

## Trend and Pattern of Violent Crimes in Nigeria: An Analysis of the Boko Haram Terrorist Outrage

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### Abstract

This paper examines the trend and pattern of violent crimes in Nigeria with a focus on the terrorist activities of Boko Haram. The paper traces the trend and pattern of violent crimes back to the 1980s and the emergence of Boko Haram whose pattern of criminal violence have taken very dangerous dimension and intensity in Nigeria. The saying is now making rounds that the fear of Boko Haram is the beginning of safety in Nigeria. This paper examines the origin, ideology, operational methods and the factors which have sustained the sect and made their pattern of criminality very destructive. The paper further discusses the challenges impeding government efforts in suppressing terrorism and other violent crimes in Nigeria. The paper holds the view that terrorism and violent crimes will continue to persist with much intensified acts of violence on the citizenry as long as government show lack of weakness and political will to arrest the situation. The paper concludes with recommendations for combating violent and terrorist acts in the country: a strict enforcement of terrorism laws, proper policing of our borders, provision of technological equipment and training of personnel, harmonization of intelligence amongst security agents, among others.

**Keywords:** Trend, violent crime, Boko Harm, terrorist

### Introduction

In post Nigerian civil war, that is from early 1970s, there was observable upsurge of violent crimes and in the atrocious nature of these crimes particularly in the use of dangerous weapons and killings. By 1970, Decree No. 47, the first armed robbery decree was promulgated, which resulted in the public execution of some convicted armed robbers. It is sufficient to say that the Nigerian civil war of thirty months which spanned from 1967 to 1970 provided the environment which facilitated the breed and indulgence in violent crimes by criminals. The national awareness and emergence of cult groups and increased violence can be traced back to the aftermath of this civil war. The roots of urban violence have also been attributed to the loss to traditional structures. This was asserted by Igbo (2007:158) when he said “the end of the civil war in January 1970 witnessed the emergence and widespread use of firearms in robbery”. The use of firearms gave great impetus to armed robbers and increased violent acts of criminality.

Consequently, related violent crimes including murder, rape, kidnapping, sea piracy added to armed robbery and cultism and of late militancy and terrorism particularly as unleashed by the Boko Haram sect, joined forces to make the Nigerian nation apparently insecure. The escalation of violent crimes in Nigeria has been attributed to the proliferation of arms and ammunition in the hands of private individuals. This was confirmed by Okiro (2005) who laments that the proliferation of small arms also contributes to a culture of violence and a cycle that is difficult to break. Violence fuels insecurity; insecurity fuels violence.

More so, the hard economic times coupled with deteriorating standard of education and lack of specific training in areas relevant for sustaining both the agricultural and industrial sector have all contributed massively for the worsening insecurity and violence in the country. Also many youths went astray and incessant unpredictable political atmosphere, lack of progressive management of the economy led to galloping inflation and concentration of wealth in the hands of the few who were in positions of public authority. This situation fuelled sense of hopelessness and depression among the masses. It is significant that all the indices for violence were prevalent in the country which included high population explosion with its attendant unemployment, corruption, gross indiscipline among politicians, kidnapping, transborder crime, poor wages, poor living conditions, urban culture shocks and poor quality of management which manifested in crisis in the health care delivery, transportation, housing and employment. Rotberg (2002) would prefer to relate the above indices as signs of a weak and failed state. Ottaway and Mair (2004) observed that failing and failed states present a grave danger to international stability as well as to the well-being of their populations, because they cannot provide security for their citizens or deliver essential goods (cited in Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2007). Hence, normlessness pervades the society leading to intense violence and insecurity.

It is on the podium of the above milieu that ethnic militia and militant groups like Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP), Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), and other militant groups like the Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force (NDPVF), Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), Oodua People's Congress (OPC), Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF), Jukun Militia, Igbo People's Congress (IPC), Ijaw Militia, and Itsekiri Militia began to take advantage of deteriorating socio-economic, cultural shock, political disharmony and infrastructural decay to cry out for recognition and against

marginalization (Guichaona, 2006; Onimajesin, 2011; Okechukwu, 2003). According to Agbaje (2002) the activities of this militia soon began to present a dangerous trend and dimension for the nascent democracy.

