

INTRODUCTION

Nations of the world are confronted with threats that varied in types, magnitude and dimension. It does appear that the most common today are those that are entangled within their frontiers with insurgencies, championed by cliques of often ideologically-motivated non state actors. The unyielding stance of the Taliban in Afghanistan and parts of Pakistan, the persistence of the El-Shaba'ab in the Republic of Somalia, and the restiveness of the Sunni/Shi'a militants in Iraq, etcetra, readily come to mind as typical insurgencies in contemporary times. A common denominator of their adventure is violence. Take for instance, the mindless shooting of Malala Yousafzai, a teenage school girl, in the Swat Valley of Pakistan in 2012, by Taliban gunmen, for daring to campaign for girl-child education, which the group by all means prohibits, and the multiple bomb attacks in Baghdad, the Iraqi capital, where at least forty (40) people in the Sunni dominated areas of the city were reportedly killed on Eid'elfitr day in 2013. These unfortunate incidents are only a tip of the iceberg among the heinous atrocities which the masterminds celebrate.

2. Back home, a similar phenomenon of sustained violence orchestrated by a self-acclaimed Jihadist group has characterized the security outlook of Nigeria in the past six (6) years. In its professed agenda to found an Islamic state within the Nigerian territory, the group whips religious sentiments to garner solidarity, perpetrating hostilities against law enforcement personnel and wreaking havoc on diverse targets perceived as enemies to its mission. Its resort to killing of unarmed civilians to include polio vaccinators, school teachers and

pupils in parts of Borno, Yobe, Kano and Adamawa states are only but part of the excesses of the group.

3. By its escapades, the long-held notion that no Nigerian would deliberately sacrifice his or herself in a suicide mission for the sake of any extremist cause has been proved to be after all outdated. The incidents of repeated suicide attacks undertaken by persons indigent to Nigeria were indeed emphatic; the first being, the bombing at the Police Force Headquarters, Abuja, in 2011, for which the group audaciously claimed responsibility.

Of course the attack on the United Nations building in Abuja is still fresh in our memory. As though at war with itself, Nigeria continued to grapple with an insurrection that is essentially localized in the North, with the North East zone being the epicenter. It cannot be denied that the crisis evolved over time, thereby frustrating socio-economic development, discouraging foreign investment, impinging on Nigeria's reputation in the comity of secured nations and ultimately threatening her ethno-religious diversity -the most sensitive fulcrum of Nigeria's corporate existence.

4. Undoubtedly, much as these mindless acts of terror had been alien to our experience with threats of national security dimension, Boko Haram is deemed a Nigerian phenomenon which has evolved in the midst of her internal realities.

AIM OF THE PAPER

This paper attempts to examine Boko Haram insurgency as terrorism nurtured within the Nigerian borders.

SCOPE

This lecture has been designed to cover the following topics:

- i. Definition of terms*
- ii. A perspectiveon terrorism and insurgency*
- iii. Boko Haram insurgencyas home-groomed terrorism*
- iv. Why Boko Haram/ Insurgency thrived.*
- v. The Task Ahead.*
- vi. Service Anti-Terror Efforts*
- vii. Recommendations*
- viii. Conclusion*

DEFINITION OF TERMS

- i. **Insurgency:** an organized rebellion aimed at overthrowing a constituted government through the use of subversion and armed conflict.*
- ii. **Terrorism:** the use of violent action in order to achieve political aims or to force government to act.*
- iii. **Jihad:** a holy war fought by Muslims against those who reject Islam.*

A PERSPECTIVE ON TERRORISM AND INSURGENCY

- 5. *The term insurgency has been variously defined. From our working definition of the term, insurgency is simply an internal conflict*

which does not rule out violence. This definition will however be deficient without identifying other features of an insurgency.

