

Rethinking Nigeria's Security System for Sustainable Development: A Consideration of New Options and Strategies

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Abstract

The Nigerian state has come under severe and unprecedented security challenges in the last few years. Some of the major security threats currently confronting the nation have been identified to include: political and electioneering conflicts, socio-economic agitations, ethno-religious crises, ethnic militias, boundary disputes, cultism, criminality, and organized terrorism, especially that which is being perpetrated by the Boko Haram sect. These contemporary security threats are intrinsically disturbing because of the dimension, proportion and sophistication it appears to have taken. These challenges, individually and collectively, constitute threats to the peace, security, and development of the country. Unarguably also, these security conundrum have implications for the nation's continued survival and democratic trajectory. What is even more worrisome is the deteriorated character of our security agencies, which has made it impossible for them to respond to the onslaught of these criminals. In most cases, security agencies are reactive rather than proactive, which is an indication that they lack the intellectual capacity, sophistry, organisational ability, training and the other necessary infrastructure to confront these criminals. This paper, therefore, canvases the need to rethink Nigeria's security system, by providing an appropriate and alternate conceptual and methodological framework that would assist security agencies in responding to crime. Apart from the need to synergise the activities of all security agencies, the paper further contends that securing the nation must necessarily transcend the mere physical presence of security personnel on the streets, to an improvement in the overall availability of defence cum-security related information/intelligence gathering, through support for research and development of the nation's data base.

Introduction and Focus of Paper

One of the most pressing challenges facing many African states is paramilitary threats – threats that are beyond the ability of most police forces to tackle. These include amongst others, organised crime, rural banditry, piracy, local war lords, guerrillas, ethno-religious and political violence and extremist Islamist groups (Heitman, 2011:p.1). The continent is also facing growing problems of terrorism, including groups such as Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and Al Shabaab in Somalia, and efforts by international Islamic terrorist groups to establish themselves elsewhere in Africa (Heitman, 2011:p.1). Nigeria has had and is still having her own fair share of these security challenges. Some of these threats are political and electioneering conflicts, socio-economic agitations, ethno-religious crises, ethnic militias, boundary disputes, cultism, and criminality. For most of these threats, the Nigerian Defence and Security Forces (DSF) were able to at least, respond to the antics of the perpetrators of these criminalities. However, the re-emergence of the Nigerian militant Islamist group, Boko Haram¹ has been a cause for significant concern. Since its emergence in 2009.

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The Boko Haram sect has been responsible for a brutal campaign of attacks targeting key and strategic public officials and institutions, religious centres and, increasingly, ordinary men, women, and children, wrecking havoc across northern Nigeria. What is even more worrisome in the Boko Haram onslaught is the sophistry and complexity involved in their attacks, which has taken the form of suicide bombing. The activities of Boko Haram, therefore, constitute a serious threat to the peace, stability, security, and development of the country. Equally very disturbing is the inability of the government and the nation's DSF to respond to these attacks and confront the sect headlong. In most cases, both the government and its DSF are reactive rather than proactive, which is a clear indication that they lack professionalism, capacity, training and other necessary infrastructure to confront these sophisticated threats. The security threats and weak state response has created a tensed national environment, indicating that the country is precariously at the precipice of political and social catastrophe. Against the backdrop of these vulnerability and precarious security challenges confronting the Nigerian nation state, most especially the sporadic attacks by the Boko Haram sect in the last few years, this paper is sets out to critically examine the current security challenges and their implications for the nation's democratic trajectory and continued survival. Using specific examples, it analytically x rays the response of the country's DSF against these threats, bringing to the fore the conceptual and methodological flaws in their responses. Given the magnitude and frequency of these attacks, the paper canvasses a rethink of the security system to make it more responsive to the needs of the country.

