
UNITED STATES SECURITY STRATEGY AND THE MANAGEMENT OF BOKO HARAM CRISIS IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *The Nigerian Government has enjoyed cordial relationship with the government of the United States over the years especially given the former's quantum of oil deposit and the latter's access to exploiting same. However, the emergence of Boko Haram insurgency has been a source of concern to both countries especially as it portends danger to their interests. Despite the efforts of both countries in finding a lasting solution to the problem, the desired result is yet to be attained. In view of this, the study examined the effectiveness of the US security strategies in assisting Nigeria overcome the crisis of Boko Haram. Intractable conflict theory was adopted in arguing that it would be difficult to resolve the crisis of Boko Haram but it can, at least, be managed if proper strategies are put in place. Finally, the work discovered that in line with American foreign policy of zero tolerance to international terrorism, its strategies in assisting Nigeria overcome Boko Haram crisis have not been very effective.*

KEYWORDS: Security, Strategy, Boko Haram, Crisis, Terrorism, Management

INTRODUCTION

Since the inception of Boko Haram sect in 2002 and its subsequent attacks on the Nigerian state from 2009, more than 10,000 (ten thousand) lives have been lost; 90,000 (ninety thousand) others displaced from their homes and property worth billions of Naira wasted both at individual and corporate levels (http://en.wikipedia.org/Boko_Haram). This is giving the governments of Nigeria and the United States serious concern such that both countries are critically involved in finding a lasting solution to the crisis. Boko Haram insurgency was hitherto thought to be a manifestation of mere aggrieved members of the Nigerian society (precisely of Northern extraction) who were dissatisfied with the performance of the Nigerian government over the years. However, latest events have shown that beyond expression of mere grievance, the group is increasingly becoming provocative reminiscent of a terrorist organization.

Though; notwithstanding the formation of the group in 2002, it remained innocuous and non-violent (but not without a violent philosophy) until 2009 when its leader Yusuf Mohammed was gruesomely murdered by the Nigerian Police Force in a manner described by the international community as unacceptable and reminiscent of a society with no regard for the sanctity of human life; imbued with flagrant contravention and abuse of the fundamental human rights (Elombah.com, 2009). Ever since then, there was a paradigm shift in the group's ideology and pattern to the pursuit of their goals; thereby re-enforcing the Hausa-Arabic nomenclatural coinage called Boko Haram which happened to be the native name given to the group by the people of Maiduguri where the sect was conceived. The concept of Boko Haram is used to

denote the sinful nature of western culture as conceived by Islamic fundamentalists and many other religious sects of like minds. The western culture, as here used, constitutes their ideology, education, religion and even system of governance. In fact, among the fundamental arguments of the beliefs held by the group is that banking, taxation and jurisprudence in the country are completely infidel and it is a sin submitting to these voids (Sani, 2011). They also argue that western education is unislamic as it embodies all that Islam projected (the pursuit of knowledge), while it propagates the negative of what Allah and his prophet had ordained (Sani, 2011). Some of these were the mixing of girls and boys under the same shade, the propagation of the theory that men evolved from the monkeys (as contained in the theory of evolution), and that the sun in the sky is static. According to them, all these are in conflict with the direct words of Allah who said Muslim must not mix sexes under the same umbrella and that he created men from clay as well as the sun, earth and the moon and each moves on their own axis (Sani, 2011).

Nevertheless, at the onset of the Boko Haram insurgency, many analysts thought it to be a domestic problem that constituted little or no international dimension as to elicit corresponding international attention (Madunagu, 2011; Johnson, 2011; Campbell, 2012; Adefuye, 2012 and Ngwodo, 2012). It was not until the group became more vexatious and successful in their attacks against both domestic and international establishments in Nigeria with threats of expansion beyond its shores that they were taken to be serious and capable of making real their threats. It was then observed that the terrorist group was aligning with other foreign terrorist organizations like the al-Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb, al-Qaeda in Arabic Peninsula, al-Shabaab, and al-Qaeda senior leaders in Pakistan (Ham, 2012). These attacks on the domestic and international establishments in Nigeria, like the UN Building in Abuja, helped in launching the group to limelight thereby eliciting argument whether or not it should be recognized as Foreign Terrorist Organization (Adefuye, 2012; Oritsejafor, 2012; Campbell, 2012 and Meehan, 2012).

Consequent upon the foregoing, the study provided theoretical explanation of Boko Haram insurgency and raised such critical questions like: why is the United States interested in fighting Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria and what strategy has it adopted in doing so? These are gaps in the literature which the study sets to fill using the theory of intractable conflict.

THEORETICAL EXPLANATION OF BOKO HARAM INSURGENCE IN NIGERIA

There are three contending schools to the explanation of Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria. These include:

- The religious
- The political and
- The terrorist schools

The religious school argues that Boko Haram insurgency is a grand design to impose the religion of Islam on Nigeria especially the nineteen Northern states. Those who belong to this school include, Johnson (2011), Ngex.com (2013), Ekanem et al (2012), among others. These scholars argue that Boko Haram members are Islamic fundamentalists who have the intention to forcefully impose the religion of Islam on all Nigerians. This is even more axiomatic and lucid

considering the official name of the sect – *Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati Wal Jihad* which simply means “People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet’s Teachings and Jihad”. Accordingly, Ngex.com (2013) maintains that Boko Haram as a religious group believes that Nigeria is ruled by non-believers and it is therefore incumbent on the sect to establish fully Islamic state including the implementation of criminal Sharia courts across the country. Boko Haram members, like many Islamic fundamentalists, believe that nothing short of Sharia Law should be the guiding principle of state practice and resorting to violence or what may properly be called Jihad (Muslim Holy War) is the best way to bring the practice into being.

