Boko haram insurgency and its impact on Nigeria's external image

Upor Boko harama in njegov vpliv na zunanjo podobo Nigerije

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Abstract

The emergence of Boko Haram insurgence in Nigeria opened a new chapter in the history of insurgency/militancy in Nigeria. It has, for instance, brought with it suicide bombing and senseless killings of innocent citizens to the shores of Nigeria; a thing that was hitherto alien to the Nigerian clime. The once peaceful and respected nation suddenly became associated with terrorism and terrorists activities. Furthermore, Nigeria's attempt to check the menace of the Boko Haram insurgency group, received condemnations from some countries and human rights

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organisations on the ground of human rights abuse by the Nigerian armed forces. While there is a strong possibility of an external link and support for the terrorists, the country is faced with investor's apathy on the other hand. Accordingly, this paper examines the Boko Haram insurgency and its attendant impact on the image of Nigeria in the international system. The paper however suggests that for the "war against terror" to be effective, the Nigerian government must liaise with the governments of all neighbouring countries and indeed the entire West African sub-region in a coordinated manner. In this way, it would be able to wage a successful war against the insurgents, in addition to supports from other partners from the international community.

Key words: Boko Haram, Ansaru, Insurgency, Image, External relations, Nigeria.

Introduction

National image is a psychological objective of foreign policy. Positive image building and good image substance are among other determinants that determines the level of influence and relevance of a nation in international politics. Therefore, the positive perception of any country's image is an important gauge for judging her standing in the international political system. A good image translates to respect, influence, and prestige and to some extent economic prosperity, as this

will encourage prospective foreign investors. On the other hand, a bad or negative perception of a country's image indicates that such a country loses respect, influence and prestige in the comity of nations. As a result, every nation tries to build, maintain and enhance their images in relation to other nations. The factors that determine a nation's image can be both internal and external. Internally, a succession of regimes of bad policies and practice can lead to bad image; and externally, it could be through participation in foreign military and humanitarian missions. An image problem usually occurs when there are both internal and external factors that sway the pendulum towards a bad/negative image.

Egwemi (2010:131) notes that, Nigeria's external image has swung between periods of extreme positivity to periods of extreme negativity. Over time, Nigeria's image in the comity of nations have been characterized with times of good (1960-1967, 1970-1983 and 1999-2007), and bad periods (1993-1999, 2007-2014). Successive governments in Nigeria, have committed huge resources to foreign agencies to launder her badly damaged image arising from such factors as corruption, nepotism, ethno-religious fundamentalism, authoritarianism, advance fee fraud (also known as 419), human trafficking, electoral malpractices, internet fraudster, the hanging of Ken Saro-Wiwa and the nine Ogoni environmental activists and involvement of Nigerians in other forms of trans-national criminal activities. The Niger-Delta crisis which was devastating impacted negatively on the

image of Nigeria in the international system (Ademola, 2006:14) and on its national economy.

In recent years, terrorist activities of the Boko Haram insurgent group in North Eastern Nigeria have been a cause for concern to the Nigerian state, Nigerians and the world at large. The group drew the attention of Nigerians and that of the international community following series of violent attacks in Nigeria since July 2009 (Ola, 2013:3). The sequence of events informed the US African Command (AFRICOM) commander General Caryter Hamin in September of 2011 to list Boko Haram as one of the three African terrorist groups. In June 2012, the US government named three leaders of the sect as global terrorists and on November 2013, the United States' Department of States added the Nigerian based Jihadist group, Boko Haram and its splinter faction known as Ansaru, to the list of foreign terrorist organisations and specially designated Global terrorist entities (Vanguard, November 2013). This meant that Nigeria is now listed as a country where terrorism thrives; this posture has impact on the nation's external image.

Consequently, the focus of this paper is on the impact of Boko Haram insurgency on Nigeria's external image. The objective of the paper was addressed through detailed documentary review of secondary sources of information which was sourced through extensive use of specialised libraries of the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA) and the

Nigerian Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS). The hermeneutic method of data analysis was used in interpreting the meaning of the text while triangulation validity technique was employed to ensure validity and credibility of data collected. Triangulation of data provided the opportunity for the researchers to synthesize data from various recorded sources, by examining multiple documents over and over again which enable us identify repeated patterns that are common to the data collected. In that case, it enhances sufficient detail and ensured an in-depth analysis of the data, as it enable us corroborates different data sources that result to similar findings and subsequently reliable analysis of data. The first section of this study examines Nigeria external image in historical perspective; the second section looked at the evolution of the Boko Haram sect, the third section examines the Internationalisation of terrorism by Boko Haram and the fourth section examined how Boko Haram insurgency impacts on Nigeria's external image.

