

Boko Haram Insurgency and the Spate of Insecurity in Nigeria: Manifestation of Governance Crisis

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Abstract.

By all indications, Nigeria is presently one of the unsecured territories in the globe. Each passing year, security is getting worse while the government on whose shoulder lies the responsibility of securing life and property seems handicapped. The recent horror of Boko Haram insurgency and terrorism has added another dimension to the gory state of security in Nigeria, making living in the country a semblance of the Hobbesian state of nature where life is poor, nasty, brutish and, short. The paper interrogates the security situation in Nigeria, the rise of Boko Haram insurgency, most especially in the North Eastern part of the country, and the unfounded conspiratorial explanations on the insurgency. Relying on the Eastonian system theory, the paper argues that the general insecurity and instability presently plaguing Nigeria underscores the governance crisis in the country. Consequently, the paper admonishes that the political leadership should embrace the core values of democratic governance that is anchored on altruistic service delivery, responsiveness, transparency, accountability, inclusiveness and rule of law. It also emphasizes the need for the leadership class to keep politics aside and work towards building faith in the possibility of building a nation where equity, justice and peace reign.

Keywords: Insurgency, Insecurity, Governance Crisis, Conspiracy, Centrifugal, Terrorism.

Introduction.

To say that security challenge is the main issue threatening the survival of Nigeria is saying the obvious. In the last few years, the security situation has taken the turn for the worse. Bombing, killing, mass murder, abduction, kidnapping and other crimes against humanity are on the increase in the country. The news of bomb explosions with indiscriminate killing by unknown gunmen is daily making the headlines of print and electronic media both domestic and international. Security, therefore, seems to have virtually collapsed as crimes becomes permanent fixture of daily life in Nigeria (Onanuga, 2013) while the state seems to “watch with a sense of helplessness, fear, foreboding and paralysis” (Jibrin, 2014: 51).

Since Nigeria returned to democracy in 1999, her socio-political life has been characterized by one violent crisis or the other. Thousands of life and unquantifiable properties have been lost to ethno-religious crises, post-election crises, and politically motivated assassination. However, the recent horror of *Boko Haram* insurgency, terrorism, looting, abduction and kidnapping has added another dimension to the country’s security history. The contemporary experience of Nigeria is unprecedented. Widespread insecurity leading to wanton destruction of lives and properties is threatening her survival. The *Boko Haram* insurgency mostly in the North East, West and Central of Nigeria; unprovoked killing by Fulani herdsmen in the North Central; unabated settler and indigene feuds in Plateau; kidnapping for rituals in the South West; kidnapping for ransom in the South East and South South; the threat of the Niger-Delta militancy in the South South and other “banditry in several parts of Nigeria have cemented the country’s place in the global hall of infamy” (Olupohunda, 2014: *Punch Online*).

Meanwhile the response of the governing class to the security situation has been perceived to be lackluster (Onanuga, 2013; Hassan, 2014; Odusile, 2014; Olatunji, 2014; Omeihe, 2014). In other words, the alarming security situation in the country is seen by majority as a manifestation of the various ills of mal-governance in the state. It is believed that the government which has, as one of its fundamental bases of existence, the protection of lives and property, is displaying inadequacies in combating the various crimes and acts of terrorism ravaging the country (Onanuga, 2013). The government’s response to the spate of insecurity is seen by many as worrisome and condemnable. Thus, poor governance, as manifested in the lack of responsive political leadership, poor institutionalization of democratic governance, endemic institutional corruption among others are believed to have led to the intensification of violence and terrorism which is threatening the corporate existence of Nigeria.

Given this backdrop, this paper argues that the alarming security situation in Nigeria is a fall-out of the governance crisis in the country. It, therefore, further argues that the poor governance regime is the catalyst to the phenomena of ethnic militias, rebel groups and religious insurgency that are working towards the fruition of the American Intelligent prediction that the country might cease to exist by 2015. The paper is structured into six parts, starting with this introduction. The second part attempts a conceptualization of insurgency, insecurity and governance crisis while the third part situates the crisis of governance and the attendant security challenge within a theory. The various conspiratorial schools of thought on the *Boko Haram* insurgency is the thrust of the fourth part. Part five examines the spate of insecurity in Nigeria within the purview of governance failure. The last part

concludes the discourse.

Insurgency, Insecurity, and Governance Crisis: Conceptual Explanation.