Moreso, those who belong to the political school argue that Boko Haram insurgency is a political strategy designed to perpetuate northern dominance in the politics of Nigeria including the unseating of President Goodluck Jonathan (Okpaga et al, 2012; Sani, 2011; Onaiyekan, 2012). Onaiyekan (2012) rightly noted that:

In Nigeria’s “winner take all” political culture, where the country’s political elites from a number of regions, religions, and ethnicities compete for power and the control of oil resources, militant groups (like Boko Haram sect) serve as a kind of pressuring mechanism for achieving what cannot be achieved in elections, in parliament, or in backroom deals...oil wealth has remained in the hands of a very powerful few, creating economic and social inequality for those regions – such as the Islamic North and the oil-producing but poor Niger-Delta regions – who are left out of the power balance (<http://www.csmonitor.com/world/Africa/2012/0604/Nigeria-s-Boko-Haram-a-holy-war-maybe-not-entirely>).

To this school, the Nigerian political culture of impunity which covertly encourages violence as a strategy of capturing political power fuels the embers of insurgency including that of Boko Haram. Others who subscribe to the political school argue that the sect members were political thugs who were used and dumped by past political leaders without proper settlement which resulted to their taking up arms against the state as a means of expressing their grievances.

The third school which sees Boko Haram sect as a terrorist group is largely a composite of religious and political schools with an additional element of economic deprivation. Accordingly, as recorded in USAID (2012), poverty is responsible for the insurgency of Boko Haram. Other scholars that share the opinion that Boko Haram is a terrorist organization due to economic deprivation include Mudasiru (2011), Heras and Zenn (2013), among others. As noted by Ehrlich and Liu (2002), “poverty, especially because of its severely unequal distribution among nations, is obviously one of the most important factors of terrorism” (cited in Mudasiru, 2011:99). Heras and Zenn (2013) noted that:

When you have millions of young boys, as is the case in northern Nigeria, for example, that are part of a largely unregulated educational system where all they learn is Arabic language, Qur’an recitation from Islamic scholars, whose credentials and loyalties may be dubious, it can make those boys more susceptible to violent interpretations of the Qur’an that Boko Haram endorses...without financial or familial support, these boys in the al-majiri system might find even

the small amount of financial support or camaraderie that Boko Haram offers to be enticing (<http://www.fairobserver.com/article/boko-haram-threatening-west-africa>).

At this juncture, it is important to revisit the meaning of terrorism especially as conceived by the United States as the leading state in the fight against international terrorism. In line with this, terrorism may be defined as a premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant groups by a sub-national or clandestine movement. Central to this definition are the following:

- The act must be a premeditated one
- It must have political motivation
- The targets in most cases are directed at a non-combatant group
- The act must involve clandestine movement (Pillar, 2001).

In view of the foregoing, the activities of Boko Haram sect meet the above criteria for measuring terrorism. This is because its attacks are usually premeditated, politically motivated, and their targets are mostly unarmed groups comprising of women and children as well as students in hostels and the attacks always conducted in secret, otherwise becoming a clandestine movement. Because of this, the United States on November 14, 2013 designated the group Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO). Within the context of this work, we subscribe to the terrorist school especially because it incorporates the religious, political and economic dimensions to the crisis. While the fundamentalist ideology of Islamic religion guides the crisis, economic deprivation and political maneuvering fuel it.

METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

The study adopted the intractable conflict theory. This theory was popularized by Northrup (1989), Coleman (2004), Deutsch and Coleman (2000), among others. Accordingly, Burgess and Burgess (2005) noted that intractable conflicts are those conflicts that stubbornly seem to elude resolution even when the best available techniques are applied (cited in Onuoha, 2008). Onuoha (2008: 311) opined that, “intractable conflicts are ones that remain unresolved for long periods of time and then become stuck at a high level of intensity and destructiveness”. Similarly, Deutsch and Coleman (2000: 1) noted that, “when conflicts that are deeply important to people remain unresolved for long period of time, they tend to escalate, transform, and resurface repeatedly, eventually becoming stuck at a high level of intensity and destructiveness”. Indeed, protracted, intractable conflicts are a form of human interaction that may very well determine the capacity of men to survive as a species (Coleman, 2004).

The critical question in intractable conflict theory is, why do some conflicts become intractable? According to Onuoha (2008: 311), “what is common to all intractable conflicts is that they involve interests or values that the disputants regard as crucial to their survival”. Some conflicts become intractable if there is a vast number of people involved and the issue at stake appeals to land, religion, ideology and other issues necessary for the people’s survival. Such issues are very difficult to be resolved. They can at best be managed.

In the case of Boko Haram crisis, the issues at stake include religion, ideology, economy and even politics. These variables are very critical to people’s existence and they largely shape their

actions and inactions; a threat of which would definitely be resisted. The United States is also deeply involved in fighting international terrorism and spares no nation or organization found to be sponsoring such. This is therefore ideologically related and central to US foreign policy. The implication is that people should not expect quick resolution of Boko Haram crisis; however, the crisis needs multi dimension approaches for it to be managed.

Boko Haram Violence and the American Security Strategies in Nigeria

The United States government has been known to evolve a direct confrontational strategy in protecting her interest in oversea countries especially where oil is found in abundance. This has been demonstrated in many places, and according to Adogamhe (2006:108):

The brutal intervention of the United States in the Iraq/Kuwait conflict destroyed Iraq, and brought starvation on the Iraqi population through maintaining an arbitrarily prolonged embargo. At the time, the United States did not take into account the consequences of the intervention. The Gulf War created among the people of Islam a revolutionary fundamentalist group.