6. *The SSS handbook captures these features succinctly by defining insurgency as “ a form of rebellion in which a dissident faction that has the support of a substantial part of the populace, instigates widespread acts of civil disobedience, sabotage and terrorism, and wages guerilla warfare in order to overthrow a government”. In his highly insightful book titled Counter insurgency warfare: Theory and practice, David Gulala posited that, “an insurgency is a protracted struggle conducted methodically, step by step, in order to attain specific intermediate objectives leading finally to the overthrow of the existing order”.*

7. *Essentially, it is the insurgent forces that stoke the fire of hostility or conflict at such a time it deems auspicious. The timing may however depend on the insurgent's assumption on the size of grassroots support it has garnered for its cause. Be that as it may, insurgency growth may be influenced or accelerated by external forces. The offshoot of the Libyan revolution and the added impetus the insurgent Ansaru Islamists in Mali derived from Al-Qaida affiliates in North Africa which further propelled the insurrection in Mali, is a reference in this regard.*

9. *Insurgency and terrorism are terms that have been used in various contexts to represent same phenomenon. This is expectedly so because perpetual violence and apprehension which are the main attributes of terrorism can hardly be dissociated from insurgencies. It is*

therefore necessary to strike a line of distinction between insurgency and terrorism.

10. While our earlier illustration on insurgency and working definition of the term terrorism may suffice, "A key difference is that an insurgency is a movement – a political effort with a specific aim. This sets it apart from terrorism, as it is a method available to pursue the goals of the political movement.

- *The ultimate goal of insurgency is to challenge the existing government for control of all or a portion of its territory, or force political concessions in sharing political power. Insurgencies require the active or tacit support of some portion of the population involved.*

BOKO HARAM INSURGENCY AS HOME-GROOMED TERRORISM

A BACKGROUND ON THE SECT

11. *Dating back about twenty years, the emergence of the current day Boko Haram sect is traced to the activities of one Ammi Hassan (now late), an Algerian national and his son Ali Hassan. The senior HASSAN was a wealthy Algerian who was banished from his country by his home government for his alleged links with the Al-Qaeda terrorist group. Subject and his son thereafter took refuge in Niger Republic, but were shortly sent packing based on the warning by the Algerian Government that they were dangerous persons. The duo thereafter made entry into Nigeria and received by one Yakubu Musa Kafanchan, a Nigerian Islamic Cleric who hails from Bauchi State but based*

in Katsina. (It should be noted here that same cleric is uncle to Abu MOHAMMED, late factional leader of the sect).

12. *Amazed by the sheer number of youngsters under the guardianship of Yakubu Musa Kafanchan as Almagiri pupils, it took no time for Ammi Hassan to realize that this was a fertile ground for extremism to thrive. Pronto, the HASSANS, under the cover of the Nigerian cleric only had to select and sponsor several Nigerian youths for desert training in the art of terror in Mali. Two batches of about thirty (30) young men each were trained and later became radical arrow heads. Among them were:*

- i. *Mohammed AMINU (aka Abu DAUDA)-said to be in Kano;*
- ii. *Mohammed ADAM (aka Abu Bilal)- in kano; and*
- iii. *LawalAyodeji -Yoruba by tribe. Subject dropped out from University of Maiduguri (UNIMAID) to pursue extremism;*
- iv. *Sa'ad MARID -a sickler who worked in a bakery in Abuja.*
- v. *Tahir (aka Abu DIMA)*
- vi. *Khalid AL-BARNAWI*
- vii. *Mohammed Mudashiru Adam (aka Abu Miqdad)*
- viii. *Adam kambar*

13. *In no time, the HASSANS became the rallying point for both local and hitherto foreign based Nigerians who had a stint with the Al-Qaeda terrorist group. Among this set were;*

- i. *Rabiu AFGHANI- trained and sojourned in Afghanistan and fought on the side of the Taliban;*
- ii. *SAUD - a black Saudi citizen banished by his home government;*

- iii. *Mohammed ALI (late); -Nigerian returnee from Saudi Arabia soon became a leader under whom Mohammed YUSUF, (late Boko Haram leader was groomed;*
- iv. *v. AbulBarrah(aka Ibrahim Haroon) -was schooled in Saudi Arabia*
- vi. *Hamza- Nigerian returnee from the Republic of Eritrea; and*
- vii. *Yusuf Abu DUJANA; -Nigerian returnee from Saudi Arabia.*

