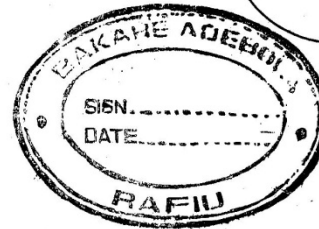




Lead City Journal of the Social Sciences (LCJSS)



Contents

Employer's Liability for Workmen's On-the-Job Injury in Nigeria: A Critical Appraisal, <i>A. Shittu Bello, Steve R. Omisore and Yunus K. Adeigbe</i>	1
External Intervention and Asymmetric Warfare in Africa: The Case of Nigeria <i>Adebola Rafiu Bakare</i>	11
Cultural Imperialism and the Evolution of 'White Africa' <i>Babafemi Jacobs</i>	25
Election Crisis and Democracy in Nigeria: Implications for National Security <i>Asimiyu Olalekan Murana, Moshood Olayinka Salahu, and Basirat Omotayo Ibrahim</i>	30
Press Reportage and Political Instability in Nigeria <i>Iyabobola O. Ajibola and Margaret Solo-Anaeto</i>	44
Party Politics and Dividends of Democracy in Nigeria <i>Iwara Iwara</i>	53
Economic and Social Benefits of Micro-Finance to Women Beneficiaries in Ghana <i>Solomon Donkor Kwame and Eno L. Inanga</i>	66
Performance Appraisal and Motivation of Nurses at the General Hospital, Ikeja Lagos, Nigeria <i>Olusegun Adeleke Adenuga and Astenike Adesola Lawal</i>	87
Impact of Democracy on Foreign Direct Investment and Economic Growth in Nigeria <i>Nafisat Olawunmi Olabisi and Olatundun Janet Adelegan</i>	93

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The Editor-in-Chief
Lead City Journal of the Social Sciences (LCJSS)
Faculty of the Social Sciences
Lead City University,
Ibadan, Nigeria
Email: lcjss@lcu.edu.ng, lcjsseditor@gmail.com,
lcjssdeputyeditor@gmail.com

Tel: Editors: 07063872489, 08057638992, 08033585557, 08161198400

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Contents

Employer's Liability for Workmen's On-the-Job Injury in Nigeria: A Critical Appraisal <i>A. Shittu Bello, Steve R. Omisore and Yunus K. Adeigbe</i>	1
✓ External Intervention and Asymmetric Warfare in Africa: The Case of Nigeria <i>Adebola Rafiu Bakare</i>	11
Cultural Imperialism and the Evolution of 'White Africa' <i>Babafemi Jacobs</i>	25
Election Crisis and Democracy in Nigeria: Implications for National Security <i>Asimiyu Olalekan Murana, Moshood Olayinka Salahu and Basirat Omotayo Ibrahim</i>	30
Press Reportage and Political Instability in Nigeria <i>Iyabobola O. Ajibola and Margaret Solo-Anaeto</i>	44
Party Politics and Dividends of Democracy in Nigeria <i>Iwara Eno Iwara</i>	53
Economic and Social Benefits of Micro Finance to Women Beneficiaries in Ghana <i>Solomon Donkor Kwame and Eno L. Inanga</i>	66
Performance Appraisal and Motivation of Nurses at General Hospital, Ikeja Lagos, Nigeria <i>Olusegun Adeleke Adenuga and Adenike Adesola Lawal</i>	87
Impact of Democracy on Foreign Direct Investment and Economic Growth in Nigeria <i>Nafisat Olawunmi Olabisi and Ola'undun Janet Adelegan</i>	93



External Intervention and Asymmetric Warfare in Africa: The Case of Nigeria

Bakare, Adebola Rafiu

Department of Political Science,
University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria.

Mobile: +2348055803641, +2348082114424

E-mail: bolaonboard@yahoo.com

bakare.ar@unilorin.edu.ng

Abstract

The President Jonathan's address at the 68th United Nations General Assembly in New York (September 24, 2013) may probably mark a turning point in: external military intervention in countries under terrorist attack. He opined that attack by any terrorist group on civilian (asymmetric warfare) anywhere in the world is an assault on collective humanity and all countries must intervene regardless of where it happens; for the international community to win the global war on terror. It is on this note that this paper examines the implication which Nigeria's external intervention will have on its national security under two repercussive views: the ongoing internal Boko Haram insurgency and the newest wave of retaliatory vengeance attack by the terrorists on the intervening third-party as recently witnessed in the Al-Shabab Kenyan Westgate Mall attack. The paper raised concern on a number of security lapses ranging from porous border, undocumented influx of foreign nationals, lack of intelligence information sharing among security institutions and inappropriate response to intelligence report among others which might gravely affect the nation. The paper strongly supports the idea of external intervention on the scale of existing peacekeeping operations but with the stringent condition that all identified security lapses are taken care of, before dabbling into such venture. It concluded that Nigeria should engage in the exercise to bring peace to the continent of Africa in particular and the world order in general; and justify her 'most suitable' campaign for the UN Security Council permanent seat.

Key Words: Terrorism, military offensive, Islamism, non-military intervention, insurgency.