Nigeria's Security Challenges and their Implications for Sustainable Development

As earlier indicated, hitherto the country faced varying degrees of ethno-religious crises, ethnic militias, boundary disputes and other types of security challenges; however, Nigeria's greatest current security threat is that of the Boko Haram sect. But for anything, the violence being perpetrated by the sect has seriously exposed and further demonstrates the weakness of the Nigerian state and its DSF. Since its re-emergence in 2009, the sect has waged series of destructive attacks. For instance, in 2009, several hundreds of Boko Haram militants attacked a police station in Bauchi state and in the process many of their members were detained. On 30 July, 2009, following Mohammed Yusuf's declaration that democracy and western education in Nigeria must change, military forces stormed the home of Yusuf and captured him. As Tachum (2012: 75-90) has revealed, the dramatic death of Yusuf while he was still in police custody, and the failure to prosecute those security personnel who were responsible for the extra-judicial killing of the Boko Haram sect leader represents one of the primary grievances of the members of the sect. In fact, the sect's terrorist campaign against Nigeria's DSF is a direct reaction to the assassination of its leader (Omede, 2011: 90-102). At the end of July 2009, the group went underground in order to re-group and mobilise more support. The group re-surfaced in 2010, having mobilised more logistic and financial support from other international Islamist terrorist groups such as al- Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (Maiangwa and Uzodike cited in Onoja, 2012: 12). In September 2010, the group attacked a prison in Bauchi and released about 700 prisoners, out of which 100 were its members. The release of at least 100 of its members must have strengthened its personnel. With such a back up, the sect continue its onslaught against churches and some public institutions. For example on 25 December 2011, the group carried out a suicide attack on St. Theresa's Catholic Church Madalla, close to Abuja in which 44 Christians were killed. The sect also claimed responsibility for another bomb blast that killed about 80 people around Jos, Plateau state on December 24, 2011.

On 26 February 2012, the group also claimed responsibility for another attack on Christ Church in Jos, killing three in the process while about 38 sustained various degrees of injuries. On 11th march 2012, it attacked St Finbarr's Catholic Church also in Jos, killing 19 people in the process (Obateru and Eyeboka, 2012: 2). As part of its onslaught, on 2 May 2012, Boko Haram attacked a chapel at the Bayero University Kano and killed a professor and 20 other Christian students, while in Maidugur, the Borno state Capital, members of the sect stormed into a church service and killed five worshippers including the priest. On 12 June 2012, a Boko Haram suicide bomber drove a car into Harvest Field Church of Christ in Bauchi, killing nine people and injuring 35 others (Maiangwa and Uzodike, 2012). There are other numerous documented attacks on Christians. These include attacks on 5, 6, 10, 11, and 24 January and 17 June, 2012 in Maiduguri, Adamawa, Plateau and Kaduna States.ⁱⁱ Apart from churches, other public or private institutions have not been spared. On 26 August 2011, the sect, using a suicide bomber attacked the United Nations (UN) building in Abuja and killed 23 people in the process, while 60 other sustained injuries.

The group claimed that it attacked the (UN) building in Abuja because United States (US) and the UN were supporting the Federal Government to persecute Muslims in Nigeria.ⁱⁱⁱ As a way of demystifying the Nigerian Police, the sect took its attack to the Nigerian Police headquarters in Abuja on the 17 June, 2011, leaving eight persons dead while 44 other were injured.^{iv} The attack came few days after the former Inspector General of Police (IG), Hafiz Ringim announced renewed efforts by the Police to eliminate the dreaded sect in Borno State, where it has been blamed for a number of killings and bomb attacks. After the attack of the Police Headquarters, the group has also wrecked havoc on other Police Stations, especially in Bauchi, Borno, Yobe, Kaduna and Sokoto states. On 26 April 2012, the group shifted its tentacles to some media houses and simultaneously attacked the offices of *This Day* newspaper in Abuja and Kaduna. Boko Haram, in taking responsibility for the twin attacks, claimed that the attacks on *This Day* facilities were retributions for insults to Prophet Mohammed by a *This Day* journalist writing about the 2002 Miss World Pageant in Abuja, which was ostensibly canceled following deadly riots in Kaduna (Maiangwa and Uzodike, 2012). There are conflicting figures as regarding the number of casualties, especially the death toll since the Boko Haram insurgency. For instance, it has been estimated that "at least 550 people were killed in 115 separate attacks in 2011, a grisly toll that has been accelerating" (Pham, 2011:1). Another source put the number of people killed in 2011 alone to 450, while it was also reported that they had been responsible for over 620 deaths during the first six months of 2012.^v Another source put the death toll in the first few years of operations to 10,000.^{vi} These figures are conflicting with that of the Minister of Police Affairs, Navy Captain Caleb Olubolade. According to him, "the Boko Haram sect has so far carried out 118 attacks in six northern states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), killing 308 people."^{vii} Consistent with government's inability to provide reliable data, the Minister failed to inform Nigerians of the period within which this data covered, but it does appear that the figure presented by the Minister was highly conservative, probably to down play the propensity the havoc may have caused the country.