14. *Given their early radical indoctrination, AbulBarrah, and ABU DUJANA were actively utilized by the HASSANS to lead Nigerian trainees, at most eight (8) persons per trip, for trainings in the Malian desert through Maradi - Tawa-ChintaBarades town all in Niger Republic, from where the recruits are made to trek several hours into the vast desert to be received by the younger HASSAN for onward movement to Mali. Eventually, during one of their clandestine movement into Niger Republic, Ammi HASSAN, Abu DUJANA and MohammedSALAHADEEN (Nigerian) were shot and killed, while ne SADDAD an Algerian was arrested by the Nigerien forces at the border post.*

15. *In early 2000, these minute clique of individuals, came together to pursue a life of radical Islam. Led by Ibrahim Haroon (aka AbulBarrah) with Mohammed Salahadeen as his deputy, the group named itself "Taliban" - an Arabic word meaning "Students"; a name they adopted in solidarity with the militant Afghanistan Taliban. The Nigerian Taliban and its followers were soon to be led from Kano to Kanemma in Yobe state by Mohammed Ali, in what was termed "Hijrah", a replication of the migration of the Holy Prophet MOHAMMED (SAW) from Mecca to Medina. It thereafter launched its first attack against security agents in 2003 in response to the arrest of one of its members, leaving about thirty (30) people dead. In 2004 during an armed encounter, Mohammed ALI, who was then the second in the hierarchy of*

the group was killed. However, ALI had groomed Mohammed YUSUF (late) as his student. In 2005 one Abubakar Adam kambar and Khalid Al-Barnawi with directives from the Algeria-based Salafia Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC) anointed Mohammed YUSUF as the Amir DaulatalIslamfin Nigeria (Leader of Islamic Republic in Nigeria) and promptly changed the nomenclature of the group from "Taliban" to "Jama'atulAhlusSunnahLidda'awatiWal Jihad", which means "Brothers of Sunni United in the fight of Holy War"

16. Mohammed YUSUF (late) was known to be seasoned in the knowledge of the Holy Quran and challenged Islamic scholars to contradict the group's posturing on Jihad and intolerance for non Islamic values. Prior to this time, he was once the leader of the youth wing of the moderate Jama'atulIzalatulBidi'aWaIqamatulSunna (JIBWIS) at the popular Indimi Mosque in Maiduguri.

17 Under his leadership and thereafter, the sect propagated extreme Islamic doctrine which condemned democracy, western education and culture as corruptive, immoral and therefore objectionable before God, thus earning it the name "Boko Haram" which means "western education is sinful/prohibited". The sum total of the group's orchestrated mission is the establishment of a Taliban-Style Islamic state in Nigeria, where the Sharia code would dictate the template for conduct of affairs, official or otherwise, and totally insulated from any element of western values. Considering the realities of the Nigerian entity in terms of diversity of religions and ethnic groups, it is only logical to conclude that the group's agenda is recipe for conflict, as it is readily pitched against the Nigerian state and the ideals her constitution espouses.

18. Realizing the need for massive followership to drive his group's agenda, YUSUF organized several open air sermons across Borno and Yobe state, where he disseminated extremist messages, preaching intolerance for moderate values, secularism and western culture. With its headquarters called "Markas" in Maiduguri, the group aggressively

brainwashed large number of ill-informed youths who immediately found resonance with the creed of the sect. at this stage, already had as immediate lieutenants in the likes of Abubakar Shekau, MammanNur, KabiruBanki and Ibrahim Agaji.

19. *In 2009, the manifest excesses of the sect under the leadership of Mohammed YUSUF reached a climax when the group's hierarchy pronounced a "Fatua", (a call to war) on Maiduguri, leading to the first major uprising, which remains unprecedeted in its short history. YUSUF was killed in the midst of the crisis which also left human casualties on the part of the sect fighters and civilians. Several police personnel were also felled and their formations destroyed in the wake of the conflict. The intervention of the military which was inevitably mobilized suppressed the uprising.*

20. *However, the circumstances surrounding the death of YUSUF, with the frenzy of criticism it elicited from civil society organizations, the media, and international human rights bodies, is a fundamental reference point in the post 2009 insurrection to the hierarchy of the sect.*