Nigeria's External Image in Historical Perspective

The image of Nigeria at independence in 1960 was that of a young nation with promising future, capable of providing leadership to the African continent and Africans and the black race in general. This was especially from the point of view that Nigeria has the highest

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concentration of black people in the world with huge resource endowment (Saliu, 2002 cited in Egwemi, 2010: 132). However, the image of this young nation began to wane with the military incursion in her political life in January of 1966 and the counter coups that followed in July of that same year. All of these, among other factors, led to the unfortunate as well as avoidable civil war that lasted from 1967 to 1970. But thereafter, especially during General Murtala Muhammed's regime, Saliu (2002: 224) posits that, the country's image soared high in the international system.

As Ajayi, (2005:52) observed that, Tafawa Balewa's pioneering efforts at foreign policy-making and implementation laid the foundation of Nigeria's roles and positive influence in international politics. Thus, Nigeria's foreign policy pursuit, since independence, has been geared more towards the pursuit of political goals to the neglect of economic development. This position is reflected, supported and explained by Nwachukwu (1988), that "having been subjected to colonial rule and domination, it was natural that the preoccupation of our immediate post-independence government was the preservation of newly won political freedom. And to this was our reason and determination to rid the African continent, the ancestral home of the Blackman, of all forms of domination. Thus, our foreign policy in this period was understandably politically oriented".

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According to Fawole (2003), General Yakubu Gowon's regime consolidated the nation's anti-colonial, anti-racial policies. The regime strongly condemned apartheid as a crime against humanity, and therefore, supported as well as funded anti-racial movements in Southern Africa. Nigeria, as the then Chairman of Organization of African Unity, (OAU) under Gowon's regime, led the organization's Middle East peace efforts, and in addition, mid-wife the establishment of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in 1975. Nigeria further demonstrated its commitment to inter-state/sub-regional economic co-operation under Gowon's government; this played out in the creation of ECOWAS in 1975. Aluko, (1986: 93) posit that, the nation's commitment and support for the anti-colonial; anti-racial policies in Africa became louder and more forceful under the Murtala/Obasanjo regime. The Murtala Muhammed regime got the O.A.U recognition for liberation movements such as MPLA, ZANU and ZAPU. The Murtala/Obasanjo regime assumed a much more radical and uncompromising posturing in the country's efforts at eradicating apartheid and all forms of colonialism from the continent of Africa.

Nigeria's role in the maintenance of global peace and security, has contributed significantly to international peacekeeping and trouble-shooting in conflict zones across the globe. Nigeria has contributed more than 200,000 troops to the various United Nations (UN) peace-keeping forces, (Aluko, 1981; Obayuwona, 1999; Ajayi, 2012; Obi, 2015). Beyond

the UN arrangements, Efebeh, (2002) notes that Nigeria provided more than 80% of the fund and 70% of the troop strength, of the sub-regional peace-keeping force, the ECOWAS Peace-Monitoring Group (ECOMOG). It is the first sub-regional arrangement in the history of trouble-shooting all over the world, to check the carnage which accompanied the Liberian civil war, and later, to manage the civil conflicts in Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire and Guinea Bissau within the West African sub-region,. With all these involvements in international politics, Nigeria became a regional power and centre of influence, particularly in Africa. Nigeria was a toast of many states seeking either its influence or support on global issues or financial assistance. As a result of this, Nigerians were highly respected both at home and abroad (Ajayi, 2005: 53).

However, in the decade of the mid-1980s to mid-1990s, Nigeria became a pariah state avoided by major powers of the world. According to Ajayi (2005: 54), the post-Shagari administration, military regimes played 'key' roles in the image- destruction of the Nigerian state. First, was the Buhari / Idiagbon regime (1983-1985), which facilitated the nation's crisis through its draconian anti-human rights decrees and policies. The regime gagged the mass media through its Decree No.4 of 1984, which prohibited any publications on public officials, including corrupt and fraudulent behaviours. This marked the beginning of image problem for Nigeria in the comity of nations. This was consolidated by the regime's policy of indiscriminate detention and imprisonment of journalists,

human rights activists, politicians and others who served in the previous regime. This however peaked with the failed bid to kidnap Umaru Dikko, a prominent minister in Shagari regime's cabinet for allegedly mismanaging public funds while in office, from Britain an action that could be considered as a serious diplomatic embarrassment to Britain, and indeed, a homeland security breach. As a result of these events, Nigeria increasingly began to wear the toga of a potential state terrorist (Ajayi, 2005:54). The over-throw of the regime in a countercoup in August of 1985 did not change the already bad image of the nation. Rather the nation's emerging image crisis became deepened under the new military regime led by General Ibrahim Babangida.