Whatever the figure may be, the truth of the matter is that the Boko Haram insurgency has not only exerted pressure on the government and security agencies, it has also cost the country, especially the north enormously, both in terms of material and human losses. When juxtaposed with other ethno-religious crisis, land disputes and other crimes in other parts of the country, the impact on the economy cannot be imagined. For instance, a recent report by Human Right Watch (HRW) indicated that Nigeria lost more than 935 of its human capital between 2009 and 2012.^{viii} In terms of finance and investment, though direct and indirect losses are unquantifiable, a World Investment Report (WIR) of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), estimated that the domestic economy lost a whopping N1.33 trillion Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) owing to activities of terrorist gang by the name Boko Haram.^{ix} The report further states that FDI flows to Nigeria fell to \$6.1 billion (N933.3 billion) in 2010, a decline of about 29 percent from the \$8.65 billion (N1.33 trillion) realised in 2009 fiscal year. The report further revealed that the sharp decline of FDI to the country was compounded in the aftermath of the global financial crisis. Also, statistics obtained from the 2010 annual report by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) showed that the total foreign capital inflow into the Nigerian economy in 2010 was \$5.99 billion. The record shows that FDI represented about 78.1 percent drop from \$3.31 billion in 2009.^x

Although data is not readily available in Nigeria, however, one thing is certain that whenever these bombs explode, they further expose the fragility of the Nigerian state, especially to the outside world. A major implication is that prospective investors become sceptical of the security of their investments and the benefits to be derived there from. The activities of the sect are gradually crippling the economy of the north and there are even greater concerns that it is being transmitted to the Nigerian macro-economic environment. This is because apart from attacks on churches, the sect has also attacked commercial hot-spots like markets, parks, government agencies and even banks. Assistant Secretary-General, Airline Operators of Nigeria captured the frustration of airliners: If you look at the flights that have been cancelled, the economic losses are enormous. The fear caused by Boko Haram bombings in particular has made foreigners, who usually featured at the annual Lagos Trade Fair to show case their products to stay away, even as those who came, had heavy security network around them.^{xi} One of the most dreaded fallouts of the Boko Haram bombing and killing is the feeling of hatred it has created and this has the potential of endangering the polity. Millions of non-indigenes in the North who are worst hit, especially the Igbo's are desperate to return to their home state where they could be better assured of their safety. For example, after the multiple attacks in Kano, the Kano State Chapter of Ohanaeze Ndigbo, the apex Socio-Cultural Organization of the Igbos, in a press statement signed by the President, Tobias Michael Idika, called on the governors of south east and south-south geo-political zones to come to the aid of their citizens stranded in Kano State. The statement read in part: The Igbos residents in Kano are living with naked fear and apprehension.

Though there are few of us who would like to stay and defend ourselves, the majority of us, particularly, women and children, numbering over three million are jostling to leave the North (Kano), because unfolding events indicate that the North (Kano) is no longer safe for easterners... Ohanaeze Ndigbo, hereby calls on the governors of the eastern states in the South-South to provide means of transportation with adequate security to evacuate our brethren who would want to leave because human life is precious and should be protected as such (Phillips, 2012: 89).

In terms of opportunity cost, critical sectors of the economy have suffered from the insecurity posed by the activities of the sect. A clear example was the 2012 budget which lost huge allocation to the security sector. The 2012 budget review of President Goodluck Jonathan showed the lopsidedness of allocation in favour of security. This lopsided allocation is detrimental to critical sectors like agriculture, which has the potential of creating employment, as well as providing food security in the country. A breakdown of the budget indicated that N921.91 billion was appropriated to the security sector while power which is a critical sector got N161.42 billion. Others are Works-N180.8 billion; Education (excluding UBE, PTDF and ETF) - N400.15 billion; Agriculture - N78.98 billion; Health - N2877.77 billion; Water Resources - N59.55 billion; and Aviation – N49.23 billion. Others include: Transport – N54.83 billion, Land and Housing – N26.49 billion, Science and Technology – N18.31 billion.^{xii} This budget is certainly detrimental to a developing economy like Nigeria, but this is the cost of insecurity and Nigerian are paying dearly for it.