Insurgency: Insurgency as a social science concept has been given many conceptions. Essentially, however, insurgency is one element of the spectrum of political violence (O'Neill, 1990; Merari, 1993; Hammes, 2006; Reed, 2007). In this light, O'Neill (1990: 13) defined insurgency as a "struggle between a non-ruling group and the ruling authorities in which the non-ruling group consciously uses political resources and violence to destroy, reformulate, or sustain the basis of one or more aspects of politics". Insurgents have the "nihilistic goal of ensuring the government cannot function" (Hammes, 2006: 18). Hammes (2006) noted further that, it is easier to achieve insurgents' goal than governing, as it is easier and more direct to use military power than to apply political, economic and social techniques. While the insurgents can use violence to delegitimize a government, simple application of violence by the government cannot restore that legitimacy.

McCallister (2005) observed that the contemporary conceptions of an insurgency are based on an interpretation of the classic texts of insurgent warfare and the history of wars of national liberation from the late 20th century. The basic tenets of this form of warfare are found in the writings of past practitioners such as Mao Tse-Tung (Hammes, 2004; Reed, 2007). Mao, as explained by Hammes (2004: 52), saw insurgent war as protracted and organized into three phase of organization, consolidation and preservation in which the insurgents build political strength; a second phase of progressive expansion as the insurgents gain strength and consolidate control; and a final decisive phase when the leadership commits regular forces culminating in the enemy's destruction.

It can be deduced from the above that many of the historical features of insurgency, as identified by intellectuals, remain valid. Insurgency still remains a political not a military struggle and therefore not amenable to a purely military solution without restoring to a level of brutality unacceptable to the contemporary global environment. Also notable among the historical features of insurgency is the emphasis on defeating the political will of the enemy rather than defeating the enemy's army by means of direct combat. Insurgencies are also measured in decades not months or years (Hammes, 2006). It is also important to note that insurgency changes in consonance with the political, economic, social and technical condition of the global society. Contemporarily, insurgent organizations are comprised of loose coalitions of the willing human networks that range from local to global and operate across the spectrum from local to transnational territories (Reed 2007). In Nigeria, the linkage that is established between Boko Haram and Al-Qaeda terrorist group buttresses the international network of modern insurgent groups.

Merari (1993) observed that mode of the struggles adopted by insurgents is dictated by circumstances rather than by choice, and that whenever possible, they use concurrently a variety of strategies. The strategies of insurgency include coup d'état, Leninist revolution, guerilla warfare, riot, terrorism and non-violent resistance. However, terrorism has become the main commonly adopted strategy by the insurgents. Terrorism in modern usage is associated with a certain kind of violent actions carried out by individuals and groups rather than by the states and with events which take place in peace time rather than as part of a conventional war. As a strategy of insurgency, terrorism involves the adoption of some methods to achieve its goal. These include bombing, guerilla warfare, kidnapping and abduction. In the context of this paper therefore, insurgency is used in a more limited sense of terrorism. It is a premeditated, politically, economically or religiously motivated violence perpetrated against the state or a regime by an aggrieved group, usually intended to influence audience.

Insecurity: For a clearer understanding of the concept of insecurity, defining security as a concept is necessary. Traditionally, security is conceptualized within the context of the capability of governments to ensure the protection of their countries from internal insurrection or external aggression through adequate preparedness of the military to ensure this. It also involved diligent in matters of intelligence gathering and secrecy, and the protection of resources and rights considered critical to the existence of states. However, this traditional realist mindset of security is undergoing some transformations as a result of the complexity in the global politics. The concept of security has changed from its state-centric perspective characterized by narrow, restrictive, militaristic and strategic views to a broader view that places premium on individuals (Saliu, 2010; Nwanegbo & Odigbo, 2013; Nwozor, 2013).

Broadly defined, therefore, security entails improvement in the socio-economic, health, environmental and physical conditions of the people; protecting the dominant values, ideology and way of life of the state from threats and forestalling any form of socio-economic, political or religious assault on the state. Thus, security is a function of the combination of high level of military intervention and improvement in the standard of living of the citizenry (Omodia & Aliu, 2013). It is the condition of feeling safe from harm or danger; the defence, protection and preservation of cores values and the absence of threats to acquired values. Insecurity is a direct opposite of this condition. It is the feeling of fear, anxiety, uncertainty, poverty, injustice, unemployment and unrest in the polity. This paper however adopts a limited view of security as it views security as the protection of lives, wellbeing of the people and safeguarding their prosperity. In this context, insecurity denotes absence of

protection from danger or other bad situation. It is the prevalence of threats to human wellbeing as a result of physical and psychological abuses inflicted upon non-combatant individuals, including children, the aged and women in the environment of armed conflicts (Nnoyelu et al, 2013; Owutu, 2012).