However, Abututu (1995) posits that the Babangida's regime, championed the establishment of ECOWAS Peace-Monitoring Group, (ECOMOG), in 1988 as a peacekeeping and peace enforcement body in the wake of the Liberian war within the West African sub-region. By and large, this effort to maintain peace on the West African sub region cost the Nigerian state a whopping USD$10billion (Efebeh, 2002). This move was applauded globally as it was seen as a move to avoid unnecessary loss of lives and properties, and, thus bring about peace in the sub-region. Some scholars and social commentators (Obi, 2015; Sokoh and Efebeh, 2013) argued that being busy with the activities of ECOMOG in the sub-region was the reason that the Nigerian government could not send troops to the Gulf War 1, otherwise known as "Operation Desert

Storm" in 1990 to join the Allied Forces to flush Saddam Hussein's forces out of Kuwait. Hassan (2002) noted that, it is as a result of Nigeria's inability to send troops to the Gulf war that made the western nations not to support her candidate for the position of Secretary General of the United Nations in 1992.

In Okpokpo (1999) view, General Babangida's regime dealt a more severe blow to image of Nigeria with the cancellation of the June 12, 1993 presidential election at a time when every country, in particular the G7 and most of the OECD countries had made democracy, good governance and human rights essential determining elements in international politics. Similarly Ajayi, (2005: 54) noted that the Babangida's regime advanced corruption and bribery to a level of state policy, and thereby compounding the moral image of the Nigerian state. Prospective foreign investors increasingly found it difficult to do business in Nigeria as much was spent on fringe, not appropriated items such as kickbacks and bribes to bureaucrats.

Between 1993 and 1998, Akinboye (1999) observed that Nigeria fell from International pre-eminence and became a pariah state, when late Gen. Sani Abacha ruled the country. A lot of factors contributed to this global ostracism ranging from: human right abuses, extra-judicial killing, banishing of prominent Nigerians into exile who were seen as anti-government policies and action. The most fundamental of these

accumulated factors according to Okpongate (2006), was the extra-judicial murder of Ken Saro-Wiwa, who internationalized the Niger-Delta struggle and the eight of his Ogoni kins-men. In fact, the aftermath of the animalistic behaviour of the military junta of Abacha was not palatable to Nigeria's external relations as Nigeria was ostracized globally in all fronts. The most disgracing was the Commonwealth suspension which was led by a Nigeria Secretary General of Commonwealth, Emeka Anyoku being assisted by Nelson Mandela who called or harsher International sanction on Nigeria. Following Abacha died in 1998, the 11 months of Gen Abdulsalami Abubakar were devoted to ensuring an immediate handover of power to civilian. General Abubakar's regime to respect human right and hand over to a civilian president engendered conciliatory gesture between Nigeria and the comity of nations.

The emergence of the present democratic dispensation in 1999, under the leadership of former President Olusegun Obasanjo, a little reprieve came the way of Nigeria as the country once again began to dine with other world leaders in the comity of Nations. Furthermore, as the Late President Yar'dua's and former President Goodluck Jonathan regimes were trying to cope with the security dilemma posed by the Niger Delta militancy groups, through the instrumentality of the amnesty programme, that a new security challenge posed by the Boko Haram insurgency immerged.

Evolution of Boko Haram Sect in Nigeria

Boko Haram is known as Jama'atuAhlis Sunna Lidda'awatiWal-Jihad in Arabic, which means "People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad." The group which is better known by its Hausa name 'Boko Haram' was a local radical Salafist group which transformed into terrorist organisation after 2009 (Cook, 2013). It is based in the Northeast of Nigeria, in the areas predominated by the Kanuri people. Loosely translated from the local Hausa language, Boko Haram means, 'Western education or civilization is forbidden'. Put differently, 'Western education or civilization is a sin.' According to Danjibo (2008), Boko Haram is the product of the "Maitatsine" doctrine or a brand of Islamic zealots and fundamentalists introduced to Northern Nigeria in 1945, The Maitatsine Uprisings, which began in 1979, were the historical antecedent to Boko Haram, and has many parallels with the current state of affairs. The Maitasine movement, under the leadership of Alhaji Marwa Maitasine, an immigrant, was made up of a bunch of religious fanatics. The leader of the Maitatsine, Muhammad Marwa, believed that Islam has been corrupted by modernization. Maitatsine group spearheaded religious uprisings in Kano in 1980 which later spread to Yola and Maiduguri in 1982 and 1983 respectively (Ajayi, 2012: 104).