He further argued that:

Before the Gulf War, people of Islam could envisage two options and exercise their choice: either support Iraqi-Syrian Baathism, a socialist and a secular one and as far as Iraq is concerned, turned towards the west...or to respond to the appeals of the Iranian integrism, and condemn the Judeo-Christian civilization considered amoral and opposed to values proclaimed by Islam. If need be, to fight this civilization by terrorism, for the lack of any other means which could confront it successfully (Adogamhe, 2006: 108).

Following the cataclysmic implication of the Gulf War which also led to profound resentment of the population of more than 1 billion Muslims all over the globe, the US decided to abandon its role of "The Great Satan" who supported Israel and to take the one of the friends of Arabs and Muslims in general. However, in the aftermath of the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in the US on 9/11, President Bush Jr. declared an open global war on terrorism. Since then, the US strategies against global terrorism shifted to direct confrontation. Adogamhe (2006: 109) has identified Bush's strategies against terrorism as follows:

- To end state support for terrorism
- To replace terror-sponsoring regimes with democratic government and
- If necessary, the US government will make use of its military capability to maintain its global hegemonic power.

Recently, under President Barack Obama, the strategy against terrorism is gradually being given a new phase of non-violent confrontation. In fact, in a research conducted by the USAID, the Boko Haram insurgency is a mere expression of grievance against the non-performance of the Nigerian government and therefore, its fight should not attract direct confrontation from the US

government; instead, a coordinated strategy that involves both the state and the local governments, especially in the North (WND Exclusive,2012).

Other scholars have continually argued that involvement of the international community (the US for instance) will hamper prompt solution to the problem of terrorism in Nigeria (Adefuye, 2012; Campbell, 2012; among others). As a corollary, it is on record that 21 scholars with expertise on Nigeria, including Peter Lewis from SAIS and Jean Herskovits from SUNY, sent a letter to former US Secretary of State, Hilary Clinton on Boko Haram (LeVan, 2012). The letter began by noting the horrific violence perpetrated against civilians and government officials, but argued that responding to Boko Haram ultimately requires a diplomatic, developmental and demilitarized framework (LeVan, 2012).

As a counter to the call for diplomatic framework, the chairman of the US House Homeland Security Committee, Peter King and Patrick Meehan, the chairman of the US Subcommittee on Counter Terrorism and Intelligence, continued to pressure the Secretary of State, Clinton, to adopt a more robust approach to checkmate the insurgence of Boko Haram in Nigeria; maybe by considering labeling the group foreign terrorist organization. In their own letter to the Secretary, they argued that “Boko Haram’s evolution into an operationally mature al Qaeda affiliate must be stopped before it is too late” (<http://carllewan.com/2012/05/boko-haram-letter-to-clinton-from-scholars>).

Campbell (2012) arguing otherwise, has stated that:

Boko Haram is different from other FTOs, such as Hezbollah, Hamas, or the Tamil Tigers, which have an organizational structure and a unified goal. Boko Haram is a highly diffused movement with little, if any, central organization. In fact, the name “Boko Haram” is a label applied only by the Nigerian Government, press, and security services, usually to describe the violence occurring (daily) in the north of the country...the uniting feature of Boko Haram is its focus on Nigeria...(<http://ynaija.com/blog/2012/05/25/why-not-to-designate-boko-haram-a-foreign-terrorist-organization>).

Among other things, Meehan, in a lecture delivered at the Heritage Foundation on July 24, 2012, had warned that the US should increase its security operation with Nigeria, remain vigilant, and officially designate Boko Haram a foreign terrorist organization (Heritage.Org, 2012). Adogamhe (2006: 118) also observed that “just as the terrorist chose to resort to terrorism to fight against Judeo-Christian civilization, so did the US choose to resort to pre-emptive war to eradicate global terrorism”. The problem now is, if the US has chosen to resort to pre-emptive war against global terrorism; given that terrorists have chosen to resort to terrorism in fighting against Judeo-Christian civilization (Muslim interpretation of western civilization), why has the United States not chosen its avowed pre-emptive strategy of war against Boko Haram – a group that has categorically stated that western civilization is not only a sin, but should be forbidden?

The US government has adopted non confrontational strategies involving 3 important US Departments in the fight against Boko Haram insurgence in Nigeria. These strategies include:

- Signing of Bi-National Commission pioneered by the US Department of State
- Provision of Security-Related Training and Funding by the US Department of Defense and
- Provision of aid by USAID
- Proscription of the Boko Haram leaders and the subsequent placement of \$7 million bounty on Abubakar Shekau.

Signing of the US/Nigeria Bi-national Commission

The question that has continued to agitate the minds of many analysts is what has the US been doing to curtail Boko Haram activities in Nigeria? This question came not because Nigeria is part of the US territory, but because the former remains strategically important to the later (Gartenstein and Vassefi, 2012; Onuoha, 2008; Lantigua-Williams, 2012 and Meehan, 2012). According to the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Johnnie Carson, "Nigeria is probably the most important country in Sub-Saharan Africa". As an answer to the question above, the United States has established the US/Nigerian Bi-national Commission with concentration on four key areas of:

1. Good governance and transparency
2. Promoting regional cooperation and development
3. Energy reform and investment
4. Food security and agriculture.

The US/Nigeria Bi-national Commission was the first United States Department of State's move in the fight against Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria, and it was launched by the Secretary of States, Hillary Clinton, in October 2010. The Bi-national Commission (BNC) is coordinated by the Department of States (DoS). However, the US Department of Defense also plays crucial role in the commission's working groups. As Amanda Dory, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for African Affairs, said in April, 2012 House testimony:

In late January, 2012, Department of Defense (DoD) participated in the inaugural meeting of the regional security working group established under the DoS-led US-Nigeria Bi-national Commission. Although meant to address the full range of U.S-Nigeria security cooperation, this working group meeting focused on countering violent extremism (<http://gunpowderandlead.org/2012/06/current-u-s-policies-toward-nigerias-boko-haram/>).

