



STRATEGIES IN COUNTERING TERRORISM/INSURGENCIES IN NIGERIA AND ITS CHALLENGES

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Abstract

Terrorism and insurgency constituted major factors for the growing security challenge in Nigeria and threat to peace and security in the country. In the recent years, there has been a surge in both the tempo and range of global insurgencies and terrorism, with virtually every parts of Nigeria facing/faced with this growing security challenge. Nigeria in a surveyed conducted in 2011 by the Department of State for terrorism, was ranked fifth in number out of 15 countries and in terms of the global number of casualties, Nigeria was also placed fifth after Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan and Somalia. In the late twentieth century till date, world peace and security has been held under siege due to the heinous crime committed by terrorists the world over, and spread across the continents of Europe, Latin America, America, Arab, Asia, and Africa. Scholars, experts and analysts with different views and backgrounds have expressed concerns about the exponential rate in terrorists' acts and discussed terrorism in relations to diverse issues such as political, economic, ideological, and socio-cultural dimensions; and the strategies adopted by many countries to end terrorism. Yet, there is no universally accepted definition of the concept terrorism and durable solutions to prevent acts of terrorism, as acts of terrorism are on the increase daily. This article carefully examines some of the major strategies/policies introduced by Nigerian government on counter-insurgency and terrorism in the country and identifies and analyses the challenges in countering insurgency and terrorism. This article adopted a doctrinal research methodology to analyse the 2019 National Security Strategy and 2016 Counter Terrorism Strategy on insurgency and terrorism in Nigeria and the effectiveness of these strategies and policies in countering insurgency and terrorism among other issues. This paper argues that critical as the plight of Nigeria appear to be, with several acts of insurgency and terrorism committed in parts of the country, unless and until something differently is done by the government, ending acts of terrorism will be a mirage. In order words, unless Nigerian government makes provisions for counterterrorist's radicalization and recruitment processes; it will be fighting a never-ending battle against terrorism in the country. This article recommends that practically methodologically inclined strategies are needed (the establishment of indigenous counter-terrorism/insurgent units at the local level to collect intelligence and maintain pressure on the terrorists/insurgents).

Keywords: Strategy, Countering, Terrorism, Insurgency

Introduction

In the late twentieth century till date, it is no doubt that world peace and security has been held under siege due to the heinous crime committed by terrorists the world over.¹ Terrorism is discussed in relations to diverse issues such as political, economic, ideological, and socio-cultural dimensions, but yet, there is no universally accepted definition of the concept terrorism² as the saying goes one man's terrorism is another man's freedom fighter. When the cooperation on counter terrorism was in progress between Nigeria and U.S. unfortunately, on the 25th December 2009, there was a major setback when a Nigerian Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, was arrested during a failed attempt to bomb Northwest Airlines flight 253, flying into Detroit from Amsterdam.³ Following the arrest of Farouk Umar and many incidences of attacks in Nigeria, the international community became the focus of international relations and the immediate reaction of U.S.A. was to place Nigeria on its "Terror Watch List."⁴

There has been a rise in global insurgencies and terrorism, with virtually every continent facing/faced with this growing security challenge. Nigeria is one of the latest to be added to the list of states affected by terrorism and insurgencies. However, in 2011 by the Department of State for terrorism, out of 15 countries surveyed Nigeria ranked fifth in number.⁵ In terms of the global number of casualties in the Boko Haram attacks, Nigeria was placed fifth after Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan and Somalia. The recognition that the threat of terrorism and insurgency has continued to challenge the nation security forces over the last decade with the splintering of Boko Haram terrorist into two factions has

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¹Olu Obafemi and Habu Galadima, *Complex Insurgencies in Nigeria, Proceedings of National Institute 2012, Eminent Persons and Experts Group Meeting*, (NIPSS 2013)3

²Tunde Adeniran, *Introduction to International Relations* (Macmillan Nigeria Publishers Limited, 2007)246

³ White House Review Summary Regarding 12/25/2009 Attempted Terrorist Attack available at www.obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/realitycheck/the-press-office/white-house-review-summary-regarding-12252009-attempted-terrorist-attack#1 accessed 27th August, 2020

⁴The United States and Nigerian Relations: Diplomatic Row Over Official Terrorist Label. Available at <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/323454097> accessed on 15 May, 2020

⁵Oladapo Fafowora, Understanding Insurgencies in Nigeria: Nature, Types, Dynamics and the Way Out: Key Note Address, in Olu Obafemi and Habu Galadima, *Complex Insurgencies in Nigeria, Proceedings of National Institute 2012, Eminent Persons and Experts Group Meeting* (NIPSS 2013)1

compounded the complexity of the threat environment and posed yet another potential threat of the use of disruptive and emerging technologies.

