

BOKO HARAM, TERRORISM AND FAILING STATE CAPACITY IN NIGERIA: AN INTERROGATION

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ABSTRACT:

This paper is an interrogation of the activities of the Boko Haram sect especially since the killing of its leader Mohammed Yusuf under very controversial circumstances in 2009. It examines how the activities of Boko Haram have threatened the security and well-being of Nigerians and how it seems to have in turn undermined the Nigerian government's ability to justify the reason for its existence, namely, to ensure the security and welfare of her citizens. Boko Haram has with seeming ease unleashed an orgy of violence characterized by bombing and killing Nigerians, especially in the north. This paper argues that sects like Boko Haram are a reaction to perceived and real injustices perpetrated by the state and its agencies. This paper is also of the opinion that the activities of Boko Haram have stretched Nigeria's delicate socio-political and ethno-religious divides to the limit. The paper makes the point that a political solution, a well-meaning engagement between the government and the Boko Haram sect, is a more probable solution than the current attempt to engage the sect militarily. A political solution is not to be seen as a sign of weakness on the part of government but is, on the contrary, a sign of responsibility. The need to explore such a solution in the face of the crisis cannot be overemphasized. As a corollary, the government needs to tackle the crisis of infrastructure in the country. Education for the teeming Almajiri population in the north should be given priority in order to reduce the number of would-be Boko Haram recruits. More importantly, there is a need to overhaul the country's security network so that activities such as those by Boko Haram can easily be nipped in the bud and/or controlled.

INTRODUCTION

Modern society is premised on the existence of law and order. Law and order requires essentially that violence, crime and undue process are not allowed to thrive (Egwemi, 2009). The *raison d'être* for the existence of the modern state is the provision of the "common good" and "the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people" (Egwemi, 2007; 2009b). The modern state is a great departure from the "state of nature". Political philosophers of the social contract school painted a grim picture of man in a hypothetical "state of nature". Thomas Hobbes, who is perhaps the most popular of the social contract theorists, conceived of a "state of nature" in which men lived before the formation of civil society and the adoption of law. In his state of nature, there is war of every man against every man. In his famous phrase, man's life in a state of nature is "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short." (Enemu, 1999:70) To avoid such an existence, man goes into a social contract in which power is transferred to an absolute authority, which ensures peace and security. The social contract is the beginning of law and order, the beginning of the modern state which from a utilitarian perspective exists to provide the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people (Bhatia, 1978; Mclean and McMillan; <http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/common.good>).

From the foregoing discussion, it is clear that, theoretically speaking, the state exists to ensure the security and welfare of its citizens. This theoretical stipulation is given practical meaning in the constitutions of most countries of the world. For example, in Nigeria, the 1999 Constitution, in Chapter II Section 1 Subsection 2(b) under the Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy, states clearly that "the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government" (1999 constitution; LL 26).

In Nigeria's recent past, the security of the citizens has been threatened by the activities of the Boko Haram sect. This paper is therefore an attempt to interrogate the Boko Haram sect and how its activities have threatened the well-being of many Nigerians and has called to question the capacity of the government to cater to the security and welfare of Nigerians. The paper attempts a review of Boko Haram activities up to the bombing of the police headquarters in June, 2011. The bombing of the police headquarters is taken here as a watershed in Boko Haram's activities and the beginning of its bombing and related terrorist activities. After this introduction, the next section specifies the methodology adopted for the study. The third section attempts to historicize Boko Haram. This is followed by a chronicle of Boko Haram's activities in the country. The next section examines the specter of terrorism in Nigeria. Terrorism is conceptualized in the sixth section while the following section isolates and discusses the implications of the activities of Boko Haram. The possible ways out of the Boko Haram debacle follows and the last section is the conclusion.

Methodology

This study is based entirely on secondary sources of data. These sources include relevant textbooks, journal articles and online materials on the state, terrorism and the Islamic sect, Boko Haram. Relevant data on the activities of Boko Haram from its earliest days to contemporary times were sourced through a random selection of Nigerian newspapers and magazines between 2009 and 2012. In this period, the news media was awash with reports on the activities of Boko Haram. The papers sampled include *The Guardian*, *Daily Trust*, *Nigerian Tribune*, *The Nation*, *Daily Sun*, *National Mirror*, and *Newsstar*. Three news magazines, *Newswatch*, *Tell*, and *The News* were also sampled. These newspapers were chosen because of their wide circulation across the country and because over the years they have

established themselves as credible media. These papers and magazines are also readily available offline and on the internet.

The data gathered relate to the activities of Boko Haram and its impact on various facets of the Nigerian polity. The views of arrested sect members and the press releases of sect leaders are also sampled. Also the views and opinions of Nigerians on the activities of the sect were also gathered. Popular perceptions about the country's security services were also sampled. Furthermore the views of key government officials were also examined. And then, the views on how to deal with the challenge of Boko Haram were also gathered. The data is not presented in any particular order, rather they are presented in terms of the flow of issues raised and discussed in the paper.

Considering that the activities of Boko Haram have become almost daily occurrences, it needs to be emphasized that the sample covers the period between 2009, when the leader of the sect, Mohammed Yusuf, was killed, after which the activities of the sect became more inclined to violence, and May, 2012 when work on this paper was completed.