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The Nigerian Islamic sect known as 'Boko Haram,' is believed to have started in 1995 with the name "Sahaba" and it was led by one Abubakar Lawan (Liolio, 2013: 64). But then Abubakar Lawan was later said to have travelled for studies at the University of Medina, Saudi Arabia; conceding the group's leadership to Mohammed Yusuf. Yusuf was said to have reorganised the group to what is known as Boko Haram in 2002 in the Northern city of Maiduguri. While in Maiduguri, Yusuf established a religious complex that included a mosque and a school. Yusuf succeeded in entrenching his hold in Northern states such as Bauchi, Gombe, Kano, Katsina and Yobe. And in 2004 the complex was relocated to Yusuf's home town called Kanamma in Yobe state near the Nigerian-Niger border where a militant base called "Afghanistan" was created (Liolio, 2013: 65). Boko Haram first received widespread attention when it launched attacks against police stations and other public buildings late December 2003; after eighteen members of Boko Haram were killed, they fled to a remote base near the border with the Niger to regroup. There, its membership increased as motivated students withdrew from schools to receive Koranic instruction (Elkaim, 2013).

In the middle of 2004, Boko Haram began attacking police stations throughout the North in order to steal arms and ammunition. These attacks continued and always resulted in police reprisals consisting of raids and arrests to recover the stolen property (Elkaim, 2013). In 2009, Boko Haram members were furious at the Bauchi State government's

refusal to allow it to publicly preach and recruit new members, reacted more violently than usual to perceived police brutality when enforcing a motorbike helmet law. Boko Haram's violent reaction sparked five days of fighting and rioting in four states, in which over 700 people died and numerous buildings were destroyed (Pham, 2012:1-8). The uprising was eventually contained by a joint operation of the police and military, called Operation Flush. The operation led to the bombardment of Muhammed Yusuf's house, and after a two-day standoff, Yusuf was arrested. While in police custody, Yusuf was filmed begging for his life, and was later killed. Although the Nigerian police later claimed that he was killed in an escape attempt, subsequent investigation showed that members of the police force killed him in an extra-judicially (Onuoha, 2012:54-67 cited in Elkaim 2013).

The death of Muhammed Yusuf led to the escalation of Boko Haram terrorist activities. Further, the death of the group's leader led to fractures within Boko Haram, with new factions forming regularly. In November 2011, it was reported that the group had splinted into three factions; namely, a hard-line ideological sect led by a close associate of Yusuf's named Abubakar Shekau, a second faction that was mostly intent on bringing about political changes in the North, and another that used the Boko Haram brand to further its criminal enterprise (Elkaim 2013). These factions are not only at odds with each other, as demonstrated by the assassination of a member of one of the more

"moderate" factions, who was killed. One sect, calling itself the Yusufiya Islamic Movement, disagrees with the direction Boko Haram has taken since the death of Yusuf, allegedly because of the more radical nature of the group's activities after coming under the influence of Abubakar Shekau. They believe in maintaining the systematic approach that Yusuf introduced, and are thought to be the older generation of Yusuf's followers. In turn, Shekau holds sway with the younger members (Zenn, 2011). To complicate matters further, another group has emerged named "Ansarul Muslimina Fi Biladis Sudan (aka Ansaru)," which translates to "Vanguards for the Protection of Muslims in Black Africa." According to Boggio,(2013)

The group has expressed displeasure with the current direction of Boko Haram's tactics, especially its willingness to commit violent acts against fellow Muslims. The emergence of a faction from within Boko Haram that rejects a takfiri strategy promoting violence against other Muslims shows that there are those within the organization, and within Boko Haram's potential pool of recruits, that are more concerned with bringing a degree of dignity and respectability to their daily life than with bringing about the fall of the government (Boggio, 2013). Furthermore, Boggio, (2013) posits that In its most high-profile attack on the Nigerian military, Ansaru ambushed a convoy of Nigerian troops who were to be deployed to Mali in Kogi state on Jan. 20, in a bid to stop African countries from joining the intervention against al Qaeda-affiliated

Islamists groups operating in Mali. Ansaru has also conducted several kidnappings of foreigners living or working in Nigeria. In March, Ansaru executed seven foreigners who worked at a construction company. Ansaru claimed the execution was carried out in response to a joint Nigerian and British military operation to free them. (Boggio, 2013).