Governance Crisis: A brief conceptualization of ‘governance’ will assist in understanding the concept of ‘governance crisis’. Governance can be used in several contexts such as corporate governance, local/national governance and international governance. Of interest to this paper, however, is national governance. On this basis, World Bank (1989) defined governance as the exercise of political authority and the use of institutional resources to manage society’s problems and affairs. It is implied from this definition that governance entails the proper management of state institutions and structures to enhance socio-economic and political transformation of the society. By this conception, the moral and natural purpose of governance consists of ensuring an exemplary pattern of the good life for the citizenry while preventing undesirable pattern of the bad life. Government is an important actor in governance system as it comprises a set of interrelated positions that govern and exercise coercive power (Musibau, 2009).

Consequently, Musibau (2009: 264) opined that good governance consists of “a set of interrelated positions exercising coercive power that assures, on behalf of those governed, a worthwhile pattern of good results while avoiding an undesirable pattern of bad circumstances”. Good governance has some properties and characteristics which can obtain in varying degrees in a state. It is participatory, consensus-oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive (Musibau, 2009; Saliu, 2010; Owutu, 2012). Good governance guarantees security where the structure, functions, purposes, powers and duties of government serve the interest and satisfy the aspirations of the people. Thus, countries tend to be well secured when governments in power evolve and sustain socio-economic policies and programmes capable of preventing crises and conflicts.

The absence of the aforesaid conditions presupposes crisis of governance. It is the absence of responsible and responsive governance which snowballs into a situation where the common good is not being kept and protected; existence of weak, corrupt and personalized institutions which prevents quick and timely intervention in critical socio-political situation and which has also fuelled rebellion and militancy as a way of settling socio-politico-economic scores (Saliu, 2010). There is thus a strong correlation between governance crisis and insecurity. Governance that enhances the delivery of public goods and improved standard of living for the people has the capacity to guarantee improved security of life and property and minimize potential risks to national security (Akpan, 2010 cited in Omodia & Aliu, 2013), as it can minimize the capacity of the socio-economic divisions and tensions in the polity.

Conversely, in the absence of good governance, a country may experience instability and eventual collapse. It is in this premise the paper argues that the present security challenge faced by Nigeria is a bi-product of poor governance evident in widespread corruption, subversion of rule of law and institution of probity and accountability, alarming unemployment rate, infrastructural decay and high level of poverty. The experience in the country is that of successive governments which systematically impose hardship on the people by failing to provide basic necessities of life and ensure justice and fairness in the polity. It is within this context that the increased spate of insecurity in the country, as exemplified by the ethno-religious conflicts, herdsman and farmers clashes, settlers and indigene feuds, kidnapping for ritual and ransom and *Boko Haram* insurgency, can be better understood.

Theoretical Framework of Analysis.

The argument of this paper is anchored on the Eastonian system theory. System analysis is a model of political analysis that explains the stability of a political system as a function of the capability of the system to convert the inputs (demands and supports) to outputs (authoritative decisions) that please majority of the people in the polity (Enemuo, 1999; Olaniyi, 2001; Johari, 2011; Thomas, 2013). As a model of political analysis, system theory was first developed by David Easton who is regarded as the pioneer of system analysis in the discipline of Political Science. The emphasis of the theory on the analysis of the factors and forces that engender stability and instability in the political system underpins its relevance to explaining the nexus between governance crisis and security challenge being faced by Nigeria. The political system within the Eastonian framework is an input and output mechanism which deals with political decisions and activities and performs integrative and adaptive functions necessary for the stability of the system (Almond, 1965 cited in Olaniyi, 2001; Omodia & Aliu, 2013; Thomas, 2013).

Thus obtaining a balance among input and output variables of the political system is crucial to its capacity to overcome inevitable stresses and frictions as well as maintenance of stability and survival of the system (Omodia & Aliu, 2013). However, authoritative decisions that displease too many members of the system will lose support for the system. In other words, the inability of the political system to address critical demands from the people or respond quickly to important feedback from its policy outputs has the capacity to undermine support for the system, thereby leading to the notion of a failed state. State failure is a situation in which the

governance system loses the capacity or the will to perform its fundamental governance functions (Manwaring, 2005). Failing or failed state status, as observed by Reed (2007: 23), “is the breeding ground for instability, criminality, insurgency, regional conflict and terrorism. Such environment can host destructive networks and various forms of ideological insurgencies”.

