

# **Defining Boko Haram Insurgency & Designing Strategy to Win the Battle**

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## **Abstract**

This paper goes beyond analyzing the current threats of Boko Haram insurgency to look into the deeper reasons for continuing insecurity in Nigeria. The paper employs Ted Gurr's relative deprivation theory which tends to agree with the idea that there seem to be a correlation between poverty and security challenges to understand the dialectics that gave birth to Boko Haram in the North-Eastern Region of Nigeria. It also goes ahead to specifically examine the status of Boko Haram insurgency vis-à-vis the Islamic position and the nexus of its rising tide with Nigeria's military strategy to counter it. Thus, it argues that the conventional military strategy employ to prosecute the insurgency war is flawed and therefore advocate the need to revisit and change it with asymmetric intelligence gathering alongside the urgent need to replace the serving commanders with patriotic, agile and creative mind capable of fighting the insurgency war to success. It employs primary source of data anchored on observations of events and semi-structured interviews with few personnel in the North-Eastern region dwelling in the theatre of conflict. It also relied largely on secondary sources of data in gathering factual information and analyzed same using descriptive method. The paper ultimately recommend the effective utilization of the Judicial arm of government in sanctioning the indicted insurgents, counter insurgency media propaganda, rendition of social desirable services and above all the engagement of elderly statesmen and traditional rulers in collaboration with some selected security agencies personnel to identify the ring leaders of the faceless Boko Haram insurgents and negotiate a peace accord.

**Key Words:** Boko Haram; Poverty; Security Challenges.

## **Introduction**

One of the most daunting challenges facing Nigeria today is the issue of Boko Haram insurgency. The situation has become worrisome looking at the spate of insurgency threats, kidnapping, killings, suicide bomb explosions, gaining momentum by the day, amidst the nation's security agencies' apparent helpless effort to contain it. In fact, the troubling situation has deteriorated to the extent that hardly will a day pass by without national dailies carrying banner headlines of mass killings of defenseless Nigerians either by heartless Boko Haram insurgent elements or cattle rustlers or even conflict between warring herdsman and farmers (usually in the North-East and North-Central Zones).

The Nigerian government set up Special Military Task Forces to counter the Boko Haram assaults in some states. Unfortunately, the task forces deployed to fight the insurgency is battling with its in-house challenges ranging from staff motivations to allegation of corruption and loss of confidence in the top leadership echelon. Thence, results of the government security forces' response to the Boko Haram attacks have been discouraging and often accompanied amidst report and allegation of human rights violations thereby exacerbating the suffering of the helpless Nigerians.

This paper is a radical departure from similar write ups on the subject matter which tended to hammer on the erosion of professionalism in the military cycle in terms of deprivation of training, modern equipment and appropriate remuneration as well as prevailing corruption; and lack of cooperation and building synergy across multi-security forces to share intelligence and pro-actively respond to the threat (Yaya, Habib Bappah, 2015); porous borders, terrorism financing, absence of regional counter-terrorism operations and endemic poverty (Odu, Otegwu Isaac, 2012:401); and elite manipulation and machination (Jacob, Audu, 2012:65) as the responsible factors attributable to the Nigerian security agencies failure to contain the insurgency violence or for fueling the insurgency violence as against what is being proposed and examined that is centered on a review of the application of conventional military strategy. Thus, the paper starts with a holistic examination of the root causes of the Boko Haram insurgency and debunks the narratives associated with the lingering belief that it is a new unfolding Islamic sect with the vision to establish Islamic state and the determination to challenge the supremacy of western education and its civilization. The paper mainly focuses on examining the rising tide of Boko Haram and why the Nigerian security agencies unable to stem the tide. To achieve these goals, the paper addresses the following research questions: Are the nation's security agencies intelligence agencies capable of weathering the storm? Is the present sole usage of conventional style of military fight the most appropriate and effective strategy in dealing with the Boko Haram's asymmetric warfare? Can the same military commanders, who were accused of wanton human rights abuses, colossal corruption, ineptitude and insubordination, by various interest groups within and outside Nigeria, have the zeal and will to prosecute the insurgency war to success?