21. *By way of isolating the group and creating effective basis for affirmative trial of its members, the Borno state government passed a legislation outlawing the group in 2010. However, as though this initiative was more of an impetus than deterrence, the runaway remnants of the sect members who took hiding in other states, like Bauchi, Taraba, Yobe, Kaduna, Adamawa and Kano gradually regrouped under a new leader, Abubakar SHAKAU, with a resolve to avenge the deaths of their "Martyred" leader (Yusuf) and perpetuate the sect's missions.*

22. *Under the leadership of SHEKAU, anindigene of Yobe state, the sect became moreclandestine,conducting its activities subtly but aggressively. This secretive outlook of the group is explained by the aftermaths of the 2009 crisis, which instantly established legal basis for*

security hunt for elements of the group as enemies of state who must be smoked out to face justice.

SECT'S DOCTRINE

23. *The Boko Haram claims to be guided by an Islamic ideology that combines a political doctrine and programme of action pursued through open Jihad (Holy War). The sect accepts this ideology as superior to western values, secular governments, democratic values and practices. Members are made to believe that they are not criminals but cannot be subject to rules of the constitution, which they believe projects western values. The sect teaches and believes that any person or group including Muslims that oppose their agenda is anti-Islam and as such must be eliminated. This explains the vicious attacks by the sect on Christians, churches, security personnel, moderate Muslim clerics and traditional rulers that question their activities or who are considered informants to security agencies. Its members are however indoctrinated to see death in the course of Jihad as a divine calling that is rewarded by Allah. The doctrinal training in discipline, unity and fatalism, inspires among members of the sect the belief in the happy endings of their victory or martyrdom.*

24. *Boko Haram inspiration is firmly tied to Al-Qaeda ideology. The sect left no one in doubt as to this when in August 2009, a spokesman for the group, Mallam Sanni Umaru, in a press statement, declared that "Boko Haram is an Islamic revolution which impact is not limited to Northern Nigeria, in fact, we are across all the 36 states in Nigeria, and it is just a version of the Al-Qaeda which we align with and respect. We support Osama Bin Laden, we shall carryout his command in Nigeria until the country is totally islamized". The spokesman further affirmed that "we have started Jihad in Nigeria which no force on earth can stop. The aim is to Islamize Nigeria and ensures the rule of the majority Muslims in the country. We will teach Nigeria a lesson, a bitter one". These assertions clearly explain the campaign of violence*

orchestrated by the group leading to deaths, gripping apprehension and sense of insecurity in the country particularly in the north.

STRUCTURE AND MEMBERSHIP

25. *The Boko Haram sect is a highly organized and compartmentalized group. At the top of its organogram is the **Imam**, in person of Abubakar SHEKAU, who doubles as the spiritual and overall commander of the group. He is assisted by a set of advisers who constitute the **Shuracouncil**, which is the highest decision making body of the sect. It comprises of a clique of staunch members whose decisions are binding on the group, upon assent by the Imam. The group has **commanders** referred to as "Qiads". They are often placed in charge of the **Fia**; the Fias are the **operational zones** of the sect. Assisting the Qiads are the **Munzirs**, the **sub commanders** of the various cells of the group who are under an **Amir** or **Uwat**, or cell coordinator. Sect **foot soldiers** are known as **Munsarat**, who could also graduate in ranking based on their individual capabilities, often measured by their viciousness and passion for the sect agenda. For instance it is known that sect foot soldiers often boast among themselves of the number of eliminated people to their credit to taunt those with fewer numbers of victims.*

SECT OPERATIONAL ZONES (FIAS)

26. *The sect has four (4) operational zones across Nigeria identified as follows;*

- i. *Fi'a MUKATILA - the first zone comprising of Maiduguri, Damaturu, Chad, Diffa (Niger Republic) and Cameroun, with ASALAFI as Commander. He was killed in Sokoto during an intelligence driven special operation by the security forces.*
- ii. *Fi'a MANSURA - is the second zone comprising of Gombe, Taraba, Adamawa, Biu and Bama, with Abu SA'AD aka MomoduBama ABATCHA, as Commander. He later became*

second in command to SHEKAU and was killed alongside his father during an armed encounter with the, JTF in August 2013 at Bama, his home town.