Introduction

Having been recognized as one of the foremost peace ambassadors in the world, Nigeria is opening a new chapter in peacekeeping operation in the aspect of the current challenges of asymmetric warfare (terrorism, resistance movements, military coups and other intrastate wars) by calling for the formalization of external intervention in a country under asymmetric attack under the same consideration as worth peacekeeping operation. President Jonathan's September 24, 2013 address

at the 68th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) expressly relay the country's resolve to venture into external intervention in asymmetric warfare and formally call for support from the international community to see any terrorist and other forms of asymmetric attack anywhere in the world as an assault on collective humanity which requires a collective response. This has three positive effects on the country. First, Nigeria will have legal and international backing to assist other African neighbours especially those that share

border with her to fight terrorism and avoid cross-border infiltrations and crisis escalation. Second, she will be able to access international support to fight her own internal insurgents especially Boko Haram. Third, it will further boost the image of the country in international community and serve as an added advantage toward the realization of her long term ambition of becoming a member of the UNSC. However, the negative implication seems to have started brewing. As reported in the daily national news on 25th September, 2013, military intelligence reveal that Al-Qaeda is planning to launch a coordinated retaliatory assault on Nigeria following the killing of foreign fighters (from Somalia, Mali, Niger-Maghreb etc) who were in Nigeria as Boko Haram mercenaries in the on-going military offensive against the Boko Haram.

Justifying this idea, terrorism as an aspect of asymmetric warfare in relation to Africa is defined as a tactic that uses violence or the threat of violence as a coercive strategy to cause fear and political intimidation within the operational scope of resistance movements, military coups, political assassinations, and various intra- and inter-state wars. It is noted that this has affected most African states at some point during the continent's transition to independence and subsequent post-colonial period (Crenshaw, 1994). Going by this, it is observed that terrorism is not "an isolated phenomenon" for individual African states but a case which the continent must grapple with. More broadly, terrorism has been a global phenomenon for many decades, and Africa has not been unscathed by it. Terrorism is just one of several types of political violence that states and their citizens, in Africa and elsewhere, have had to grapple with. It is universally seen as the most important security challenge faced by African states and their citizens. Thus, the necessity to place terrorism within the broader terrain of Africa's security challenges and the need for countries to collectively fight the scourge is not out of context.

However, it is noted that external intervention may sometimes escalate conflict rather than solve it. Hoehne (2012) argued that the present day militant Islamism which culminated to terrorism in Africa is a product of external interference in the Somalia crisis. Using Somalia as a case, he opined that contrary to the assumption about 'black holes'¹ and ungoverned spaces voiced by politicians and some academics, the Harmony Project (2007) has shown that the absence of a government in Somalia did not automatically provide fertile ground for *Al-Qaeda* terrorism. However, in 2006, the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) unexpectedly took control of Mogadishu and much of southern and central Somalia. The UIC was overthrown a few months later by an Ethiopian military intervention supported by some internal players and the United States. Since then, militant Islamism has gained further momentum in the country (Hoehne, 2012:20-21). Currently, 'extremist' groups, such as *Al-Shabaab* and *Hizbul Islam*, who fought the transitional government under the 'moderate' president Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, who in 2006 had been a head of the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC), which was then considered a 'Taliban-like' regime by much of the West. Premised on this argument, it was

¹ Korteweg listed seven elements of 'black holes' that in his opinion would support terrorist engagement (see Korteweg, Rein, 2008: 'Black holes: On terrorist sanctuaries and government weakness', *Civil Wars* 10(1): 60-71). Yet he completely blocked out the fact that the absence of government and the availability of weapons within a community provide a veritable security risk also to external terrorists. Moreover, ungoverned spaces and 'black holes' can be invaded by the enemies of terrorists as well, with impunity. These and other factors were clearly presented and analyzed by the Harmony Project/Centre for Combating Terrorism at West Point, 2007: 'Al-Qaida's (Mis)Adventures in the Horn of Africa' (<http://ctc.usama.edu/aqII.asp>).

² For a detailed analysis of this argument, see Thomson, A. 2006. Somalia's Taliban? (*Channel 4*, 6 June) available online at: <http://www.channel4.com/news/articles/world/somalias-taliban/165555>; Kfir, Isaac. 2008. Islamic radicalism in East Africa: Is there a cause for concern? *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 31.9: 829-855; Euben, R. L. and Zaman, Q. 2009.

concluded that this alone should suffice to caution us against ascribing any objective meanings to such terms as 'extremists' and 'moderates', even if empirically such a distinction may make sense in certain cases and at particular moments in time². Corroborating this argument, Norwegian Minister of International Development, Heikki Holmås (2012) in his view with regard to the Malian crisis and external intervention, argued that military intervention cannot resolve the crisis but rather will succeed in bringing the various militant groups closer together, and mobilizing more militants in the region; which can inflame existing tensions between sedentary and pastoral communities and consequently lead to a major bloodbath.

With this caveat in mind, coupled with the significance of the threat which terrorist networking activities pose to the world (Africa in particular), it is absolutely necessary to build up research capacity in the study of the counter-terrorism tactics with the intent of proffering how to reduce the causal effect of such action on the national security of the concerned countries (host and third-party states) to the barest minimum. Premised on this, this paper explores the justification and implications of the external intervention of Nigeria to other African countries under terrorist attacks (asymmetric warfare) in the face of its own internally yet-to-be-solved Boko Haram lethal insurgency.