From the forgoing, it is evident that the Eastonian system theory is analytically fecund to explain the complex contradictions that surround the current security threats faced by Nigeria and Nigerians. The security issue confronting the country is mainly due to the absence of good governance or the failure of the state to perform its expected functions. The problems of high poverty rate, unemployment, infrastructural deficit, endemic corruption, ethno-religious conflicts, politically motivated violence and general insecurity plaguing the country underscores governance crisis in the polity. Consequently, the diverse nature of the country and the failure of the governing apparatus to perform its integrative functions, have made ethnic, religious and other primordial elements become preponderant. The failure of the Nigerian governing class since independence to evolve a nation out of multiplicity of ethnic nationalities in the state explains largely the precarious security situation in the country. The climax of this laxity is the *Boko Haram* insurgency which is seriously threatening the peace and stability of the Nigerian political system.

***Boko Haram* Insurgency: An Unending Conspiracy in a Centrifugal Polity.**

Boko Haram is an Islamic sect based largely in North Eastern part of Nigeria. From its inception, the group was known as ‘*Jama’atul Ah lus Sunna Lid’Da’awatis Jihad’ (JASLIDAT)*. The sect emanated from an orthodox teaching slightly resembling that of *Taliban* in Afganistan and Pakistan. It considers anything western as an aberration or completely un-Islamic. It views the western influence on Islamic society as the basis of the religion’s weakness. Accordingly, it believes that Western education is the cause of corruption, inequality and injustice bedeviling the society and must be forbidden (Akubor, 2011; Bamigbose, 2011; Sani, 2011; Nwanegbo & Odigbo, 2013). However, this stance of *Boko Haram* on Western education is hypocritical as recent happenings reveal that the sect is not completely outlier with regard to Western education and technology. In view of the modern technological resources it employs in the conduct of its deadly campaigns, it must have close affinity with those whose educational attainment is very high.

The activities of the sect came into limelight in 2002 when its presence was first reported in Kanama, Yobe State and also in Gwoza, Borno State (Nwanegbo & Odigbo, 2013). However, its origin is traced to 1995 when it started as ‘*Sahaba*’ Islamic association (Sani, 2011), which suggests that prior to 2009, the sect operated as a non-violent organization. It is believed that it embraced violence as its “weapon of martyrdom” (Nwozor, 2013: 5) when some of its members were killed in July 2009 and the death of its leader, Muhammad Yusuf, in the police custody under a questionable circumstance (Bamigbose, 2011; Sani, 2011; Nwozor, 2013). Since then, the sect’s dastardly attacks become intensified, not only in the North East, but in the North West, north Central and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Its trend has attained a more sophisticated, deadly, dangerous and international dimension, most especially in the last two years.

As threatening as the *Boko Haram* insurgency is, countering it has been problematic, not only because of their mode of operation, but mostly because of the centrifugal nature of the Nigerian state. Series of explanations are given on the rationale behind the existence and radicalization of the sect. Thus, there are several conspiracy ‘theories’ on *Boko Haram*. These ‘theories’ tap into the fears that are edged in the Nigeria’s traditional fault lines of Christian South and Muslim North coupled with political division along party affiliation.

The first ‘theory’ is what can be termed “*Northern Conspiracy*” i.e. the conspiracy of the northerners against President Jonathan’s administration. The proponents of this school of thought (mostly from South South) are of the opinion that *Boko Haram* is sponsored by key Northern politicians to make the country ungovernable for President Goodluck Jonathan (a Christian from the Ijaw minority ethnic group) (Adamu, 2014; Adibe; 2014). This theory finds solace in the controversy that surrounded the emergence of President Jonathan as the acting President in 2009 and his election in 2011 as substantive President. Following the incapacitation of President Yar’Adua, a Northerner, the National Assembly had to invoke the ‘doctrine of necessity’ before his Vice, Goodluck Jonathan, could be allowed to act on his behalf. It was believed that some ‘cabals’ mostly from the North were blocking the Vice President from having access to power. Following the death of President Yar’Adua in 2010, the Vice President assumed power to complete his tenure. However, his ambition and eventual emergence of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) flag-bearer in 2011 General elections was contested by most Northerners in the party who believed that the North still had for more years to rule going by the PDP’s rotational principle, as the South was believed to have ruled for eight years (1999-2003) under President Obasanjo’s presidency (Hassan, 2013a). On this premise, it is believed by the proponents of this ‘theory’ that the North invented *Boko Haram* to vent their anger against their supposedly ‘usurper’s’ administration.