While there are many who advocate engaging in dialogue with the sect group, utilizing the tenets of the amnesty program that have had great success in demilitarizing the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. However, the reality on ground is such that the ideological thrust of Boko Haram makes this impracticable. In April 2011, the offer of amnesty by the elected governor of Borno State, Kashim Shettima, was rebuffed, when the group released a statement on a local language radio station about their stance; saying that "first we do not believe in the Nigerian constitution and secondly we do not believe in democracy but only in the laws of Allah."(Elkaim, 2013)However, the lack of clarity in Boko Haram's structure and ideological stance has made it difficult for the Nigerian government to arrive at a policy choice towards curbing the terrorist group.

Internalisation of Boko Haram Terrorist Activities.

The growing spread of Boko Haram insurgent's choice of attack on international institution and foreign nationals in Nigeria, and its affiliation with other regional and global terrorist groups, is an indication that the sect has 'foreign ambition' and links with other terrorists' bodies with international reach. Prior to 2011, the terrorist activities of Boko Haram within the Nigerian state manifests in various forms using bombs and or guns to attack public institutions such as Nigeria police stations, army barracks, prisons, churches, and schools. However, In August 2011, the group pursued an international objective for the first time by attacking an international institution, the United Nations' Headquarters in Abuja in suicide bombing attacks. After the attack, which killed 23 and injured 80, videos of the alleged suicide bomber were released. In the videos, the attacker praised Osama bin Laden, who American forces killed three months earlier, and referred to the UN as "a forum of all the global evil (Elkaim, 2013) According to Elkaim, (2013) noted

The incident was much more in line with other globalist terrorist organizations, and is strongly reminiscent of the suicide attack in Baghdad against the United Nations in August 2003, which was one of the opening blows of the Iraqi insurgency.

Many experts on terrorism believes that the group's suicide bombing on 26 August 2011 that destroyed the UN building in Nigeria's capital, Abuja, reveals its link with al-Qaeda in the Maghreb (AQIM). Before the attack, an internal Nigerian intelligence document had discussed possible links between Boko haram and AQIM. General Carter Ham, the general in front of United States African Command (AFRICOM) speculated that Boko Haram might want to establish partnership with the Somali terrorist group, Al-Shabaab, in addition to AQIM. In January 2010, the leader of AQIM, Abd al-Malik Droukdal, released a statement offering to provide training and material assistance to Boko Haram (U.S African command 2012).

Another international attack occurred in March of this year, when Nigerian forces, with the assistance of British Special Boat Services (SBS) failed in a joint rescue attempt to free westerners, a British and an Italian citizen, who have been held captive since May 2011. The sum of Boko Haram's tactical evolution points to cooperation with ideologically similar groups that operate throughout Africa. Until they implemented the use of suicide bombings, only Al-Shabaab in Somalia and AQIM had used the tactic in Africa (Soria, 2012). This development has increased in importance because Boko Haram's use of explosives has reportedly grown increasingly sophisticated and bears hallmarks of bomb-making techniques used by Al Qaeda affiliates. The Republic of Niger's Foreign Minister, Mohamed Bazoum, on 25th January 2011 notes that, Boko

Haram received training and weapons from Al-Qaeda's North African wing. Bazoum,(2011:12) who spoke at a regional security summit in Mauritania's capital, Nouakchott, said members of the sect received training in camps in the Sahel region of West Africa as well as explosives from Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (Bazoum, 2011: 12) In his words:

There is no doubt that there is confirmed information that shows a link between Boko Haram and AQIM (Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb), and it consists primarily of the training given to elements of Boko Haram. "One group has been received in AQIM bases here in the Sahel and another group got training, based on information we've gotten, with the Al-Shabaabs in Somalia"(Bazoum, 2011:12).

It is important to state here that a press statement dated August 09, 2009 and signed by the then acting leader of the group, Mallam Sanni Umaru, had confirmed Boko Haram ties with al-Qaeda. In his words:

Boko Haram is an Islamic Revolution which impact is not limited to Northern Nigeria, in fact, we are spread across all the 36 states in Nigeria, and Boko Haram is just a version of the Al Qaeda which we align with and respect. We support Osama bin Laden, we shall carry out his command in Nigeria until the country is totally Islamised which is according to the wish of Allah (Vanguard, August 2009).