The second United States Department of State move to curtail the activities of Boko Haram in Nigeria is improvement of local partners in Nigeria. According to Gartenstein-Ross and Vassefi (2012), the State Department's Antiterrorism Assistance Program (ATA), which provides training and equipment to countries combating the threat of terrorism, has projects with Nigeria (<http://gunpowderandlead.org/2012/06/current-u-s-policies-toward-nigerias-boko-haram/>). A key ATA project initiative, according to Ambassador Benjamin, involves building Nigeria's counter incident countermeasures capacity as the level of terrorism and political violence at the hands of Boko Haram increases.

The third US Department of State goal in fighting Boko Haram insurgency is finding means on how to reduce the flow of funds to Boko Haram. Its Counter Terrorist Finance (CTF) is working with the Government of Nigeria to address Boko Haram's revenue streams, with special focus on dealing with kidnappings. In fact, Ambassador Benjamin had explained that:

The State CTF program works with the interagency to provide the Government of Nigeria with an array of training to include Bulk Cash Smuggling, Terrorist Finance Investigations, Financial Intelligence Unit Analytical Training, as well as soft skill development targeting the financial regulatory system. Pending adoption of AML/CTF legislation that meets international standards, Nigeria may be one of the best equipped nations in West Africa to address the threat of money laundering and terrorist finance.

In an effort to build regional cooperation toward stopping the flow of illicit funds and illegal goods and substances through West Africa to Europe, from the Western Hemisphere, state will partner with the Department of Homeland Security in July, 2012 to deliver a new program in partnership with both the Senegalese and Nigerian governments. The venue will serve as a platform for dialogue for each country to discuss common challenges presented by organizations such as Boko Haram and Hizballah (<http://gunpowderandlead.org/2012/06/current-u-s-policies-toward-nigerias-boko-haram/>).

Indeed, money has been described as a key to international terrorism and thus to counterterrorism. Track it, and the responsibility for terrorist attacks will become clear. Interdict it, and terrorism will be reduced as its financial "lifeblood" dries up (Pillar, 2001). The long quote from Ambassador Benjamin is suggestive of the fact that insecurity and terrorism need collective fight by the regional powers and by extension, other power blocs as well.

Sequel to the grave insecurity in the country especially in the North, the US/Nigeria Bi-National Commission (BNC) has been re-arranged by both the US and Nigeria by splitting its Regional Security Cooperation and the Niger Delta component into an entirely separate working group, with emphasis on insecurity in the North. At the inception of the BNC, its core mandates were basically protecting the Niger-Delta, which then was the haven of militants, promotion of good governance, strengthening national institutions for better performance, among others.

However, when officials of Nigeria and the United States began a two-day talk under the BNC in Abuja on 23rd January, 2012, there was a consensus among the participants that the terror in the North should be given prominence in its framework (<http://www.informationng.com/2012/01/nigeria-u-s-at-talks-make-terror-in-north-ssecurity-threat.html>). At the inaugural meeting of the Regional Security Cooperation Working Group of the BNC in Abuja, the US Deputy Assistant Secretary, Mr. William Fitzgerald, said that the security situation in the Northern part of Nigeria had reached a significant dimension. The move, according to officials, will enable a sharper focus on the terrorism onslaught emanating from Nigeria while the end of the same instrument takes care of the older Niger-Delta problem.

Fitzgerald said that, “although Niger-Delta issues are ever pressing alongside with maritime security, there is a critical need for a more delineated approach to security in Nigeria” (<http://www.informationng.com/2012/01/nigeria-u-s-at-talks-make-terror-in-north-s-security-threat.html>).

Provision of Security-Related Training and Funding

The provision of security-related training and funding is being coordinated by the US Department of Defense (DoD). The Department of Defense provides the Nigerian Government with security-related training as well as funding. General Carter Ham had said that the US military relationship with Nigeria is very long-standing, very helpful and very useful.

The Department of Defense provides training and support activities. The US Army Special Forces Soldiers have provided counterinsurgency training to Nigerian troops, helping them to prepare to fight Boko Haram. In November, 2011, it was disclosed that the US sent 100 Special Forces Soldiers for training through both the African Coastal and Border Security Program (ACBS) and the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP) (<http://gunpowderandlead.org/2012/06/current-u-s-policies-toward-nigerias-boko-haram/>).

ACBS was designed by DoD to provide training, border and maritime security, and increase military professionalism; while TSCTP began in 2005 to prevent the expansion of terrorist groups. In Nigeria, the program provides training and intelligence support directed against Boko Haram. Additionally, the National Guard’s State Partnership Program links the California National Guard with Nigeria.

Besides the provision of military training, the United States Defense Department also provides funding to the Nigerian Army to improve their capabilities. In fact, it has been observed that:

DoD has provided the Nigerian army with \$2.2 million for the development of a counterterrorism infantry unit, and another \$6.2 million designated to the tactical communications and interoperability within its counterterrorism unit (<http://gunpowderandlead.org/2012/06/current-u-s-policies-toward-nigerias-boko-haram/>).

Involvement of USAID

In addition to involving the Departments of States and Defense, American government has also involved USAID in the fight against Boko Haram insurgence in Nigeria. Honorable Patrick Meehan, the Chairman US House Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence, has suggested the involvement of USAID to reach out to the northern Nigerian Muslims, among whom Boko Haram has found a sympathetic following. The USAID involvement in the fight against the insurgents was before now unclear sequel to its claim that the misunderstandings between Muslims and Christians made it difficult to administer aid program (<http://mobile.wnd.com/2012/05/obama-slaughter-of-christians-a-misunderstanding/>). To make the situation clearer for possible solution through aid program, USAID launched a program titled Project PEACE – an acronym for Programming Effectively Against Conflict and Extremism. PEACE says it would hire contractors to help the agency analyze the “true” causes of the conflict

and consequently provide more effective humanitarian and conflict-resolution assistance (<http://mobile.wnd.com/2012/05/obama-slaughter-of-christians-a-misunderstanding/>).