This position is considered absurd on several grounds. In the first instance, *Boko Haram* has been in existence before President Jonathan’s administration both as acting President and substantive President. Its existence, as reviewed above, is dated back to 1995 (Sani, 2011) and their activities came to light in 2002, during President Obasanjo’s administration. The main target of the sect’s attack also belies this school of thought. Much

of the mayhem being carried out by the sect has been in the North with large casualties being the Northerners. It is therefore difficult to explain the nexus between the destruction and destabilization of governance in some Northern states and the making of the country ungovernable for the President (Adibe, 2014). The incessant attacks and killing of security forces (not minding their region of origin and religious affiliation), unarmed civilians (Southerners, Northerners, Muslims and Christians), prominent Islamic clerics and prominent Emirs prove that the *Boko Haram* insurgency goes beyond a plot against a particular administration. The question in the mind of the critics of this 'theory' is how could a region deliberately reduce its own economy and social life to shamble just because the President of the country hails from a different region?

Closely related to the Northern Conspiracy is the "*Conspiracy of the Opposition*". The main proponent of this 'theory' is the PDP ruling party. With no concrete prove, the party is of the opinion that some notable members of the opposition had promised to make the country ungovernable for President Jonathan if he wins 2011 presidential election (Jibrin, 2014; Muhammed, 2014; Nda-Isaiah, 2014). This position suggests that the party is more inclined to playing politics with *Boko Haram* problem than in solving it. The manner in which the party's Publicity Secretary, Mr Olisa Metuh, has been attacking the main opposition party, All Progressive Congress (APC), labeling it as an Islamic party with a '*Janjaweed*' ideology attests to this point. The opposition party (APC) has severally been accused of sponsoring *Boko Haram* without a shred of evidence (Haruna, 2014a; Olupohunda, 2014). Consequently, instead of putting hands on the desk to solve the problem, leading political figures in the ruling PDP and the main opposition APC engage in quarrel and play politics with the burning issue of *Boko Haram* insurgency, trading blames and accusations. The statement made by President Jonathan during the PDP 65th NEC meeting on June 5, 2014 also shows the trading of blames and accusation on the serious security issue facing the country. In his address during the meeting, the President says "most of our PDP states are doing well. In fact security challenges are less in PDP states because of the commitment of the governors" (Agbese & Hassan, 2014: 5). With this statement of the President, it is argued that *Boko Haram* insurgency has been politicized.

Another major conspiracy theory is what can be described as "*Jonathan's Conspiracy*" i.e. the conspiracy of the federal government against the North and Islam. The proponents of this 'theory', mostly the Northerners, believe that *Boko Haram* is sponsored by President Jonathan's administration to paint Islam bad or give the impression that the North is out to pull it down as a way of mobilizing the support of the Nigerians and the international community (Adibe, 2014). A variant of this 'theory' is that *Boko Haram* is sponsored by the federal government to weaken or destroy the North. Those who believe in this school of thought claim that President Jonathan's administration has been hiding under the war against *Boko Haram* to commit genocide in the North and secretly collaborate with the insurgents to destroy the region. For instance, the Adamawa State Governor, Admiral Murtala Nyako, has twice accused the federal government in this direction (Adamu, 2014). The revelations that several aids of the President, such as his Senior Special Assistance on Social Media, Reno Omokri, and the Director General of the State Security Services, have attempted to frame some prominent Northerners, notably the former Central Bank Governor and Emir of Kano, Alhaji Sanusi Lamido Sanusi, as the financier of *Boko Haram* insurgents, strengthens the belief of the proponents of this 'theory' that the Presidency has a hand in the activities of the sects.

This 'theory' also takes solace in the alleged confession of Mr Henry Okah, the leader of the Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND), that MEND masterminded the 2010 Golden Jubilee Independence celebration day's bomb explosion in Abuja while the Presidency persuaded him to withdraw his statement claiming responsibility for the bombing. In an affidavit sworn to in South Africa, Okah claimed that he was contacted by the Head of Personal Security to President Jonathan, Mr Moses Jituboh, who prevailed on him to withdraw his statement claiming responsibility for the bomb explosion so that it can be blamed on some Northern politicians who against his 2011 presidential ambition. Okah also claimed that his refusal to cooperate with the Presidency made the federal government leaned heavily on the South African authority to secure his imprisonment as he is currently serving jail terms in South Africa for his role in the bomb explosion (Haruna, 2014a).

