eyes of the international community. The (failed) Christmas day bomber in the United States, the insurgent Boko Haram sect and its growing terrorist activities in the North, and other growing Muslim fundamentalist elements emerging in (the north of) Nigeria not only pose security concerns for the country and the international community, but are themselves huge symptoms of state weakness. These are clear in the porous borders, and the infiltration of Al-Qaeda's elements in Africa as a whole, and the growing rate of anti-Western sentiments in the mostly Muslim dominated northern Nigeria.

Furthermore, these issues will continue to pose serious questions for the future of Nigeria as it reflects upon its achievements almost fifty years after independence. The inability of the Nigerian state to respond adequately to nipping the phenomenon of terrorism in the bud poses serious danger to the country's nascent democracy and economic development. It has therefore become imperative that the Nigerian government must design an ingenious strategy to combat this challenge. In as much as the reformation of the Nigerian state is vital, cooperation with international community and western friends of the country is necessary. Furthermore, African institutions such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU) need to pull their resource together to tackle the problem in a concerted manner

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