The Boko Haram, ISWAP and later the Lakurawa aims to create an Islamic Caliphate in the Northeast and Northwest Nigeria which has resulted to lot of mass displacement and migration. The threat posed by Boko Haram, ISWAP and Lakurawwa require a comprehensive approach in collaboration with Nigeria's neighbours and international partners to deal with the situations.⁶ Meanwhile, for the purpose of this article, we shall focus attention on insurgency and terrorism which is the fulcrum of our discussion, and in light of this, the work examines the Nigerian strategies and challenges in countering terrorism/insurgency and provides some recommendations in countering terrorism/insurgencies both at the local and national levels.

Nigeria Counter-Insurgency and Counter-Terrorism Strategies and Policies

Since the inception of terrorism/insurgency in Nigeria, government has developed various strategies towards curbing the activities of terrorists and insurgents in the country. For instance, the use of brute military force against insurgent groups into the affected parts of Nigeria, with no clear military code of justice for operation is worrisome. The case in point is the invasion of Baga community in Borno State on Sunday April 12, 2013 by the Nigerian soldiers,⁷ which had received several condemnations from international human rights groups. Furthermore, the failure to liberate the Chibok Schoolgirls by the security agents was a clear indication of the Nigerian military's manifest inadequacies for the task and the Jonathan's government visibly weak political will has prompted some in the U.S. Congress and the media to call for U.S. military intervention to liberate the girls.⁸ Hence the calls for viable strategies and policies to address the security challenge in the country.

National Security Strategy 2019

The National Security Strategy outlines major security concerns of Nigeria for which policies and strategies have been articulated, and how government plan to deal with

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Solomon Adebayo A, Modupe Ake and Olakunla Olowojo, Combating Terrorism and Insurgency in Nigeria: An International Collaborations Against Boko Haram, *Journal of Management and Social Sciences*, Fountain University Osogbo, [2016] (5) (1) 67-74

⁸ John Campbell, U.S. Policy to Counter Nigeria's Boko Haram, *Council Special Report* No 70 September 2014, 15-18

insecurity in the country. Nigeria published its maiden national security strategy in 2014, and since then the security environment has continued to evolve giving rise to emergent challenges, thus necessitated the 2019 review. The nature of the security challenges facing Nigeria today is more complex than in the past. There has been an intensification of pastoralists-farmers conflicts, banditry, and upsurge in kidnapping and other crimes.⁹ However, the national security strategy 2019 aims at ensuring that Nigeria's sovereignty, territorial integrity, national interests, the well being of the people and the country's institutions are preserved, protected and enhanced. The national security strategy aimed to facilitate the short, medium and long term security aspirations of the country.¹⁰

In respect to combating terrorism and countering violent extremism which has constituted a major national security challenge in Nigeria since 2009, while responding to the threat, Nigeria enacted the Terrorism Prevention Act, 2011 revised in 2013, and 2022.¹¹ It also developed the National Counterterrorism Strategy (NACTEST) 2016,¹² and established the counter-terrorism centre to coordinate all the national counterterrorism efforts. In furtherance of the national security objectives, the document encourages the use of a whole of government approach through strong interagency platforms and mechanisms at strategic and operational levels to ensure the realization of counterterrorism mandates. It also focus on conducting threat analysis, sharing information with partners, promote international cooperation, strengthen national finance systems to disrupt terrorist financing, deploy strategic communication in aid of security operatives to counterterrorism efforts and narratives; partner with domestic and international information technology companies to counter violent extremists narratives online; strengthen criminal justice system including investigation, evidence collection, and prosecution to bring terrorists to justice; upgrade border, maritime, aviation and cyber security measures.¹³

Similarly, recognizing the nexus between violent extremism and terrorism, Nigeria adopted a policy framework and a National Action Plan for preventing and countering violent extremism in 2017,¹⁴ in which it emphasizes human security and people centred approaches in dealing with insecurity. It also promised to build the capacity of Ministries,

⁹ Preface to the National Security Strategy outlined the intention of the review of the 2014 National Security Strategy, Office of the National Security Adviser, Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2019.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ FRN, Terrorism Prevention Act 2013, (as amended)

¹² FRN, National Counter Terrorism Strategy NACTEST 2016

¹³ FRN, National Security Strategy 2019, 24

¹⁴ FRN, National Action Plan, Policy Framework for Preventing and Countering of Violent Extremism, 2017.

Departments and Agencies, partner with civil society and the media to execute the mandates.

Contrary to the principle of the best practice in counterinsurgency, addressing the root causes of conflicts, Nigerian government had initiated programmes to encourage defections from terrorist groups, as well promoted the rehabilitation and reintegration of repentant terrorists without the due application of the principle of best practice 8 (pursue opportunities to reach settlement to the conflicts). Often times, the so-called repentant terrorists grabbed privilege information from the public as they are reintegrated and later disappear and return to their groups.