Most recently, the Boko Haram Islamic Fundamentalist group stepped into the arena of violence criminality, unleashing terror with impunity as a means of condemning the existing political and religious order in the country. Their activities became somewhat difficult to control due to the influence of foreign Islamic ideology which they have imbibed and which is found to be at variance with the Islamic doctrine being practiced by Muslims in Nigeria, hence the inability of Muslims and other Nigerians to reconcile the activities of Boko Haram with what they know about Islam. The group have become more vicious and unpredictable in their attacks with massive human casualties that government at the moment seem completely out of strategic measures to curtailing their violent acts.

**Violent Crimes in Nigeria: Retrospective review**

Crime can be seen as an infraction of both the basic principles of law and order and the norms of civilized behaviour. No society is immune from this thorny social problem but what differs is the frequency and magnitude of the situation and the response mechanisms to address same (Emeh, 2012). Moreover, crime is viewed as a conduct behaviour or an act which violates the criminal law or formal or written laws of a state for which a punishment is prescribed (Schmallenger, 2004; Terito, Halstaed, and Bromley, 2004; Adler, Mullier, and Laufer, 2001).

In the 1980s, crime wave grew to nearly pandemic proportions, particularly in Lagos and other urbanized areas characterized by rapid economic growth and change, stark economic inequality and deprivation, social disorganization and by inadequate government service and law enforcement in capabilities (Emeh, 2012). Published crime statistics were probably grossly understated because most parts of the country were virtually unpoliced coupled with the issue of ‘dark figures’ (Igbo, 2007; Odekunle, 1981). Nigeria became caught in the web of crime dilemma which manifested in upsurge of both violent and non-violent crimes. The crimes grew from minor offences to robbery, murder, rape, cultism, Kidnapping, sea piracy and terrorism, thus generating a state of insecurity and threat to National security. According to Igbo (2000), violence appears to be the norm rather than the exception for armed robbery in Nigeria (cited in Igbo, 2007).

Most alarming and terrifying is the present escalation of violent crimes and the barbarity, lethality and trauma the perpetrators unleash on the hapless citizenry across the country. Notable in this regard are the rising incidents of armed robbery, assassination and ransom-driven kidnapping which are now ravaging the polity. So far, the prevalent increasing waves of violent crimes in Nigeria have questioned the political will on the part of the leaders and the capability of the law enforcement agencies in containing the challenges. In the past, armed robbers used to operate only in the night. But today, they operate both night and day, attacking homes, offices, banks, shops, restaurants and churches to rob, rape, maim and kill. They attack banks with dynamites, strike at filling stations and swoop on victims at traffic jams (Emeh, 2012; Ugwuoke, 2010; Igbo, 2007). Similarly, rape, sea piracy, cultism have taken sharp and increasing dimension in recent times. The increase rate of violent crimes of all categories in Nigeria is illustrated in **tables 1** below:

**TABLE 1: CASES/OFFENCES REPORTED TO THE POLICE 1996-2000**

YEAR	CASES REPORED	CASES REPORTED	CASES PROSECUTED AS % OF CASES REPORTED	CASES PENDING INVESTIGATION	CASES CLOSED
1996	258,655	92,237	35.7	132,047	13,020
1887	234,992	100,284	2.7	104,831	11,004
1998	217,553	94,898	43.6	96,065	9,626
1,999	197,429	87,728	44	89,498	8,533
2000	163,397	86,911	53.2	65,535	10,740

**SOURCE: The Nigeria Police Force (published in FOS, 2001:186)**

**Table 2** is a summary of crimes from 1995 to 2003. A glance at the table shows an increasing trend of violent crimes across the country. For example, in 2002 armed robbery cases increased from 3271 to 3497 in 2003 about 6.5 percent (226). This trend was sustained in subsequent years especially in 2008 (See table 3 below), and as reported for Lagos State in 2011 by the State Commissioner of Police.