A Short History of Boko Haram

Shehu Sani has attempted to historicize the Boko Haram phenomenon in Nigeria. According to him, Boko Haram is an Islamic sect based largely in the North-Eastern part of Nigeria. It started as sahaba group in 1995 (Sani, 2011). At the initial stage one Abubakar Lawan was the leader of the group until he left for study at the University of Medina. The mantle of leadership then fell on Mohammed Yusuf who was reportedly killed by the police in 2009 (Sani, 2011). It was under Yusuf that the group was radicalized. It has been reported that Yusuf was quite close with many leading Muslim clerics because of his brilliance.

He, however, parted ways with his teachers as he grew more radicalized (Sani, 2011b).

According to Sani, available information indicates that the group emanated from an orthodox teaching slightly resembling that of the Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Their school of thought considers anything western as an aberration or completely un-Islamic. The group viewed the western influence on Islamic society as the basis of the religion's weakness. Hence their declaration that western education and indeed all western institutions are infidel and as such must be avoided by Muslims.

At first, both clerics and the larger community ignored the gospel as they dismissed the preacher as ignorant, while others saw them as sheer propagandists who would not get the attention of the modern Muslims but events proved all wrong as the sect began to grow from strength to strength (Sani, 2011b). Shehu Sani has argued that at the initial stage of their growth, the sect was entrenched in Borno, Yobe, Katsina, Kaduna, Bauchi, Gombe and Kano states, but it has now covered virtually all northern states and is advancing its frontiers to other parts of the country (Sani, 2011b).

The Boko Haram sect has other names. In fact, the argument has been made that it is not clear if the sect actually calls itself Boko Haram. (Shinkafi, 2011) The other known names of the sect are *Jamaatul Takfur Wal Hyra Ahlus Sunna*, *Yusufuya (Yusufiyah)*, *Khawaarji* and *Jamaatul Alh lissunan Lidda'awasiwal Jihad* (Sani, 2011b, Shinkafi, 2011). By whatever name the sect is called, what is important is that "the movement is of recent history and the peak of their disagreement with the state was the confrontation between them and security agencies in Bauchi and Maiduguri during which their leader was killed while in lawful custody" (Shinkafi, 2011:56)

A chronicle of Boko Haram's violent activities

Shehu Sani has attempted a chronicle of Boko Haram's activities since the sect gained national prominence in 2009. This chronicle is reproduced verbatim below:

- 26 July 2009 –First clash with security agencies in Bauchi State after an all-night attack on Dutsen-Tanshi Police. 39 members, two policemen, one soldier killed.
 - 27 July 2009-First attack in Yobe State during an invasion of Potiskum Division Headquarters, leading to the death of three policemen, one fire service officer.
- 29 July 2009-Confrontation with security men at Mamudo Village, along Potiskum/Damaturu Road, Yobe.33 Boko Haram members killed.
- 29 July 2009-An all-night battle with combined security operatives at Railway Terminus, Maiduguri, Borno State. Scores killed and operational base destroyed.
 - 8 Sept. 2010 – set ablaze Bauchi central prison and freed members of the sect who were jailed there.
 - 29 January 2011-Killed governorship candidate of the Borno State chapter of the All Nigerian Peoples Party (ANPP), Alhaji Modu Fannami Gubio and six others at Lawan Bukar ward, Maiduguri.
 - 2 March 2011-Killed two policemen attached to the residence of a Divisional police Officer (DPO), Mustapha Sandamu at Rigasa area of Kaduna State.
 - 30 March 2011 –Bomb explosion in Damaturu injuring a policeman.
 - 2 April 2011-Bombed Dutsen-Tanshi police station injured two policemen.

- 4 May 2011-Shot dead a prison warder at Maiduguri prison on Kashim Ibrahim Way
- 5 May 2011-Shot Duty Officer at Maiduguri Government House, Umaru Shehu, at his Abuja Talakawa residence of Maisanadami ward killing a 13 year-old boy and injured another.
- 9 May 2011 – Killed two Islamic clerics, Sheikh Goni Tijani and Mallam Alhaji Abur, at their residences in Maira and Bulabulum wards of Maiduguri.
- 9 May 2011 – Killed Bauchi State Chairman of the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW), Ibrahim Dudu Gobe and injured his son, Mohammed.
- 13 May 2011-Two people killed by bomb explosion at London Chinki, Maiduguri.
- 15 May 2011 – Planted bomb at Lagos Street, Maiduguri which injured two soldiers, three policemen. A policeman was also shot dead same day in the city.
- 29 May 2011 – Bombed Bauchi military barrack, killing 14.
- 31 May 2011 – Shot dead Shehu of Borno’s brother, Alhaji Abba Anas Garba Elkanemi.
- 1 June 2011 – Four people killed at a drinking joint in Bulumkutu, Maiduguri.
- 16 June 2011 – Four children killed in a bomb explosion at Damboa town, Maiduguri.
- 16 June 2011 – Bombed Force Headquarters, killing two people, (Sani, 2011:38).

In the next section of the paper we will undertake a full scale analysis of the June 16, 2011, bombing of the police headquarters by the Boko Haram sect. However, after the attack on the police headquarters, the sect has continued its attacks across Northern Nigeria with seeming ease. The next major target was the United Nations building in Abuja. The attack was carried out on August 26, 2011 by a suicide bomber who breached the security at the facility. The toll at the time of the attack was put at about 23. Some of the injured died later.

The attack on the UN house was a strategy in the opinion of this paper to draw the attention of the international community to the cause of the sect. It also drew attention to the fact that Boko Haram was not just a local Nigerian group. Probes into the attack have revealed that Al-Qaeda, a known terrorist group, had a hand in the event (Agbaegbu,2011; Agbo,2011; Alli and Ikumola,2011). While many condemnations trailed the attack, the facts demonstrate that the Boko Haram phenomenon has become a real challenge for Nigeria.