Research Questions and Propositions:

The intractability of the military intervention ideology in international relations seems unenviable. It is always shrouded in controversy and there is no point in time where there is unanimous agreement on its implementation; even at the world highest level of security decision-making gathering (the United Nations Security Council). It always hangs in-between the principle of inviolability of state sovereignty and the principle of responsibility to protect. The United States (an acclaimed world police) is also caught up in the web of this intractable dilemma. While addressing the 68th General Assembly of the

United Nations, Obama (2013) reported that the United States has been accused of meddling in the affairs of the middle east countries (violating the principle of state sovereignty) and at the same time accused of not intervening in Syria to stop the ongoing civil war (neglecting the principle of responsibility to protect - R2P). Whichever standpoint one views it, the underlying reasons for external military intervention is premised on a number of potential incentives perceived as threats and/or benefits: the fear of conflict spillovers and refugee flows, opportunities to exploit instability and weaken rival regimes (Anderson, 2013: 5).

In light of this controversy, this paper raised the following fundamental questions for further research:

- i. Why does external military intervention occur in some cases but not in others?
- ii. Who and what determines whether there is need for military intervention or not?
- iii. What determines whether an intervention will succeed or fail?
- iv. How viable are non-military intervention (political, diplomatic, humanitarian etc.) in dousing conflict and preventing its escalation?

In an attempt to proffer preliminary answers to the above fundamental questions, the paper identified a number of guiding propositions which will also assist other researchers interested in this feat to give direction to their works. These propositions are heavily influenced by the work of Anderson (2013) who identified some hypothetical statements as regards the relationship between external military assistance and the duration of intrastate conflict. In the same vein and with regards to the degree of fatality and

Introduction. in R. L. Euben and Q. Zaman (eds), *Princeton Readings in Islamist Thought: Texts and Contexts from al-Banna to Bin Laden*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 1-46, 40-46). Elliot, A. and Holzer, G. 2009. The invention of "terrorism" in Somalia: Paradigms and policy in US foreign relations. *South African Journal of International Affairs* 16.2: 215-244; International Crisis Group (ICG). 2005. Somalia's Islamists. *Africa Report*: Nr 100, 12 December, p. 1.

duration of asymmetric warfare in Africa, the following propositions are pinned down for consideration.

- i. Absence of competitive external assistance/intervention to both parties will enable the government forces to curb the rebel groups in their gestation period and decrease the asymmetric warfare durations.
- ii. One-sided external assistance to rebel groups will increase the fatality and durations of asymmetric warfare.
- iii. One-sided external assistance to governments will end the rebel groups' insurgency in a very short duration, discourage the emergence of other rebel groups; and prevent asymmetric warfare in a relatively 'distance period' (*ceteris paribus*).
- iv. Competitive military intervention is associated with increased fatality and durations of asymmetric warfare.

It is observed that external military assistance contributes in no small measure to the dimension and trends of current wave of terrorism in Africa. Though, external military assistance to countries under terrorist attack is minimal compared to what transpires between the terrorist groups in form of training, contribution of mercenaries, financial and weapon aid and tactics networking. As noted earlier in the propositions, the external assistance to the rebel groups in Africa has prolonged the durations of most of the asymmetric warfare and also increases their fatality. The terrorist groups can only surrender or retreat when they suffer resource exhaustion as witnessed in the northern Mali crisis. However, this is not the case as external assistance as noted by Anderson (2013:2) is preventing resources exhaustion, fills resource gaps, reconstitutes and rearms the domestic combatant forces, readying them for a new round of fighting. The rejuvenation of the terrorist groups as a result of external assistance prompted the emergence of external assistance to countries under attack as seen in Somalia. This led to the concept of *competitive external interventions* where the two sides to a war receive external assistance from

third party which makes them to have the requirement to continue the war head-on with one not having a decisive military or technical advantage over the other thereby prolong the duration of the asymmetric war and increase its fatality.

It is worthy of note that the concept of competitive external intervention under the context of *International connections of terrorist groups* have succeeded in enabling the Boko Haram to be more sophisticated, vibrant and lethal. The current trend of its activities in Nigeria has proven that it now occupies number one position as the most deadly terrorist organization in Africa, soaring beyond Al-Shabab and AQIM. One may not be out of context to argue that it will overthrow Al-Qaeda and become the world most lethal terrorist group should its activities escalate to other countries (Zenn, 2013 also shared this view). The inhuman way of wrecking havoc by wiping out entire communities, killing hundreds of students overnight, operating during day light for hours without fear of the military, using sophisticated weapon beyond human imagination, and above all, absence of sign that its activities will soon come to an end call for concern at the international level. This disturbing notion calls for urgent and collective efforts to tackle it and justify the call for international support under the context of *external military counter-terrorism* before it is too late.