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Boko Haram has also expanded its propaganda efforts to show solidarity with al Qaeda and its affiliates. In July 2010, Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau issued an online statement praising al Qaeda and offering condolences to al Qaeda of Iraq for its loss of Abu Ayub al Masri and Abu Omar al Baghdadi. He also threatened the United States saying:

Do not think jihad is over, "Rather jihad has just begun. O America, die with your fury." In December 2012, Shekau praised Al Qaeda and said he and his fighters support the global jihad in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Kashmir, Chechnya, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Somalia, Algeria, Libya, and Mali. Documents seized at Osama bin Laden's compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan in May 2011 showed that top-level Boko Haram leaders have been in touch with al Qaeda (Boggio, 2013).

Boko Haram is known to receive support from al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and from Shabaab, an al Qaeda affiliate in East Africa. In the same vein, Boko Haram's spokesman, Abu Qaqa while speaking via phone to a handful of reporters on November 2011 noted,

We are together with al Qaeda…they are promoting the cause of Islam, just as we are doing. Therefore they help us in our struggle and we help them, too (Reuter, 2012).

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According to Boggle, (2013), it has been alleged that Boko Haram has training base in the north of Mali as well as strong ties with the Tuaregs of Mali. In August 2013, it was reported that Boko Haram was among a number of jihadist groups such as the Movement of the Taliban in Pakistan, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, and al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, that participated in a series of communications with the top leadership of al Qaeda, which included Ayman al Zawahiri and Nasir al Wuhayshi, al Qaeda's general manager (Boggle, 2013).Further, the kidnapping of European citizens was interpreted as a clear sign of Boko Haram's shift to the adoption of classic al-Qaeda-style methods and tactics, and underscores their augmented ideology where they have essentially bought into the latter's narrative and cause. These occurrences, along with the creation of martyrdom videos and sophisticated, multi-location bombings (Thomson, 2012: 15), as well as AQIM leader Abdel Wadoud's announcement of support, clearly indicate the presence of cross-border and inter-organizational cooperation between al-Qaeda affiliates. Bodansky, (2010) noted that AQIM leader Abdel Wadoud stressed that

The entire global jihadist movement affiliated with al- Qaeda, and not just AQIM, was committed to markedly expanding presence and operations in sub-Saharan Africa because it provides for "strategic depth that would give the jihadists a bigger scope for maneuvers".

It believed that it would be impossible for al-Qaeda to operate in West Africa without gaining a solid foothold in Nigeria, the region's leading power, leaving Boko Haram perfectly placed to profit from its increased importance (Bodansky, 2010). These disturbing developments, along with new evidence that Boko Haram is attempting to morph into a regional entity, with members and recruitment efforts across Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Mali, are likely factor in the United States Africa Command's (AFRICOM) decision to include Nigeria in the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP) (Elkaim, 2013). Further, the United States has recently taken preliminary steps to address the threat that Boko Haram poses to international security, by designating three of the group's members, Abubakar Shekau, Abubakar Adam Kambar, and Khalid al-Barna as Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGT) in June 2012. In November 2013, the US government added Boko Haram to its list of terror groups 17 months after placing Abubakar Shekau, the emir of the Nigerian jihadist outfit, and two other operatives on the list of global terrorists. Boko Haram and its splinter group Ansaru were listed as number 52 and 53 respectively, on the foreign terrorist group (Boggle, 2013).

Impact of Boko Haram Activities on Nigeria's External Image

Nigeria's image in the comity of nations is very relevant in the direction of its external relations, because it determines the quality of respect she earns from other states and other shareholders in the global community. The respect and acceptance that a nation holds globally is dependent on the core value that it upholds, the effective management of her domestic affairs and the promotion of her citizen's interests as well as the conduct of her external relations (kehinde, 2008 cited in Adefuye, 2013). Unfortunately, the activities of Boko Haram have serious implication on Nigeria's external relations and have affected the perception of Nigeria's image.

The implications of Boko Haram on Nigeria's external relations are enormous especially has it manifested in the diminishing image of Nigeria in the comity of nations. First and foremost, the listing of Boko Haram group as Foreign Terrorist Organisation (FTO) by the United States of America and Canada has led to a renewed campaign of calumny against Nigeria in which many western nations have advised their nationals to desist from travelling to Nigeria, especially the North East region where suicide bombing, kidnapping and killings has become rife. The United States and most European countries through their embassies in Nigeria has constantly issue travel warning to their citizens not to visit the north-eastern part of the country and Abuja, particularly

after the killing of a British hostage Chris McManus and his Italian counterpart, Franco Lamolinara by the Boko Haram sect. In another vein, the designation of Boko Haram and its splinter group, Ansaru sects as Foreign Terrorists Organisations (FTO) by the United States of America and Canada, implies that Nigeria has now be grouped along with such terrorist states as Afghanistan, Yemen, Somalia, Pakistan, Libya, Iran and Iraq, to mention but a few; where people lives in perpetual fear, and indeed, where people lives in Hobbesian state of nature where life is "short, brutish and nasty". The implications remain that, the collective will and support needed by Nigeria in her quest of becoming a respected player in global politics is being daunted by the negative image of being a terrorist state.