## **Theoretical Framework**

This study employs Relative Deprivation Theory which attempts to establish a link between societal conditions and psychological responses of the people within the society. The theory acknowledges that the sources of discontent which propel a group to violence are found in societal relationships. The theory can be seen as a perceived or real discrepancy between man's value expectations and their value capabilities. Value expectation here is seen as the good and conditions of life to which people believe they are rightly entitled, while value capabilities on the other hand refers to the goods and conditions they think they are capable of attaining or maintaining, given the social means available to them. Relative deprivation therefore refers to the tension that develops from discrepancy between the 'Ought' and the 'Is' of collective value satisfaction that disposes people to violent actions. If for instance, anger built over the years arising from deprivation is powerful and persistent,

people can employ much reason and inventiveness in devising ways to give it a violent expression as seen in the security challenges in the Northern Nigeria.

The concept of relative deprivation, which is well developed by Ted Gurr, was first used by authors of *The American Soldier* that described the feelings of all individuals who lack the status or conditions that they think they should have, measured by reference to what other persons or groups have. As defined by Ted Gurr, it is “the actors’ perception of the discrepancy between their expectations and their value capabilities”. The theory is based on the assumption that men have potentials for aggression that can be translated into collective violence. This aggression can be innate, learned or deliberately invoked to address frustration.

The spate of violence embarked upon by Boko Haram insurgents in the major cities of the North-Eastern Nigeria in the recent times can be attributed to the deplorable living conditions of the citizenry aggravated by the higher level of unemployment, poverty and intolerable accommodation, relative to their counterparts in other regions of Nigeria. The insurgency acts of collective violence or civil disorders tend to be directed against the government or the state because of the widened scope of their activities and the expectations generated on the part of citizens. In other words, such disorders are instrumental in the sense that they are directed against a single contentious issue arising from the perception, imagined or real deprivation which is responsible for high poverty ratio as the basic, instigating condition for participation in collective violence. Historically, there are both Unitarian and moral justifications for violence on the part of those who feel sufficiently aggrieved. The most pathetic reality of the poverty in the North Eastern region or Northern region of Nigeria in general is the prevailing situation where majority of its members are living in poverty while the remaining relatively insignificant minority otherwise described as elites, are living in affluence. In this regard to many people, poverty is simply lack of income, while others extend it to lack of education and health facilities. But according to Amartya Sen cited in the World Bank Development Report (2000) and again cited in Jacob (2012), poverty encompasses lack of voice, lack of empowerment, lack of good governance (here people are worse off when officials are corrupt, unresponsive to local demands and unaccountable). It also means little money getting through for intended purposes. Kuren cited in Sani (2008) sees poverty as deprivation. It is the deprivation for the many and affluence for the few. He further sees poverty as socio-economic phenomenon whereby the resources available to the society are used to satisfy the wants of the few while the many do not have their basic needs.

However, all forms of discontent do not necessarily result in collective violence and it is not all cases of violent responses that address or solve the problems. What is true however is that in some cases people’s participations in collective behaviour can have cathartic effect on them. Typical examples of this can be found in the spate of dissatisfactions, labour strikes and work paralyses in Nigeria in the early 1970s and the 1980s. In the 1970s, for instance, despite the upward review of workers’ salaries and wages by almost 100 percent, inter-profession, inter-cadre and inter-sectoral comparisons produced dissatisfactions which resulted in a dynamic confusion in the public sector as various unions unilaterally embarked on industrial actions to the extent that an industrial stalemate was created. This necessitated the setting up of the Williams Committee of 1975 to stem the discontents which arose from the Udoji Public Service Review Committee of 1974.

### **The genesis of boko haram insurgency operation**

As a matter of fact, various scholars have tried to give insights into the possible causes of the Boko Haram scourge. First they cite long standing neglect of the North-Eastern states by their leaders that dovetailed into strangulating poverty, unemployment, underdevelopment in all aspects of their infrastructure, lack of access to quality educational facilities, lack of meaningful access to economic opportunities, etc. Secondly there is assertion that Boko

Haram continued to fester because the federal government appears to be clueless as far as national security is concerned. The third explanation is that Boko Haram is the military wing of some political groups that are bent on seizing power through sporadic acts of terror. The fourth explanation is that the terror acts are being perpetrated not by Boko Haram but rather by some sinister rogue security agents with a political agenda. The fifth explanation hinges on the foolish perception by the adherents of the Boko Haram teachings that Nigeria can be coerced into adopting their sectarian ideological ideal in place of the present secular order.

