Defending the Homeland:
A Critical Assessment of Government's Response to the Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria

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Abstract   Like all federal systems, Nigeria has had its own fair share of insurgencies which ranged from conflict amongst ethnic nationalities to even religious terrorism. Of course, states have no option than to ensure and assure its citizens safety and security any way and any-how they can guarantee it. Reprisal attacks on terrorists is a mere bandage method, basi-cally because the wound has already been inflicted, but also since ensuring security is also target hardening, and has little effect on the success or failure of a terrorist attack. Security can only minimise casualties, not prevent attacks, especially those delivered by the terrorist suicide bombers. This paper uses secondary data as a source of information and presents the results of their content analysis to explain Nigeria efforts to protect the citizens. It argues that terrorism is a violent form of insurgency that must be retorted ac-cordingly any policy response that does not take this into consideration is not only naïve, but also utopian. The paper, then, recommends solutions adapted to particular circumstances. While it supports negotiation with Niger-Delta militants, it objects nego-tiation with Boko Haram, because these groups are pursuing totally different agendas.

Introduction

Like all federal systems, Nigeria has severely suffered from insurgencies which ranged from conflicts amongst ethnic nationalities to agitation for political space and accommodation within the federal system, to even religious differences clothed in ethnic coloration. Historically, ethnic agitations have led to the formation of ethnic militias and Nigeria has played host to two types of them. The first type are the vigilante groups formed to assist the Police and authorized to arrest and prosecute robbery suspects, while the second type are the ones that started with primordial political sentiments and propagate ethnic objectives (Agara, 2008). The emergence of the second type of ethnic militia groups, such as the Odua People's Congress (OPC), Movement for the Actualization of Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), the Egbesu Boys, Arewa People's Congress (APC), has led to the advent of politically motivated forms of conflicts. However, religiously motivated conflicts in Nigeria have historically taken two forms: intra-religious violence, limited to struggles within the fundamentalist and orthodox Muslims or Christians alone, and inter-religious violence, which happens between Muslims and Christians. It was on the basis of apostasy that the various intra-religious clashes occurred in the northern part of Nigeria, especially in Kano, such as the Maitatsine riot of 1980, the Bulumkutu, Jimet and Gombe battles of 1982, 1984, and 1985, the Shiite attacks of 1996 and 1997, among many others (Albert, 2004; Ukanah, 2011).

Islamic extremism has enjoyed several advantages over other competing ideologies, especially in Nigeria. First, it is readily intelligible to uneducated Muslims. It offers a set of themes, slogans and symbols that are profoundly familiar and therefore effective in mobilising support and in formulating a critique of what is wrong and a program for putting right what is wrong. Second, religious movements easily ferment under despotic or autocratic rulers who may forbid meetings and other gatherings but not public worship. As a result, it is only religious opposition groups that can have regular meetings and maintain their network outside the control of the state. Thus, as the experience of the Middle East and North Africa has shown, the more oppressive the regime, the more inadvertently it helps the rise and emergence of religious extremism by giving it a virtual monopoly of opposition. Muslim extremists can be identified as those who squarely placed the troubles of the Muslim world today at the doorstep of modernisation, those who see it as eroding authentic Islamic faith and values. For them, the remedy is to go back to the old value system, including the abolition of all laws and culture borrowed and adopted from the West. Of equal importance is that in Nigeria religious violence and terrorism have always acquired an ethnic cleansing dimension. This remains closely in line with Morgan's observation that "religion gets [easily] entangled with nationalism, ethnic pride, rebellion against colonial or neo-colonial forces. It becomes an affirmation of cultural integrity, a personal identity" (Morgan, 2001, p. xviii).