By far the most devastating attack carried out so far by the sect was on the city of Kano on January 20, 2012. In a coordinated bombing and shooting attack, many police stations in the metropolis and the office of the State Security Service (SSS) were hit by the sect. The death toll in the attacks is in the neighbourhood of 300(Alli and Adeyemi, 2012; Umar, Aliyu and Habib,2012; Rasheed, Oyelere, and Daniel,2012; Abuh,2012).

The irony and tragedy of the Kano attacks is that Boko Haram had precisely a month earlier warned about the attack. The sect had threatened that it would carry out the attack if the Kano state government did not stop arresting its members (Ola, 2011). Investigations after the attack indicate that it was so successful because of intelligence failure on the part of security agencies (Madu-

West, 2012). This illustrates the extent of collapse of Nigeria's security network (Editorial, *National Mirror* January 24, 2012).

Boko Haram has attacked and set primary schools ablaze in Maiduguri. Such attacks have affected the turnout of pupils in Maiduguri in particular and Borno state in general (Ola, 2012).

The media has also come under attack by Boko Haram. The attacks on some media houses in Abuja and Kaduna was, according to the sect's spokesman, Abu Qaqa, because these media houses 'had taken sides with government or security agencies or both(Emewu and Anumihe,2012:5).

While most of the attacks have been in Northern Nigeria, other parts of the country cannot afford to take security for granted as it has been reported that Boko Haram has threatened to attack Lagos and other parts of Southern Nigeria (Anucha,2012). They have threatened that unless President Jonathan meets with the group personally they would carry out their threat.

At this point it should be made clear that it has virtually become impossible to keep tabs on the activities of Boko Haram, whose attacks have been regular and persistent.

Boko Haram and Terrorism in Nigeria

On June 16, 2011, a bomb rocked the car park of the Nigerian Police Headquarters (Louis Edet House). That singular event was an indicator of the state of (in)security in the country. Indeed, it was a clear indication that the country's security is lax and uncoordinated (*Daily Sun* Editorial, 26 June 2011). Boko Haram claimed responsibility for the bombing. Over the years since 2009, the group had carried out many attacks, but the June 16 attack has been the most audacious as it

seemed to have struck the very nerve of the country's internal security apparatus and, most significantly, caught the police literally napping (Adegboye, 2011 Bashir, Yakubu and Mutum, 2011.)

The bombing of the police was a major watershed in the activities of Boko Haram. It introduced a major security challenge to the country namely suicide bombing and terrorism. In an interview with a weekly tabloid *Blueprint*, the spokesperson of Boko Haram Abu Zaid is reported to have said that the alleged suicide bomber Mohammed Manga "agreed to sacrifice his life for Allah's sake and also wished others would follow his step" (Suleiman, 2011:56). But more worrisome is Zaid's claim that "so far we have screened nearly 100 persons for suicide attacks for this year alone in Nigeria while more than this number is getting ready for next year" (Suleiman, 2011:56) While there are arguments about whether the attack on police headquarters was a suicide attack or not (Suleiman, 2011), the attack on the Police headquarters tells a lot about the state of insecurity in the country. That an event of such magnitude could happen right inside police headquarters tells the whole story.

Even more worrisome is the spectre of terrorism which seems to be rearing its ugly head in the Nigerian polity. It has been reported that Boko Haram is linked with al-Qaeda and maybe operating with the support of al-Qaeda's African branch and the al-Shabab terror group in Somalia (Adeyemi and Chukwu, 2011).

Conceptualizing Terrorism

Terrorism has become an everyday occurrence across the contemporary world, yet putting a finger on what constitutes terrorism is still a very difficult enterprise. T. A. Imobighe has echoed this dilemma in the following words:

Although terrorism has become a daily phenomenon of the global landscape, getting people to agree on a common definition of the phenomenon has been extremely difficult... efforts to define the concept have aroused discord among members of the international community (Imobighe, 2007:14-15).

The phenomenon of terrorism is extremely sensitive. It is usually approached from a subjective perspective. This dilemma is encapsulated in the phrase, 'one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter (Carlton and Schaerf, 1981; Ochim, 2011).

Terrorism, in the opinion of Oduah-Bozimo is "calculated use of violence and non-violence or both to intimidate, to frighten, oppress and suppress people into submission usually for purposes of achieving certain goals..."(Oduah-Bozimo,2010:2). Terrorism "is the deliberate and systematic murder, maiming and menacing of the innocent to inspire fear for political ends" (Ojukwu, 2011:373).

Terrorism, according of the *Oxford Dictionary of Law*, is "the use or threat of violence for political, religious or ideological ends (Martin and Law 2003:532). It is, according to the *Oxford Concise Dictionary of Politics*, a term used "most frequently to describe life-threatening actions perpetrated by politically motivated or self-appointed sub-state groups (Mclean and McMillan, 2003:532) Be that as it may, the term has no agreed definition but is used in most cases in a pejorative sense (Mclean and McMillan, 2003) Terrorism evokes different emotions and reactions across cultures, peoples and divides.