**TABLE 2: CRIMES IN NIGERIA (1995-2003)**

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Murder	1585	1561	1730	1688	1766	1871	2120	2283	2136
Attempted Murder	321	307	250	248	244	243	253	280	233
Manslaughter	25	21	18	27	14	27	15	14	6
Grievous harm/wounding	16300	17650	14720	14440	16730	14168	15351	17761	17666
Hssault	46543	52747	42815	40847	37044	35000	37691	32492	17666
Rape/indecent dressing	2346	2198	2585	2265	2451	2234	2285	2201	2253
Kidnapping	415	373	377	282	356	357	354	369	410
Armed robbery	2109	2419	2181	2291	2422	2953	2925	3271	3497
Arson	1240	1002	1190	1135	1291	1007	908	1539	1499

**SOURCE: The Nigeria Police Abstract of Crime statistics (1995-2003) as cited by Ugwuoke (2010:190-191)**

**TABLE 3: COMPARATIVE TABLE ON GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT ARMED ROBBRY 2007-2008**

<b>OFFENCES</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>
No. of Armed Robbers	2,316	2,340
No. of Policemen Killed by Armed Robbers	101	110
No. of Persons Arrested	4,109	3,423
No. of Persons Prosecuted for Armed Robbery	715	2, 026
No. of Cases/persons A/trail	1,442	2,026
No. of Police Killed on Official Duty other than A/Robbery	201	-----
No. of Civilian killed by Armed Robbers	259	133
No. of Policemen injured by Armed Robbers	239	26
No. of Expatriate killed & Injured by Armed Robbers	--	-----
No. of Robbers killed by the Police	462	857
No. of Armed Robbers Injured by the Police	38	53
No. of Civilians injured by Armed Robbers	57	19
Cases Pending Investigation.	1,252	109

**SOURCE: CLEEN FOUNDATION, 2010**

In a Press Release and briefing by the Lagos State Commissioner of Police, Mr. Yakubu Alkali recently, he admitted that there was a rise in robbery incidents in Lagos State. He gave the summary of crime statistics of 2010 and 2011. According to him, in 2010 there were 48 cases of armed robbery in 2010 as against 61 in 2011. There were 204 cases of murder in 2010 as against 319 in 2011. The number of civilians killed by armed robbers in 2010 was given as 124 as against 164 killed in 2011 while the number of policemen killed between 2007 and September 2011 was given as 124 (Ugbodaga, 2011). The implication is that there was significant upsurge of crime in 2011 as against 2010 with great human casualties.

Nevertheless, the emergence of Boko Haram has over-shadowed these other violent crimes as if they never existed due to its violent nature, terrorism and state of constant fear it has ingrained in the lives of the citizenry. This has given impetus to a popular saying in the security arena that ‘the fear of Boko Haram is the beginning of safety’. This because the name of Boko Haram is currently synonymous with bomb blasts, terrorism, massacre of innocent citizens, destruction of churches and all that stand against peace and stability (Chinwokwu, 2012a). “The socio-psychological effect this fear has generated on the people is better imagined than said” (Chinwokwu, 2012b:47).

### **Evaluation of Boko Haram**

Jama’atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda’awati Wal-Jihad translated as people committed to the propagation of the Prophet’s teachings and Jihad popularly known in its Hausa name as Boko Haram, is an Islamic fundamentalist organization (that has metamorphosis into a dreaded terrorist group) based in the North East Zone of Nigeria in the areas predominated by the Kanuri ethnic group. It was alleged to have been founded by Mohammed Yusuf in 2002. The organization is a Muslim sect that seeks to abolish the secular system and establish an Islamic state, as well as establish Sharia system of government in the country. The sect Boko Haram translated as “Western education is sacrilege” or “Western education is a sin” is divided into three factions and in 2012, was responsible for more than 950 killings in Nigeria (Wikipedia, 2012).

The group became known internationally following the sectarian violence in 2009. It does not have a clear structure or evident chain of command. Though it is a debatable subject if Boko Haram has any links with terrorist outfits outside Nigeria, however, some claim that one of its factions maintains link with the terror groups in Somalia, North Africa and Al-Qaeda. The late Muammar Gaddafi of Libya hinted in 2010 that there were Al-Qaeda cells in Nigeria. Furthermore, the State Security Services alleged that a member of the Boko Haram recently came back from Somalia to oversee the attack of the UN Office Abuja – Nigeria

(<http://www.economist.com/21528307>).