The result of the finding of USAID revealed that Boko Haram simply shares with other groups' anger over the nation's poor governance. The document therefore recommended that improved state service capacities and working to enhance the service delivery capacity of local governments would help in reducing such anger and the resultant conflict.

Consequent upon the recommendations of PEACE, the United States has begun to engage Nigerian Muslims, primarily through US Agency for International Development (USAID) programs in the northern states of Bauchi and Sokoto (<http://gunpowderandlead.org/2012/06/current-u-s-policies-toward-nigerias-boko-haram/>). A USAID program called Leadership, Empowerment, Advocacy and Development (LEAD), is helping northern governments build partnerships between states and local governments and the private sector. The goal of this program is to improve accountability, governance, and the delivery of essential services.

Proscription of Boko Haram Leaders and Placement of \$7 million Bounty on Abubakar Shekaus

As part of the United States strategies in fighting Boko Haram insurgence in Nigeria, the US government, in addition to the proscription of the leaders of Boko Haram – Abubakar Shekau, Abubakar Adams Kamar and Khalid al-Barnawi – in June, 2012, the US government has also announced the placement of \$7 million bounty of Abubakar Shekau for anybody with useful information that can lead to his arrest (Ajakaye, 2013 and Premium Times, August 4, 2013). According to a report from Monday Ateboh of Premium Times, “the United States has officially declared the leader of the extremist Boko Haram sect, Abubakar Shekau, wanted and placed a \$7 million to anyone with information that could lead to the arrest of the Boko Haram leader” (Premium Times, August 4, 2013). Also declared wanted are four alleged terrorists believed to be spreading terrorism in the West African sub-region. These terrorists include: Mokhtar Bel Mokhtar, described as a one-eyed mastermind of the January, 2013 deadly attack on a gas plant in Algeria, which left 37 foreigners dead; Yahya Abou Al-Hamman, an alleged terrorist believed to be behind the 2010 murder of an elderly French hostage in Niger; Malik Abou Abdelkarim, described as a senior AQIM fighter and Oumar Ould Hamaha, spokesman for Mali's Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO). The US authority has placed \$5 million bounty each on Mokhtar and Al-Hamman respectively; as well as \$3 million bounty each on Oumar and Malik also (Premium Times, June 6, 2013). Recall that the United States had on June 21, 2012, designated Mr. Shekau, the Boko Haram leader, a specially Designated Global Terrorist under the Executive Order 13224 (Ateboh, 2013).

Reacting to this latest development of \$7 million bounty on Shekau, the Director-General of Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA), Professor Bola Akinterinwa, urged Nigerians not to see the placement of bounty on Abubakar Shekau as interference in the nation's affairs but instead as a step in the right direction (in Premium Times, June 6, 2013). He further stated that:

The \$7 million dollar ransom was part of the \$23 million posted on Monday (June 3, 2013) by the US States Department's reward for Justice Programme. It is to help track down Mr. Shekau and some leaders of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic

Maghreb spreading terror in Nigeria and other West African countries. There is nothing like the United States government's interference in this case. Activities of Boko Haram are by the day assuming a worsening dimension that Nigeria alone cannot handle. Boko Haram is a terrorist group and terrorism is an international virus that should be dealt with through the right surgical operation. This is simply what the United States is doing (Premium Times, June 6, 2013).

However, since the placement of this bounty on Shekau, nobody has officially indicated that they know his whereabouts (Ateboh, 2013). Similarly, apart from the military efforts being made by the Nigerian security forces, the carrot and stick approach adopted by the US government appears to be producing little or no result. The attacks perpetuated by the Boko Haram sect are still increasing even with the declaration of state of emergency in the northeastern states of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa (see table 4.5 for details). In fact, the Boko Haram leader, Abubakar Shekau, in a video released on Monday, August 12, 2013, has boasted that the sect is on top of the situation in the northeastern part of Nigeria even with the state of emergency that was in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states and the subsequent deployment of the military (Ajakaye, 2013). In his own words, as recorded by Ajakaye (2013):

We have killed countless soldiers and we are going to kill more. Our strength and firepower has surpassed that of Nigeria. Nigeria is no longer a big deal as far as we are concerned. We can now comfortably confront the United States of America (<http://www.aa.com.tr/en/news/2149598--60-feared-dead-in-fresh-boko-haram-attacks>).

The above statement should send signal to the United States government, especially in thinking that Boko Haram does not pose direct threat to them or that they do not possess the magic wand capable of attacking them. If no lasting solution is sought now, then the spread of Boko Haram attacks to specific US interest both in Nigeria and beyond is just a matter of time. Though for now, the insurgency of Boko Haram has not gone beyond the epicenter of its base in the northeast and northwest (with pockets of influence in the northcentral) (Stratfor Report, 2013).

With all these strategies in vogue, let us examine with tables whether the activities of Boko Haram is reducing; otherwise whether they are being curtailed in the face of the US non-violent strategies.