T.A. Imobighe has attempted to provide a basis for an acceptable definition of terrorism. He suggests that four critical

elements of terrorism must be investigated in this quest: the environment of terrorism; the nature of the actions associated with terrorism; the target of terrorist actions; the objectives for such action (Imobighe,2006;18). He argues further that a critical look at these four elements will reveal the following:

- Terrorism occurs in an environment of conflict and discord, and hence it is a product of conflict escalation.
- Terrorism is a violent mode of response to a conflictual relationship.
- The target of terrorism is not limited to the parties directly involved in the conflictual relationship, but includes everybody directly or remotely associated with the principal actors or combatants.
- The objectives of terrorism are varied and not always political (Imobighe,2007:15)

When all these essential elements are factored into any attempt to define terrorism, what one constructs is a definition such as:

...the indiscriminate and random use of different levels of violence against an opponent or ancillary interests of such an opponent with whom one has an adversarial relationship, in order to strike fear (into) the latter and impose one's will on (the opponent) or tailor (the opponent's) action towards a desired goal (Imobighe,2007:15).

Whatever one's opinion of terrorism, the truth is that terrorist attacks leave in their wake destruction and death. The attack on the police headquarters left its own share of destruction and death. Other implications of terrorism will be discussed.

Categorizing Terrorism

According to I.S. Ogundiya and J. Amzat "there are various typologies of terrorism (Ogundiya and Amzat, 2008:171). Following the Wilkenson typology, they identify three categories: revolutionary, sub-revolutionary and repressive. Revolutionary terrorism is aimed at bringing about political revolution. Sub-revolutionary terrorism is employed for political motives other than revolution. Repressive terrorism is government directed at restraining certain groups, individuals or forms of behavior considered undesirable.

In Madunagu's opinion, two categories of terrorism exist: state terrorism and civil society terrorism. The former is directed at the civil population while the latter is directed at the state (in Ogundia and Amzat, 2008). There is also inter-state terrorism and intra-civil society terrorism: the former relates to a state divided against it and the latter relates to communal/inter-ethnic frictions.

Other categories of terrorism identified by Ogundiya and Amzat are:

- State-sponsored terrorism
- National terrorism
- Religious terrorism
- Left-wing terrorism
- Right-wing terrorism, and
- Domestic terrorism (Ogundiya and Amzat, 2008:171-173).

The activities of Boko Haram fall in the religious and domestic terrorism categories. However, whatever the category, three elements are important to note about terrorism and terrorists: (Amaraegbu, 2011:211-212).

1. Terrorists are normally triggered by some form of oppression - real or imagined - which precedes the terror act that allows the perpetrators to rationalize their actions.
2. The victims or objects of a terrorist attack have little intrinsic value to the terrorist but represent a larger human audience whose attention the terrorist seek.
3. Terrorism always pleads a political cause, and involves committing terrible acts intended to cause political change.

Explaining Boko Haram Terrorist Activities

As it has been noted earlier in the paper, Boko Haram began like every other normal Islamic sect in 1995. Although from the beginning it had radical tendencies, it was not initially associated with violence. The late founder of the sect had to relocate first from Kano to Maiduguri and later to Chad because other clerics in these places did not tolerate his radical posture (Adisa, 2012)

It has been alleged that many politicians used the sect for electoral purposes between 2002 and 2007, especially in the North East (Adisa, 2012; Herskovits, 2012). Be that as it may, the group remained a relatively peaceful entity until 2009. It was only after the killing of its leader, Mohammed Yusuf, in controversial circumstances that the group embraced violence as its *modus operandi* (Herskovits, 2012; El-Rufai, 2012). In the words of El-Rufai, after the killing of its leader, Mohammed Yusuf, Boko Haram evolved from a largely

peaceful, fringe Islamic organization to a vengeful sect and currently an anarchist threat to the Nigerian nation' (El-Rufai, 2012)

Boko Haram has given many reasons for its attacks. In Kano it was because its members were arrested by the police in Kano (Umar, Aliyu and Habib, 2012). The attack on media houses was premised on the alleged one-sidedness of reports and alleged misinformation about the sect (Ndahi, 2012). Schools have been attacked to show their disdain for western education (Edet, 2011; Bwala, Oyelere and Oladipo, 2012). They have attacked prisons to set their members free (Ukpong, Ola and Adeyemi, 2012; Alabelewa, Ola and Alofetekun, 2012). They have attacked churches and Christian places of worship to push for an Islamic state in Nigeria (?) (Yusuf and Ugwu, 2012; Alli, 2012; the *Nation* April 13, 2012). In fact, there are speculations to the effect that Boko Haram is a Northern/Muslim reaction against a Southern/Christian president (Olagunju, 2011). Or could it be the much-talked-about grand conspiracy to destabilize Nigeria as has been predicted? (Abimboye, 2012; Umar-Yusuf, 2012; Abdallah, 2012)

Today it is difficult to determine which faction of Boko Haram is responsible for the attacks across the country since the group is now said to have factions (*Daily Sun*, February 1, 2012; *The Nation*, July 21, 2011; Bwala, Usigbe and Shoboyo, 2011). Whatever the reasons for the attacks and whichever faction is responsible for them, the attacks have very dire implications for Nigeria!

The Implications of the Boko Haram Crisis

The first implication of the Boko Haram crisis is that it is a demonstration of the extent of discontent in the polity. As one analyst has argued "at the bottom of the Boko Haram onslaught is injustice" (Andesine 2011:56). In July 2009, when Mohammed Yusuf was murdered in an extra judicial fashion, the culprits were not immediately brought to book. This no doubt angered members of the

sect and they have literally been on a rampage since then. In spite of the security personnel deployed to deal with the sect, especially in Borno State, they seem to be waxing stronger. The belated effort to try the suspected killers of Yusuf may have come late but is still a step in the right direction (Bashir, 2011.) What has happened since the killing of Yusuf up to this moment has been an attempt to suppress justice. This was a bad strategy, for, as Adesina has argued, “you don’t suppress injustice, you address it, if you ever want peace” (Adesina, 2011:56).