Furthermore, also of equal importance is the fact that since antiquity, religion had always been used to justify violence, war, and repression. Thus, religious violence cannot really be said to be a modern phenomenon (Agara, 2012). As a matter of fact, as Rapoport (1984, p. 659) has noted, until the 19th century, religion has provided the only justification for terrorism and it was not until 1980, as a result of the repercussions of the revolution in Iran the previous year, that the first "modern"

religious terrorist groups emerged (Hoffman, 2006, p. 85). By 1992, the number of religious terrorist groups had increased and expanded to embrace major world religions, as well as the obscure religious sects and cults. Thus, virtually all religions of the world, including Christianity, have been linked to violence at one time or the other in their history. The link between terrorism and Islam has made it mandatory to explain what Islam really is and why some of its adherents are prone to violence, and why it is used, by some, to justify modern day terrorism. As Lewis (2003, p. 3) has observed, "it is difficult to generalise about Islam", primarily because "in one sense it denotes a religion, a system of beliefs and worship; in the other, the civilisation that grew up and flourished under the aegis of that religion". Thus, the term 'Islam' denotes peace and had maintained world peace in more than fourteen centuries of history. It has not only contributed to world civilisation and development but also has billions of adherents with religious and cultural tradition of enormous diversity.

It is within this rubric that we can begin to contextualise and even begin to understand the present Boko Haram phenomenon. Although the Boko Haram movement is enjoying notoriety and its origins, purpose, and identity of its leadership are shrouded in secrecy and much confusion, its aim and ideological underpinnings are not. Thus, of all the religious violence Nigeria had ever experienced to date, the Boko Haram debacle has surpassed them all in terms of casualties and targets, commitment, reach (membership), and dexterity of its attacks.

The aim of this paper is to critically assess Nigerian government's various responses to the Boko Haram insurgency, albeit within the larger theoretical and practical frame work and policy options adopted by the experienced Western nations. We are more interested in the possible problematic contradictions and compromises which these policy responses are fraught with and which they may foist on the government. Basically, we shall refrain from making evaluative and value-laden judgment of whether such policies are good or bad, rather, our assessment will be purely theoretical. To do this, therefore, the paper has been divided into several parts. This introduction attempts to establish a theoretical base for the paper. The second section explains different types of insurgencies available for the insurgents, arguing that the choice of which type to adopt is purely that of the insurgents. The third section adopts two classificatory schemas which take a theoretical look at the various policy responses available to the government in tackling terrorism. The fourth section investigates various problems the policy responses may generate or posit for the government, using the Nigerian situation as an example. The last part offers conclusions and recommendations.

Types of insurgencies

Gurr (1988), in his typology of terrorism, has explained that insurgent terrorism aims to change political policies by direct threats or actions against the government. It attacks the *status quo*, while providing for the insurgents an extra-constitutional means of expressing grievances, whether real or imaginary, and hence theoretically, poses a threat to the political system in two ways: 1. It challenges the monopoly of force imputed to the state and control by it, and 2. in functional

terms, it is capable of interfering with, and if severe, to destroy the normal political processes of the state. In the final analysis referring to any conflict situation, whichever option or tactics is eventually chosen to prosecute the violence by insurgents, will depend on certain factors such as their anticipated goal, opportunity available to them, and the level of their fear of retribution. Thus, contemporary insurgencies have taken many, or a combination of, forms generally known as irregular or unconventional wars, such as revolution, *coup d'etat*, guerrilla war, terrorism, strikes, and riots. As Kaldor (1999, p. 107) had explained, the terms 'irregular' or 'unconventional', as opposed to 'regular' or 'conventional' wars, are often used to describe conflicts that do not take the form of mass armies engaging one another on the battlefield, or the traditional air and sea based military operations that support them. We shall now turn to a discussion of three of the most popular of these insurgency tactics or forms of violence.