- iii. Fi'a MUJAIDA - the third zone consists of Kaduna, Kano, Jos, FCT, Kogi, Niger and Bauchi states, under MAIYADI as Commander. He was reined in an intelligence-driven operation.*
- iv. Fi'a MUMINA - the fourth zone comprises of Zamfara, Jigawa, Sokoto and Katsina, under Khalid AL-BARNAWI as Commander.*

27. *Membership of Boko Haram cuts across the strata of the society among whom have been identified politicians, medical doctors, highly educated persons, and youths who could be as young as eight years old. However, the bulk of the sect's membership are idle young adults who pose as everyday people involved in various menial trades, while many were raised as Almajiri pupils.*

SOURCES OF FUNDS

28. *The Boko Haram group generates fund from both internal and external sources. It receives Zakkat and free will donations from members and sympathizers, convass for donations from the public under the pretext of building Mosques, in addition to selling Islamic books, investment in legitimate businesses of members and sharing of profits based on a concept known as Bai'aTabi-ie. The group also involves in extortion of earmarked persons or organizations through threat messages; robberies of Banks and other business outfits. Its external sources of fund are believed to be from Alqaeda affiliates.*

FOREIGN CONNECTION

29. *Report indicates the sect's link with Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghred (AQIM) and its affiliates in Mali, Sudan and Somalia, from where it derives ideological impetus and support, in terms of funds, training in the art of*

terror and mercenaries to boost its rank of fighters. The UmmulQurah Camp in Mauritania and the desert camps in North Eastern Mali are training destinations where several of the sect's foot soldiers have also received trainings. The character and modus operandi of Boko Haram activities are indicative of its ties with Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan, which advocates Jihad to enforce strict Sharia Law and annihilate real and perceived enemies of its agenda.

CONFRONTING BOKO HARAM INSURGENCY

30. *Counter-insurgency generally involves a full range of measures, to includemilitary, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological and sociological, consciously pursued by government with or without the assistance of friendly nations, to ultimately defeat an insurgency and restore her authority. To a large extent, efforts to combat the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria have necessitated certain conscious measures, and these are well documented. The declaration of state of emergency on the affected states, government proposal for truce, empowerment program for youths and anti terror legislations, are among other initiatives taken by government in this regard.*

31. *On their own part, the Military has continued to overcome observed challenges to its counter insurgency operation across Boko Haram flash points identified by intelligence reports especially in Northern and Southern Borno axis, thus liberating several hitherto besieged communities and forcing the hoodlums to flee into Sambisa forest and parts of Marte Local Government Area (LGA). This sustained operation has also witnessed unprecedeted collaboration of troops of the neighbouring countries who have also launched successful raids on sect enclaves across their borders thereby keeping the insurgents on the run.*

WHY BOKO HARAM/INSURGENCY THRIVED

- **EXPLOITATION OF RELIGIOUS SENTIMENTS**

32. *The sect effectively whips religious sentiments to create bandwagon effect among the largely Muslim communities of the North for its Jihadist ideology, while posturing as champions of sharia system to free the society from supposed "injustices" being meted out to them by corruptive western model government; a strategy through which large numbers of idle and ill-informed youth segments are brainwashed into enlisting into the radical fold as foot soldiers and suicide mission volunteers.*

- **TRADITIONAL ALMAJIRI PRACTICE**

33. *Though wrongly termed a religious exercise, the long traditional practice whereby children as young as five(5) years old are abandoned to the care of a poor Arabic teacher for tutelage as Almajiri, has continued to provide potential followership for radical groups to be used as foot soldiers in violent confrontations. Evidently, these vulnerable children who grew under harsh conditions constitute the very bulk of Boko Haram fighters.*

- **PREVAILING SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS**

34. *Closely related to the above is the deplorable socio-economic realities that pervades our communities. Aside the high poverty level is the excruciating youth unemployment which leaves high percentage of youths idle and thus predisposing them to be used as instruments of*

subversive activities. This unfortunate reality indeed remains a great challenge not only to the society but also to government.