Justification for Nigeria's External Intervention in African Asymmetric Warfare

With consistency and perseverance hinged on absolute political will, Nigeria should win the war against terrorism in her shore. It should be noted in international relations that out of all actors in the arena, only state is permanent. Boko Haram insurgency is a challenge which will sooner or later be overcome. But for it to be overcome, it must be uprooted to avoid its re-germination. Whenever a terror group is defeated in a country, it usually retreats and fighters infiltrate another country to regroup and bounce back. This was the case in the Malian Tuareg fighters whom after they were

pushed out of northern Mali, infiltrated other western countries including Nigeria. This influx of rebels fleeing into the country is a threat to its national security and political stability. This signifies that no matter the success of the military offensive against Boko Haram, it will retreat and bounce back. It is on this ground that we argue that Nigeria and other African major powers should intervene externally in countries where there are terrorist insurgencies as well as those that are vulnerable in Africa because of the networking among them. If they are defeated in all countries of their abode in Africa, then they will have no base to regroup and peace will eventually return to the continent. There are some countries that are specifically vulnerable to terrorist activities thereby serving as threat to the peace of the continent. These include Mali, Sudan and Somalia. The main international security concerns have been about the potential of these countries imploding into failed states controlled by Islamist extremists thereby exporting terror in the continent and globally.

The coordinated activities of the terrorist groups led by AQIM in Mali, Somalia, Niger, Kenya and other African countries, have shown that the continent had become the new haven for Islamist extremists. Northern Mali had become not only their new operational base, but also a magnet for foreign jihadist fighters. Mali, with its mountainous and desert terrain, is fast becoming the centre of gravity for jihadists and has led to a shift away from the traditional jihadist focus on South Asia to North Africa and the Sahel (Francis, 2013:9). This has not only become a main source of security concern to Africans but to the world in general. It is generally agreed that Al-Qaeda should not be given the opportunity to establish itself in Africa using Mali as its preferred base. The U.S. defense secretary, Leon Panetta, on a visit to France in January 2013, attested to this when he clearly argued that "we have a responsibility to make sure that Al Qaeda does not establish a base for operation in North Africa and Mali. While they might not have any immediate plans for attacks in the United States and Europe, ultimately that still remains their objective" (Panetta, 2013).

As evidenced by the collapse of the Malian state when Tuareg fighters based in Libya returned to "Azawad" after the fall of the Mu'ammarr Gadhafi regime, the movement of Boko Haram fighters from Nigeria to other countries in the Sahel does not bode well for the region. It means Nigeria's problem will become another country's problem, such as Mali, Cameroon or Niger, or smaller countries like Guinea, Burkina Faso and Senegal. Like northern Nigeria, these countries have majority Muslim populations, artificial borders, ethnic conflicts, insufficient educational and career opportunities for youths and fragile democratic institutions, and they have all witnessed Islamist militant infiltration in their countries and their countrymen traveling to northern Mali to join the Islamist militias in 2012. Although the ethnic groups in some of these countries differ from northern Nigeria, Boko Haram and Ansaru have the potential to inspire other "Boko Harams" in West Africa with their ideologies that fault the secular government, democracy and the West for their troubles and bark back to a time when Usman dan Fodio and the Islamic caliphate brought "glory" and "dignity" to the Muslims of the region (Zenn, 2013:10). To avoid this possibility of regionalization of Boko Haram, It is necessary for Nigeria in connection with other vulnerable African countries to collectively fight the terrorist groups and break the networking links between them. By this, the tactic of divide-and-rule techniques may be adopted to defeat them individually in their countries of origin.

The superpowers of the world have begun to realize this fact which has prompted them to intervene in crisis outside their shores to avoid the repeat of the September 2011 twin-tower bombing. It was this fear of the potential emergence of a terrorist state in Mali that galvanized France to intervene in the Malian crisis. This was evident in the statement of the French foreign minister, Laurent Fabius that "We must stop the rebel offensive otherwise the whole of Mali will fall into their hands, creating a threat for Africa and even for Europe" (Newman, 2013). Furthermore, the entire African continent is

situated in a volatile, unstable and conflict-prone region. Virtually all countries of the continent have had their own share of civil wars, violent extremism, and Islamist jihadist and terrorist activities. To this end, it is not wise to overlook the crisis rocking a neighboring state as it is often said that 'one cannot go to sleep while the roof of his neighbor is on fire'.

There are some countries who initially disagree with the interventionist approach. Norway is a prominent member of this school of thought (see Holmås, 2012). However, a taste of the spillover effect of the crisis proves the Norwegian orientation wrong. The Algerian hostage crisis on February 26th, 2013 in which the Al-Qaeda-linked Al-Mulathameen group claimed the lives of five Norwegian citizens, dramatically changed the Norwegian government's foreign policy approach. Justifying international military intervention in Mali and the threat posed by Islamist extremists and terrorism to Norway, the prime minister, Jens Stoltenberg, stated that "This time it was Algeria, next time it can be us" (View and News from Norway, 2013). This prompted the Norwegian government to contribute NOK 30million (\$5.2million) to the UN Trust Fund for Mali in addition to the annual Norwegian contribution of NOK 80million (\$13.9million) in aid to Mali (Francis, 2013:9). In essence, the implicative effect of the Malian crisis was felt by several African countries chiefly Nigeria, Algeria, Niger, Libya among others.