Table 1: (showing results for early Boko Haram attacks in Nigeria before the take off of the US/Nigeria Bi-National Commission)

S/N	Date	Nature and Place of Attack	Number of Casualties
1	26 th July, 2009	First clash with the security agencies in Bauchi state after an all night attack on Dutsen-Tanship police station	42 people killed including 39 sect members, 2 policemen and 1 soldier
2	27 th July, 2009	First attack in Yobe state during an invasion in Potiskum Divisional Police Headquarters	4 killed including 3 policemen and 1 fire service officer

3	29 th July, 2009	Confrontation with security men at Mamudo village, along Potiskum/Damaturu Road, Yobe state	33 members of the sect killed
4	29 th July, 2009	An all-night battle with combined security operatives at Railway Terminus, Maiduguri	Unreported scores killed and operational base of the sect destroyed
5	13 th March, 2010	Attack in Northern part of Jos, Plateau state	300 people killed
6	8 th September, 2010	Attack at Bauchi Central Prison	No record of death but prisoners were freed
7	24 th Dec., 2010	Bomb explosion in Barkin Ladi, Jos, Plateau state	30 people killed
8	31 st Dec., 2010	Explosions at Mogadishu mammy market, Abuja	About 10 people killed

Source: Sani (2011: 17) “Boko Haram: History, Ideas and Revolt”, *Journal of Constitutional Development*. 11 (4): 1-16 and Okpaga et al (2012: 86) “Activities of Boko Haram and Insecurity Question in Nigeria”, *Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review*. 1 (9): 77-98

Table 2: (showing results of the litany of Boko Haram attacks after the signing and effective take-off of the US/Nigeria Bi-National Commission between January to November 2011).

S/N	Date	Nature and Place of Attack	Number of Casualties
1	28 th Jan., 2011	Attack on the ANPP governorship candidate's convoy at Lawan Bukar ward, Maiduguri	7 people killed including the governorship candidate
2	2 nd Mar., 2011	Attack on DPO Mustapha Sandamu's residence at Rigasa area of Kaduna state	2 policemen killed
3	30 th Mar., 2011	Bomb explosion in Damaturu	A policeman was injured
4	2 nd April, 2011	Bomb explosion at Dutsen-Tanship Police Station	2 policemen injured
5	4 th May, 2011	Attack at Maiduguri Prison on Kashim Ibrahim Way	A prison warder was killed
6	5 th May, 2011	Attack in Maiduguri Government House	2 people killed including the Duty Officer and a 13-year-old boy with another injured
7	9 th May, 2011	Attack on the residences of 2 Islamic clerics, Sheikh Goni Tijani and Mallam Abur, at Mairi and Bulabulum Wards in Bauchi state	The 2 Islamic clerics were killed

8	9 th May, 2011	Chairman of NURTW Bauchi state was attacked	1 person died – the chairman
9	13 th May, 2011	Bomb explosion at London Chinki, Maiduguri	2 people killed
10	15 th May, 2011	Bomb explosion at Lagos Street, Maiduguri	5 people injured including 2 soldiers and 3 policemen. Also, a police man was shot dead same day in the city
11	29 th May, 2011	Bomb explosion in Bauchi military barrack	14 killed
12	29 th May, 2011	Bomb explosion at Zuba, a suburb of Kubwa in Abuja	8 people lost their legs
13	31 st May, 2011	Attack on Shehu of Borno's brother	1 person killed – the Shehu's brother
14	1 st Jun., 2011	Attack on Police Station in Maiduguri	5 people killed
15	12 th Jun., 2011	Attack on a drinking joint in Bulumkutu, Maiduguri	4 people killed
16	16 th Jun., 2011	Bomb explosion at Police Headquarters, Abuja. Also, bomb explosion at Damboa town, Maiduguri.	2 people killed 4 children killed
17	20 th Jun., 2011	Attack on Kankara Police Station in Katsina state	2 people killed
18	9 th July, 2011	Clash between Boko Haram and the military in Maiduguri. Also, bomb blast in a church at Suleja, Niger state	31 people killed. 4 died in that of Suleja with scores injured
19	11 th July, 2011	Bomb explosion at a relaxation joint in Fokados Street, Kaduna	Unreported scores killed with many more injured
20	12 th July, 2011	Attack on a moving military patrol vehicle with IED in Maiduguri	5 people killed
21	15 th July, 2011	Bomb explosion in Maiduguri	5 people injured
22	23 rd July, 2011	Bomb explosion close to the Palace of the Shehu of Borno	3 soldiers injured
23	25 th July, 2011	Bomb explosion near the palace of a traditional ruler in Maiduguri	8 people killed
24	26 th Aug., 2011	Attack on the United Nations building in Abuja	25 people killed with about 60 more injured
25	12 th Sep., 2011	Bomb explosion in a Police	7 people killed including 4

		Station in Misau, Bauchi state	policemen
26	13 th Sep., 2011	Attack on the military after a raid in Boko Haram hideouts in Bauchi state	About 4 soldiers injured
27	17 th Sep., 2011	Attack on Mohammed Yusuf's brother-in-law two days after playing host to Obasanjo	1 person – Babakura Fugu – killed
28	3 rd Oct., 2011	Attack at Baga market in Maiduguri	3 people killed
29	4 th Nov., 2011	Attack in Damaturu, Yobe state	About 150 people killed
30	27 th Nov., 2011	Attack in Geidaam, Yobe state	7 people killed

Source: Sani (2011: 40-41) "Boko Haram: History, Ideas and Revolt", *Journal of Constitutional Development*. 11 (4): 1-16 and Okpaga et al (2012: 86-88) "Activities of Boko Haram and Insecurity Question in Nigeria", *Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review*. 1 (9): 77-98

Table 3: (showing results of the litany of Boko Haram attacks after the US deployment of 100 Special Forces soldiers through the Department of Defense in November, 2011 to provide training and intelligence support for the Nigerian military).