- **SUCCESSFUL ATTACKS ON SECURITY FORMATIONS**

36. Another catalysts for the sect are their successes in launching repeated onslaughts on security formations and commercial banks, during which sophisticated weapons and mobile war equipment were looted, while huge sums also get carted away from vaults of banks. These continually afford the sect the wherewithal to sustain its violent campaign.

- **POROUS INTERNATIONAL BORDERS**

37. Nigeria's expansive and porous borderline with Niger, Chad and Cameroun Republics has been to the advantage of the sect, which it readily exploits to network with its foreign collaborators for arms, mercenaries and safe havens. Though these subversive cross border activities have been drastically confronted by the current deployment and involvement of the armies of the Chad, Niger and Cameroun, our own part of the border remains largely unmanned.

- **FOREIGN SUPPORT**

38. Connections of the sect with foreign terrorist groups, particularly the Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) which has active cells in Northern African countries for training and funding, is another factor that propels the sect. Similarly, available reports have confirmed links between the sect and the Tuareg rebels of the neighboring Niger Republic. The sect leverages on rebel's weapons holding and experience in civil rebellion, and engages them as mercenaries among its fighting force.

- EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING DEFICIT OF SECURITY/MILITARY PERSONNEL

39. A wide gap currently exists in the areas of modern equipment and requisite training in manipulation of such hardware by personnel deployed for enforcement operations. A situation whereby even the few available sophisticated equipment cannot be effectively deployed, owing to deficiency in requisite expertise by the handlers is highly regrettable. This has continued to impinge upon operational momentum against the insurgents in their remote enclaves.

SERVICE ANTI-TERROR EFFORTS

40. It is highly instructive to posit that in the face of the gradual evolution of the sect into a major national security threat despite the concerted efforts to nip it in the bud over the years, the Service was indeed quick to observe the early warning signals of the budding terrorism and promptly alerted the authorities on the threat. These notifications were not only accompanied with recommendations for appropriate action but Service also initiated enforcement operations. In this bid, the Service variously summoned radical elements during the formative days of the sect and also arrested suspects. Among these were Muhammed Yusuf, late leader of the sect, Abubakar Shekau, Mammam Nur, Muhammed Mudashiru Adam (aka Abu Miqdad) and Galtimari, at separate times and locations. However, while these conscious actions were timely, the absence of appropriate legislations at the time, for conclusive trial of suspects inevitably led to their premature release from custody, often pursued by human rights bodies and lawyers. It will be recalled that at some point in 2006, when the Service warned of

a bourgeoning terrorism in Nigeria, some vested interests including a prominent Northern traditional ruler did not mince words in condemning the Service' position and dismissing same as unfounded. Meanwhile, just a few years down the line, the same monarch came under open threat of attack by the group.

41. However, in living up to its mandate of intelligence procurement, close monitoring by the Service was also sustained on the activities of the group through the post 2009 mayhem in Maiduguri. Such vital intelligence reports have necessitated special operations thereby reining in members of the sect, including such high profile commanders as Abu Muhammed, late factional leader of the sect, Habibu Yusuf (aka Assalafi), SalehLadan, IbnSaleh, Abu Qaqa, Sect spokesman, KabiruSokoto, a Shura Council member, Abu Summaiya, Abu Mali, MuhamaduAlhaji Abubakar (aka MomoduBama), who was second in command to sect leader Abubakar Shekau, Adam Kambar, AbdullahiDamasak, Muhammad Zangina, etc. Part of these operational successes premised on actionable intelligence from the Service were the neutralization of several dastardly plot of attack on earmarked locations and personalities across the country, and the precise raids of remote enclaves of the sect by the military.

42. Even though the eventual isolation of the insurgents to forest camps offered tactical advantage for military offensives, prompt and exhaustive utilization of intelligence reports on identified Boko Haram operational bases for robust military offensive were largely inhibited by systemic constraints of manpower deployment, equipment, technical expertise, as well as troop morale. It is however crucial to observe that these challenges are already receiving attention, thus increasing the prospect

for sustained heat against the terrorists across the epicenters of the insurgency in the North East zone.