In the effort to achieve peace and then sustain it, the government must devise means of engaging the Boko Haram sect in order to identify their grievances and then attempt to redress them. Many Nigerians have advocated for such an engagement with Boko Haram. For now the two sides do not seem to have made up their minds on whether or not to negotiate. (Ola, Ojo, Ukpang, Paulinus, Tyem, Ajijah and Nwosu, 2011: Ajayi, Ndahi and Dennis, 2011, Sheme 2011) Yet the government must go in to such an engagement seriously. As a corollary, the sect must also come to such an engagement with realistic demands which should be in tandem with extant Nigerian laws.

The second implication of the crisis is that Nigeria’s internal security network is far from efficient. The ease with which the sect seems to have struck across the country exposes the failure of the country’s intelligence network (Adegboyega, 2011; Bashir Yakubu and Mutum, 2011; Salaudeen, 2011; Olaoye, 2011.) As a matter of fact, the sect has continued to taunt the security agencies, claiming that since their activities are in tandem with the wishes of the people, they do not have any fear of these agencies (Ebije, 2011). The fear of Boko Haram has become the beginning of wisdom and two state governors penciled down for assassination by the group are said to have apologized to the group already (Alfa, 2011; Olaoye, 2011.) Also, the

fact that some governors are reported to be anxious to meet Boko Haram is a pointer to the strength of the group. Again, the bringing in of experts to help with investigations shows how ill-prepared the police and other security agencies are. (*Sunday Sun* Editorial. Jun 26, 2011:6; Akhaine, Shadare, Okafor and Coffie-Gyamfi, 2011: Ifoh, 2011)

Another implication of the Boko Haram crisis is that it has the tendency to fan the embers of religious crisis in the country. Boko Haram, an Islamic sect, apart from attacking the police and drinking places across the country, has also targeted Christian places of worship, thus giving their activities an anti-Christian outlook. Of course such a situation is bound to generate tension. For example, the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria recently issued a statement in which it said “violence, under any guise, is not the exclusive right of any particular group of people and Nigeria as a nation is greater than any religious or political group forbidding any one from committing a crime with impunity without being called to order”(CSN 2011:42). The Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), the umbrella body of Christians in Nigeria, has called the Boko Haram sect terrorists and has called on the government not to negotiate with them (Igbintade; Abraham, Oyefeso and Msue, 2011; Yusuf and Ugwu, 2012). The implications of these positions for inter-religious harmony in the country are not hard to see.

Boko Haram has continued to target Christian places of worship and it is needless to say that Christians now perceive themselves as targets. Some of the churches that have been attacked with dates are:

- St. Theresa’s Catholic church, Madalla, on Sunday, December 25, 2011(see Alli, Odunuga, Ehikioya and Anofi; Editorial, *Daily Trust*, January 3, 2012).

- St. Finbarr's Catholic church, Rayfield, Jos, on Sunday, March 11, 2012 (see Shoboyo, Usigbe and Babajide, 2012)
- A place of Christian worship at the old campus of Bayero University, Kano, was attacked on Sunday, April 29, 2012 (Adamu, 2012; Madu- West and Ndahi, 2012)

Many people lost their lives in these attacks. On Easter Sunday (April 8, 2012), about 40 people were killed in a suicide bomb attack in Kaduna (Akowe, 2012; Alli, Akowe and Abiodun 2012; Ibrahim, Okeke, Bwala and Muhammed, 2012; Msue and Madu-West, 2012). The attack may be construed as an attack on Christians even though many of the victims were non-Christians. The irony of the attack is that the Joint Task Force (JTF) and the SSS had earlier warned Nigerians about the likelihood of attacks during the Easter celebrations. That the attack was not prevented and still took place says a great deal about the laxity of Nigeria's security network (Adamu and Khalid, 2012; Williams, Msue and Oluwalana, 2012).

Closely related to the above is the fact that the Boko Haram crisis will further put a strain on already tense ethno-regional relations in the country. Most Nigerians will recall that in the aftermath of the 2011 presidential elections, ethno-religious tensions and violence literally enveloped many Northern states. The country has not really come to terms with the full implications and impact of this situation. Already some Nigerians are suggesting that Boko Haram is only a Muslim/Northern reaction to the victory of Jonathan at the presidential polls. (Eya, 2011, Sampson, 2011, Olaoye, 2011) Furthermore, as a consequence of Boko Haram activities, many Southern states have evacuated their citizens from the North (Onojovwo, 2011; Sean, Ndahi, Madu-West and Oyefeso, 2011; Norah et al 2011; Jimi, Abiodun, Akowe, Emmanuel Adenoma, Therese-Peter, 2011). Also, many Southerners in Borno have left on their own

to save their lives. (Ola, 2011; Iris and Ibrahim, 2011) Since Boko Haram commenced its violent activities in 2009, many Southerners, especially Igbos, have come under attack and have lost lives and property. After the January 2012 attacks in Kano, and also in response to an order from Boko Haram for Southerners to leave the North, many Igbos decided to do so (Editorial: Nigerian Tribune 20 January 2012; Abubakar, 2012) This mass exodus of the Igbo from the North brings to clear relief the precarious security situation in the North in particular and the country in general. The Southeast governors and some prominent Igbo leaders have appealed to the Igbo to remain in the North but this call has hardly been heeded (Fafowora,2012; Onwukwe,2012; Agbo,2012; Ossai,2012; Mgbob,2012; Abuh,2012a, 2012b; Editorial, *Saturday Sun*, February 4, 2012). In reaction to the treatment meted out to Southerners in the North, radical southern groups like MASSOB, MEND and OPC have threatened to react appropriately to the Boko Haram menace (Folaranmi, Ola, John and Onwughalu,2011; Okara, 2012; OPC factions, 2012). For a country that is technically not at war, the implication of people moving to their own regions is clear. It shows how divided the country has become as a result of the activities of Boko Haram. Also the stance of MASSOB and OPC has the potential of charging up an already heated polity.