Another dimension to the image problems occasioned by the Boko Haram insurgency is the suspicion of most Nigerians at international airports in some countries, *as they are subjected to intense scrutiny before being allowed to board the flight.* As Adefuye (2013) posits that with the designation of Boko Haram and Ansaru as Foreign Terrorist Organisations, Nigerians are likely to be subjected to further travel restrictions to the United States and Canada. Another pointer to this global ostracism, also manifested in the American president, Barrack Hussein Obama's first visit to the Sub Saharan Africa, in which he choose Ghana, in place of Nigeria and in his all exciting speech to a large crowd of Ghanaian in Accra, including top government functionaries of the host

country and Nigeria. The erudite president simply advised all the states in the sub-Saharan Africa to learn from Ghana, that is Nigeria inclusive. The choice of President Obama's visit to Ghana instead of Nigeria was considered as a major diplomatic failure for the Nigerian state, particularly judging by its size, resource endowments and its laudable leadership roles, over time, on the continent of Africa.

The crisis in the North East region, has continued to attract negative attention globally, especially by international right groups and humanitarian bodies like Amnesty International (Al), Human Rights Watch (HURIWA), who have all written at various times damaging reports on the activities of the Nigerian state, especially as it concerns the North East region. This barrage of criticism to a very large extent has the potentials of reducing Nigeria to a pariah state among the comity of nations. The kidnap of 300 Chibok school girls to Sambisa forest, opened a new vista in the activities of Boko Haram and its implication on Nigeria's external image, as the kidnap draw the attention of the whole world and this led to the famous global campaign of " # Bring Back our Girls". The kidnap of the school girls and the crisis within the Armed forces that led to the dismissal of some officers from the frontline exposed the weaknesses of the counter terrorist measures of the Nigerian government before the world. The above made analysts, the world over, to begin to see Nigeria as a 'failed state'. A state which lacks the potential of providing security of live and prosperity as well as

inability to meet its constitutional mandate of providing basic amenities of life to its citizens.

Furthermore, Nigeria's status in Africa and international organizations continued to be threatened, The activities of the insurgent groups has negative implications on the big brother's role Nigeria play to other African nations, preaching and promoting peace, equity and justice, ethnic terrorism have sent a wrong signal. Therefore, her status as the 'giant' of Africa is at stake. This situation, Bariledum (2013:334) observes, made some countries in Africa to contest the leadership position with the country. For every available position in which Nigeria has an interest, there are usually some other countries which compete with her and, in some instance defeating the nation due to the image problem. Nigeria has lost important positions such as the ADB, on two occasions (1995 & 2006) Morocco and Rwanda had respectively defeated Nigeria for the ADB's presidency. In the same vein, the quest for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council is also threatened, as other contending states are assumed to be more stable in nature, politically, economically, socially, militarily.

Again, the capacity of the Nigerian military is questionable which is supposed to be boosting factor for the vibrancy of a state foreign policy. Due to the claims by the militias of strategic combat successes recorded against the states represented by the Nigeria military, the Nigeria

military has severally been termed "sitting ducks" by the insurgent group. In agreement with this, the Cable News Network (CNN) in February 2014 corroborated with the above, that the insurgent group are having a field day conquering the Nigerian military. The Federal Government denied the report as bias and untrue. This necessitated government's cancellation of her image laundering Heart of Africa project with CNN, compelling state government to do same. In the same vein, Nigeria has been predicted to be the next Afghanistan by an analyst from the west, Layinan Princeton, if the insurgent group is not comprehensively contained. Also worthy of note is the fact that when Hilary Clinton visited the country a period that coincided with the Boko Haram crisis, she warned against Al -Qaeda in Nigeria (Kemi, 2009) and this has manifested with Boko Haram pledging allegiance to ISIS

The continued attacks of the Boko Haram sect and its breakaway faction, Ansaru, has come to challenge the sovereignty of the Nigerian state and thus portray Nigeria as not being on top of the crisis; a thing that has given Nigeria further negative image among the comity of nations. Such negative image could rub off on its nationals outside of the country. The incessant Boko Haram insurgency has made many Nigerians in the affected states to flee from the troubled areas for fear of further attacks, thus becoming refugees in their own country as many of the citizens of the troubled states had to flee to other states for fear of being victim of Boko Haram attacks; others are fleeing to neighbouring countries of

Niger, Chad and Northern Cameroon. This does not augur well for Nigeria's external image.