The Tactics of Boko Haram and State Response to Security Threats

There are indications that the Boko Haram sect has links and connections with other international Islamist terrorist groups. The first sign of this was a June 14, 2010, Al Jazeera interview with Abu Musab Abdel Wadoud, the Emir of al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb in which he stated that his group would provide Boko Haram with weapons, training and other support in order to expand its own reach into Sub-Saharan Africa, not only to gain “strategic depth,” but also to “defend Muslims in Nigeria and stop the advance of minority crusaders” (Pham, 2011:p.3). Initially, the internationalisation of the activities of the sect was dismissed, but subsequent events proved same to be correct. This is because there are some tantalising linkages between Boko Haram and other militant movements. Obviously, the former has clearly absorbed the tactic of the latter: The use of vehicle-borne Improvised Explosive Device (IED) in repeated attacks against high-profile public targets, resulting in a spectacular increase in casualties, especially in cases where the bombs are deployed in near-simultaneous or otherwise coordinated attacks has become rampant (Pham, 2011:p.5). Clearly, the use of suicide attacks indicates some level of foreign influence, since such episodes had been practically unknown to Nigeria in particular and Africa in general, until recent years when they became a part of AQIMs *modus operandi*.

To further substantiate its claims of foreign linkages and support, Boko Haram spokesmen also boasted of their ties with militants in Somalia; links that have been confirmed by the African Union forces in that country (Pham, 2011:6). This linkage with other Islamic militant groups is also confirmed, especially when viewed within the context that the successful establishment or acquisition of an active affiliate in Sub-Saharan Africa has been a goal of Al Qaeda for some time (Pham, 2011:5). Activities of the Boko Haram sect may get worse given revelations that the group is sharing funds and swapping explosives with two other terrorist organisations in Africa. Commander of the U.S. military's Africa Command, General Carter Ham, said indication of cooperation between Boko Haram, al Shabaab in East Africa, and Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb could signal a dangerous escalation of security threats on the continent.^{xiii} The interest of Al-Qaeda in Africa is better captured by Peter Pham: There is no doubt that Al-Qaeda and the holy warriors appreciate the significance of the African regions for the military campaign against the crusaders. Many people sense that the continent has not yet found its proper and expected role and the next stages of the conflict will see Africa as the battlefield (Pham, 2011:11). In this connection, one is no longer in doubt as to why the activities of the sect has taken the direction of so much sophistication, especially when considered against the backdrop of the strategy employed, the weapons used, the logistics and funds involved and deployed in its attacks.

Since the sect imposed a serious security challenge to the Nigerian state, the government has adopted various strategies, including dialogue to stem the tide, but to no avail (Okpaga, Chijioke and Eme, 2012: 93). For example, in January 2012, the government retreated from its earlier tough stance that it was not going to dialogue with the sect. Making this disclosure, President Jonathan had declared that his government was ready to dialogue with the sect as long as its leadership was ready to unveil itself to government, but all these entreaties did not yield any success.

From the activities of the sect, it is apparently clear that the government and its DSF are confused as to the next line of action to take. This is not strange, given that previously, the country's DSF have never faced such a complex security challenge. Thus, the complexities involved in the activities of the sect have, for the first time, not only put the capabilities of our security to test, it has also stretched them beyond limits. The situation the nation's DSF have found itself and the general security situation is to be expected. This is because it's (DSFs) has some colonial underpinnings. For instance, during colonial rule the colonial administration used these security agencies to intimidate, oppress and suppress the colonised under the guise of maintaining "law and order."

The goal was to overcome the legitimacy crisis and to achieve the extractive, accumulation and extractive objectives of the colonial state (Ibeanu and Momoh, 2008: 8). In the post-independent Nigerian state, our DSF were hardly involved in the process of investigating and uncovering complex criminal activities, especially those involving terrorists groups. During and immediately after the long years of military rule, the DSF were basically used by the junta as an instrument to suppress, oppress and intimidate those considered to be "antagonists" of their rule. Such group of people included academics, social critics, civil rights organisations, labour and student union groups just to mention but a few. In addition, the junta often deployed DSF against peaceful demonstrators, shooting unarmed civilians in the process. This had serious implications. For instance, Hounnikpo (2012: 2) has shown that the shooting of unarmed civilians in Africa quite often by the military clearly indicates that the primary responsibility of the DSF was to defend the regime in power rather than the constitution, contravening even basic codes of military conduct and emerging democratic norms on the continent. Even where legitimate civilian rule predominates, the relationship between the DSF and the civil society remain strained in much of Africa, and Nigeria is certainly not an exception. Arising from the above background, the nation's DSF lacked the intellectual capacity, intelligence, sophistry, organisational ability, logistic strength, training and other necessary infrastructure to confront the Boko Haram sect, when the group fully deployed what they had in their arsenal as they confronted the Nigerian state.