Another closely related implication is that the Nigerian polity has been unusually heated. The tension created by the activities of the Boko Haram sect is palpable across the length and breadth of Nigeria but more so in Northern Nigeria. As if the tension created by the bombings and killings that have taken place already is not enough, the sect has continued to issue threats of more serious attacks (Ebije, 2011 Onwughalu and Omidire, 2011, Editorial: Nigerian Tribune 20 January, 2012). The consequence of the new threats has been panic across the length and breadth of Nigeria (Adeyemi, Tyem and Adefulu, 2011; Agbana, 2011; Omyewudu, 2011; Uweru, 2011; Musa and Ebiri, 2011 Musa, 2011). Some Nigerians have even said that the

activities of the sect may lead to another civil war in the country (Adams, 2011; Ejoor, 2012). As extreme as such a view is, it points to the danger of allowing the activities of Boko Haram to continue unchecked. The Nigerian president seemed to have captured the mood of the nation when he opined after the police headquarters bombing that every Nigerian was a target (Ikuomola, 2011).

Given the above scenario, it is clear that all is not well in Nigeria as a country. The tensions generated by the activities of Boko Haram have stretched Nigeria's famed resilience to the limit. The acts of terror carried out by the sect have negatively affected education (Edet, 2011; Taiwo, 2012; Bwala, Oyelere and Oladipo, 2012; Ibrahim, 2012). It has tellingly impacted on commerce and the economy (Abubakar, 2012; Onuorah, Sunday and Godwin, 2012; Adekoya, 2012; Tolu-Kusimo, 2012; Ola and Molomo, 2012; Musa, 2012). It has affected the work of the judiciary (Ige and Ajayi, 2011). It has hindered the work of the legislature (Ndahi, 2011). Generally, it has put the lives of many Nigerians on the brink (Omoniyi, 2011; Ijediogor, 2012; Johnson, 2012). Emergency rule has been declared in some parts of the country (The Nation, January1, 2012). More significantly, the tension across the country has called into question Nigeria's capacity to guarantee the security of her citizens. In this direction an Inspector General of police was removed from office because of his apparent inability to tackle the Boko Haram menace (Ikumola, 2012; Fadeyi and Msue, 2012). Will this change improve the nation's security? Will it stem the tide of the Boko Haram onslaught? (Ezea, 2012) These are posers for conjecture! In light of the above scenario, what can be done? This question is addressed in the next section.

What can be done about the Boko Haram Crisis?

Any government confronted with a challenge such as the one posed by the Boko Haram sect must devise means of tackling it. There are two issues involved. The first is to look for a way of dealing with the menace at hand and the second is to devise means of stemming the growth of groups such as Boko Haram.

On the first issue, the government must engage the sect. Even though the government seems to be hesitating on negotiating with Boko Haram and vice versa, engagement between government and Boko Haram has to be undertaken (Akhaine, Nzeh, Musa; 2011; Sheme, 2011; Ola, 2012). Many Nigerians have also advised the government and the sect to embrace dialogue (Seteolu, 2011b). Dialogue is not a sign of weakness on the part of the government. On the contrary, it is a sign of responsibility! The government needs to engage Boko Haram in order to understand their grievances. A military solution is definitely out of the question (Ebije2012; Hammagam, 2011). So far it does not seem to have achieved much. More importantly, the problem with a military solution is brought into clear relief with Mohammed Zagga`s rhetorical question: 'Is there a military solution in dealing with a man who is ready to die for his course?' (Zagga, 2012:51). That members of the sect are willing to die in their struggle is clear from a YouTube address posted on April 12, 2012 (see *The Nation* April 13 2012). They even pray to Allah to have the privilege to die for Him. A political solution to the Boko Haram issue is possible.(Editorial: *The Guardian* May 14, 2012; Omojolomoju, 2011; Fadeyi, 2012; Iredia, 2011).

Even the government appears to realize the futility of a military solution and is in fact desirous of a political solution. Nigeria`s senate president, David Mark, had this to say recently:

There is no government that would fold her arms and watch innocent citizens being murdered in schools, markets, churches as well as mosques. This carnage has to stop. As brothers and sisters, we must listen to each other's grievances. I believe that the government in line with this has expressed readiness for dialogue and I urge the members of Boko Haram, their representatives, sponsors or sympathizers to key into this dialogue. (Folashade-Koyi, 2012:3)

As a corollary to the above, government must realize that the quick dispensation of justice rather than attempts to suppress justice is more rewarding. The refusal as it were by the government to bring the killers of Mohammed Yusuf to justice seemed to have strengthened the resolve of the sect to fight the government and its agencies, especially the Nigerian Police. In the future, such extra-judicial killing should be handled expeditiously to avoid the tragic events that have trailed the failure to prosecute the killers of Mohammed Yusuf (El-Rufai, 2012).