### **Etymology and Ideological Base**

In Maiduguri, where the group was formed in 2002, the residents dubbed it 'Boko Haram', which comes from the Hausa word 'Boko' meaning "Western education" and the Arabic word 'Haram' figuratively meaning "sin" (literally 'forbidden'). Literally, Boko Haram means "Western education is forbidden". The group earned this name due to its notoriety and strong opposition to anything 'Western', which it sees as corrupting Muslims (Wikipedia, 2012).

Boko Haram is an indigenous Salafist group which only turned itself into a Salafist Jihadist group in 2009. (Salafism) is an Islamic fundamentalist movement associated with Wahhabism. The sect in its radical form emphasizes strict interpretation of religious texts and opposition to non-Islamic influences. It propagates a version of Islam that not only forbids any interaction with the Western world, but is also against the traditional Muslim establishment and the government of Nigeria. Furthermore, it promotes a version of Islam which makes it sinful for Muslims to take part in any political or social activity associated with western society, for instance, voting in election, wearing skirts, trousers or reading a secular book or attending secular education (Chothia, 2011). For this group anything representing Western culture and civilization should be rejected by the Muslims. The group publicly extols its ideology despite the fact that its founder and former leader, Mohammed Yusuf was himself a highly educated man who lived an extravagant life and drove a Mercedes Benz. It is an irony that those who speak maliciously of Western culture live all their lives enjoying the very things they preach against.

It is fascinating to note that members of the group do not interact with local Muslim population and have carried out assassinations in the past of anyone who criticizes it, including Muslim clerics. In a 2009 BBC interview, Yusuf, then leader of the group rejected scientific explanation being the cause for rain, the theory of evolution and the earth being a sphere, if it runs contrary to the teachings of Allah. Before his death, Yusuf reiterated the group's objective of changing the current education system and rejecting democracy.

It is also remarkable to note that everybody including Muslims and Christians has condemned the group's violent activities which they have described as inhuman and dastardly. Dr. Mu'azu Babangida Aliyu, the Niger State Governor has criticized the group stating that "Islam is known to be a religion of peace and does not condone violence and crime in any form". And Boko Haram does not represent Islam. Also, Abubakar Sa'adu, the Sultan of Sokoto, has called the sect "anti-Islam" (<http://allafrica.com/view/an-ambassador-to-islam/>).

### **A Historical Background of Boko Haram**

Before colonization and subsequent invasion of the British Empire, the territory where Boko Haram is currently active, was a sovereign constitutional republic or Sultanate with a majority of Kanuri Muslim population. It was a Sultanate that was governed in line with the principles of the constitution of Medina. The Bornu Empire, also known as Bornu Sultanate was quite distinct from that of the Sokoto Caliphate of the Hausa/Fulani ethnic group. The Bornu Sultanate of the Kanuri, spring out after the overthrow of the older Kanem-Bornu Empire ruled by the Saifawa dynasty for over 2000 years. The Saifawa are the longest ruling dynasty in recorded history.

After the conquest of Bornu Sultanate in 1903, the British, who were predominantly Christians; introduced a new educational system which found little appeal among the local population. This crystallized increased dissatisfaction and gave rise to many fundamentalist among the Kanuri and other tribes of the North-East Nigeria (Onwubiko, 1967).

One of the most famous of such fundamentalist was Mohammed Marwa (alias Maitatsine) who was at the height of his notoriety during the 1970s and 1980s. He was sent into exile by the British authorities. He refused to believe Mohammed was a Prophet and scheme riots in the country which resulted in the death of thousands of people. Some analysts view Boko Haram as an off-shoot of the Maitatsine Islamic fundamentalist, although with some ideological modifications. As a rule, the Hausa/Fulani do not believe in the teachings of Mohammed Marwa and that was why they dubbed him "Maitatsine" meaning the "accursed one".

The Boko Haram group was founded by a self-proclaimed Nigerian spiritual leader, Mohammed Yusuf (1970-2009) in 2002 in the city of Maiduguri with the aim of establishing a Sharia Government in Bornu State under former Ali Modu Sheriff. He established a religious complex that included a mosque and a school where many poor families from across Nigeria and from neighbouring countries enrolled their children. It is important to know that the kind of school established by Yusuf is that which will have appeal for the teeming Almajiri youths. This social outcast that have no place they call their home, or parents to be identified with will be most grateful for somebody who offers them a home, food, clothing and other social comfort. This forms the main reason they remain easy tools in the North that can be manipulated to foment acts of violence. Thus, Yusuf and his school had ulterior political motive which soon manifested in the use of the place as recruitment ground for future Jihadist to fight the state. The group also includes members who come from neighbouring Chad and Niger Republics and speaks only Arabic. In 2004, the complex was relocated to Yusuf's home state of Yobe in the village Kanamma near the Niger border (Wikipedia, 2012).