In as much as the aforementioned factors have some semblance of truth, this write up subscribes to the empirical explanation given on the bane of 'Boko Haram' (alias **Jama'atu Ahlis Sunnah Lid dawa'ati wal Jihad**) that is attributed to the case of ravaging poverty in the North-Eastern part of Nigeria. The poverty stricken Nigerian citizenry in search of solace were left vulnerable at the mercy of recruitment into any religious movements that emerge for their salvation. Incidentally, Boko Haram, which sprouted out of the Islamic religious sect called **Jama'atul Izallatul Bid'a Wa Ikamatul Sunnah (JIBWIS)**, provided a fertile ground for such recruitment of these poverty stricken minds through its skillful and seemingly convincing preaching that basically hammered on dissecting the dialectics of the power relations, resource allocation vis-a-vis the prevailing political elites inept corruption, cronyism and impunity within the North-East States, hence got a mass followership. To this end, the Boko Haram insurgents' movement started off as a relatively peaceful organization in 2002, and had a relationship with some top political elites in the society. It sought to establish their own system, adjudged by their followers and advocates to be an extreme version of 'Islamic state', in which they sought to condemn western education and western civilization due to what they saw was prevailing in their society in terms of abject poverty, moral degradation, cronyism, corruption and hopelessness championed by the political elites that were churned out from western educational institutions. The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) cited in Odu (2012) puts the Nigerian poverty profile at 69%. The report further reveals that 112.47 million Nigerians live below one dollar per day and as a result barely afford the minimal standards of food, clothing, healthcare and shelter. In all these statistics, Northern Nigeria is the worst hit as there is high level of illiteracy, high child mortality rate and high unemployment (Gomez, 2010). All these contribute to the increased recruitment of Northern youths by the Boko Haram sect.

Unfortunately, the Boko Haram approach in redressing the situation are on killing, kidnapping, raping, forceful conversion of their captives into their believes that **totally NEGATES** the teaching and practice of Islam that is anchored on respect and protection of sanctity of human lives and properties (Quran 4:92-3); no compulsion or coercion in conversion for religion (Quran 2: 256.); and justice (where Allah says in Quran 4:40 "Allah does not tolerate any act of injustice, no matter how minute it is") as well as the imperative need for universal peaceful co-existence of the entire mankind acquired through submission to the commandments of Allah (SWT) (Quran 3:102). Added to that, the Quran categorically said that "if any Muslim kill any single human soul innocently is synonymous to as if he kills the whole of humanity and that killers recompense in hell fire on the day of reckoning" (Quran 5:32-3-4). Based on the foregoing evidences and many more teachings of the Prophet Muhammed (SAW), this write subscribes to the idea that the Boko Haram insurgency are infidels, dangerous group that transgress the limits set by Islam, hence are said to be on their own, and so **MUST NOT** be regarded as part and parcel of Islamic sect **as against the widely held belief** by most scholars that Boko Haram is another contemporary emerging Islamic sect (Odu, Otegwu Isaac, 2012:401; Yaya, Habib Bappah, 2015; Audu, Jacob 2012:65) that cannot easily be dismissed with kid gloves, since they were alleged to have belief in Allah (SWT) and His beloveth Prophets, including the finality and sealing of Prophet hood with Muhammed (SAW).

Using the antics of mobilizing support for political gains, the then Governor of Borno State, Senator Ali Modu Sheriff, was alleged to have entered into alliance with the Boko Haram insurgent in exchange for political support to consolidate his position in power. Infact, it is an open fact that one of the Boko Haram subjects, Buji Foi, was hired as a Commissioner of Religious Affairs Ministry in Borno State in fulfillment of the covenant made to them by the then Governor. As this Boko Haram insurgent group lived to grow, it eventually felt apart with the Governor over his inability to fulfill some of the promises made to them on sharing of state power and resources. That failure provoked them to pick up arms against the state as a bargaining tool to reclaim what they were promised earlier on or to establish their own jungle polity base on their own articulated creed ideals for justice, equity and fairness in matters of State administration. This led to the arrest of their leader, Mohammed Yusuf, which led to his hurried and eventual extra-judicial extermination in 2009 by the State. This singular development set the tone for the Boko Haram disagreement with Borno State Government that snowballed into a global disgrace and threat to peace within Northern Nigeria as well as with the neighbouring countries in the West Africa sub-region. This singular event led to the emergence of Abubakar Shekau as new leader of the Boko Haram movement that was determined to go for vengeance and spread their creed's belief, served as the basis for Boko Haram mass killings of innocent citizens and destruction of places of worship nationwide in retaliation over the killing of their gang leader, which poised a serious security challenge to Nigerian Government and West African sub-region.