Another reason why Nigeria's external intervention in African terrorist attack is necessary stems out of the fact that the country is one of the proximate neighbors that are seriously affected by the crisis in any part of Africa, and the government sees the crisis as a national security threat. This is chiefly why Nigeria is pursuing the foreign policy of African center piece. Correspondingly, anything that happens in Nigeria be it positive or negative does have spillover effect on all African countries because it drives the soul of the continent. For example, the emergence of Ansaru (*Jamaatu Ansarul Mushimina Fi Biladdis Sudan/Vanguards for the Protection of Muslims*

in Black Africa) as an offshoot of Boko Haram and linked with AQIM with its regional jihadist ambition is already terrorizing the whole of west Africa claiming to be fighting to establish Islamic states in the region. As Nigeria is currently fighting a protracted and violent war with Islamist extremist groups, Boko Haram; there is no doubt that the terrorist group is not only a threat to Nigerian national security but to the entire continent of Africa. The connection between Boko Haram and other terror groups domicile in Africa attest to this fact. Intelligence reports claim that AQIM has provided terrorist and jihadist training to Boko Haram in northern Mali. Another terrorist affiliate of AQIM, Al-Shabaab, has provided insurgency training to Boko Haram in Somalia. In view of this, we strongly support the Nigeria's deployment of soldiers under her leadership of ECOWAS to AFISMA forces in Mali as a pre-emptive intervention to crush Islamist extremists in Mali, and to deny them access to and prevent them from providing support to Boko Haram in Nigeria. In the absence of such intervention, Mali may emerge as a terrorist state and safe haven from which attack can be coordinated against Nigeria which will threaten the disintegration of the already fractious country.

The Implications of Nigeria's External Intervention on her National Security:

It is arguable that the controversial nature of external military intervention in international relations does have both positive and negative implications. There is corresponding implication for the actions and inactions of all third parties to an asymmetric warfare in any given country regardless of the geographical location, economic status and bloc alignment. For a third party nation to intervene - or not intervene - in the domestic conflict of another nation (especially border-sharing nations or same regional bloc), there is a corresponding implication on their national security and/or economic interest. More often than not, the dimension of the implication is a matter of the vulnerabilities of the third party to such conflict.

With regard to Nigeria's proposed external military intervention in asymmetric warfare in Africa following the renewed call to duty, the peculiarity and inherent characteristics of the country make it vulnerable to the newest wave of terrorist reprisal attack as evidently witnessed in the *Al-Shabab* Kenyan Westgate Mall attack which claimed the lives of 61 civilians, 6 security officers, 6 rebels with the collapse of 3 floors of the building which trapped several bodies (Kenya, 2013). The lesson to be learnt is that, in a warlike or competitive situation, an attacking side should never employ all its artillery leaving the defense open for possible penetration by the enemy (opponent) in the event of counter-attack. It is sad to note that most African countries are not judiciously employing this tactics in their fight against terrorism. This makes the reprisal attack a success for the terrorist groups as witnessed in the cases earlier noted.

Should Nigeria engage fully in external intervention in asymmetric warfare on the scale of her intervention in peacekeeping operations, the chances of staging a successful reprisal attack is relatively high as a result of the following factors: porous border; undocumented influx of foreign nationals; internal insurgency, national and transnational organized crime and conflicts; inadequate sharing of intelligence information among security institutions; increased extremist religious ideologies and external influence on the radicalization of vulnerable groups; weak governance; and collapsed state institutions. These factors coincide with poor socio-economic conditions of the people as evident in high rate of youth unemployment; mass illiteracy; poverty; inadequate provision of basic infrastructural facilities; above all, the leadership and followership failure. This unfortunate coincidence not only makes the country prone to external retaliatory attack but also create a fertile ground for the existence and nurturing of terrorism and other criminal activities.

i. Porous Borders and Undocumented Influx of Foreign Nationals:

The first and most prominent issue which makes Nigeria vulnerable to external reprisal attack is the porous nature of her borders. The country is located in West Africa and shares land borders with the Republic of Benin in the west, Chad and Cameroon in the east, and Niger in the north. Her coast in the south lies on the Gulf of Guinea on the Atlantic Ocean. These borders (especially the landed ones) are poorly manned. This represents a major challenge to ensuring security and stability for governments both at the national and states who share borders with the international nations. There is agreement among Nigerians that the nation is going through a period of unprecedented security challenges. However, there is lack of consensus on how to deal with the problems. Hence, the problems are degenerating (Albert, 2013:1).

As it is the case in most, if not all African countries, the presence of the state security apparatus is marginal in many border areas, which reflects a general inability of the governments to enforce order within each country's territorial boundary (Kimunguyi, 2011; Rabasa, 2009; Rosand, Millar and Ipe, 2009). This allows for free movement of people and illicit trade across borders. This is particularly true in the case of the Nigeria – Republic of Benin border for illegal importation of goods, and most importantly the Nigeria – Niger, Chad and Cameroon border which has not only allowed the movement of fleeing *Tuareg* rebels from the conflict in Mali but also allows movement of terrorist and easy flow of illegal weapons. Terrorists from other African countries especially Somalia's *Al shabaab* and *Hizb Islam* also use these porous borders as route to Nigeria. This is premised on the fact that there seems to be a consensus that Somalia serves as a coordinating point, transit and shield for *al-Qaeda* operatives in the entire African continent (Menkhaus 2004: 70; Menkhaus, 2008: 42-43; Dempsey, 2006: 14; International Crisis Group, 2002 and 2007; Quaranto, 2008: 28). Somalia has been linked with a number of terrorist attacks in

neighbouring states, and in each of these cases al-Qaeda used Somalia as a co-ordination point and transit route (Kimunguyi, 2011:5).