Guerrilla wars

'Guerrilla' in Spanish means "small war", a form of insurgency and violence that is older than conventional war itself. In numerous instances, guerrilla war has been used as the main form of struggle whereas in other instances, it has been used as an auxiliary form of fighting, especially behind enemy's lines while the main confrontation between armies in a conventional war is taking place. In both instances, guerrilla war is a diffuse type of war, fought by a relatively inferior combatant force against a qualitatively superior and stronger enemy force. Thus, as a strategy, guerrilla warfare avoids direct, decisive battles, and instead opts for a series of protracted but small clashes and skirmishes where the insurgents' inferiority in terms of manpower, arms, and equipment can be turned to an advantage by adopting flexible hit-and-run tactics and style of fighting. The purpose and the effect of this are not only to wear down the conventional enemy's force through attrition, but also to prevent it from employing its full qualitative advantage of armaments, number of troops and equipment in the contest. Thus, guerrilla warfare employs raids, ambushes and sabotage from remote and inaccessible bases in mountains, forests, jungles or territory of neighbouring states.

Military strategists, tacticians and theoreticians have, however, argued that guerrilla warfare should only be adopted as an interim phase of a struggle. The main aim is that it should ensure the insurgents the time to build up a necessary support base and recruitment of manpower for its cause and, hence, build a regular army that will eventually win through conventional war (Mao, 1968; Lacquer, 1976). Be that as it may, insurgent groups usually resort to this mode of combat out of necessity borne out of the need to adopt the most cost-effective methods of military combat and political disruption. Today, many modern states with regular army also have troops specifically trained for irregular warfare. These soldiers are members of elite groups of warriors called 'special forces', such as the British Special Air Service (SAS) and Special Boat Squadron (SBS), the Americans Delta Force (DF), Army Green Berets and Navy SEALS (Sea, Air, and Land), and the Russians' Spetsnaz. As a result of the special training in sabotage, explosives, and selective destruction of targets, and because cruelty and brutality unmodified and unsanctioned by rules of war under which regular army operates are the enduring characteristics of irregular warfare, these elitist military groups actually qualify to be called terrorists-in-uniform.

Revolution

More than any other term, revolution has been associated with violence exerted to achieve political means and ends. However, there are two dimensions to its usage. The first connotes it as a strategy of insurgency (means) while the second implies a social or political outcome (ends). We are concerned with the first connotation and it is in this regard that revolution is associated with politically motivated violence. Conceptually precise definition of revolution is impossible but nevertheless, its understanding embodies "a deep-seated change, reflected invariably by alterations in the political fabric of society, often consummated through violence and ultimately accompanied by the production of ideology" (Leiden and Schmitt, 1968, p. 3). The term 'revolution', as Griewank (1971) has observed, entered into the political science lexicon from astronomy where it is used to mean the oscillation of a planetary body around another and returning later to its starting point. Predictably, the reactionary and conservative usage of the term became popular amongst early political scientists who were the first to adopt the term (Leiden and Schmitt, 1968, p. 4). Later, the concept of revolution as renovation and transformation into the "basic principles of good government", offered by Machiavelli, became popular (Griewank, 1971, p. 20). Marx, however, adopted the term and gave it its current meaning as a strategy for effecting violent change in a political system, when he asserted that "the next French Revolution will no longer attempt to transfer the bureaucraticmilitary apparatus from one hand to another, but to smash it" (Marx, 1975, p. 247).

However, although the orthodox Marxist prescription for a socialist revolution has been discussed elsewhere (Agara, Fayemi, 2005; Agara, 2011), the imperative to both smash and replace the socio-economic formation with a new one distinguishes a revolution from anarchy and the charge of nihilism arises primarily because of this insistence to smash and destroy the existing system. A revolution as an insurgent strategy is distinguished from a reform, primarily, because of this insistence which seems to make violence a common denominator of revolution. As Majola (1988, p. 100) has put it, "a change or development that takes place within one and the same socio-economic formation is called evolution or reform". Usually, this kind of social reform or transformation occurs when "the powers-that-be resort to eliminate current contradictions in the social economic life of a country (or to create the impression of trying to resolve them)" (Yermakova, Ratnikov, 1986, pp. 153–154). Thus, social reform implies attempt at improving the social and economic life of a country but this attempt is not underpinned by a radical change in either the class character of the society or the ownership of the means of production, or in the class composition of those who wield state power.