The unfolding crises of security occasioned by Boko Haram have far-reaching implications for the country's international politics, diplomacy and economic development. The spates of hostilities particularly bombing of houses, schools, government agencies in the Northern Nigeria are on the extreme. This situation demonstrates largely, the collapse of security in Nigeria which has further battered Nigeria's image. In this circumstance, most countries, especially America and Britain that are critical to the realization of Nigeria's developmental quest and relevance in the global politics had warned her citizens not to travel to North eastern part of Nigeria, while those working in the affected areas were advised to leave immediately. The activities of Boko Haram have adversely affected the inflow of foreign investment into Nigeria's solid mineral sector in the northern part of Nigeria as Daewoo; oil servicing companies, Julius Berger Construction giant, among others have pulled out their operations from the region, and prefer other African neighbouring countries, as a result of the insecurity situation. Similarly, the annual Kaduna international trade fair held in 2015 can be termed unsuccessful as almost the entire international stand was empty.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The emergence and continued unprovoked attacks on innocent civilians and foreign interests by the Boko Haram terrorist group in Nigeria have left Nigeria with a further battered external image. This demonstrates the growing fragility and the pervasive instability of the Nigerian state. The sect has now infiltrated the Nigerian government and former President Good luck Jonathan, admitted that Boko Haram sympathisers are in his government, the executive, legislature, judiciary and security agencies, hence making the scenario even more complex (Adetayo, 2012). Therefore, the rise of Boko Haram as a terrorist group can fittingly be situated within the context of the nature and character of the Nigeria state. Worse still is the fact that Boko Haram is affiliated with foreign extremists groups such as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, otherwise known as ISIS, all of which have influenced Boko Haram with both tactical knowledge and ideologically.

Thus, it is pertinent to note that, the Nigeria state during this period has been confronted by a number of challenges, such as security problem, dwindling revenue and image problems. Consequently, the issue of amnesty is hardly the solution to the Boko Haram insurgences, as the sect are not ready to surrender their arms or unconditionally renounce terrorism and sign undertaking to this effect; although the new leadership of the sect group has indicated readiness to negotiate with

the Nigerian government. On the other hand, counter insurgence such as declaration of emergency rule in affected states as a state apparatus has the effect of not just destroying infrastructures and economic lives of the state, or lead to death of innocent civilians, but that it has a higher possibility of leading insurgency into a classical state of terrorism as the case with the Boko Haram sect. Thus, the Boko Haram insurgence can only be solved holistically.

The study thus recommend that, given Nigeria's weak capacity to deal with large scale insurgence as well as the internationalisation of the sect, intelligence co-operation and capacity development should be a priority area for international assistance. In order to avoid the fight against the Boko Haram insurgency from turning to a pseudo war, like the war on drugs and crime, which does not end. The Nigerian government should adopt collaborative measures by involving neighbouring countries such as Chad, Cameroon, Niger and Mali, as they are currently doing under the Buhari's administration. In addition to such collaborative efforts, is the issue of how to disrupt, expose and dismantle the financial channels and sources of funding for the sect groups. This becomes necessary in the fight against terror groups because disrupting funding flows will create hostile environment for the terrorist group and constraining their overall capacities and thus helping to frustrate their abilities to implement attacks.

In the spirit of "an injury to one is an injury to all", embedded in the doctrine of collective security, the international community should adopt the present approach in use against the ISIS sect in Syria in the fight against Boko Haram; or better still, an ECOMOG like forces be established, to be funded by the African Union (AU) and the United Nations (UN) to not only fight Boko Haram in Nigeria, but other terrorist groups that exists on the continent of Africa, particularly, Al Shaaba in Kenya, Sudan, Somali and other parts of the Continent. Nigerian government should also endeavour to promote social regeneration in the North and break the vicious cycle of poverty, lack of education, inequalities and industrial stagnation that blight the region. Top Muslim Imams/clerics and other religious figures in the Northern region should make strong and collective efforts to teach the large Muslim population that Islam does not support killing of one person by another. Additionally, a blend of diplomacy and police strategies, intelligence work and infrastructural development should be used to counter Boko Haram insurgency.

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