Secondly, the government must improve the security and intelligence capacity of the country. Boko Haram activities over the past two years have exposed the vulnerability of the nation's internal security. In the past Nigeria has been listed as a failed state (*The Guardian* Editorial June 30, 2011:14, Seteolu, 2011a; Adegbamigbe, 2007; Okei-Odumakin, 2011 Ezirim, 2009). One of the indices for measuring a failed state is insecurity. No doubt the activities of a group like Boko Haram may be some kind of corroboration of

Nigeria's failed state ranking (Ciroma, 2012; Ijediogor, 2012; Oshunkeye, 2012). Nor can it be said in the face of unrelenting Boko Haram attacks as (Obijiofor rhetorically poses) that President Jonathan is on top of national security (Obijiofor, 2011; Mordi, 2012).

The second approach to the Boko Haram crisis is to nip the activities of groups like that in the bud. Already, there are reports of similar sects springing up across the country (Dennis, Salihu and Idakwo, 2011; Akowe, 2011)

Shehu Sani has made the following suggestions in the above regard:

- Reforme and enhance Almajiri.
- Create effective poverty alleviation policies and enforcement by the government.
- Isolate and address grievances of all interest groups as fairly as possible.
- Initiate government regulation of preaching in religious gatherings.
- Effective job provision and sustainability by the government
- Enhance criminal intelligence by the security agencies
- Implement effective police reform policies reducing the high turnover of the inspector general of police and establishing a legal procedure to elongate or fix tenure of, perhaps, five years for them.
- Enhance border patrol and regulations of the influx of immigrants or aliens.
- Put in place good policies to promote effective and efficient leadership, good governance, transparency and a mechanism to check, prevent and totally eliminate corruption.
- Put in place an effective mechanism for conflict mediation and resolution and also an alternative dispute resolution.

- Enhance the citizen security agencies relationship towards maintenance of internal security and stability.(Sani, 2011c:38)

In a similar gesture, the Government of Borno State has proposed “to adopt a holistic approach, enveloping all the socio-economic challenges confronting us” (Shettima, 2011:51) This approach, which has interim and long term measures incorporates among other strategies, compensation of all victims of the Boko Haram crisis, provision of jobs, improved health care delivery and education and the revamping of the agricultural sector (see Shettima, 2011) If the government at all levels in Nigeria adopt such pro-active measures, it would be easy to deal with challenges such as those posed by Boko Haram.

Considering the enormity of the Boko Haram challenge, the government should collaborate with countries that have the expertise to deal with such problems. There are already indications that some countries are willing to partner with Nigeria in this direction (*The Nation*, February 24, 2012; Ehikioya and Chiejina, 2010). Government needs to tap into these opportunities. (Editorial: *Nigerian Tribune* 21 February, 2012).

Lastly, the government needs to muster the necessary political will to deal with known sponsors of the sect. Since the beginning of the Boko Haram saga, a number of high profile Nigerians have been identified as their sponsors and/or collaborators (Ojiabor and Ogundele,2011; Balal,2011; Fadare,2012; Adisa andIbrahim,201;Ifoh, Okemi and Msue,2012; Nigerian Tribune, 14 February 2011 Editorial: *National Mirror* December, 1, 2011). The government needs to expeditiously prosecute all the cases that have been brought against such elements and appropriate measures taken against them. Such a resolve on the part of government will show it is indeed ready to tackle the Boko Haram challenge.

CONCLUSION

The menace of the Boko Haram sect has impacted negatively on Nigerians. In specific terms, it has compromised the security and welfare of many Nigerians. It has called to question the capacity of the Nigerian state to meet one of her constitutional obligations to the people. Yet the Boko Haram challenge is not an insurmountable one if the government focuses its efforts for this purpose. As this paper has contended, the government needs to engage the sect meaningfully so that the causes of the crisis are isolated and steps are taken to address them. The government will also need to provide functional infrastructure—schools, hospitals, roads, jobs and the like—so that other groups like Boko Haram do not emerge. The establishment of a school for the almajiri in Sokoto by the federal government is a step in the right direction (Suleiman, 2012; Editorial: *The Guardian*, May, 3, 2012; Editorial: *Sunday Sun*, May 20, 2012). The states, especially in Northern Nigeria, should borrow a leaf from the federal government to reduce the number of would-be Boko Haram recruits. They also need to address the dearth of infrastructure in the region. For members of the Boko Haram sect, the words of Afghan president, Hamid Karzai, at the burial of his brother in July 2011 are apt: “My message for them (Taliban) (and in the case of this paper, Boko Haram) is that my countrymen, my brothers, should stop killing their own people. It is easy to kill and everyone can do it, but the real man is the one who can save people’s lives” (in Shettima, 2011:50). If the members of the Boko Haram sect can embrace dialogue with government and stop the bombing and killing of (often times) innocent Nigerians, then the country may be on its way to peace. On the other hand if they continue their bombing activities and government cannot checkmate them, then the country could indeed be tending towards state failure.

Be that as it may, most of the work needed to stem the tide of terrorism has to be done by the government and many practical

options are available to the government in this direction (Appendix and Sani, 2011 c: 38).