In contrast, social revolution refers to a radical change or transformation in "all the principal spheres of social life, such as the economy and politics (…). The principal issue as well as the main feature of (social) revolution consists in the transfer of state power from one class to another which is more progressive and advanced" (Yermakova, Ratnikov, 1986, pp. 147–148). The startling difference between a social reform and a revolution can be located in the fact that while a social reform comes as a result of intraclass struggle, a social revolution is the end result of internal contradictions between antagonistic classes, that is, interclass struggle. This is to say that no matter the scope, nature or comprehensiveness of a reform, it fails or falls short of a revolution if it does

not smash the existing *status quo* and replaces it with a qualitatively better one while at the same time resolving the issue of class antagonism and contradiction. However, as the Feierabends (1966) have noted, the presence of violence (or class struggle) in a community does not of itself mean that a revolution becomes necessarily imminent, but it does suggest that when eventually a revolution takes place, it will be accompanied by much violence.

Terrorism

According to Lenin, the purpose of terrorism is to terrorise. It is the only way a small country or people can hope to take on a great nation and have any chance of winning. Terror, therefore, becomes a "symbolic act designed to influence political behaviour by extranormal means, entailing the use or threat of violence" (Thornton, 1964, p. 73). The general contention about terrorism as a weapon of the weak (Crozier, 1960, p. 159), has now become contentious with the emergence of the phenomena of state terrorism and statesponsored terrorism. Russett et al. (2006, p. 224) have attempted to make a distinction amongst the traditional (what they refer to as "dissident") form of terrorism, state (what they refer to as "establishment") terrorism, and statesponsored terrorism. According to them, state terrorism is the use of terror by the state "against their own populations to gain or increase control through fear. Tactics (used in this case) include expulsion or exile, failure to protect some citizens from the crimes of others (as in statetolerated vigilante groups), arbitrary arrest, beatings, kidnappings (disappearances), torture and murder", while statesponsored terrorism means "international terrorist activity conducted by states or, more often, the support of terrorist groups through the provision of arms, training, safe haven, or financial backing".

The emergence and increasing instances of religiousmotivated terrorism have equally made it compulsory to differentiate between it and its political counterpart. Although both employ the use of violence, they differ in certain important respects that make it important for a better understanding of the concept. For a terrorist action to qualify as being politically motivated, it must "challenge the state but affect no private rights of innocent parties" (Kittrie, 1981, p. 300). On the other hand, religiously motivated terrorism differs from other acts of terrorism primarily because: 1. While political terrorism attempts to find a resolution within the lifetime of the perpetrators, religious terrorism outlives their participants. This is predicated on the belief that the rewards of those involved in this cause are transtemporal and the time limit of their struggle is eternity. 2. Targets of religious terrorism are not chosen for their military values but rather they are chosen for the sole purpose of making an impact on public consciousness both by its brutality and suddenness. 3. The constant recourse to a 'god' to justify their action has the power of 'satanising' the enemies while making the perpetrators of religious terrorism 'godly'. As Juergensmeyer (2004, pp. 34–38) had noted, this is a kind of "perverse performance of power meant to ennoble the perpetrators' views of the world while drawing viewers into their notions of cosmic war". The effect of this, as he had also noted, is "not so much that religion has become politicised but that politics has become religionised. Through enduring absolutism, worldly struggles have been lifted into the high proscenium of sacred battles". 4. The targets of religious terrorism and violence also have the tendency to