According to estimates, Boko Haram controls over 30,000 square km of Nigeria's territory, which is about the size of Belgium.<sup>1</sup> Over 13, 000 Nigerian lives have been lost within five years. Moreover, the images of Nigerian troops fleeing, sometimes alongside civilians, seeking refuge in neighbouring countries, leaving behind cache of arms and ammunitions are hard evidence proving that the military campaign against the insurgents is, thus far a dismal failure. The threat of Boko Haram has expanded and engulfed parts of the neighbouring countries of Cameroon, Chad and Niger. Consequently, the African Union has approved a regional force of 7,500 troops to supplement the perceived failure of the Nigerian military to contain and eliminate the insurgency.<sup>2</sup> Added on to that, Nigeria has reactively moved to demonstrate its new vigour in fighting the insurgency in the recent times by forming a multi-national Joint Task Force under the umbrella of Lake Chad Basin Development Commission (LCDC) with headquarter base in Ndjamen (Chad) comprising its neighbouring countries of Niger, Chad and Cameroun.

### **The orthodox security agencies symetric warfare strategy & challenges**

Suppression of internal insurrection or insurgency is a constitutional duty of the security agencies, particularly the military. Its reputation and value hangs on discharging this duty effectively. The Nigerian military started its campaign and foght against Boko Haram with an underestimation of the enormity of the task involved to prosecute the war to success, apparently due to weak intelligence gathering on the determination of the enemy's capability to prosecute, sustain their nefarious operation, their sponsors and even their international affiliation with other terrorists groups thriving in fragile failed states of Libya, Somalia, Iraq,

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<sup>1</sup> Payne Julia (2015) 'Nigerians face killings, hunger in Boko Haram's 'state'' REUTERS, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/01/20/us-nigeria-boko-haram-insight-idUSKBNOKS1S120150120>. Accessed 27/06/2015.

<sup>2</sup> BBC News Africa (2015) 'Boko Haram crisis: African Union backs regional force of 7, 500 troops' [www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-31057147](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-31057147). Accessed 27/06/2015.

Syria and many more. The military rolled into the battle against the insurgents with the usual thought that it would be one of those routine exercises in suppressing internal insurrection using the conventional strategy of symmetric warfare approach and more agonizing with obsolete equipment as revealed by some reports that some of the military equipment and explosive were failing to detonate. This ill prepared manner of the Nigeria security agencies operation was put under severe pressure to contain the insurgency. The result of which had been minimal successes recorded accompanied with massive inconceivable human rights abuses meted against the Nigerian people the security agencies are supposed to protect. Cases in the like of suspects' detention in dire horrible condition and overcrowded cells over a longer period without charging them to court, torture, extrajudicial killings, and many more ill forms of dehumanizing treatments were alleged to have been employed by the security agencies and documented by human rights observers and used by the international community against the Nigerian military, with damning consequences. Meanwhile, the top hierarchy of the military continued to deny the human rights violations labeled against them.

Soldiers in the field complained of neglect, inadequate and irregular payment of salary and operational allowances (aside the obsolete equipment they are left to manage to response to any distress emergency calls and challenges), and thereby giving credence to the allegations of corruption in the military. Transparency International Global Corruption Barometer of 2013 confirmed the allegations of corruption. It reveals that 45% of their respondents felt the military is corrupt, and 75% said that it had increased in Nigeria.<sup>3</sup> But giving the nature of the secrecy around military spending, no evidence could be released. The entrenched tradition relating to security agencies budget allocations and expenditure is that the public is not expected to know, much less to ask about how these security votes are utilized by the executive and the security apparatuses. As the fighting zeal and morale of the soldiers was plummeting, the insurgents were becoming stronger, pounding on military formations, overrunning them and taking over towns and villages.