S/N	Date	Nature and Place of Attack	Number of Casualties
1	18 th Dec., 2011	Bomb detonation in Shuwari, Maiduguri	3 sect members died
2	22 nd Dec., 2011	Bomb explosion and gunshots in Borno state	4 people killed and several others injured
3	24 th Dec., 2011	Bomb explosion in Jos	About 80 people killed
4	25 th Dec., 2011	Bomb explosion at St. Theresa's Catholic Church in Madalla, Niger state	About 50 people killed and several others injured
5	30 th Dec., 2011	Attack in Maiduguri	7 people killed
6	5 th Jan., 2012	Attack in a church in Gombe	6 people killed
7	6 th Jan., 2012	Attack in Christ Apostolic Church, Yola, Adamawa state. Also, attack at Mubi, Adamawa	17 people killed. Also, 20 Igbo people were killed in Mubi
8	20 th Jan., 2012	Multiple attacks in Kano	About 250 people killed
9	22 nd Jan., 2012	Attacks at 2 churches and the headquarters of Tafawa Balewa LGA in Bauchi state	About 10 people killed
10	26 th Jan., 2012	Bomb explosion in Sabon Gari, Kano state	Many injured
11	28 th Jan., 2012	Attack in Gambiru Ngala, Borno state	1 killed
12	29 th Jan., 2012	Attack in Gambiru Ngala,	2 killed

		Borno state	
13	30 th Jan., 2012	Attack in Maiduguri environs	6 killed including 2 Air force officers
14	4 th Feb., 2012	Attack in Damboa town, Borno state	2 killed
15	5 th Feb., 2012	Attack in Yobe	An SS man killed
16	7 th Feb., 2012	Attack at Kano market and military barrack	5 people killed
17	7 th Feb., 2012	Another attack in Kano	10 people killed
18	10 th Feb., 2012	Shootout with soldiers in Maiduguri	4 people killed
19	10 th Feb., 2012	Attack in Police Station in Shagari Quarters, Kano state	No casualty recorded
20	12 th Feb., 2012	Tip-off in Maiduguri	Some members of Boko Haram killed
21	15 th Feb., 2012	Jail break in Koton Karji prison, Kogi state	A warder killed and 199 prisoners freed
22	15 th Feb., 2012	Attack on policemen in Minna, Niger state	2 policemen killed
23	17 th Feb., 2012	Attack I Geidam, Yobe state	2 people killed
24	17 th Feb., 2012	Attack in Maiduguri metropolis	5 people killed
25	19 th Feb., 2012	Bomb explosion near a church in Suleja on the outskirts of Abuja	5 people injured
26	11 th Mar., 2012	Suicide bomb attack in a church in Jos, Plateau state	4 people killed and 38 others injured
27	8 th April, 2012	Bomb explosion on Easter Sunday near a church in Kaduna	36 people killed with 13 others injured
28	29 th April, 2012	Bomb attack at a lecture theater used as Christian worship in the University of Kano	19 people killed including 2 professors
29	3 rd Jun., 2012	Suicide car bomber drove into a church in Yelwa during Sunday service	About 12 people killed
30	10 th June, 2012	Attack on a church congregation in Biu town, Borno state	Unreported number of people killed

Source: Okpaga et al (2012: 88-89) "Activities of Boko Haram and Insecurity Question in Nigeria", *Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review*. 1 (9): 77-98 and *Vanguard* December 1st, 2012 also retrievable from www.vanguardngr.com

Table 4: (showing results of the litany of Boko Haram attacks after the US refusal to label the group Foreign Terrorist Organization, and the subsequent designation of 3 sect leaders as foreign terrorists on June 21st 2012 and the involvement of USAID)

S/N	Date	Nature and Place of Attack	Number of Casualties
1	1 st Oct., 2012	Attacks at Adamawa State University, Federal Poly, and the school of Health Technology and also University of Maiduguri in Borno state	About 43 students killed
2	1 st Oct., 2012	Attack in Minna, Niger state	2 policemen killed
3	7 th Oct., 2012	Confrontation between the military and the sect members in Damaturu, Yobe state	About 32 people killed including 30 members of the sect and 2 civilians
4	8 th Oct., 2012	Reprisal attack for the death of military officers through IED in Maiduguri	10 people killed
5	14 th Oct., 2012	Attack at Dongo Dawa village in Gwari LGA of Kaduna state	24 people killed
6	28 th Oct., 2012	Attack in Kaduna	8 people killed and 100 injured
7	28 th Oct., 2012	Suicide bomber struck at St Rita's Catholic church in Angwar yero, Kaduna state	8 people killed
8	29 th Oct., 2012	Attack at a drinking bar in Gindin Akwati Barkin Ladi, Plateau state	6 people killed
9	21 st Nov., 2012	Attack in Maiduguri by the sect	10 people killed
10	22 nd Nov., 2012	Attack on ladies believed to be on mini-skirts in Maiduguri	20 women killed
11	24 th Nov., 2012	Bomb explosion in St Andrew's Anglican church at the Armed Forces Command and Staff College Jaji, Kaduna state	15 people killed
12	26 th Nov., 2012	Attack on SARS headquarters in Abuja	2 officers killed and 30 detainees freed
13	1 st Jan., 2013	Shootout in Maiduguri	14 people killed including 13 sect members and a soldier
14	2 nd Jan., 2013	Attack on a Police Station at Song town of Adamawa state	4 people killed including 2 policemen and 2 civilians
15	4 th Jan., 2013	Attack on a military check-	7 people killed including 5