assume and acquire a similar religious mien, explanation, and perspective. For instance, following the 9/11 attacks, America adopted the song, "God bless America" as the country's unofficial national anthem thereby signifying a counter 'religious' phase and perspective to the antiterrorism posture of America. As a matter of fact, the then US President, George Bush, further whipped up national sentiments when he invoked the "religious image" of America's "righteous cause" as combating and bringing to an end the "absolute evil" of its enemies. 5. The "divine" nature of religious terrorism, the notion that the battle is between "good" and "bad", "truth" and "evil", the expectation of heavenly rewards for the terrorists all rule out the possibility of a compromise, negotiable truce/ceasefire or a peaceful resolution. 6. The spiritual dimension of the war makes it to go beyond the confines of human law and ideal of morality. Society's laws are subordinated and in extreme cases are deemed non-existent or inapplicable because of the recourse to a higher authority. The belief and perception here is that society's laws and limitations are of no relevance when one is obeying a higher "divine" authority. 7. Finally, the end result of religious terrorism is that it impacts a sense of redemption and dignity on the perpetrators. It is at this level that religious terrorism acquires a personal willingness on the part of the perpetrators who oftentimes are men who feel alienated and marginalised from public life.

From whichever perspective (whether religious or political) we look at it, terrorism as a strategy of insurgence involves three basic components: the perpetrator(s), the victim(s), and the target(s) of the violence (Badey, 2007, p. 1). The perpetrators are seen as fanatics, disaffected groups or minorities who employed terrorism as a tool to oppose the rule and the oppression of an established and militarily superior power (Nicholson, 2003). The victims are seen as innocent people who have no part or are directly involved in the struggle and the struggle or target may or may not be strictly political in nature. A glaring thing about terrorism is that it involves acts of violence. Violence or the threat of violence is endemic to terrorism. The violent acts need not be perpetrated before it qualifies as terrorism. Once the threat is backed with the capacity and willingness to use force or violence then the act qualifies as terrorism. Coupled with this is the fact that terrorist actions would be useless if not directed to attract attention, the attention of a specific audience in which a particular mood of fear is sought to be created. The violence of terrorism is not an end in itself. Rather violence is employed precisely to create a sense of fear, terror and uncertainty in the people who are the audience of terrorism. The fear or terror thus created or caused by terrorism is linked to the nature of the victims of terrorist attacks. In terrorist action, the victims cannot be specifically defined. Even the terrorists seem not to be able to determine or define who their victims or the numbers will be. The fact that they are only interested in maximising the impact of their attacks without regards to the victims further served to intensify the mood of fear and uncertainty precisely because anyone could be a victim. As Howe (1976, p. 14) had stated, "to qualify as a victim of a terrorist today, we need not be tyrants or their sympathisers; we need not be connected in any way with the evils the terrorist perceives; we need not belong to any particular group. We need only to be in the wrong place at the wrong time".

Theoretical underpinnings of global responses to terrorism

What can be called a global response to terrorism and championed by United States actually emerged as the aftermath of the postSeptember 11 debates about the appropriate way to understand and respond to contemporary terrorism. The recommendations emanating from the different debates have informed the focus and direction of U.S. policy response to terrorism and these has been sold to its allies and the United Nations. This global dimension has become necessary although terrorists are seen as nonstate actors, but terrorist organisations must still operate within states, their targets are often states, their objectives usually invoke changing state policies and their activities take place within the same international system in which states operate. Thus, since terrorism is a phenomenon that plays itself out in the context of the international system, then for any response to be adequate, it must also be international, taking into the consideration the totality of the systems that made up the international system. It is a form of international social conflict and so must be dealt with internationally.

Theoretically, Archibugi and Young (2002) have classified global responses to terrorism as either "statist" and/or "cosmopolitan". The cosmopolitan framework conceptualises terrorist attacks as criminal acts requiring an international, multilateral response within the context of international law and organisations. It, therefore, advocates a long term strategy that involves addressing the root causes of terrorism which it identified as including poverty, inequality, and discontent. This framework does not see terrorists' attacks as acts of war. Consequently, terrorist attacks as crimes against humanity and not merely against the state under attack, imply the establishment of an international tribunal with the authority to seek out, extradite, or arrest and try those identified as either terrorists or as having affiliation with terrorist organisations as either sympathisers or supporters. In this wise, states are expected to refrain from any unilateral and precipitous military action, but that states in the international system must create a unified international coalition that can bring terrorists to justice. Deriving from this perspective, all terrorists and their organisations will be classified as international criminal organisations and the full range of international law will be brought to bear in order to put them out of business.