### **Operational Methods and the Emergence of Boko Haram Outrage**

Boko Haram group conducted its operations more or less nocturnally and peacefully during the first seven

years of its lifespan. However, this was truncated in 2009 when the Nigerian government initiated an investigation into the group's activities following alleged reports that its members were building up arms in anticipation or preparation for an attack on the people or government. Before this time, it had been muted in security circles that government were privileged to security intelligence reports indicating that the group was subversive in its formation; but government reportedly ignored the warnings provided by the security agencies about the militant character and organization of the group. This perceptible disinterest of government in the activities of the sect may have been informed from the fact that the sect assisted the ruling party in the state of Bornu to ascend to the throne. As a result of this obvious fact, their activity was not considered inimical or threat to the peace of the state.

However, when Government commenced clampdown action on the sect in 2009, several members of the group were arrested in Bauchi, sparking off deadly clashes leading to the death of over seven hundred (700) people. During the hostility with the security forces, Boko Haram fighters reportedly used fuel "laden motorcycles" and "bows with poisoned arrows" to attack a police station. The group leader's father was killed during the fight while the leader Mohammed Yusuf was arrested and taken to the police station for detention. Mohammed Yusuf was later killed by the police in cold blood while in their lawful custody. The news of Yusuf's death sparked off various condemnations from human right groups across the world. After Yusuf's death, a new leader emerged whose identity is still not known to the government. Government action in the extra judicial killing of Yusuf was a misguided course, in some cases the theory of removing the arrow head in order to quell a dissident group does not necessarily lead to the death of the group, instead it further harden the tenacity of the group to carry on with the course of their dead leader. That is the case of Boko Haram and many other militant or dissident groups across the globe.

Consequent upon the killing of Yusuf, the group carried out its first terrorist attack in Bornu State in January, 2010 which resulted in the death of four (4) people. Since then, the violence has escalated in frequency, intensity and ferocity with massive human casualty as illustrated in **table 4 below**:

**TABLE 4: SOME CASES OF VIOLENCE CAUSED BY BOKO HARAM**

S/NO.	DATE	INCIDENCE
1.	7/9/2010	Bauchi Prison attack in which about 721 inmates were released including 123 Boko Haram members
2.	December, 2010	Bomb attack in Zuba an out-skirts of Abuja
3.	24/12/2010	Multiple bomb attacks in Jos, Plateau State killing over 38 people
4.	31/12/2010	Bomb attacks at Mugadishi Barracks, Abuja killing over 32 people
5.	22/4/2011	Bomb attacks on the INEC Office Suleja, Niger State killing 14 people.
6.	22/4/2011	Boko Haram frees 14 Prisoners during a jail break in Yola, Adamawa State
7.	29/5/2011	Various attacks in different cities of Northern Nigeria killing over 20 persons
8.	16/6/2011	Police Headquarters bomb attacks in Abuja killing 3 persons
9.	26/6/2011	Bombing attack on a beer parlour in Maiduguri
10.	10/7/2011	Bombing at the All Christian Fellowship Church in Suleja, Niger State.
11.	11/7/2011	The University of Maiduguri was temporarily closed down due to violence and insecurity.
12.	12/8/2011	A Prominent Muslim cleric Liman Bama was shot dead by Boko Haram.
13.	26/8/2011	UN Office at Abuja was attacked by a suicide bomber killing 23 lives.
14.	5/11/2011	Bomb attack at Damaturu, Yobe State.
15.	25/12/2011	Multiple bomb attacks at St. Theresa Catholic Church, Madalla, near Suleja Niger State killing over 43 persons.
16.	20/1/2012	Multiple bomb attacks of government facilities including the Zonal Police Headquarters, SSS, Immigration offices in Kano city, Kano state killing over 150 persons.
17.	8/3/2012	Boko Haram killed two Westerners – a Briton and Italian Engineers who were kidnapped by the Sect eight months ago in Sokoto.
18.	11/3/2012	St. Finbar's Catholic Church near government house, Jos Plateau State was attacked by a Boko Haram suicide bomber killing 11 persons and injuring over 22 others.
19	29/4/2012	The Islamic Fundamentalist group Boko Haram launched a multiple bomb attacks on a worship centre located inside the Bayero University, Kano killing over seven people.
20	10/6/2012	Boko Haram suicide bomber attacked Christ Chosen Church of God, Rukuba Road in Jos – Plateau state and killed over 15 worshippers.
21	10/6/2012	Boko Haram gun men attacked church worshippers in Biu Bornu State and killed 3 persons and injured many persons.
22	28/10/2012	St. Rita's Catholic church in the Malali village, Kaduna Nigeria was attacked by Boko Haram suicide bomber who drove a vehicle packed with explosives into the church during Sunday Mass, killing about 8 people and injuring over 100 persons including children.