The complicity of the Department of State Service (DSS) in playing the role of a mole is another major challenge the nation's entire security outfit has to contend with to contain the insurgency war. The DSS under President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan (GEJ) was severally accused of providing support to Boko Haram, destroying lives and properties through targeted killings, in addition to orchestrated election rigging to undermine the emergence of APC regime. These allegations were substantiated by several startling revelations, which include:

*"In September, 2014, the Australian peace negotiator, Reverend Canon Dr Stephen Davis, who was appointed by GEJ administration, made a startling allegations that the former chief of army staff, Lieutenant General Onyabor Azubuike Ihejirika, and former governor of Borno State, Senator Ali Modu Sherriff, were complicit in the Boko Haram insurgency. Considering the severity of the allegation, a swift and thorough investigation is what would have ensued if the DSS were an internal security agency worth its once of salt. Without any investigation whatsoever, and without any regard for due process of law, within 24 hours of that allegation being made public, Marilyn Ogar (the spokes person of DSS) went on national television to lambast Dr Stephen Davis for "blackmailing" two "innocent" gentlemen. She went further to exonerate Lieutenant General Ihejirika, and Sanator Ali Modu Sherriff of any wrong doing..... In order to perpetuate the Boko Haram scam, the DSS took some high-profile Boko Haram members from their detention*

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<sup>3</sup> Transparency International (2013)'Nigeria', <http://www.transparency.org/gcb2013/country?country=nigeria>. Accessed 27/06/2015.

*centre in Abuja to Balmo/Darazo forest in Bauchi State and created a new fictitious Boko Haram splinter group called **Ansarul Musilimina Fi Biladis Sudan**. The DSS provided them with money, arms, ammunition, and logistics support. This treacherous operation was coordinated by the former DSS Director in Bauchi State, Tosin Ajayi.” (Ahmed, Idris; 2015:5 & 32).*

These challenges were **compounded** by lack of effective strategic communication. Since the insurgency begun there have not been coordinated actions, messages, images, and other forms of communications to inform, influence and persuade the public and the international community in the pursuit of the war objectives.<sup>4</sup> It involves not only the projection of government objectives, but also countering negative messages and images unleashed by Boko Haram insurgency. Sadly, the Boko Haram seems to be ahead of the curve in using strategic communication to its advantage. At every stage, the insurgents use the media and Internet to pass clear message to the public about their motives and objectives, as well as their gains in the war. So far about dozen videos were released by Abubakar Shekau detailing their version of the war, despite being confined to remote communities within Nigeria. Shekau’s ability to access and use the Internet is a major blow to the Nigerian military intelligence capability. As for the Nigerian military there are many occasions in which it failed to use strategic communication to protect its objectives and win the heart and minds of the people and the world. One of these occasions was the exchange of words between the military and the Committee of Borno Elders and Leaders of Thought in 2011. The committee accused the military of excesses in their fight against the insurgency. Instead of listening and learning from the allegations, the joint task force commander of operations accused them of being “sponsors, sympathizers and members” of the Boko Haram sect.<sup>5</sup> The military failed to learn from the people and win them over. Consequently, on August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2014, Amnesty International released a report accusing the Nigerian military of war crimes, including extrajudicial executions, and other serious human rights violations.<sup>6</sup> The gruesome video footages obtained shows how porous the space of operation of the soldiers is, and exposes lack of discipline and professionalism in the conduct of the soldiers. The military said they would identify those responsible and prosecute those found guilty.<sup>7</sup> There was no report of the investigation or prosecution. Meanwhile, the effect of the report continues to damage the image of the military and its efforts. One of Nigeria’s leading military ally, the US decided not to sell lethal weapons to Nigeria due to ‘concerns about the Nigerian military’s protection of civilians when conducting military operations’.<sup>8</sup> Thus, from the above one can vividly deduced that the failure of the military action in handling of the Boko Haram insurgency can be attributed to mismatch of the use of symmetric warfare strategy to fight

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<sup>4</sup> Paul Christopher (2011) *Strategic Communication: origins, concepts and current debates*, (Santa Barbara: PRAEGER).

<sup>5</sup> Scott Stearns (2011) ‘Nigerian Military Says Some Civilian Leaders Sponsoring Islamic Militants’ *Voice of America*, <http://www.voanews.com/content/nigerian-military-says-some-civilian-leaders-are-sponsoring-islamic-militants-125640053/142286.html>. Accessed 27/06/2015.

<sup>6</sup> Amnesty International (2014) ‘Nigeria: Gruesome footage implicates military in war crimes’ Amnesty International News, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news/nigeria-gruesome-footage-implicates-military-war-crimes-2014-08-05>. Accessed 22/06/2015.

<sup>7</sup> Associated Press (2014) ‘Nigeria’s military accused of war crimes’ ALJAZEERA AMERICA, <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/8/4/video-rights-abusesnigeriaamnestyreport.html>. Accessed 27/06/2015.