The catch to this is that international legal and law enforcement agencies, such as Interpol and other institutions, are not as well developed as the domestic ones. This implies that individual state's internal law enforcement institutions will still be relied upon and their cooperation cannot be guaranteed especially in such nations which are classified as favouring terrorists and providing for them safe havens. Such nations as classified by America include Syria, Cuba, South Korea, Libya, and Afghanistan. However, according to Shimko (2008), international legal responses directed at people and organisations involved in terrorist acts are something of "a bandage approach that deals with the problem of terrorism after harm has already been done".

In advocating for the need to address the deeper causes of terrorism, the problem which the advocate of this approach has is that there is no agreement as to the cause of terrorism. However, at a more general level, the root causes of terrorism have been generally identified as including poverty, economic inequality, and a profound sense of frustration and deprivation. This is why Diamond (2002, p. 101) has offered a rather simplistic solution that "we must feed the hands that

could bite us" in order to stop terrorism. In the same vein, others have identified different root causes such as "the creation of a more peaceful and just world order [which] implies changes in political, economic and social institutions" (Archibugi, Young, 2002, p. 31). As a policy thrust, Karon (2001, p. 18) has argued that "in the long run, eliminating the root causes of terror will involve, if not complete democracy, at least allowing the citizens of [Middle Eastern] countries some voice in their governance".

Interestingly, other scholars such as Lewis (2002, 2003) have also come up with what we shall call the historical-contemporary event root cause of modern religious terrorism. Their argument is hinged on the fact that "Islam" which denotes more than fourteen centuries of history, a billion and a third people, and a religious and cultural tradition of enormous diversity, had actually been prominent and represented the leading civilisation in the world during the interlude between the decline of the ancient civilisation of Greece and Rome and the rise of modern western civilisation of Europe. Historically, the rise of European civilisation eclipsed the prominence of Islam, hence the tendency among some Muslims to see Western civilisation and all of its trappings as evil and America as its bastion. This tendency has found expressions in the many pronouncements made by Osama bin Ladin, especially in his videotape of 7 October 2001 where he alluded to the "humiliation and disgrace" that Islam has suffered for "more than eighty years".

Like every nation or religion, the Muslim peoples are aware of their history, they are shaped by it and their awareness dates back to the advent of Islam. Islam, as far back as the medieval period, developed a strong interface between it and the state with prophet Muhammed (Peace be upon him) assuming the headship of both, thereby uniting them under one inseparable authority. As Lewis (2002, 2003, p. 7) has noted, "religious truth and political power were indissolubly associated: the first sanctified the second, the second sustained the first". While the idea of a nation based on religion may seem anachronistic, it is not so to Islam and its adherents. Thus, as Lewis (2003, p. 3) has further observed, "it is difficult to generalise about Islam" primarily because "in one sense it denotes a religion, a system of belief and worship; in the other, the civilisation that grew up and flourished under the aegis of that religion". In addition to this are the fundamentals of Islam belief system which requires certain obligations from the adherents.