**Sources:** Authors compilation

Today, the group has graduated from using motorcycle to lift its improvised explosive devices (IED) which are detonated at the targets, to the use of cars including Hilux Van to carry bombs with jerry cans of fuel to

launch attacks on its target. The group has also intensified its dangerous pattern and dimension by the use of suicide bombers and foreign terrorists from Niger and Chad Republics. The group has further added another dimension in their operations by kidnapping and killing foreign nationals thereby given it an international outlook.

#### **Factors That Enhanced the Growth of Boko Haram**

The factors that facilitated the emergence of Boko Haram can be viewed in three major dimensions. These include political, religious and economic factors but this is not exhaustive of the factors.

**Politically**, the group originally had a political goal of establishing Sharia states in the North as different from the secular system in the country. According to Chothia (2011) its political goal was to create an Islamic state, and school, and the school was to become a recruitment ground for Jihadist to fight the state. Consequently, they received tacit support unmindful of the consequences and effect. This was done through the payment of ten Million Naira (#10m) annually to the group. The demand and introduction of Sharia in some Northern States of Nigeria was in line with the political agitations of the group. As long as government fulfilled their promise to them in terms of Islamizing the North and paying their regular stipend, the group was to remain loyal to the ruling party. However, the love romance which existed between government and the sect became sour, as government tactically and strategically began to withdraw their support and payment to the group. Perhaps the sponsors from the government circle did not envisage the dimension of their operation and the outcome of their refusal to stick to the earlier agreement with them.

In the **Religious** dimension, the group is a fundamentalist and an extremist breed who do not want any adulteration of Islam by any Western standard or influence. Hence, at the inception, they had no appeal for the educational system of the west which is operated in Nigeria. Secondly, they were also not comfortable with the traditional Islamic set up due to the level of teaching they have imbibed from their foreign collaborators. Their kind of religious ideology was a return to pure golden age, where there was zero tolerance for any other religion. Even Muslims who disagree with their religious principle was regarded as anti-Islam. Thus they crush Muslims and non-Muslims alike with impunity without remorse.

The **Economic** dimension stemmed from their level of illiteracy which prevented them from appreciating the plunder in governance which instead of enhancing their well-being, they made do with funds paid to them. Since they were allergic to schooling in Western culture other than Arabic studies, there was penury. The level of poverty was heightened by their lack of skills and they are equally unemployable. Though a few of their leaders are educated, most of them are not, and so are susceptible and easily persuaded so long as it is in line with extremist doctrine. The unfortunate thing is their ignorance in recognising the double standard of their leaders, who preaches against western education and yet is enmeshed in the use of all that is Western for their comfort – internet, media, vehicles, radios, arms, clothing, food etc.

#### **Sources of Funds:**

The sources of funds of Boko Haram are not different from that of terrorism financing. When the group started each member was tasked to contribute one Naira daily to which they were committed and dedicated. Other sources include

**Farming:** - The group engaged in extensive farming and sell the proceeds for fund.

**Trading:** - Their counterparts outside the shores of this country send goods to them which they sale to raise money for the group.

**Robbery:** - They engaged in extensive robbery in the North Eastern part of the country including cattle rustling.

**Armed Robbery:** - Including bank robbery with which to fund the family of their suicide bombers.

**Harassment:** intimidation and extortion of those they appreciate to be reasonably wealthy; and funds from foreign sponsors.