In view of the prevailing threats in the country, and responding to preventing and combating kidnapping, armed banditry and militia activities, which have become very serious threats to Nigeria's national security and to prevent the incidents of terrorism, government pledged to establish early warning and early response system in the national crisis response mechanisms; address disputes and conflicts through dialogue before they trigger crisis and violence.¹⁵ In addition, in 2015, Nigerian government developed the National Cyber Security Policy and Strategy ¹⁶ and the Cybercrime (Prohibition, Prevention etc) Act, 2015¹⁷ in the same year in response to cyber security threats. These documents outlined the preparedness against threats in cyberspace, and mitigate cyber risks.

Furthermore, regarding the use of Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosives (CBRNE),¹⁸ materials by terrorist insurgents on their targets; and to mitigate the risks associated with the weapons and related activities require a coordinated and integrated global approach. The Nigerian government pledged to:

- i. Build the capacity of the criminal justice and law enforcement personnel to implement relevant legal frameworks;
- ii. Improve physical protection measures for facilities with CBRNE and related materials;
- iii. Develop national policies and strategies on CBRNE detection implementation;
- iv. Carry out national risk and threat assessment for CBRNE materials and facilities;

¹⁵ FRN, National Security Strategy 2019: 24

¹⁶ FRN, National Cyber Security Policy and Strategy 2015

¹⁷FRN, Cybercrime (Prohibition, Prevention etc.,) Act, 2015

¹⁸ National Security Strategy 2019:33

- v. Provide strong national coordination using inter-agency/inter-ministerial committees to enhance cooperation and collaboration;
- vi. Improve detection capacity and equipment distribution including provision of personal protection kits;
- vii. Enhance adequate implementation of strict measures on storage, transport and export of CBRNE materials; and
- viii. Improve response systems and measures for CBRNE emergencies including the establishment of early warning systems.

Perhaps, Nigeria is signatory to a number of international instruments on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. However, there are known incidents of the use of explosive precursors such as ammonium nitrate by Boko Haram to make improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in Nigeria, as well as incidents of loss of radioactive materials by oil prospecting companies in the Niger Delta.¹⁹

On Youth Strategy: the document recognizes the fact that the youth constitute over 63 per cent of Nigeria's population, and to address the critical challenges facing them, there is need for urgent intervention if the country must developed. And for the working and active group to benefit, government outlines the following policies:²⁰ government will focus on overcoming the challenges such as unemployment, poverty, illiteracy and extremist indoctrination that expose the youth to deviant tendencies with associated negative violent outcomes; this is to bridge the employment gap and profitably engage the youth, with the aim to rekindle the confidence of young Nigerians themselves and in their nation; and address the root causes of the current security challenges confronting the youth by tackling gaps in opportunity, development and infrastructures.

In the final analysis, one major short fall of this document is that it treats kidnapping, armed banditry as mere criminal acts, without realizing the fact that these acts are perpetrated by terrorists and insurgents as they are their source of finances. Secondly, the document lacked the implementing committee to monitor the implementation of the said strategy. Thirdly, the strategy is heavily coercive, deploying the use of military force and other security operative i.e the use of kinetic power as against the use of soft or non kinetic power to remedy the security challenges confronting the nation.

¹⁹Ibid. 32

²⁰ Ibid.52

The National Counterterrorism Strategy 2016

In response to the terrorist insurgencies in Nigeria, the Government of Nigeria in a second major attempt to address the terror attacks that are being perpetrated by violent extremist organizations (VEOs) against the citizens published a document that chronicled the country's effort at combating terrorism called the National Counter Terrorism Strategy (NACTEST), in 2016. According to the document, to effectively address issues of terrorism within the country, properly planned preventive measures have been articulated. These measures developed in the document would enable the effective protection of the public, assist appropriate organizations in preparing to deal with act of terrorism and pursue terrorists and those who sponsor them.²¹ NACTEST is therefore based on international best practice and tailored to address Nigerian domestic peculiarities with due cognizance of international human rights standards and the rule of law.

The NACTEST is divided into five work streams: forestall; secure; identify; prepare; and implement, each with its key objectives and success indicators:²²

1. **Forestall:** to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. To forestall is to prevent violent extremism and radicalization that leads to terrorism. The forestall aspect of NACTEST entails both domestic and international efforts that focuses on addressing issues which will diminish the capacity of terrorists to operate freely in Nigeria. Priorities in this regard involve creating and emphasizing security awareness amongst the populace to reduce the possibility and ability of terrorist groups to recruit new members and support measures that will deter potential terrorists.²³ However, the forestall pillar of NACTEST is built on five objectives which include to:²⁴

- i. Develop an effective counter narrative to respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism from those who propagate it;
- ii. Create conditions to deter people from embracing terrorism and extremist ideologies;
- iii. Initiate programs that would require engagements with key sectors (education, criminal justice, faith-based organizations, health etc.) identified as possible areas for radicalization;

²¹ FRN, (n- 10)

²² Ibid. 2-3

²³ Ibid.18

²⁴ Ibid. 19-21

- iv. Initiate programs to identify the underlying cause of radicalization and develop strategies that provide solutions; and
- v. Create opportunities and hope for people in the affected communities and restore their faith in the government.