<sup>8</sup> Jen Psaki cited in Sahara Reporters (2014 13 November) ‘US Denies It Refused To Sell Military Equipment To Nigeria’ Sahara Reporters New York, <http://saharareporters.com/2014/11/13/us-denies-it-refused-sell-military-equipment-nigeria>. Accessed 27/06/2015.

asymmetric insurgent warfare couple with some elements within the security agencies working to undermine the nation's collective resolve to defeat the insurgents.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

After a careful observation of the totality of the fragile security situation in the country, it is glaring that the anti-terrorism units of Nigeria's security agencies have woefully failed to tame the insurgents despite their periodic bogus claims of expertise, superiority of arms, winning the battle and renewed moral vigour injected into the Army with advent of the new regime. Had government placed any value on the use intelligence gathering of information and the need to protect the lives of its citizens, the Boko Haram kingpin would not have been hurriedly killed. If the Nigerian security intelligence agencies had been up and doing, if they had been able to penetrate the Boko Haram insurgents and monitored their activities, the hardship caused this nation would have been avoided. Also if the nation's intelligence agencies routinely monitored the excesses of the ruling elites in order to check serious lapses on their part, especially as related to their corrupt practices, the nation would not be put in the compromising position it finds itself today whereby virtually all the basic rights of the Nigerian masses have been undermined; especially right to education, shelter, health, decent living and even payment of civil servants monthly salaries.

At the heart of this problem however, is the question of leadership. The situation no doubt requires leadership to tackle the serious challenges confronting the military in fighting the insurgency. Leadership is needed to seize opportunities, convert setbacks into opportunities to mobilize resources, goodwill and commitment of the soldiers, the people and international partners to neutralize the insurgency. It also requires total overhaul of the current military symmetric warfare strategy and the immediate change of security agencies service chiefs, who have outlived their usefulness in terms of giving efficacious ideas, lack of integrity and the strength to prosecute the war. In other words, the insurgency thrives from poor handling of government inability to apply the right mix of strategies to handle the situation. The advocates of requesting the current regime's President Muhammadu Buhari to buy more time and work with the current military chiefs is counterproductive that would amount to nothing if sustained, other than increase in sporadic Boko Haram attacks, as recently seen in Borno, Yobe, Kano, Kaduna, and Jos.

The starting point on combating the insurgency fight should be with the effective utilization, empowering, re-shuffling and deployment of security intelligence operatives to take the lead in gathering, evaluating and communicating of strategic security information aimed at preventing and detecting of crimes that might affect the security stability of the nation given utmost attention. The security operatives saddled with the responsibility of carrying out such an arduous task in the like of the Police Criminal Investigative Department (CIDs) and its Special Fraud Units (SFU); Department of State Service (DSS); Economic Financial Crime Commission (EFCC); Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC); Nigeria Intelligence Agency (NIA); Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA); Customs and Excise Intelligence Unit, Nigerian Immigration Service (NIS); Nigerian Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA); and Nigerian Civil Defense Corp Service (NCDSC); should be made to step up their intelligence roles and work in collaboration with each other to fight the insurgency. The operatives are expected to provide the country's policy-makers with accurate information about the power and behavior probabilities of any element or group that is/are perceived to be a security threat. What constitutes a threat is determined within the context of the country's national interests which may cut across political, economic, environmental, technological, hostile propaganda, industrial relations and religious extremism and touches on two important areas of concern. The first deals with security at the borders against external threats of aggression such as when another country or non-state actor(s) is/are trying to levy war against another, as exemplified by Boko Haram alleged connection with Islamic State of

Iraq and Levants (ISIL) and buttressed by their free movement across neighbouring Niger, Chad and Cameroun to unleash periodic attacks on the sovereignty of Nigeria. The other deals with the control on internal threats such as Maitasine insurgent group which struck in Kano in 1980 but somewhat crushed and the ongoing home grown Boko Haram insurgency attacks. Such threats may be perpetrated by the activities of men of the underworld, internal saboteurs, spreading of false rumours and propaganda, espionage, all of which are calculated to disrupt and destabilize normal social and economic activities in the country. Very often the problem of internal security becomes associated with the problems of socio-economic and political circumstances of the people. The challenge to both domestic and external security lies in the capability of security agents and law enforcement officers in gathering intelligence for the purpose of fore-knowledge about activities that constitute threats to life and property or infringement of the laws of the land. Such capability would go a long way to preventing the consequences of such activities. It would also help to formulate policies and strategies to enable the agents to cope and contain the threats if ever they occur. Furthermore adequate and prompt security intelligence would enhance the image of the country internationally.