**Foreign Aids:** - Boko Haram is believed to have links with Islamic fundamentalist groups like Al-Qaeda, Al-Shabab of Somalia and with countries like Iran, Iraq, Libya, Sudan, Lebanon and Palestine. It is obvious that apart from the human capital being trained by these groups and in those countries, financial aids are also provided which gave Boko Haram the impetus to have access to exotic cars which are immediately put into use in their suicide attacks.

**Local Support:** The President of Nigeria, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan hinted to the Nigerian people of the infiltration of the sect in his government. The implication is that Boko Haram is not alone. There are people, in fact very highly placed Nigerians who provide the leverage backbone on which the sect relaxes on for financial and moral support. Okunaya (2011) spoke of cosmic symbols which predict that if Nigerian politicians make peaceful change impossible, they will make violent revolution inevitable. We feel that it is this kind of people who have made Boko Haram invincible and unyielding. Boko Haram is not driven by ignorance, poverty or unemployment, rather they are driven by people whose voracity and avaricious nature refuse them from seeing that power belongs to God and it is in his hand to decide whom to give it. It is therefore this 'power thirsty' individuals that have encouraged, maintained and sustained the needs of the group using them as bargaining power to launch themselves into political relevance in the political governance in the country.

#### **Dilemmas in Combating the Terrorist Group**

1. Lack of political will by those in government who may be apparently sympathizing with them due to religious or other sentiments.
2. Allegation of compromise by senior officers of security agencies who are on the payroll of Boko Haram. Consequently, they frustrate information and investigation process about the group.
3. Lack of maximum implementation of the anti-terrorism law.
4. Lack of information and co-operation from the members of the public, especially in the North regarding the activities of the Boko Haram sect
5. Inability of security agencies to penetrate the group due to their faceless nature.
6. Lack of loyalty to the President among government principals officials who have been alleged of being in sympathy with Boko Haram.
7. Religion and culture seem to play the greatest obstacle in combating the menace of Boko Haram. Government action must often be misinterpreted to mean marginalization, disfavour, oppression or domination of one religion or culture over others.

#### **Assessment of Boko Haram Terrorist Outrage**

Boko Haram is considered to be a major potential terrorist threat affecting Nigeria's internal security and other countries. United States officials believe it is potentially allied with Al-Qaeda. United States Africa Commander (AFRICOM), Commander General Carter F. Ham stated in September 2011, that three (3) African terrorist groups including al-Shahab of Somalia, Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb across the Sahel region and Boko Haram have very explicitly and publicly voiced an intent to target westerners, and the US specifically and that he was concerned with "the voiced intent" of the three (3) organizations would result in more closely collaborations and synchronizing of their efforts (Gambrell, 2012).

Gambrell (2012) went on to report in Associated Press that General Ham reiterated his concern after the Christmas Day 2011 bombing of St. Theresa Catholic Church, Madalla near Suleja in Niger State and stated he was greatly concerned about their stated intent to connect with Al-Qaeda senior leadership most likely through Al-Qaeda in the lands of Islamic Maghreb. A bipartisan US congressional counter terrorism panel urged the Obama Administration and US intelligence community in November 2011 to focus on Boko Haram as a potential threat to United State territory.

Similarly, the then National Security Adviser (NSA), General Owoye Andrew Azazi, was working with other African Government, European and Middle Eastern Governments, and the US Government to build cooperation against Boko Haram. He met in 2010 with the Criminal Intelligence Agency (CIA) Director, Leon Panetta and in 2011 with AFRICOM Commander, General Ham and other US officials and was in the US when the congressional panel was preparing its report on Boko Haram. He participated in a CIA conference at about the same time. After the Christmas 2011 bombings carried out by Boko Haram, President Barack Obama's office issued a statement that confirmed that United States and Nigeria were cooperating at a senior level against the terrorist group. The Israelis government and France have given their words to collaborate with Nigerian government in combating the scourge of Boko Haram.