The corollary to the cosmopolitan approach is the statist approach which views terrorist attacks as acts and declaration of war and assumes that the most effective strategy for combating terrorism must be a universal declaration of war against terrorists and on those states that actively support or passively tolerate terrorist organisations by providing safe haven to them. Pomerantz (1998, p. 14) had voiced this opinion by saying that "the fundamental problem is that international terrorism is not only a crime. It is also, for all intents and purposes, an act of war, and [every country] needs to treat it as such". This perception of terrorist attacks as a call for arms and war against the attacked state implies significantly a more aggressive diplomatic posture and government response. This is a reminiscence of the realist school and as Krauthammer (2001, p. A21) has argued, it is not a war of choice where losing is a option, but a war that was brought directly to the attacked state's doorstep and therefore, losing is not an option. Losing is fatal. There is no time for restraint and other niceties. Once declared, the war against terrorism signifies a time for righteous might.

However, this perception that views terrorist attacks as acts of war or declaration of war is problematic because traditional wars are fought by military means and amongst states and with definite endings. War carries with it the connotation of armed conflict between and amongst states whereas the perpetrators of terrorist attacks are nonstate actors that are capable of inflicting damage like states in conventional wars. A major problem of this conception is that it brings with it policies and response that may be inappropriate to combating terrorism. Thus, the alternative is to view terrorist attacks as criminal acts, thereby leading to law enforcement strategy instead of a military model. In spite of the fact that the military model seems more popular and accepted, it basically conflicts with the law enforcement strategy.

The critical difference between cosmopolitan and statist approaches may seem conflictual and contradictory, but in actual fact the difference is more in the emphasis and general predispositions of protagonists of the two sides. For instance, while the statist would not argue against the leaders of Boko Haram being caught and brought before the courts for justice to prevail, they would rather not want international legal and organisational avenues be pursued as primarily but only as supplementary components of a military antiterrorist strategy and policy. To view legal options as substitute to war against terrorism means seriously limit the possibility of finding an end to terrorists' activities. While legal avenues and criminal justice systems may be a viable option at the domestic arena of each state, however, at the international level, the legal and criminal justice system has not been fully developed with the corresponding agencies and institutions. This failure leaves each state with no option than to go about prosecuting the war against terrorism the best way they can, that is, the military way. Even the international police system such as Interpol would need much intelligence gathering and information which remains in the hands of the national law enforcement bodies of each state that may or may not want to share it with them. The reality is that it is difficult to craft an effective global strategy against terrorism in a world of sovereign states.

Assessment of Nigerian government's responses

Military response

Nigerian government has responded to the terrorist with full force. Several attacks had been made against Boko Haram group and splinter groups. Successive government have demonstrated military capability to subdue terrorist in Nigeria. For instance, President Yaradua gave order to forcefully crossed Boko Haram as far back as 2009. This military action led to the demise of the leader of the group and arrest of scores of its members. This attack silenced the group for some years. The reemergence of the group in a tougher manner also met military response from President Jonathan who succeeded President Yaradua. He named administration's military response "Operation Lafia". Though military response in this administration was weak at initial stage due to political reasons, however, at the end of the administration we could still record laudable military achievement in combatting terrorism (Osezua, Usamotu, 2015). Recent government of President Buhari demonstrated, right from the inception of his administration, political will to fight terrorism. It is on record that he declared on the day of his inauguration shifting of military

headquarters from Abuja to Maiduguri, just to show level of commitment of the administration in combatting terrorism. Administration adopts a slogan of "Operation Lafia Dole" meaning "peace by force" (Odo, 2015). Though administration recorded laudable achievements during its first term, as terrorist were pushed back and displaced out of Sambisa Forest while some local governments occupied by the terrorist during the previous administration was recovered, peace is still elusive in the region. Persistence of security challenges from the terrorist made some analysts and concerned stakeholders to be thinking of alternatives. Could negotiation be the best option?