The second strategy should be focused on the effective use of the judicial arm of the government in sanctioning Boko Haram culprits. This has been kept at a low ebb ever since the appearance of the Boko Haram elements in 2009, which ought not to be so. There are a lot of Boko Haram suspects that were duly apprehended and detained in security agencies nets without government making any concerted effort to arraign them before any Court of competent jurisdiction to try them openly and sanction them so as to serve as deterrent to others. Likewise, there are highly placed or influential individuals accused of having a link with Boko Haram roaming about streets without security agencies making any effort to apprehend them for interrogation in order to ascertain the extent of their association with the Boko Haram insurgents. These elites appear to get away with their crime with impunity. The impunity enjoyed by perpetrators of crimes against humanity have not helped matters but only provided a fertile ground for nurturing new horrendous crimes, which should not be left unpunished. Criminal justice and its administration are the results of criminal law which defines certain conducts and activities as criminal and should not be swept under the carpet.

Thirdly, the federal government should adopt peaceful resolution of the insurgency crisis that bedevils the country. Peaceful resolution guided by the principles of 'No victor, no vanquished' should be sincerely and passionately pursued. That means genuine reconciliation through dialogue and sincere negotiations with insurgent groups must be explored. Leadership of traditional institutions, religious bodies and elderly statesmen should be sought to join hands with government to fashion out solutions to the crisis and to help in identifying those to be reached out on the side of Boko Haram insurgents for negotiation to resolve the crisis, while the federal government maintains its security operation in the troubled areas in defense and protection.

Fourthly, the federal government need to urgently take decisive action to investigate it security agencies of the various allegation labeled against them in terms of human rights abuses bordering on extra-judicial killings and torture meted to Boko Haram suspects and/or innocent civilians detained in their cells. Also, investigation should be extended on the expenditure profile incurred by the security agencies ever since the start of the Boko Haram war in 2009. For instance, if the country claims to have spent N1.1 trillion on security yearly and is still submerged in insecurity, then there appears to be very big problem. The cases of trillions of naira siphoned to South Africa under the pretext of buying ammunition by the previous regime; deprivation of payment of military personnel allowances and other expenditure alleged to have been looted associated with training and logistics are still fresh in the minds of Nigerians. The Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch Reports on human rights abuses made public and presented to the present regime should be good working document to kick-start the investigative processes, if the government want to be serious in setting the

wrongs right. Added to that, government should also quickly cleanse its security agencies of moles within this 'rank and file' that were alleged or suspected to be conniving with the Boko Haram elements to have a trusted work force capable of confronting the enemy head on. In this regard, the service chiefs of various security agencies should be dropped immediately and monitored to safeguard the investigative process from being unduly influenced to get the desired result. And anybody found wanting in this regard should be summarily dealt with according to law of the land without further delay and their ill-gotten wealth recovered.

Mass recruitment of credible people into the various nation's security formations should be done immediately and backed with effective training of the recruited personnel in aspect of combat operation, strategic security intelligence gathering and enhanced interrogation mechanism as a strategy to get adequate Nigerian security personnel and reduce the civilian JTF to only mere information providers as against current attitude of allowing them to play the role of soldiers in fighting the insurgency. The wisdom of employing this method is to avoid the unforeseen situation of the civilian JTF turning against the state in the long run after this Boko Haram situation is nibbed in the bud.

Finally, the Northern governors and the bourgeoisie elites should plan to create more high value entrepreneurs of international repute across the broad spectrum of their states diversity. They should revive the ailing industries and harness the agricultural potentials of their respective domains so as to create employment opportunities and enhance their states internally generated revenue. Also, the state governors should effectively block economic leakages in their domain and judiciously utilize the Federal Account Allocation Commission (FAAC) proceeds on the development of basic infrastructures such as roads, hospitals, schools and step up other social desirable services such as rehabilitation of the internally displaced persons (IDPs) caused by the Boko Haram insurgency barbaric attacks, and educational scholarship awards to alleviate the suffering of their populace and set the stage for the creation of the enabling environment for investors to be attracted.

The security and stability of Nigeria is inviolable. Her security and stability cannot be conditioned on any foreign ideology or partisan agenda. Every Nigerian reserves the right to his personal security, freedom and dignity, and no amount of terrorist blackmail or super-continental powers can make Nigeria surrender her norms and values.

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