It is worthy of note, that the first strategy to forestall is a well planned and outlined strategy to prevent the threat of both domestic and international terrorism. But unfortunately, the strategy is just a paper work well documented, with no implementation of the objectives stated in the document as there is no single visible program as suggested in the policy on ground.

2. Secure, to strengthen protection capacity against terrorists attacks: the secure aspect of NACTEST is concerned with safeguarding citizens, utilities and infrastructures by reducing their vulnerability to attacks. The securing work stream covers a range of issues which include, strengthening border security, protecting critical national infrastructures, building capacity of security forces and reducing risks to transportation system amongst others. The objectives of this indicator include to:

- i. Initiate measures aimed at strengthening border security;
- ii. Introduce effective ways of protecting critical national infrastructures and building resiliency;
- iii. Embark on capacity building for security forces;
- iv. Reduce the vulnerability of the transportation system; and
- v. Improve protective security for crowded places including worship centres.²⁵

As part of the objectives of this strategy, all security and intelligence agencies are to be trained and are mandated to maintain Response Units (RU) or outfits in all parts of the country. However, to some extent the transportation system especially aviation and maritime has been given considerable attention to fortify the system against terrorists considering the importance of the two sectors. But other objectives have been relegated by government with no implementation of the said objectives.

3. Identify, to pre-empt through detection, early warning and ensuring that terrorist acts are properly investigated. The identify strategy is concerned with stopping terrorist threats and attacks on Nigeria and her interests. This implies defeating and investigating threats at the earliest possible instance as well as disrupting terrorist

²⁵ Ibid.22-25

operation before they can endanger the public and ensuring the prosecution of those responsible. The objectives of this indicator include to:²⁶

- i. Disrupt terrorist threats before they are executed;
- ii. Ensure an increased in the capabilities of security agencies to detect, investigate and prosecute;
- iii. Disrupt terrorists' ability to raise funds i.e to seize and freeze assets belonging to terrorists or terrorist organizations;
- iv. Government through its agencies to maintain a sustainable relationship with community representatives, traditional and religious institutions and civil society organizations;
- v. Work with foreign governments and multinational institutions to better tackle threats from the source;
- vi. Continue to assess security powers and review them as necessary; and
- vii. Build and improve capacity of the criminal justice system (CJS) to successfully investigate, prosecute and punish people for terrorist offences.

Be that as it may, this strategy is concise and comprehensive in dealing with the issue of terrorism, but regrettable, some of the provisions under these objectives are grossly neglected, such as government working with communities, investigation is poorly carried out even when an incident happened. Therefore , there is the need to strengthen the capacity of CJS on prosecution of terrorist offences, despite the increasing rise in the terrorist acts in the country, it rarely you hear conviction of terrorist in this country, unlike developed countries.

4. Prepare: to mitigate the impact of terrorist attacks by building resilience and redundancies to ensure continuity of business. The prepare strategy is concerned with ensuring that the nation is ready to manage and utilize the consequences of a terrorist attack where it cannot be stopped and increase resilience for an immediate recovery from the aftermath of the attacks. The objectives of the prepare strategy include to:²⁷

- i. Build the capacity for all security agencies and stakeholders, organizations to respond to and recover from all categories of terrorist attacks and other emergencies;

²⁶ Ibid.26-29

²⁷ Ibid.30-31

- ii. Prepare dedicated agencies for response and recovery tasks for specified high risk areas; and
- iii. Enhance information sharing and communication amongst agencies through joint training, operation and the provision of equipment.

The question one is tempted to ask is how many times have the federal government or the office of the national security adviser organized joint training for all the agencies and stakeholders responsible for the implementation of quick response and recovery of victims of terrorist attack; as well as information and communication sharing amongst the security agencies in the country?. Each agency is working independently with poor coordination from Office of the National Security Adviser.

5. Implement; to have a framework for the mobilization of coordinated cross governmental efforts.²⁸ The implementation strategy involves the various elements acting together and cooperating to deal with a complex threat. Much of the work requires partnerships across the public sector involving the police, and emergency services, local authorities and federal government departments as well as partnerships with businesses in the private sector and voluntary organizations. The implementation stream of the NACTEST therefore stipulates how it will be successfully executed and which Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) plays what role. The roles and responsibilities are stated in the document.