The Federal Government instituted a panel headed by Ambassador Usman Gaji Galtimari to find out what the group actually wanted in order to make way for dialogue. They rebuffed such entreaties while maintaining a vengeful stance for their slain leader Mohammed Yusuf. They have recently asked government to release all their members held in various prisons for acts of terrorism, as a condition for dialogue with them. The group's strategy of liaising with Somalia to perfect their terrorist campaign is an indication of non-compromise with their plans and ideology. The group seem not to be in a hurry to surrender their arms, although the Northern leaders in a recent meeting with the Sultan of Sokoto told the group enough was enough. In a most unbecoming of a government, it seems Boko Haram dictates the terms of dialogue instead of government marshalling to them the riot act.

It would also be recalled that Boko Haram became manifest in 2002 during President Olusegun Obasanjo regime, when Northern governors clamoured for the implementation of Sharia law in the states. Consequently, Boko Haram was fancied by the governors to be an Islamic police for the implementation of Sharia, possibly without due consideration of the aftermath of such outfit. It was further alleged that the Governors were funding them with annual subvention of Ten Million Naira (#10M). Later, Isa Yuguda of Bauchi State reduced the fund to Five Million Naira (#5M) annually.

Boko Haram grievances came to the peak when most of the Governors stopped paying them. It was alleged that they warned Governor Kwankwaso severally before the onslaught of attack unleashed in Kano on 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2012. They also alleged that the present Governor of Bornu State facilitated the apprehension of their spokesman by the State Security Service. It would be recalled that Kabiru Umar (Alias Kabiru Sokoto) was first arrested in the Bornu State Governor's guest house in Abuja before his escape from the Police.

In the event of non-implementation of Sharia in the Northern States, and not being used to enforce the law, the bottled up grievances against the State has manifested in the present situation whereby the government and state became their target, as seen in their fight against the political outfit of Governor Modu

Sheriff (ECOMOG) and the state government outfit code named Operation Flush (OPS FLUSH).

### **Recommendations**

A number of steps aimed at solving the problem such as creating a special joint military task force to eliminate Boko Haram, installing numerous closed circuit televisions (CCTV) throughout the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja and appointment of a new National Security Adviser have proved ineffective in suppressing terrorism and other violent crimes in Nigeria. The country has rather witnessed intense tension, fear and insecurity, to the extent that nobody know their next victim or where, how and when they will strike. There is actual great fear in the land. The following are recommended:-

- a) Government should ensure the law on terrorism is enforced to the letter without show of sentiment. The Criminal justice system especially the police and the court must relegate sentiment and allow the full weight of the law to be meted to all offenders equally according to the Act.
- b) The security of our country's borders should be reviewed to ensure all the nooks and crannies of the country's land borders through which aliens can enter the country are properly policed with structures and equipment emplaced with the immigration and customs and other security officials stationed there, to screen immigrants and emigrants accordingly.
- c) The government should put in place emergency measures requisite to quell a violent revolution including reducing such areas of discontent that could be capitalized by disgruntled elements like unemployment, corruption, and infrastructural development relation to power, roads and refineries as well as empowering the security forces to nip such a revolution in the bud.
- d) The security agencies should be equipped and trained with modern technological gadgets for detecting bombs among others, as well as encourage them with life insurance policy that will motivate them to take the risk of dying for the unity and security of the nation.
- e) The media should be used to manage the perception of the people using the local language people can understand very well; and
- f) Good governance based on rule of law, justice and equality, freedom and liberty are keys to neutralizing any insurrection, insurgency, subversion and terrorism. Government must strive to remove all indices of corruption and injustice and ensure the dividends of democracy reaches all citizens irrespective of social status.
- g) Security agencies should harmonize their operations to form a strong synergy whereby information are effectively shared and utilized for efficient security service delivery. They should be a centralizing unit to coordinate security intelligence for maximization of information and operational efficiency.

### **Conclusion:**

The act of violence and terrorism being experienced in our country does no one good, rather the country is degenerating as a pariah nation soon to be abandoned as people move out in droves as a result of general insecurity. After a decade of violence, the government still does not have an effective strategy for dismantling the group. The terrorist organization preys on the disillusioned Muslims of the North, who are fed up with corruption, poverty, illiteracy, unemployment and lack of economic opportunities. Unless this changes, the audacity of Boko Haram attack will continue to hunt the government. The current announcement of the group to seize fire in order to enter into negotiation with government is good. But government must provide the terms of peace and must negotiate with the real leaders of the group and surrogates.

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