Confronting the Nation's Security Challenges

The fundamental responsibility of any state is the provision of security to its citizens and Nigeria can certainly not be an exception. The state is not worth its onions if it is unable to protect the life of its citizens. Events in the country in the last few years indicates that despite its control of the instruments of coercion, the Nigerian state has been unable to protect its citizens against various forms of security threats and this has had far reaching implications for the socio, political and economic development of the country. It is against this back drop that we need to overhaul the country's security apparatus through strategic rethinking, especially by considering new options that can make it more result oriented. It is important to state from the onset that security itself is a holistic thing and it requires a holistic approach. Therefore, all we shall attempt to do here is to rethink and provide an alternative methodological approach to the work of DSF in their quest to provide security for the Nigerian state. It is our thinking that securing the nation obviously transcends the mere physical presence of security personnel on our streets to a systematic change and improvement in the work of the nation's DSF.

First, there is need to rethink our conceptualisation and notion of security which is generally confined to "national security." National security is in turn equated to state security, and state security is viewed as the security of those who occupy public office. Ibeanu and Momoh (2008: 8) have argued that rarely is national security viewed as the welfare and happiness of the citizens, neither is security viewed as "community security," "societal security" or securing the "common good."³¹ Put differently, security is viewed in purely state centric and military terms and not in social and development terms; it is perceived as the maintenance of state sovereignty, not in the context of common humanity and promoting the welfare of the people (Ibeanu and Momoh, 2008: 8). Normally, it is expected that the state will protect, rather than act as agents of oppression and suppression as has been the case in Nigeria, where the citizen is always the criminal or the criminalized, while state excesses and arbitrariness pass unchecked by the law itself. Ibeanu and Momoh (2008: 8) capture it more succinctly: The Nigerian state is itself a source of insecurity. State security agencies constitute a veritable threat to the security of the citizens of Nigeria. More often, rather than restore peace and order, they exacerbate crises, ramping up social and political tension. As a result, the quest for enduring security cannot and is not feasible exclusively through state security agencies and apparatuses.

It is therefore advocated that rather than emphasise the state centric approach to security, the collective and complimentary approach should be adopted. The state will do much better in its efforts to secure the country if it does not depend or focus only on state security decision-making structures. What this means is that public (state) and the private (non-state) security structures must complement each other in the quest to secure the nation.

Second, arising from its history and antecedents, DSF must change its modus operandi to make the people believe, accept and trust them enough to guarantee their security. In this connection, security forces must be thoroughly embedded and engaged with the local population, who are willing and able to assist in times of need. The relationship between the local population and security forces is very essential in the quest to secure the country. The people must see themselves reflected in security forces and see them as friend and helper.

This point needs to be reinforced because there can be no meaningful improvement in securing the country if security agencies work at cross-purposes with the people who they are expected to secure. Senate President David Mark drummed this issue when he stated inter alia: One of the greatest national security threats was lack of familiarity between civilian and military agencies that demanded a consistent and coherent process of engagement with a view to strengthening the security agencies' work.... (Cited in Hounnikpo, 2012: 2). Security outfits must connect with the local population and ultimately rely on them, not only to blow the whistle whenever there is any security breach, but also provide clues that would assist in identifying those responsible for such security breaches. This can be achieved by organising forums where civilians and DSF can freely interact and confidentially explore strategic areas of cooperation. Such a culture of dialogue does not only provide opportunity to establish a relationship but also offer space to discuss integrated approaches to national security and develop shared understanding of roles and responsibilities. In times of crisis, the relationship built through such forums contributes invaluable to finding consensus-based and durable solutions (Djindjere, 2010: 1). Closely related to the above is the need to consciously and radically democratise DSF in the country to bring them in tune with the country's democratic process. This would require them to have enormous respect for constitutionalism and the rule of law. Because they are endowed by the constitution with the instruments of coercion, DSF must transcend partisanship and represent the ideals of national unity and patriotism. In a democratic form of government, this means respecting citizen rights and freedom during period of elections, strikes, protests, and other forms of democratic expression (Djindjere, 2010: 3).