Negotiation response /amnesty response

In response to incessant calls from some quarters about giving Boko Haram terrorist the same treatment as the Niger Delta terrorists, President Jonathan announced his readiness to negotiate with them. He made several efforts like Ahmad Datti Committee but all were abortive (Osezua, Usamotu, 2015). President Buhari also made similar moves. He has succeeded in getting some excombats surrendering their weapons and they were given amnesty. The question is to what extent are these excombats sincere? Is it possible for a real member of Boko Haram to jettison his crusade sprit for material things? The answer is ambiguous. We argue that people are better prevented from being acquitted with extreme beliefs of Boko Haram rather that expecting a member to forsake such beliefs. And if de-radicalization process shall be done it must include well versed Islamic Scholars who can talk to the senses of such excombats. Otherwise, amnesty process similar to that of Niger Delta which is based on materialism shall produce nothing besides equipping the socalled excombats. That could also encourage other fake Boko Haram to engage in violence with intention of getting government attention.

Developmental response

There is another response from Nigerian government possible. This has to do with provision of social and economic development to Nigerians especially in the areas where Boko Haram is ravaging developmental efforts (PCNI, 2016). This response is premised on assumption that terrorism is a result of long period of abandonment of the area in the areas of socio-political and economic development (PCNI, 2016). This response is not only timely but also adequate, as solution to terrorism in Nigeria, since Nigerian terrorism is not unconnected with poverty and illiteracy. Unfortunately, like all other responses, this response is not adequately implemented. Though governments at all levels often complain about lack of resources to execute this laudable idea but the role of corruption in undermining the little efforts put in place is also significant and pathetic.

Conclusions

In the final analysis, states have no other option than to ensure and assure its citizens safety and security any way and anyhow they can guarantee it. America has been known as vowing that it will never negotiate with terrorists, but in actual fact, it has been known to negotiate in order to secure the release of some of its captured soldiers and citizens. Terrorists' attack on a state is

a violation of its territorial integrity, and the use of arms denotes such attacks as not only criminal but as a declaration of war and must be so treated. Reprisal attacks on terrorists is a mere bandage method basically because a wound has been inflicted, but also since ensuring security is also target hardening, and has little effect on the success or failure of a terrorist attack. As Stinson (1984) has opined, physical security merely reduces the probability of terrorist assaults by 15%. Security can only minimise casualties, not prevent attacks, especially with the recourse to the use of suicide bombers by terrorists.

A policy option that can be ruled out is negotiation. While negotiation is feasible with political terrorists, it is not with religious terrorists. The amnesty which was granted to the Niger-Delta militants cannot be extended to Boko Haram religious terrorists basically because they are pursuing totally different agendas. We make this assertion based on the fact that religious terrorism differs greatly from secular terrorism as they are founded on different value systems, mode of justification, and legitimacy for their actions. Their different actions, legality and legitimacy are derived from different concepts of morality, belief systems and world view. For instance, while for the secular political terrorist, terrorism becomes a means to an end, for the religious terrorist, terrorism is an end in itself. Violence, therefore, becomes a sacred instrument or means to achieve a divine duty in response to a divine imperative. The religious terrorists are not guided by any manimposed political or social imperatives, but see their acts as a sacramental duty with transcendental dimension expedients for the attainment of their goals.

This explains in part why religiously motivated acts of terrorism are more intense and claim more fatalities than the relatively less discriminating violence perpetrated by secular terrorists. Religious terrorists see themselves not as "insiders" or members of the system, but as "outsiders" seeking to effect fundamental changes in the existing order along certain doctrinal lines. Therefore, religious terrorists have a high sense of responsibility coupled with a sense of alienation that enable them to distance themselves from the victims of their atrocities and able to contemplate ever more destructive means of action. This explains the rhetoric common in the vocabulary of such demagogues denigrating and dehumanising their victims in various terms. The deliberate use of such terms not only justifies the acts of violence since the victims are not seen or regarded as human beings, but also justifies and erodes away every form of constraints on violence and emboldens the perpetrators. Thus, terrorism is a violent form of insurgency that must be retorted accordingly and any policy response that does not take this into consideration is not only naïve, but also utopian. We conclude that none of these policy options are inherently bad or good, the final choice of policy response which any government (Nigerian government included) decides to take will be a combination of many factors.

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