This position has also been faulted on several grounds. In the first instance, one of the highest casualties of the *Boko Haram* mayhem is the security agents of the state. Churches are also one of the main targets of the sect with thousands of lives lost to its attack. Majority of victims of bomb blasts in various motor parks are Southerners, mostly Christians while the large number of kidnapped Chibok-school-girls are said to be Christians. It also defies logic why a President should set part of his domain on fire just to weaken that particular region (Adibe, 2014). The arbitrary targets of the insurgents' attack appear to create analytical problem with regard to who they categorize as infidel as there has not been any boundary in the target of their attacks. Their attacks have not followed any particular pattern to lead to a plausible conclusion about their driving motives and ultimate goals (Nwozor, 2013). The fact remains that the theater of *Boko Haram* insurgency may be the North but the scourge has since transmogrified into a Nigerian problem which has claimed the lives and properties of Nigerians from all parts of the country.

Though, efforts at providing logical explanations of the emergence of and subsequent violent posture of *Boko Haram* continue, but it suffice to state that the insurgency is a manifestation of the failure of the successive governments since independence in 1960 to integrate the various people in the state through good governance. The insurgency is therefore a reflection of the crisis of nation building in Nigeria (Hassan, 2013b; Adibe, 2014; Hassan & Umar, 2014). The implication of this is the rife of mutual suspicion in the polity and the structural difficulty in decisively and unanimously dealing with the menace engendered by *Boko Haram*.

General Insecurity in Nigeria: Manifestation of Crisis of Governance.

By all indications, Nigeria is facing a serious security challenge. The country is now home to terrorists and insurgents with their dastardly incessant killings, destruction and abduction. According to Human Rights Watch cited by Adetumbi (2014: 16), more than 700 people have been killed in 40 separate attacks by the *Boko Haram* insurgents in 2014 alone. These are just few incidents of the growing spate of killings and destructions in many parts of Nigeria. Dailies are awash with news of bomb explosions, kidnapping, armed robbery, and ethnic militias confrontations. Recent hostilities between the Fulani herdsmen and farmers have also claimed hundreds of life in Benue, Nassarawa and other parts of the Middle belt while kidnapping for ritual and ransom is having a field day in the Southern part of the country. The abduction of over 200 female students at Government Girls Secondary School Chibok on April 14, 2014 further exposed the security problem being faced by Nigerians to the international community. The mass kidnap sparked headlines worldwide and invited international collaboration towards rescuing the girls and fighting against terrorism in Nigeria.

The question is how does the country degenerate to this deplorable security situation? While there are a number of efforts at scholarly explaining the present security situation in the country, this paper is of the opinion that a more comprehensive explanation is seeing the security challenge as a reflection of crisis of governance. It is an incontestable fact that the government, in any state, has the primary function of protecting life and property of its citizenry. However in Nigeria, due to sheer laxity, corruption and non-commitment of resources over the years to security infrastructure and man-power, the security agencies have become a shadow of themselves, leaving Nigerians to a hopeless fate. Consequently, there is no equivalence between the actions of the Nigerian security forces and that of the insurgents. The latter are believed to be better equipped and motivated than the former. This is due to systemic corruption ravaging the Nigerian socio-political system. Pervasive corruption undermines the government's fight against insurgency. Despite the fact that the Nigerian government has one of sub-saharan Africa's largest security budgets, with \$5.8 billion dedicated to security in 2014 budget (*The Nation*, May 23, 2014: 3), yet corruption prevents supplies of basic equipments such as bullets and transport and communication facilities from reaching the Joint Task Force (JTF) (Ross, 2014).

The implication of this is low morale and desertions among soldiers. For instance, on May 14, 2014, some 7th Division reportedly fired at their General Officer Commander's car, complaining that he failed to ensure they receive the necessary equipment (Timawus, 2014). However, warfare everywhere in the world is engaged in and sometimes won when soldiers are motivated. But Nigerian military today is dispirited and lack modern arsenals to fight 21st century wars. The government, despite allocating the largest percentage of budget to security, has not acquired up-to-date armaments for the military (Abah, 2014). Due to widespread corruption, there is lack of investment in training and death of equipment maintenance. For instance it is reported that Nigeria bought Israel Surveillance drones in 2006 that might be used to hunt for the abducted school-girls, but poor maintenance has left them grounded (*The Nation*, May 30, 2014).

Meanwhile, international impression has been very ugly. The United States' Under-Secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy and Human Rights, Sarah Sewall, in May 2014 told the American House Committee on Foreign Affairs that entrenched corruption and incompetence has hindered the Nigerian Armed Forces from wiping out *Boko Haram* (Timawus, 2014). The decision of United States of America and United Kingdom to station their surveillance aircrafts and personnel in Chad and Ghana respectively instead of Nigeria, to assist in the search for the Chibok girls, has been seen as a lack of confidence in the Nigerian military by both countries (Odusile, 2014). Not surprisingly, the Nigerian Senate on April 29, 2014 expressed its disappointment on the inability of the security forces to arrest the security situation despite yearly budgetary allocations running into trillions of naira (Hassan, 2014).