In addition, the foundation of a professional DSF is rooted in basic ethical values, typically formalised in an official code of conduct meant to guide the thoughts and actions of troops. Such values include loyalty to the nation, a sense of duty, selfless service, and integrity. A code of conduct, however, is only valuable in so far as it is known and respected. Hence, such codes must as a matter of necessity be instilled into recruits as well as seasoned officers and modelled by commanders before they are absorbed (Djindjere, 2010: 3). This appears to be lacking in our DSF. Whereas, the elite corps receives the mandatory and required training, the recruits are hurriedly trained and packaged and so lack the basic ethics of their profession. Professionalism within the DSF can only be sustained through constant and on-going high-level training. This must be the underlying principle governing any organisation that seeks to operate effectively. Professional skills are acquired through objective selection of participants during the recruitment process; meaningful instruction delivered by experienced officers, and the proper use of human and financial resources. Given the general security challenges in Nigeria, training programmes should focus more on responsible crowd and riot control, rules of engagement, compliance with the rule of law, and information and communication technologies are essential components and critical priorities. Such training enhances DSF capabilities and integrates democratic norms.

It has also been recognised that there can be no effective counterterrorism and counter-crime measure without a strong and reliable data base and intelligence gathering. Nigeria's DSF lack data of its people and this is a major challenge in its fight against crime. For instance, security operatives must have the data of all available cars and their registration numbers and the owners of such cars at every given point in time. The number of people living within a specific locality and what they do is often not known; why new entrants into any community and where they have come from is not documented. In this connection, landlords would be required to inform security agencies of the lease of their property to such tenants. The State also needs to have the data of how many Nigerians use mobile phones, their registration numbers and their specific areas of operation, etc. All these are the type of data required by the nation's DSF. Therefore, DSF must work with other relevant government agencies to build reliable database which would facilitate their work. Security bodies are unlikely to make any meaningful breakthrough especially in the fight against crime if it lacks a strong and reliable data base and an effective way of intelligence gathering. There is need to differentiate the roles of the various DSF to prevent them from working at cross-purposes. What is the role of the Nigerian Police (NP) *vis a vis* the State Security Service (SSS)? What is the role of the SSS *vis a vis* the National Intelligence Agency (NIA).

What is the role of the NP *vis a vis* the Nigerian Army (NA), especially within the context of maintaining national security? What is the relationship between the NA, the NP, the SSS, the NIA and other security bodies such as the Nigerian Civil and Defense Corp (NSDC), the Nigerian Immigration Service (NIS), the Nigerian Custom Service (NCS) and the Nigerian Prison Service (NPS)? These are fundamental issues that the Nigerian state must have to address as a matter of urgency. Whereas, all the aforementioned agencies have one security function or the other to perform in the Nigerian state, the roles and functions must be clearly differentiated to avoid unnecessary overlap and conflict as we have experienced or noticed on a number of occasions. The superior-inferior relationship that exist between or amongst these outfits is needless and must be checked.

The above identified challenge can be addressed only when the country provides a comprehensive *National Security Policy (NSP)*. This point is quite instructive because it has been discovered that in Africa, DSF operate without any constituent documents that clearly sets forth their missions and defines their rules of deployment. This perpetuates many problems and causes great confusion in defining their purposes, their configurations, and the resources and tasks assigned to them (Djindjere, 2010: 2). The NSP should amongst others, define a clear and pertinent inter-services national security strategy, establish suitable doctrines for the use of force, and establish and maintain appropriate human and material resource management practice. The nation's DSF must be proactive in its fight against terrorism and other criminal activities. We have discovered that often times our DSF are reactive rather than proactive in the discharge of their duties and responsibilities. For example, pre-emptive measures are required to counter the threats to terrorism. It is after all, less useful to apprehend and incarcerate terrorists after civilians have already been killed and maimed. In this regards, it might be instructive to examine the lessons in counterterrorism from selected European countries.^{xiv} Key elements include nationwide security plans and pre-planned extra security measures for public places and public transport, a special relationship between the intelligence service and dedicated magistrates. In this way, cases do not have to crumble when suspected terrorists are hauled before the court (Solomon, 2011: 6-7). Other proactive measures include: disrupting terrorist finances, destroying weapons caches and information for training, and training camps.