This became worrisome as it readily suggests that the nation is under siege and that the customs and immigration agencies no longer have the capacity to deal with the rising influx of miscreants and illegal importation of light arms and gun running at the borders which consequently leads to insecurity in the land. At present there is evidence that foreign terrorist fighters have moved into Nigeria from Somalia, Mali and Niger-Maghreb through its numerous porous borders to join forces with Islamist fundamentalist group-*Boko Haram*. This is given credence by the earlier noted report in the Nigerian daily news bulletin on September 25, 2013 that military intelligence report gathered reveal that Al-Qaeda is planning to launch coordinated retaliatory assault on Nigeria following the killing of foreign personnel from Somalia, Mali and Niger-Maghreb in the ongoing military offensive clamp down on *Boko Haram*. These foreign fighters came to Nigeria as a follow up to the international networking activities of the terrorist groups under the auspice of Al-Qaeda in the Maghreb (AQIM) and Al-Shabab who are providing terrorist insurgency and jihadist training to *Boko Haram* in northern Mali and Somalia respectively (Francis, 2013:11).

ii. Internal insurgency, National and Transnational Organized Crime and Conflicts:

In Nigeria, the fact that there is a nexus between the existences of militant groups, organized criminal gangs and trans-border crime cannot be discountenanced. In recent times, the manifestation and intricate linkages in Africa have become growing sources of concern at national, regional and international levels. In West Africa in particular, "terrorist" footprints are increasing due to the activities of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO), Ansar Dine, *Boko Haram* and Jama'atu Ansarul Muslimina Fi Biladis Sudan (Ansaru) in addition to other sleeper

militant networks which is more often than not complicated by the security landscape in the increase in the outbreak of transnational organized crime (TOC) that feed into the so-called terrorist loop in West Africa (Onuoha and Ezirim, 2013:1). The linkage can also be drawn from the fact that the so called terrorist group do engage in criminal activities ranging from armed robbery, kidnapping, sea pirate, drug trafficking, natural resource smuggling, forgery, cigarette smuggling, arms trafficking, and money laundering among others to source for fund for their heinous acts. Bah (2004) reported that out of approximately 500 million illicit weapons in circulation worldwide in 2004, it was estimated that about 100 million were in sub-Saharan Africa, with eight to ten million concentrated in the West African sub-region.

By implication, this poses a negative impact for Nigerian national security as the terrorist will have enough opportunity to equip them with needed arsenal to attack the country given ineffectual national security systems and the porous borders. With the destabilization of Libya, it is reported that the proliferation of weapons in the Sahara-Sahel region has enabled AQIM and other mercenaries to transfer the Libyan arms to groups such as Ansar Dine, *Boko Haram* and MUJAO, emboldening and enabling them to mount more deadly attacks (Onuoha and Ezirim, 2013:12).

The transnational dimension manifested in the incidence of February 19, 2013 where *Boko Haram* kidnapped a French family of seven in Cameroon, transported them to Nigeria, and freed them on 18 April 2013 after allegedly collecting \$3.15 million as ransom. It is also reported that AQIM fetched an estimated \$70 million in ransom payments between 2006 and 2011 by kidnapping Westerners in the region for ransom, and disbursing the proceeds to its Nigerian affiliates, Jama'atu Ansarul Muslimina Fi Biladis Sudan (Ansaru) and *Boko Haram* (Foster-Bowser and Sanders, 2012). Hence if these issues are not addressed, it will not augur well for the nation's national security in the event of reprisal attack by the terrorist.

iii. Inadequate sharing of intelligence information among security institutions:

The cold relationship and superiority rivalry between security operatives in Nigeria is a crucial factor that is worth wondering about in the bid to prevent negative implication from external intervention in asymmetric warfare in Africa. In the fight against terrorism, the rivalry and suspicion that characterized the activities of the State Security Service (SSS) who is at the forefront and the Nigerian police are not helping matter. It is not an overstatement that the SSS is truly in possession of vital security and intelligence information but not willing to share same with the police perhaps for two reasons: One, the perceived systemic corruption that is rampant in the police force and the fear that police officers can compromise to release suspects as a result of the corruption. Second, the issue of eye-service syndrome or what I describe as 'take-the-glory-syndrome'. From experience, there are reported cases where the suspects or culprits handed over to the police by the military for prosecution are released under a shoddy investigation preempted by bribery or extra-judicially killed probably to conceal more facts or name-calling of their godfather or as a result of the trigger-happy attitude of the officers. Prominent is the killing of the Boko Haram founder, Mohammed Yusuf in police custody after his arrest by the military. If the situation where intelligent information is not shared among the security operatives is not urgently addressed, the country is highly vulnerable to coordinated external attack. This is because; it will not enable the security institutions to harmonize the individual scanty information that might ordinarily not suffice to prevent such attack if acted upon individually.

iv. Increased extremist religious ideologies and the external influence on the radicalization of vulnerable groups:

Since the advent of Boko Haram and its first attack under Abubakar Shekau's leadership in September 2010, its membership and the number of extremist religious groups has been increasing in Nigeria

under the banner of the effort to introduce *Shariah* Law and the total islamization of the northern Nigeria. This ideology was criticized by the traditional Islamic leaders which led to the expulsion of Shekau from two mosques in Borno state. He however founded his own mosque called 'markaz' where he propagates his radical ideology. Although, the insurgency began as a local movement in northeastern Nigeria's Borno State, since August 2011 there have been increasing signs of international collaboration between Boko Haram and militants outside Nigerian territory, such as in Borno State's border region, northern Mali, the Sahel, Somalia and other countries in the Muslim world. As a result of these international connections, Boko Haram, which in 2009 was known as a "machete-wielding mob," has now matched—and even exceeded—the capabilities of some Al-Qaeda affiliates, while also incorporating al-Qaeda ideology into the locally driven motives for the insurgency in northern Nigeria (Zenn, 2013:1). The external connections greatly influence its target selection mostly whom are government personnel and security officers, Muslim politicians and traditional Muslim religious leaders, and Christians (Leadership, September 8, 2010).