Sunday, May 6, 2012

The Sun Security Summit Communiqué

PREAMBLE	<p>The Sun Publishing Limited, in collaboration with CUE Communication Limited, organized an International summit on the current security situation in Nigeria between April 17 and 19, 2012. It took place at Transcop Hilton Hotel, Abuja. The theme of the Summit was: Making Nigeria Safe for Lives and Investments. It was endorsed by the Office of the National Security Adviser and chaired by Sir Mike Okiro, former Inspector General of Police (IGP)</p> <p>Renowned scholars' experts, heads of key government institutions and various security agencies presented papers. These were: Terrorism in the Eye of the Law by Prof. Akin Oyebo, Faculty of Law, University of Lagos; Defining Counter-Terrorism Strategies in Nigeria by Maj. Gen Sarkin Yaki Bello from the Office of the National Security Adviser; Training security Operatives in Intelligence Gathering and handling of Improvised Explosive (IEDs) by Mr. Chris Moghalu, US-based counter-terrorism expert and The Mass Media and National Security: Dilemma of Balancing "The Doctrine of the Public Right to Know" and magnifying the Propaganda of Terrorist Groups by Dr. Stanly Ngoa, Head of Mass Communication Department, Covenant University, Ogun State.</p> <p>Others were: Aviation Industry and Global War Against Terrorism and Emerging Trends and Challenges for Airlines Operators and Stakeholders by Dr. Harold Demuren, Director-General of Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAAA); National Security and Nigeria's Maritime Assets: Growing Incidences of Piracy in Exclusive Economic Zones by Mr. Patrick Akpobolokemi, Director-General, Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) and Pathways to National Security by Prof. 'Soji Adelaja of the Office of National Security Adviser. There was also an executive presentation by the governor of Borno State, Alhaji Kashim Shettima, titles: Poverty Alleviation and Wealth Creation as Panacea for Peace and Development in North Eastern Nigeria.</p> <p>Through plenary, presentations and discussions, issues around the present security situation in the country were analyzed.</p>
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<p>OBSERVATIONS</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To Nigerians, terrorism was, until recently, thought of as a distant phenomenon. Today, it has come upon the country in all its sinister details. Therefore it has become the most potent challenge confronting Nigeria today. 2. Terrorism thrives on publicity and feeds on peoples' fear. <p>Terrorism germinates, takes root and festers in an environment of abject poverty, mass illiteracy, corruption and a yawning gap in socio-economic parity.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Terrorism is given impetus by bad governance, weak socio-political and economic institutions and absence of fair credible elections. 4. Unemployment is a prime trigger and sustainer of terrorism. It was observed that where there is a preponderance of the unemployment, there is infestation of disenchantment. Profoundly, these idle hands make ready and easy recruits. 5. All the paradigms in 3, 4, and 5 are present in Nigeria 6. Two of the major issues hobbling security in Nigeria are MEANS and SYNERGY. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) MEANS: there is gross under-funding of all the security agencies. With routine poor budgetary allocation on security, performance is at best consolatory and at worst dismal. Nigeria vacillates between the two. (b) SYNERGY: There is manifest lack of fusion among security agencies. Specifically, agencies hardly corporate and collaborate in intelligence sharing. Rather, they compete much more than they collaborate. 7. Selection and/or recruitment process and procedure into security services have been compromised. As testified by serving and retired officers across the service, the integrity of the process is no longer guaranteed. The result is that mediocre and those whose dedication to their job and allegiance to the country are half-hearted find their way into the services. 8. There are many brilliant and competent men in the services and they are doing their best. If there are gaps, it is only because they cannot perform beyond their present capacity and the tools available to them. 9. There is a general lack of awareness amongst the populace of what constitutes insecurity. When people are ill-informed or are careless about what to look out for in order to effectively secure their environment, they are left vulnerable to criminal activities. 10. Nigeria's borders are not only extensive, they are also very
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	<p>porous. Their porous nature has made it possible for criminal elements to come in and go out of the country with ease.</p> <p>11. Proliferation of arms and ammunitions in the country has empowered and strengthened the present state of insecurity.</p> <p>Globalization should also be blamed for the wave of high insecurity profile-such as terrorism, as the country is experiencing today. It is even more so in the face of the unbound information technology phenomenon.</p>
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RECOMMENDATIONS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Security is a collective responsibility, involving every Nigerian. Therefore, there should be sustained programme for public awareness on security issues. That way, all Nigerians will be conscious of and sensitive to their environment in this regard. 2. Government should, as a matter of urgency, address the socio-economic and political triggers of insecurity, thus: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) There should be a programme for mass employment so that the army of the unemployment will be positively engaged b) The unacceptable level of poverty in the land should be realistically addressed. c) Corruption and the uneven distribution of national wealth should be reserved. d) Equality of all Nigerians, as contained in the principle of The Rule of Law, must be made to work. e) There should be good governance; those in positions of authority must know that they are there to serve and not to be served. f) The integrity of our elections must be protected. 3. Since publicity is the oxygen that sustains terrorism, the media should be circumspect on the quantum and context of publicity given to terrorism and terrorists. 4. There must be deliberate and enhanced inter-agency collaboration. There is also urgent need for all the agencies to work/operate at the same pace to make fusion possible. 5. There must be adequate funding and provision of appropriate equipment for the agencies. 6. There should be training and re-training of security personnel, especially on latest developments, to enhance capacity for effectiveness. 7. There should be intelligence-based response to security threats and timely sharing of sensitive information among security agencies. 8. International/regional co-operation is crucial, just as it is incumbent on the Nigerian government to sanitize, fortify and effectively police the nation's borders. 9. Security agencies need the support of the populace for information and informants must be protected and the information treated with absolute confidentiality.
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Sir (Dr.) Mike Mbama Okiro, CFR, NPM, MNI
 Former Inspector General of Police (IGP) Summit Chairman
Source: Sunday Sun May 6, 2012:37

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