It is worthy of note, that the fifth strategy to implement is a well planned and outlined strategy to prevent the threat of both domestic and international terrorism. But unfortunately, the strategy is just a paper work. There is no visible action regarding the implementation of the outlined strategies by the responsible agency as stated in the document. Conversely, for instance in quantitative study of the relationship between repressive acts and terrorists incidents in Chenoweth and Dugan, the researcher found that repression across target types in one month increases the risk of terrorism the following month.²⁹ A similar study focus on the West Bank and Gaza by Marwan also found that heavy-handed repression spurs, rather than suppresses collective action.³⁰ Another study found that although, repression against VEOs may have short-term effects in reducing

²⁸ Ibid. 32-37

²⁹ Chenoweth Erica and Laura Dugan, Does Repression Decrease Terrorists Attacks? Evidence from Israel Paper Presented at the Annual Meeting of the International Studies Association, Montreal, Quebec, March 15-19, 2011. See also Surveying the Literatures on Counterterrorism, Counter-Insurgency, and Counter-Violent Extremism: A Summary Report with focus on Africa

³⁰ Khawaja Marwan, Repression and Popular Collection Action: Evidence from West Bank'', Sociological Forum, 1993: 8

violent extremism, the long term effect is to produce backlash.³¹ On the other hand, and however, repression may be effective when carried out by more autocratic government.³² Therefore, there are short falls or gaps in the provisions of the National Counterterrorism Strategy 2016 which need to be reorganized to give a better document.

Challenges of Combating Terrorism

Terrorism and insurgency are integral to many conflicts in form of a broader context of armed conflict. Indeed, efforts to combat insurgency and terrorism have been made with a number of challenges that impede or slow down those efforts as identified hereunder:

1. Conceptualization of terrorism: The definition of terrorism forms the base of a challenge which hinders analysis of terrorism and makes the conceptualization of terrorism controversial. There are many varying definitions due to political reasons usually inform of propaganda- calling terrorist freedom fighters or vis-visa.³³ Terrorism is consider a criminal act, and can also be described as a strategy used by belligerents in an asymmetrical warfare or in fourth generation warfare to deliberately targets civilians and non-combatants.³⁴ The African Union acknowledges the fact that people struggle-including armed struggle carried out in accordance with the principle of international law for the liberation from colonialism, occupation, aggression and domination by foreign forces is not considered as terrorism.³⁵ The interpretations and labelling by the media forms one of the arenas in which terrorism is conceptualized and this gives media the power to influence the public's understanding of terrorism.³⁶

2. Radicalization: This is another challenge especially among young people, as Davis noted that corruption, poverty, oppression, marginalization, and religious extremism lead to radicalization which is the result of terror flourishing in Africa due to development problem.³⁷ These factors mentioned above can also have a combine effect as seen in the case of the Nigerian Boko Haram and Somalian Al-Shababs. Similarly, religious

³¹ Rasler Karen, Concession, Repression and Political Protest in the Iranian Revolution, *American Sociological Review*, 61 (1) (1996) 132-139

³² Gupta Diptak, Harinder Singh and Tom Sprague, 'Government Coercion of Dissidents: Deterrence or Provocation?' *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 37 (1995) 301-312

³³ Weinberg and others 2004, cited in Julius Adinoyi A, Terrorism Landmine, Weapon of Mass Destruction, Counterinsurgency'' Nairobi, Kenya: University of Nairobi, 2013
available<<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327861566>> accessed on 28 September, 2020

³⁴ Botha A., Relationship between Africa and International Terrorism, 2007)2 accessed on 28 September, 2020

³⁵ OAU/AU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, Algiers 1999: Treaty on Cooperation among the States Members of the Commonwealth of Independent States in Combating Terrorism) 207-208 accessed on 28 September, 2020

³⁶ Julius Adinoyi (n - 31)

³⁷ Davis C., Anatomy :African Terrorism World Policy Journal 29 (2012) (4)

extremism contributes to the greater terror perception in Africa and the Middle East, usually emanating from the predominant religions e.g. Christianity and Islam. These religions are not of origin from Africa and thus, the inception of their beliefs which leads to radicalization can be attributed to external factor that contributes to terrorism.

3. Civil Liberties: The implications of terrorism on human rights is one of the challenges in combating terrorism, and the violation of such rights are evident in Africa, and this can lead to increase in terrorism as the people whose rights are denied may seek to find justice through the use of terror as a strategy.³⁸ Likewise, human rights activism can be viewed as a rhetorical nonsense that encourages civil unrest, disobedience and resistance to laws and revolution against the established government.³⁹ For example, upholding freedom of speech with undermines peace as seen in the case of Charlie Harbdo Cartoon movement in Spain that incited terror across the world.

4. Finance and Sponsorship: Weak anti-terror finance combats have also contributed to the spread of terror in African region. Classical example is the African leaders and officials supporting terror groups for strategic interest, and in the case of Boko Haram and more often the anti-terror finance and money laundering (AML) regimes are inefficient to track secret or covert terror sponsorship.⁴⁰ Oohome argue that the emergence of terrorism is unconnected with transnational support since local armed groups originally existing as insurgents finds it hard to win regional or international recognition, but attain such position once they secure finance or sponsorship from external sources in form of funds from illegal transactions of natural resources with foreign nations;⁴¹ and foreign support they received with the tag “moderate rebels” as they are called by those supporting them in form of systematic regime change to take over power from the established government. For example, U.S. sponsorship of rebels in Syria aided the finance and stability of Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) which control parts of Iraq and Syria,⁴²