		point in Marte town of Adamawa state	sect members, a soldier and a policeman
16	19 th Jan., 2013	Attack on a contingent of Mali-bound Nigerian troops in central Kogi, Kogi state	2 soldiers killed and 5 others injured
17	19 th Jan., 2013	Attack on Emir of Kano's convoy	5 people killed mostly the Emir's security guards
18	21 st Jan., 2013	Attack of a market in Damboa town	18 people killed mostly local hunters
19	23 rd Jan., 2013	Attack at Gwange area of Maiduguri	5 people beheaded
20	27 th Jan., 2013	Attack of Gajiganna village near Maiduguri	8 civilians killed
21	1 st Feb., 2013	Clash with the military in two forests outside Maiduguri	17 sect members killed
22	8 th Feb., 2013	Attack on 2 polio clinics in Kano	10 polio immunization workers killed and 3 others injured
23	10 th Feb., 2013	Attack in Potiskum, Yobe state	3 North Korean doctors killed
24	15 th Feb., 2013	Bomb attack against military patrol vehicle in Maiduguri	2 suicide bombers died and 1 soldier injured
25	16 th Feb., 2013	Attack on a construction company in Bauchi state	1 security employee killed and 7 foreign nationals abducted
26	19 th Feb., 2013	French family taken hostage in Cameroun near the Nigerian border	No casualty reported but the family members were abducted
27	20 th Feb., 2013	Attack of a military patrol vehicle in Maiduguri	3 people killed including a suicide bomber and 2 civilians
28	18 th Mar., 2013	Bomb explosion in a luxurious bus park in Kano	More than 70 people killed and several others injured
29	16 th April, 2013	Clash between the JTF and the sect members in Baga, Borno state	Over 200 people killed mostly civilians

Source: http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/timeline_of_Boko_Haram_attacks_in_Nigeria

Table 5: (showing result of Boko Haram attacks after the US placement of \$7 million bounty on Abubakar Shekau, the leader of the sect).

S/N	Date	Place of attack	Nature of attack	Number of deaths	Source of data
1	18/6/2013	Maiduguri	Unspecified	22 people mostly civilians were killed	http://www.presstv.com
2	6/7/2013	Attack on government boarding school in Mamudo village Borno state	Sporadic shooting and throwing of explosives	At least 43 people were killed, mostly, students	http://en.m.wikipedia.org
3	29/7/2013	Sabon Gari, Kano state	Coordinated bomb blasts	At least, 6 people died and 6 others injured	http://dawn.com/news...
4	4/8/2013	Military base and police post in Bama, Borno state	unspecified	12 soldiers and 7 police officers were killed	http://world.time.com...
5	11/8/2013	Ngom village near konduga in Borno state	Shoot-out	12 people were killed	http://www.npr.org/blogs/
6	11/8/2013	Mosque in Konduga, Borno state	Coordinated attacks including shooting and throwing explosives	44 worshippers killed and 26 others injured	http://en.m.wikipedia.org

Compiled by the researchers

Perhaps, between August 2013 and February 2014, more than 1000 deaths have been recorded at various locations different from those captured in the tables. However, the United States having seen the ineffectiveness of the prevailing strategy, has taken the bull by the horn through the designation of the entire Boko Haram sect as foreign terrorist organization instead of the piecemeal approach of labeling its leaders foreign terrorists. With this bold step, sustained through utmost commitment to the fight against the terrorist scourge in Nigeria by the United States government, the crisis can be better managed. It suffices to state that if the designation ends in mere declaration without a corresponding sufficient action by the US Government, then the

problem of Boko Haram is bound to spread beyond its present North-eastern base to other areas. In order to ensure that monumental failure is not further recorded, Nigerian leaders, both those in government and the opposition, must eschew all sectional interests and work for the overall national interest irrespective of their party affiliations while the US Government is expected to match words with action. Else, the entire efforts by the US and Nigerian governments would be meaningless and fruitless.

Significance of the Study

Theoretically, the study is a contribution to the existing body of knowledge on Boko Haram crisis, and by extension international terrorism. It is specifically designed to unravel the strategies adopted by the United States Government in managing the crisis of Boko Haram in Nigeria. Undoubtedly, the study will aid and enrich researchers whose interests are on international terrorism; especially the Boko Haram variant.

On a more practical note, the work serves as a guide to policy makers, administrative stakeholders and security agents both in Nigeria and the United States who over the years have been partners in the fight against international terrorism. The research is therefore important because Boko Haram crisis has largely remained a source of concern to both the United States and Nigeria; thereby demanding a more coordinated approach.

CONCLUSION

It is no longer news that American global security interest is to fight international terrorism wherever it is domiciled, and since Boko Haram sect has been so classified, the United States has no option than to declare total war against it in line with its foreign policy. This informed the US interest in the fight against the scourge; vis-à-vis its oil interest in Nigeria. Notably, the prevailing strategy adopted by the US government in dealing with the Boko Haram crisis was designed to achieve a long-term result in the maintenance of peace and security within and outside Nigeria but the short-term result has increasingly become questionable. This necessitated the move by the United States government in devising a more robust approach that could achieve both short and long-term results by way of designating the sect Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) while sustaining other grand strategies that include both economic and political approaches.

In a nutshell; notwithstanding this robust approach, especially with Boko Haram crisis increasingly becoming an intractable conflict – conflict that appeals to fundamental existence of a people ranging from the economy to religion, politics and ideology, Nigerians should not expect quick resolution of the crisis, but within an acceptable decorum, expect a manageable situation to the problem. The central argument is that the United States cannot perform miracle in terms of arresting the Boko Haram crisis within the shortest time but, they can aid in managing the insurgence.

However, given that terrorism is a global problem its solution requires global cooperation. From the study conducted, it was observed that the hitherto grand strategies that deliberately eschewed military involvement by the United States government in fighting Boko Haram insurgence in

Nigeria have been ineffective in achieving short-term result while becoming gloomy even in achieving the long-term plans. It was therefore suggested that the US government having considered the designation of Boko Haram sect a Foreign Terrorist Organization should waste no time in deploying the arsenal necessary to arresting the scourge especially as it affects information gathering and direct military involvement. On the other hand, the work also suggested that Nigerian leaders at all levels should not hesitate in lending credence to the fight against the scourge given that nobody's interest is more paramount than the national interest.

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