Analysts have also criticized the seemingly cold response of the government to the security threats in the country. The President's action after the April 14, 2014 Nyanya Car Park bomb blast and his reaction to the April 15, 2014 mass kidnap at the Chibok continue to be cited as cases of his insensitivity to the plight of Nigerians. In the case of Chibok, instead of taking quick responsibility for dealing with the incident, the President allowed his aids, party stewards and wife to create impression that the authorities did not believe there was any abduction in the first place; that it was the handiwork of the 'enemies' of the administration who hell bent on painting it as incompetent, heartless and indifferent (Haruna, 2014b). This is probably the reason why it took the President more than two weeks to speak publicly on the kidnapped girls. It was the international pressure driven by '#BringBackOurGirls' campaign that made the President to finally accept intelligence and

surveillance assistance from United States, Britain, France, China and others. However, the residual doubt on the abduction of the girls was laid to rest by the report of the Presidential Fact Finding Committee on the abduction which confirmed that a total number of 276 students were abducted out of which 57 escaped (*Daily Trust*, June 25, 2014: 16). Most nonchalantly was the fact that the severity of the Nyanya explosion did not convince the President and his party to cancel the April 15, 2014 Kano political rally where he danced as if nothing horrible had just happened.

It has also been observed that, instead of the President to shelve official engagements to commiserate with Nigerians whenever absurdities occur, he usually chooses such sensitive periods to embark on foreign travels or organize state-sponsored flamboyant events which blur the national mourning of the mayhem. The case of centenary celebration, a few days after the gruesome killing of 59 male students in Buni Yadi, Yobe State shows the President's disposition towards such occurrence in the country (Adetunmbi, 2014). In sane clans, human disaster of such level would have caused government to wobble severely. For instance, in South Korea, Prime Minister Chung Hong-won offered his resignation over the government's handling of a ferry disaster on April 16th that killed some school children. While one does not call for President Jonathan's resignation, but a low key celebration would have portrayed him as a leader who feels the pains of the governed.

The recent upsurge in the clashes between the Fulani pastoralists and the farmers in some parts of the country has also been hinged on government negligence. It is argued that the clashes would have been prevented if government had implemented the policy recommendations of the Sheikh Ahmed Lemu led Presidential Panel set up to probe the 2011 post election violence and civil disturbances in some Northern States. The findings of the Panel revealed that the main cause of violence between the herdsmen and the farmers was the destruction of cultivated crops by cattle. On this basis, the Panel recommended that government should ensure that each state defines its grazing zone and routes which would then be harmonized with those of adjacent states (Timawus, 2014).

This scenario depicts crisis of governance. The level of insecurity, no doubt, is alarming and in the face of all these the government which has the fundamental and constitutional responsibility of securing the people and in possession of security apparatus seems to be displaying inadequacies in combating the various crimes and acts of terrorism ravaging the country. Instead of the government to present a unified front with opposition in the face of the security challenge, it is more focused on blame game. The ruling party (PDP) and the main opposition party (APC) are playing primordial politics on the serious situation at hand. Their preoccupation seems to be 2015 General Elections. Instead of seeing North East as region that needs to be salvage from the clutch of the insurgents, the President sees it as a stronghold of opposition. His statement during the 65th PDP NEC meeting, earlier referred to, implied that the President believes that the insurgency is a problem of the opposition states. The remarks of the President during the PDP North East rally on March 26, 2014 in Bauchi State also implies that the President is more interested in playing politics with *Boko Haram* than in ending its insurgency. In apparent response to governors of the troubled states, the President said "I solved the terror problem in my home state, Bayelsa, when I was deputy governor and the governor, so Nyako and other Northern governors accusing me of incompetent leadership should go solve their *Boko Haram* problem" (Haruna, 2014a). On this basis, some argue that the political class has been insincere in tackling the insurgency just due to their selfish and personal interest for 2015 general elections. This explains the reason why the extension of the state of emergency in the troubled states was greeted with mixed reactions.