Achieving proactiveness requires strengthening regional cooperation and the capacity of neighbouring countries. There are indications that the Boko Haram sect has used Nigeria's porous borders and the limited capacities of neighbouring countries to its advantage. A January 2012 report by the UN noted that Boko Haram members received training in Mali the previous summer and that seven were arrested with names and contact details with AQIM militants (Pham, 2011: 7). Regional efforts are, therefore, required to stem this unfortunate tide. Greater cooperation and intelligence-sharing between States in the region need to be encouraged and facilitated by international partners. Importantly and much more worrisome is the wrong philosophical underpinning of national security in Nigeria, which is tied to the endless accumulation of military weaponry and hardware to the neglect of the basic human needs of survival, and this has remained fundamental to the appalling security problems confronting the country. Granted that some level of military weaponry and hardware are required, but too much emphasis on same to the neglect of some basic needs poses greater security challenges to the country. We agree with Chris Orngu that: Sadly the Nigerian state has always tended to place security side by side with the endless accumulation of military weaponry to the basic needs for survival. Contradictorily, this stereotypically fixated notion of security has remained fundamental to the appalling security problems in the country. The consequences of this.... manifest in the rising wave of armed robbery, organised crime such as kidnapping and various other forms of violent crimes (Orngu, 2011: 37).

It is not within the purview of this essay to trace the relationship between economy and criminal activities within a state as this has been addressed by other scholars (Pham, 2011:p.7 and Commins, 2011: 5). Be that as it may, it is a truism that without addressing the basic survival needs of the citizenry, the desperation to survive will continue to provoke desperate survival strategies, which are sometimes derived from criminal activities (Orngu, 2011: 37). Hence, the government must also try to address the many legitimate grievances that have rendered meaningful segment of the population amenable to criminality. In this connection, issues that have to do with frustration arising from poverty must be tackled. Conscientious efforts are also required to end corruption and build a more inclusive government, alleviate poverty and lack of access to health care, expand access to education, and create a transportation, utilities, and communication infrastructure capable of sustaining economic growth for Nigeria's 170 million people (Pham, 2011: 7).

Conclusion

All we have attempted to do in this paper is to examine the various security challenges confronting the Nigerian state. In examining the security challenges, the activities of the Boko Haram sect which has wrecked havoc on the socio-economic development of the country, especially the north is explored. The paper also tried to assess the various strategies the Nigerian state, especially the nation's DSF have adopted in their quest to secure the nation. The paper has also stressed the need to rethink the nation's security system in order to achieve maximum development. We have demonstrated that our DSF must have to change their modus operandi by first connecting with the people, professionalising its forces, gathering intelligence and data, and applying some measure of proactiveness in their activity, especially in their bid to counter the activities of terrorists. Importantly, the paper also canvassed the need for the state to discourage the emphasis placed on state-centric and military approach to security; rather it advocates the need for the state to rely more on both state and non-state security structures in security-decision making, as the country is bound to benefit more from the complementary roles and cooperation of both structures.

Endnotes

- i. Boko Haram is derived from the combination of the Hausa word for book (as in book learning), book, and the Arabic term haram, which designates those things which are ungodly or sinful. Thus Boko Haram is not the group's common name, but its slogan to the effect that "Western education (and such products that arises from it) is sacrilege. For More elaborate on it history and evolution, read J. Peter Pham, "Boko Haram's Evolving Threat" in Africa Security Brief, A Publication of the African Centre for Strategic Studies, No.20, May 2011, pp.1-2.
- ii. See D. Cook "Boko Haram Escalates Attacks on Christians in Northern Nigeria," Combating Terrorism Centre, cited in <http://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/boko-haram-escalates-attacks-on-christians-in-northern-nigeria>, accessed on 21 August, 2012.
- iii. See "UN House Bombing: Why We Struck Boko Haram" in Vanguard of August 28 2011, cited in <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2011/08/un-house-bombing-why-we-struck-boko-haram/>. Retrieved 21 August 2012.
- iv. See O. Chukwueze, "Boko Haram Bombs Police Headquarters, Abuja," cited in <http://www.informationnigeria.org/2011/06/boko-haram-bombs-police-headquarters-abuja.html>, accessed on 21 August, 2012.
- v. See H. Umar and B. Adigun, in the Huffington Post "Boko Haram Prison Break: Radical Sect Free 40 in Nigeria," cited in http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/06/25/boko-haram-prison-break_n_1624339.html. Retrieved 27 June 2012.
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