THE TASK AHEAD

43. Having come this far in our counter insurgency efforts despite the evident outcomes, it is certainly not uhuru yet as current realities only offer the relevant security agencies and the military a platform to be more decisive in the planning and prosecution of a whole gamut of offensive against camping and marauding syndicates, as well as mop up those hibernating in rural communities.

This is achievable with due consideration to the following;

- i. sustained intelligence procurement to identify sect black spots*
- ii. deployment of aerial surveillance and raid on remote camps*
- iii. Robust simultaneous operation on identified sect enclaves and sect-infested villages to rein in the hoodlums.*
- iv. Establishment of well-equipped military combat units with adequate manpower at strategic locations across liberated areas.*

This measure is crucial for several reasons:

- It will deter re-infiltration of sanitized communities by elements complicit with the group, and also ward off reprisals.*
- It will provide a sense of safety and defence for the local residents, encourage further collaboration with security agents and reaffirm their confidence in government's ability and readiness to protect them.*

- *It will facilitate prompt incident response to control any untoward situation and facilitate arrest of suspects.*
- *Enable resumption of normal routine socio-economic and administrative activities by civilians.*

44. *However the emphasis on these measures remains (1) sufficient troop deployment and (2) provision of adequate and right military hard wares and fire power to overwhelm the insurgents.*

RECOMMENDATIONS

45. *While security options to improve upon the current gains through sustained review of strategies, intelligence/security operations, intelligence sharing, deployment of hi-tech devices, training / retraining of operatives to maximize outcomes against the general capabilities of the sect, further recommendations to checkmate extremism and the threats of terrorism it poses are hereby proffered:*

- i. *Government must place high premium to grassroots education especially in Northern Nigeria and further improve upon the modern Almajiri schools which combines western education with Arabic studies.*
- ii. *An aggressive youth employment drive by Government at all levels must be prioritized to reduce youth vulnerability to social vices and radicalism.*
- iii. *A complete overhaul of the existing border security apparatus of the nation, particularly along our international boundaries with the three neighbouring francophone countries is an urgent requirement. A watertight border security will also facilitate*

intelligence sharing and joint operations with security forces of these countries in the control of across-the- border criminalities.

- iv. *While intelligence sharing with foreign agencies is being exploited, the role of Nigeria Intelligence Agency (NIA) in sustaining monitoring of Nigerian dissidents elements in their AORs, to also identify their contacts and provide timely information on movement of such elements to Nigeria is emphasized.*
- v. *All recognized Religious bodies, prominent religious/traditional leaders, Islamic scholars must to live up to their moral and religious obligations by vehemently and consistently taking a stance against intolerance and divisive sermons.*
- vi. *Establishment of a body to register/accredit clerics so as to conduct background checks on prospective preachers; identify those with radical leanings and exclude unqualified teachers.*
- vii. *Enactment/enforcement of laws at State levels to regulate preaching activities; set guidelines and procedures for organizing public sermons and spell out sanctions for breaches and; identify requirement/limits for open air sermons, especially to exclude radical or divisive messages.*
- viii. *Infiltration/penetration of suspicious religious groups for procurement of actionable intelligence on the group's overt and covert activities for timely counter measures.*

ix. Activation of public orientation mechanisms to counter any inciting publication that pertains Nigeria by local/ foreign extremist elements.

CONCLUSION

46. The realities of the time is that Nigeria contends a real challenge of insurgency advanced through sustained terror by indigent actors who hold tenaciously onto a Jihadist creed, to which they bear eternal allegiance. Therefore, in the face of this resonating fact, the political leadership, relevant agencies of government and indeed all patriotic citizens must forge greater commitment in the effort against terror elements, and emplace proactive measures against factors that elicit and exacerbate the threats in our communities. Finally, to ask whether tackling the problem of insurgency is often tortuous and protracted is to ask the obvious; to ask if they have ever been won and whether the Boko Haram insurgency can be won, for me I would answer in the affirmative, if and only if we do what we must collectively at the current stage of the fight.

THANK YOU

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