The unhealthy struggle between the federal government and the governors of opposition states makes it harder for the development of coordinated response to the spate of insecurity in the country. This is a manifestation of crisis of governance in Nigeria. Nigerians are unfortunate to be led by governments which are largely insensitive to their plight. Years of neglect and corruption, self-centeredness and wickedness on the part of the successful leaders have made violent option attractive to people on one hand, and reduced the Nigerian Armed Forces, once the pride of Africa, to a band of helpless 'boys' in the hands of *Boko Haram* insurgents.

Conclusion

The main thrust of this paper is to demonstrate that the current spate of insecurity in Nigeria is a direct consequent of the failure of the state to discharge its primary duties and responsibilities. The rate of insecurity in the country is quite alarming. The persistent phenomenon of bloodshed and wanton destruction of lives and properties, the unrestrained kidnapping (both for ransom and ritual), armed robbery in different parts of the country and other security threats portray Nigeria as one of the unsecured territory in the globe. The analysis in the paper results in the belief that the spate of insecurity in Nigeria is the outcome of a complex governance crisis which breeds lack of opportunity, religious extremism, proliferation in thuggery and endemic corruption in the polity. This precarious situation is made worse by the activities of the *Boko Haram* insurgents which have led to the lost of thousands of life, destruction of properties and abduction of defenseless Nigerians. The key challenge Nigeria has with *Boko Haram* is that its mayhem is not only spreading across the country, but also becoming a daily occurrence. It is therefore argued that that there exists a strong correlation between the increase

in the spate of insecurity in Nigeria and the crisis of governance as evident in the failure of the governing class to formulate and implement policies that will make violent options not attractive to the aggrieved members of the state.

On this basis, the paper concludes on the note that Nigerian political leaders should embrace the basic tenets of democratic governance. The failure of the democratic governance in Nigeria (most especially since May 1999) to improve the wellbeing of most Nigerians is the major contributing factor to the emergent threats to national security. The political leadership has to imbibe and practice the core values of democratic governance such as responsiveness, rule of law, transparency, accountability, inclusiveness and strengthening of political institutions. This will go a long way in inspiring confidence and popular trust in the government thereby improving the loyalty and obedience of Nigerians to the government, with great impact on the legitimacy and capacity of the state to guarantee security, stability and long lasting peace. This is of utmost important because beneath the dysfunctionality in governance is the recklessness and insensitivity of the political leadership in the management of the numerous natural resources Nigeria is endowed with.

This is also imperative as the fundamental weapon in counterinsurgency remains good governance. As noted by Hammes (2006: 21), “while the insurgents must simply continue to exist and conduct occasional attacks, the government must learn to govern effectively. The fact that there is insurgency indicates that the government has failed to govern”. Thus, the fight against *Boko Haram* insurgency requires more than just military action; it requires a comprehensive approach to improving the lives Nigerians. The deployment of troops is not enough; the government must also give people hope for a better future. The people must have hope not just for a better life as they see it but, but also for the feeling of dignity that comes from having some say in their own future. Nevertheless, it must be stressed that the first step in counterinsurgency approach is establishing security for the people. Without effective, continuous and responsive security, people must cooperate with the insurgents or be killed. This will reduce the support enjoyed by the government (Merari, 1993; Hammes, 2006; Reed, 2007).

In addition, to prevent the extremist religious ideology being dangerously canvassed by *Boko Haram*, Nigeria needs to develop an international approach. Dealing with the networked, transnational, and ideological insurgent groups as *Boko Haram* requires transnational approach. Nigeria’s counterinsurgency measures must not just focus on *Boko Haram* ideology but all ideologies of various international terrorist groups it has been linked with. This is necessary because the ideology of one group might reinforce that of others. A deep knowledge of the culture and history of the people in insurgency by the counterinsurgents is also important for a successful ideological combat (Hammes, 2006).

Finally, at this point of Nigeria’s existence, all stakeholders at the federal, state and local government levels need to keep politics aside and work towards building faith in the possibility of building a nation where equity, justice and peace reigns. The affected governors should face the challenge with a home-grown solution, cooperating with the federal government while the latter must see all parts of the country as its jurisdiction and be decisive in tackling any problem erupted in any part of Nigeria. As admonished by the Presidential Fact-finding Committee on the Abduction of the Schoolgirls in Chibok:

Much as Nigerians and the rest of the world have been galvanized to drum support for the freedom of the Chibok schoolgirls, little will be achieved through finger-pointing. Getting the girls, out and safely too, is far more important than the publicity generated by the blame game that has tended to becloud the issue (Tori Blog, 2014: www.toricenter.blogspot.com).

As long noted by that Black Civil Right forerunner, Fredrick Douglas, ‘the life of nation is secured only while that nation is honest, truthful and virtuous.

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