The activities of Boko Haram have transcended the Nigerian border. It is not only a threat to the Nigerian security but also a threat to the entire African continent. For example, In November 2012, it connives with the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) - an offshoot of AQIM, led primarily by Malian Arabs which focuses on sub-Saharan Africa- and Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) to capture Menaka in Mali's Gao region from the secular Tuareg-led militia, the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA). An MNLA spokesman reported that MUJAO, AQIM and Boko Haram prevented the local population from leaving the city so that they could be used as human shields (Oumar, 2012). Several sources corroborate the spokesman's claim that Boko Haram fighters are present in Mali (Zenn, 2013:1). News reports from Mali reported that 100 Boko Haram militants reinforced MUJAO's positions in the battle for

Gao and that Boko Haram helped MUJAO raid the Algerian consulate in Gao and kidnap the vice-consul, who was executed by MUJAO on September 2, 2012, and that Boko Haram supported MUJAO, AQIM and Ansar dine in their January 8, 2013, attack on Kona, central Mopti region (Vanguard, April 9, 2012; Radio France Internationale, April 10, 2012; Agence France-Presse, September 2, 2012; Agence France-Presse, July 6, 2012; Radio France Internationale, August 4, 2012; Reuters, October 7, 2012; Associated Press, December 3, 2012; News24, January 8, 2013).

More worrisome is the trend of international connections which Boko Haram is tapping to its advantage. The group has a strong network with terrorist groups and financial, training and materials donors in Mali, Niger, Chad, Cameroon, **Saudi Arabia, Senegal and Afghanistan**. Boko Haram has long drawn inspiration from the Taliban and was called the "Nigerian Taliban" by outsiders from 2003 until 2009. Some Boko Haram members have reportedly trained in Afghanistan, and in northern Nigeria Boko Haram appears to have adopted tactics similar to the Taliban (*ThisDay*, September 1, 2011; BBC, September 2, 2009). Boko Haram also has a deeper history of involvement in Saudi Arabia: Muhammad Yusuf found refuge in Saudi Arabia to escape a Nigerian security forces crackdown in 2004; Boko Haram has reportedly received funding with the help of AQIM from organizations in the United Kingdom and Saudi Arabia; and Boko Haram's spokesman claimed that Boko Haram leaders met with Al-Qaida in Saudi Arabia during the lesser hajj (umra) in August 2011 (Adisa, 2012). In August 2012 the imam of the Grand Mosque in Bignona, southern Senegal, claimed that Boko Haram was recruiting local youths (SeneNews.com, August 22, 2012).

Boko Haram takes advantage of Niger, Chad and Cameroon for refuge, training, transit, attack planning and recruitment. Boko Haram does not, however, carry out attacks in those countries, possibly to prevent those governments from cracking down on the group and because Boko Haram's grievances are rooted in Nigeria (Zenn,

2013:6). However, the continuous increase in the sophistication of the group may empower it to attack these countries and subsequently become a household terror name in Africa as is the case of Al-Qaeda in the world. Should this be the case, its implication on Nigeria's national security will no doubt be at jeopardy as is the case with the Afghanistan's national security.

v. Weak governance; and collapsed state institutions:

Nigeria has experienced severe civil and inter-state conflicts, which coupled with weak governance and statelessness have led to instability, poverty, and political isolation. These factors contribute towards the nation's vulnerability to terrorist exploitation. For instance, the nation has been simultaneously at war with several internal insurgents: Boko Haram, the Niger Delta militant groups, the eastern secession-oriented group (MASSOI), Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger-Delta (MEND) and several other little cells. This coupled with the security challenges of armed robbery, kidnapping, political assassinations among other civil disturbances. In addition, inter-communal conflict is not exempted in which the main triggers of such ethnic and communal conflicts in Nigeria have been border disputes as well as personal disputes between the leaderships. Furthermore, some military officers and politicians (notably Senator Alli Ndume and former governor Alli Modu Sheriff- both from Bornu State among others) have also been accused of providing support to religious extremist groups with links to Al-Qaida (such as Al Shabaab, AQIM, MUJAO), which further increase the collapse of the nation's security objectives.