³⁸ See HRW 2007, Get the Gun: Human Rights Violations by Uganda’s National Army in Law Enforcement Operations in Karamoja Region. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327861566>. Accessed on 28 September, 2020

³⁹ Julius Adinoyi A. (n -31)

⁴⁰ FATF Terrorism Financing in West Africa: FATF Report October 2013; Financing Action Task Force. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327861566>. Accessed on 28 September, 2022

⁴¹ Oohome III, Chester 9, Terrorist Insurgenta and Criminal-Growing Nexus? Studies in 2008. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327861566>. accessed on September, 2020

⁴² Global Research, Is Washington Financing Terrorism? Islamic State (ISIS) Mercenary Activists Getting Funds from US, 2015. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327861566>. Accessed on 28 September, 2020

5. Expertise/Technicalities: Despite the efforts by African states in combating terror, there are still deficiencies in the area of intelligence. For instance, most of the intelligence information are received from foreign intel about the impending attack, and in most cases such intel are generalized, and thus makes it a difficult task to identify specifically the area of potential attack.⁴³ Among other challenges are weaknesses in institutionalized terror related curricular not only in tertiary institutions, but also at the secondary and primary levels. Similarly, defensive and war counterterrorism machinery have hindered the fight against terror- particularly in the case of Nigeria where the military lacks proper equipment due to corruption.⁴⁴

6. Issues of Human Rights Tag Freedom: The effects from freedom of choice by right through Westernization have created clash of civilization and religious/culture, thus creating loss of decency as viewed by religious/cultural extremists hence create an avenue for radicals to go to any length to protect views, ideas and cultures they think should be non-derogable.⁴⁵ Indeed, Bruce and Jacob observed that terrorist's threat is vastly different today from what it was in 2001, noting that social media has empowered extremist movements and terrorist groups to network and organize online, making it far easier for them both to recruit newcomers and to direct or inspire attacks.⁴⁶ They identified the following as the new challenges and hurdles to intelligence and law enforcement agencies:

7. Evolving Terrorist Tactics:⁴⁷ Another challenge will continue to be presented by the deliberate efforts of a range of adversaries to obviate existing laws and restrictions of weapons through 3Ds printing technology and 'ghost guns' by terrorists. Terrorists are utilizing a spectrum of both simple and innovative weapons to carry out attacks that in some cases minimize planning and logistical preparations and in other effectively render national laws and restrictions on firearms irrelevant. The example is stabbing, mass shootings and vehicular attacks are clearly less sophisticated and their perpetrators less capable than their more professional trained counterpart.

⁴³ Al Jazeera America, Why Nigeria Military is losing the Battle against Boko Haram, 13 January 2015, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327861566>. Accessed on 28 September, 2020

⁴⁴ FATF 2013 (n -39)

⁴⁵ Ibid. 6

⁴⁶ Bruce Hoffman and Jacob Ware, "the Challenges of Effective Counterterrorism Intelligence in 2020" available at < www.lawfareblog.com/challenges-effective-counterterrorism-intelligence-2020 > accessed 28 September, 2020

⁴⁷ Ibid. See also Terrorists Tactics available at <www.themantic.com/international/archive/2018/04/toronto-ran-ince/558836> accessed 28 September 2020

Challenges of Combating Insurgency

Indeed, efforts to combat insurgency have been made with a number of challenges that impede efforts against insurgency. Adeyinka et al ⁴⁸ observed that it appeared the international community lacked adequate knowledge of the threat which Boko Haram posed to the existence of Nigeria at the early stage of the fight against insurgency. However, some of the challenges in countering insurgency include to:

1. **Understanding the Adversary:** Just as in any armed struggle, success in counterinsurgency requires a full appreciation of the adversary's strengths, weaknesses, and goals. In counterinsurgency, however, the opposition is likely to be far more elusive and opaque than it is in the conventional conflicts between nation-states. Insurgencies, particularly in their formative stages are by nature subterranean movements whose members "hide in plain sight" by living, training and operating among a wider civilian population with no uniforms to identify, and with much effort expended to remain clandestine, the cadres, leaders, and support members of an insurgent are unlikely to present obvious targets for intelligence and surveillance.⁴⁹
2. **Lack of State Capacity and Presence:** The lack of capacity in police and intelligence is a critical shortfall for many governments facing insurgencies. This lack of capacity contributes to the growth of insurgent movements in a number of ways: corruption, laziness and incompetent policemen- or simply the shortage or absence of policemen of any calibre- signals to the general public a regime's inability or unwillingness to provide for public order are of the fundamental responsibilities of any modern polity.⁵⁰ Similarly, the public safety vacuum in turn allows the growth of private militias, criminal elements, and other violent non-state actors are an indicator to potential insurgents that the state may be a less formidable adversary than previously supposed. Corroborating this point, Robert Thompson a leading counterinsurgency theorist in his judgment has this to say:

⁴⁸ Richard Adeyinka E, Abayomi Charles Deramola and Kolawole Amos, 'Terrorism, Boko Haram and the Role of the Media in the Fight Against Insurgency in Nigeria', In Olusola O. Isola and Muyiwa Popoola (eds) *Journalism Practice and Terrorism in Nigeria: Issues, Trends and Techniques* (John Archers 2015)53-54

⁴⁹ Ibid.32

⁵⁰ Ibid.37

without a reasonably efficient government machine, no programs or projects, in the context of counterinsurgency will produce the desired results.... The correction of these administration weaknesses is as much part of counterinsurgency as any military operation.⁵¹

Thompson had played an instrumental role in suppressing the communist insurgency in Malaya. Vigorous and effective administration, the development of political institutions, road building, and other government actions can help convince local populations that the state is determined to prevail.

3. Un-control Population: There is a widespread agreement among theorists and practitioners that population plays an essential role in any insurgency, with the people serving as an invaluable (if not irreplaceable) resource base, both material (e.g food, recruits, arms) and political. Without the consent and active aid of the people, concludes one analyst ‘guerrilla would be merely a bandit, and could not long survive’.⁵² While this is true for a nature of insurgency, it is by no means certain that such vigorous support is necessary during the conflict’s infancy when, as has been noted above, most of the population is uncommitted. It does seem clear, however, that an insurgency is unlikely to grow in an environment in which the population is actively hostile.⁵³

4. Search and Destroy Operations: The doctrine of search and destroy operations are to “find, fix, and fight”, the insurgents are in fact worse than ineffective. The use of conventional combat power in populated areas easily leads to civilian casualties, the destruction of crops, and property damage, and in so doing, antagonizes the very population the government is seeking to enlist in its cause. Edward noted that reliance on combat power overestimates their attitudes to the outcome of the struggle.⁵⁴ However, it almost goes without saying as observed by Gordon that the police, paramilitary and military forces engaged in maintaining the government’s control regime must refrain

⁵¹ Robert Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency: Experiences from Malaya and Vietnam*, (London, UK: Chatto and Windus, 1967)51

⁵² Laqueur Walter, *the Futility of Terrorism*, Harper’s Magazine 1976, available at <harpers.org>archive>1976/03> the futility-of-terrorism> accessed 17 October, 2020

⁵³ Edward E. Rice, *Wars of the Third Kind: Conflict in Under-developed Countries*, (Berkeley, Calif: University of California Press, 1988)115

⁵⁴ Ibid.

from acting like an occupying force.⁵⁵ Therefore, strict standards of behavior must govern all interactions of the security forces with the civilian population. Again, a population antagonized by the depredation of the security forces is likely to provide many fresh recruits for the insurgent movement, and at the very least, it is highly unlikely that that population will be willing to provide these forces with the intelligence essential to defeating the insurgency.

It is the natural inclination of the soldiers to display strength, courage and aggression. But in counterinsurgency, as Townsend noted “‘normal military logic is negated’”.⁵⁶ Otherwise, admirable material qualities can backfire in counterinsurgency’s ambiguous environment as Frank Kitson, a British Army official who led counterinsurgency campaigns in Kenya, Malaya, Oman, and Northern Ireland, has noted. However, it has been most effective when conducted by forces highly trained in counterinsurgency techniques. For example, in rural insurgencies, combat power has proven most useful and appropriate when it is employed by small, specialized, highly trained counter-guerrilla units capable of constant patrolling at long range and for extended periods of ambushing and harassing the enemy, and of gathering intelligence that are backed up, when necessary, highly mobilize army, air and naval striking forces.⁵⁷

For example, this technique was used with great effect against the Huk rebels in the Philippines, the Malayan communist party in the Malaya and against the Mau Mau in Kenya between (1952-1960), “pseudo gangs” are essentially non-uniformed counterinsurgency forces disguised as guerrillas who operate (sometimes ruthlessly) within insurgents dominated areas.⁵⁸ These techniques have worked well in rural societies but appear to have limited applicability in more urbanized insurgencies, such as Iraq.

5. **Ungoverned Space/Porous borders:** Porous borders can play a key role in cross border infiltration and arms shipments in support of the insurgency. In the early stages of an insurgency, weapons, food, and other resources can often be obtained locally, but as the movement grows, its requirements typically expand to the point at which outside

⁵⁵ Gordon Mc Coormick, A System Model of Insurgency” unpublished paper, (Montarey, Calif: Naval Post Graduate School, 22 June, 2010)8

⁵⁶ Charles Townsend, Britain in Civil War: Counterinsurgency in the Twentieth Century (London, UK ,Faber and Faber, 1986)31

⁵⁷ Mc Cuen 1966 cited in Alan J. Vick (n 53)

⁵⁸ Lawrence E. Cline, Pseudo Operations and Counterinsurgency, Lessons from other Countries (Carlisle, P: US Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, June 2005)1-5 See also John S. Pustay, Counterinsurgency Warfare (New York: The Free Press, 1965?)114

assistance is necessary, either from state sponsors (e.g. Kashmir today, where Pakistan support numerous militant groups fighting Indian occupation forces) or from non-state actors, such as diasporas (the Tamil communities in Canada that have helped finance the operation of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil, the so-called Tamil Tigers).⁵⁹ Moreover, while safe havens for rest, recuperation, and training can sometimes be found internally, insurgents most frequently rely on adjacent countries for sanctuary', the reliance on external support, whether in terms of material, international propaganda, intelligence, or sanctuary, encourages insurgents operations.