The ongoing political feud in the country is contributing in no small measure to the vulnerability of the country to external reprisal attack. Since the beginning of the intra-party crisis of the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP), which eventually led to the defection of five governors to the opposition party (All Progressives Congress- APC); the attention of the

President and the concerned governors (especially Rivers, Adamawa, Kwara, Sokoto, Taraba, and Niger) had been diverted from serious governance. This has continued to shortchange the citizens of these states and deprive them of dividend of democratic governance. The 2015 political calculation and permutations which led to the sack of vibrant technocrats in the cabinet (especially Gbenga Ashiru and Bolaji Abdulahi- former ministers of foreign affairs and sport respectively) for the choice of core politicians who have little or nothing to offer is doing the country more harm than good. The weak governance being witnessed is also coupled with collapsed state institutions where the police and other security operatives are being used to witch-hunt perceived political enemy. The Federal Capital Territory Development Authority is also employed to either seal or demolish the properties of these perceived political enemies. All these will negatively affect the national security should the country venture into external intervention in asymmetric warfare in Africa on the scale of the country's massive contribution to peacekeeping operations.

vi. Poor socio-economic conditions of the people:

Premised on the foregoing analysis, Nigeria is vulnerable to more attack and its national security is widely open to external penetration as a result of the poor socio-economic conditions of the people. For Al-Shabab to successfully launch a reprisal attack in Kenya where it has little or no membership drive, one is better not imagine what will happen in Nigeria should Al-Qaeda attempt to actualize its reported coordinated attack. The high rate of youth unemployment, mass illiteracy, poverty, inadequate provision of basic infrastructural facilities, above all, the leadership and followership failure provide a fertile ground for easy recruitment of fighters. The primary method of recruiting fighters is through brainwashing and this is more possible on illiterate people who more often than not lack the basic reasoning to judge between what is morally right and wrong, and the justifiability of such heinous

act they were meant to execute. The World Bank reported in 2013 that 46million Nigerians are adult illiterate. A figure which put Nigeria in the category of 10 countries of the world with more than 10million illiterate adult whose ages range from 15years and above (The Punch, October 23, 2013). To this end, the poor socio-economic conditions of the people (especially the *Almajiris* in the north) have a major implication for Nigeria's national security in the possible coordinated reprisal attack by the terrorist groups.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Premised on the above analysis, it is necessary that Nigeria should take the bull by the horn in its counter-terrorism agenda both at home and abroad, paying full attention to identified short- and long-term implications. However, it should be noted that, for the maintenance of domestic and international peace and security, military action alone will not suffice. The external intervention must also be supplemented with non-military methods such as political, humanitarian, diplomatic, and peace brokerage among others in all associated terrorist and Islamist extremist problems in the continent of Africa. Based on this, it is recommended that:

On the part of Nigeria and other interventionist countries, external intervention should be hinged on the following:

- i. That the solution to the terrorist crisis in Africa should be seen as a continental problem that requires a continental approach (without recourse to regional or bloc alignment) to dealing with Islamist extremists, as well as addressing the depressing socio-economic and development issues of poverty, injustice, illiteracy, youth unemployment, drought and famine.
- ii. There should be recognition that military intervention is a short-term-quick-fix-and-exit-strategy' oriented intervention that does not guarantee long-term peace and stability. In view of this, post military peacekeeping effort such as negotiation, amnesty and peace

pacts and other long-term strategies should be employed to sustain the peace and avoid the re-emergence of the asymmetric warfare.

- iii. The interventionist troops should not withdraw until the government of the receiving state and the army are able to establish authority and control over the whole country and have strongly strengthened its security and policing of its porous borders with Neighboring states.

On the part of the receiving countries, the government should:

- i. Use the opportunity provided by the intervention in the crisis and asymmetric war to develop a new strategic vision and roadmap for the future direction of post-war era based on inclusive democratic politics and political accountability;
- ii. Organize a national political dialogue that will lead to a final political settlement of the warring groups' grievances through an inclusive, negotiated political framework or devolved regional government for them (preferably using the traditional ruling institutions) within a new federal political framework;
- iii. Reform the country's military and security agencies and national governance institutions for efficient political and economic management of their countries;
- iv. Undertake, with the support of the international community, a verifiable amnesty programme for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of all combatants; by providing incentives to them for further studies and professional career advancement through a fully funded scholarship programme; and
- v. Be ready to commit an appreciative amount of human and material resources to supplement and serve as guide to the incoming foreign forces.

On the part of AU and other regional organizations:

- i. Should facilitate a continental and regional approach to the resolution of all forms of crises in Africa beyond the military intervention phase;
- ii. In collaboration with the UN and other regional bodies like EU, support the security sector and governance reforms of the African government to resolve the challenges of poor socio-economic conditions of the people;
- iii. Support the training, professionalization and democratic accountability of the military personnel billed to engage in the interventionist missions to keep them abreast of the current tactics of guerilla warfare; facilitate the establishment of a standing troop to be code-named AU anti-terrorism special force, to be affiliated to the UN peacekeeping institutions for fund drawing to be made easy;
- iv. Lead a new AU initiative with collaboration with regional organizations, with the support of the international community, to prevent terrorism and the spread of Islamist extremism in the Sahel and Sahara regions.
- v. Open a counter-terrorism support office in all terrorist ravaged countries to support, fund and facilitate the government's security sector and governance reform programmes; and
- vi. Through diplomatic, political pressure and economic and development incentives, encourage the sitting presidents, governors, lawmakers and all political executives with *locus standi* in the case to constitutionalize anti-terrorism laws and form broad-based government of national unity as a strategy to accommodate the warring politicians that are likely to instigate violence as a means to their political gains.

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