Conclusion

In response to the terrorists and insurgents acts in Nigeria, the Government of Nigeria in a first major attempt to address the terror attacks that are being perpetrated by violent extremist organizations (VEOs) against the citizens published documents that chronicled the country's effort at combating terrorism called the National Security Strategy and National Counter Terrorism Strategy (NACTEST among other documents. A number of options were considered to improve government counterterrorism /insurgencies strategies. Though no two insurgencies are identical, and thus as it is suggested that there can never be a universally applicable template for delivering success. Notwithstanding, there are strategic approach to countering terrorism and insurgency adopted by the UN, UNSCR, OSCE and many other countries. This also implies that there is the need for sincerity of purpose and political will by Nigerian government in its fight to end insurgencies and terrorism in the country.

In order for terrorists to organise themselves, plan and carry out attacks, terrorists need recruits and supports, funds, weapons, the availability to travel unimpeded, other forms of material support, and access to vulnerable targets. Therefore, effectively countering acts of terrorism and insurgencies requires a comprehensive and strategic approach, relying on a broad range of policies and measures. From a careful analysis of the work, we can conclude that unless radicalization and recruitment into insurgencies and terrorism is address, achieving terrorists and insurgents' free society in Nigeria would be a mirage, particularly with the upsurge in the range of insurgencies and terrorism in the country.

Recommendations

The purpose of this article is to recommend durable solutions to end acts of terror and insurgencies in Nigeria through effectively countering acts of terrorism and insurgencies

⁵⁹ Byman Chalk and others cited in Alan J. and others (n 53)48

by deploying comprehensive and strategic approaches, relying on a broad range of strategies and measures.⁶⁰ Similarly, strategic approaches to counterterrorism often encompass several objectives in addressing different chronological stages in the occurrence of terrorism.⁶¹ This article recommends the following measures:

1. The UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy approach to counterterrorism:⁶²
 - a. measures to address conditions that are conducive to the spread of terrorism;
 - b. measures to prevent and combat terrorism; and
 - c. measures to ensure respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis of the fight against terrorism.
2. The UN Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) recommend all states to establish appropriate legislative, regulatory and institutional frameworks, including to:
 - a. refrain from providing any form of support, active or passive to entities or individuals involved in terrorist acts;
 - b. prevent and suppress the financing of terrorism; suppress the recruitment of members of terrorist groups; eliminate the supply of weapons to terrorists;
 - c. prevent the movement of terrorists or terrorist groups; deny safe havens to those who finance, plan, support, commit terrorist acts, or provide safe havens;
 - d. ensure that any person who participates in the financing, planning, preparation, perpetration of terrorist acts or in supporting terrorist acts is brought to justice; and
 - e. afford each other the greatest measure of mutual legal assistance in connection with criminal matters related to terrorism.⁶³
3. Regarding counterinsurgency, notwithstanding, generics counterinsurgency ‘best practices are recommended for any government fighting insurgency to consider implementing. Accordingly, in counterinsurgency efforts, government should distribute

⁶⁰ Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), *Preventing Terrorism and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism: A Community Policing Approach*, Vienna, Office of Democratic Institution and Human Rights, 2014. P.30

⁶¹ In many countries, strategic approach to counterterrorism is incorporated into document on national security policy. Several other countries and organizations have developed a specific document which outlines their respective counterterrorism strategy. These strategic document often utilize similar terminology but with variations in the actual meaning of specific terms.

⁶² UN General Assembly, ‘‘The United Nations Global Counter Terrorism Strategy’’, Doc.A/RES/60/288,2006,<http://www.un.org/en/terrorism/strategy-counterterrorism.shtml> accessed 17th Aug.2023

⁶³ UN Security Council Resolution 1373 (2001) adopted by the Security Council at its 4345th meeting, on 28 September 2001 (S/RES/1373 (2001), [http://www.un.org/en/sc/ctc/special meetings/2012/doc/United %20Nations%20Security%20Council%20Resolution%201373%20\(2001\).pdf](http://www.un.org/en/sc/ctc/special%20meetings/2012/doc/United%20Nations%20Security%20Council%20Resolution%201373%20(2001).pdf) access on 17th Aug. 2023.

resources, programmes, activities and other efforts so that each of the best practices receives an appropriate level of support and attention, depending on the nature of the conflict.