African Journal on Terrorism

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Contributions

African journal on Terrorism is a continental, peer-reviewed, interdisciplinary journal. The journal seeks to publish quality grounded research on all aspects of terrorism, counter-terrorism and violent extremism. The journal seeks to provide a platform that encourages critical analysis and sustained reflection of terrorism and violent extremism on the continent.

Procedures

All submitted manuscripts are subject to an initial blind peer-review by the Editors, and, if found suitable for further consideration, to a second peer-review by at least two independent, anonymous expert referees. The Editor In Chief and Editors review the comments from reviewers, and where appropriate communicate them directly to the author. The Editors will inform the author if the original or revised paper has been accepted for publication in the journal.

Length and Format

Authors submitting papers for the consideration of the journal should limit their works to between 5000 and 6000 words, including references, text, all tables and figures. They are encouraged to support their arguments with relevant statistics, pictures and graphical illustrations. The preferred referencing format of the journal is the electronically generated endnotes. The referencing style however, is the Harvard referencing style. Abstract should not exceed 300 words with at least five keywords.

Contents

Editorial

One of the editions of this Journal produced in October 2022 focused on unconstitutional changes of government (UCG) in Africa given the threat that the problem poses to the fight against terrorism and violent extremism in the continent. The papers have continued to be appreciated by our readers who consider them to have shed better light on the nexus between terrorism and UCG. We warmly thank all contributors to the special edition for their development-relevant thoughts, analytical dexterity and writing skills. Some of the issues they raised in their papers are in tandem with the submissions of the African Union (AU) at the 16th extraordinary session of the Assembly held on the two issues (terrorism and UCG in Africa) on 28 May 2022 at Malabo, Republic of Equatorial Guinea. The resolutions of the meeting are contained in the last document in the present edition of our journal. Future contributors to this journal and related publications may wish to make reference to and draw important lessons from them.

The remainder of the present edition of the journal consist of twelve articles that could broken into two main parts in terms of the critical issues addressed. The first three articles shed more light on the manifestations and causes of terrorism and violent extremism in Africa. The issues addressed include cattle rustling, school attacks and other risks. The next two papers, still on dynamics of violent extremism, dealt with the provocative issue of youth participation in violent extremism and what could be done about the problem. The remaining papers focus on efforts at countering terrorism and violent extremism in some parts of the continent. The terrorist groups dealt with in this respect include Al-Shabab, Boko Haram, Islamic State, and Ansar Al-Sunnah. One of the papers dealt with the ongoing deradicalization processes in Nigeria and need to invest more on cyber counterterrorism.

As observed in the past, most of the articles in the volume are on Nigeria. The conflict issues and number of academic institutions studying them could be responsible for this. This notwithstanding, it is wished that the other African countries should equally share their stories with us as our regular monitoring of conflicts around Africa shows that terrorism and violent extremism is an emerging problem almost everywhere now. However, the issues differ from one country to the other. While the countries currently facing the problems counter them the states not going through the problems need to put in place prevention mechanisms. It would be interesting to have scholars share stories of these prevention methods with us. Our academic institutions, policy centres and political leaders need such information for improving their performances.

More papers are equally needed on the youth question. Most of those writing on this issue focus more on youth participation in terrorism and violent extremism. Those writing on the measures for dealing with the problem leave out how the African Union is confronting the issues. The policies of the African Union on the matter include the African Youth Charter, Youth Decade Plan of Action, and the Malabo Decision on Youth Empowerment all of which are neatly connected to the attainment of the AU Agenda 2063. The Youth Decade Plan of Action focuses on 5 key priority areas. The third is on "Governance, Peace and Security". Several programmes and trainings are being carried out by the AU on this issue. We solicit for articles on the aspects having to do with the countering terrorism and violent extremism in different parts of the African continent.

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Is Cattle Rustling in Karamoja Region of Uganda an Act of Terrorism?

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Abstract This article interrogated whether cattle rustling in Karamoja region of Uganda is an act of terrorism. The aim of the article is to help scholars of these subject areas to understand and distinguish between cattle rustling and terrorism. Data was collected through content review and interview. The article found that while indiscriminate violence is meted out (killing, maiming and destruction of property) in both, there are no political, ideological and religious considerations in cattle rustling as it is the case in terrorism. These fundamental differences set the two phenomena apart from each other. The article concludes that despite similarities in violence, the differences strongly outweigh the similarities. Therefore, cattle rustling as practiced in Karamoja region of Uganda is not an act of terrorism. The article recommends that Anti-Stock Theft Unit personnel and scholars of these subjects understand well the distinction between cattle rustling and terrorism. Researchers should research more on cattle rustling in other parts of Africa for more possible findings in relation to terrorism.

Keywords

Cattle rustling , Karamoja , Terrorism , Uganda.

Introduction

This article arose as a result of an argument between some Anti-Stock Theft Unit (ASTU) personnel of the Uganda Police Force and the author. ASTU is a unit within the Uganda Police Force charged with the responsibility of curbing cattle rustling in the Karamoja region of the country. The ASTU personnel argued that cattle rustlers

inflict a lot of suffering on the communities they attack; killing, maiming, destroying properties and creating extreme fear among community members. By committing these atrocities, their actions are reminiscent of the atrocities committed by the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), a terrorist group operating in western Uganda and eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). They should therefore be treated as terrorists since their activities are similar to the activities of terrorists. As such, they should be charged in court under the Anti-terrorism Act of 2002 of Uganda. The author argued to the contrary.

The aim of the article is to shed some light on the distinction between cattle rustling and terrorism. This will help, not only ASTU personnel, but scholars of terrorism to understand cattle rustling as practiced in Karamoja region of Uganda visa-vie terrorism. The article begins with an analysis of Karamoja region, origin of guns in Karamoja and attempts to disarm the Karimojong, Karimojong attachment to cattle; hence cattle rustling, understanding terrorism and analysis of cattle rustling visa-vie terrorism. It then draws a conclusion and recommendations.

Methodology

Data for the article was sourced through qualitative means; content review and interview. Reviewed documents included United Nations conventions against terrorism and other related publications on terrorism, Uganda's Anti-terrorism Act and Uganda police records. Key informants included ASTU personnel and other security officials, local council leaders in Karamoja and former cattle rustlers. Observations were made on some preparatory activities before cattle rustling and photographs taken. Sampling of informants was done purposively as these were the people believed to offer the necessary insight to illuminate the understanding of the subject.

Analysis of Karamoja region of Uganda

Karamoja region lies in north-eastern Uganda bordering the Republic of Kenya to the east and the Republic of South Sudan to the north and north-east. Within Uganda, the region borders other ethnic groups; Acholi and Lango to the western part, Teso to the southern and Sabiny to the south-eastern part. The region is comprised of eight districts; Karenga, Kaabong, Kotido, Abim, Moroto, Nakapiripirit, Amudat and Napak. It harbors seven clans; Dodoth in Karenga/Kaabong, Ethur in Abim, Jie in Kotido, Bokora in Napak, Matheniko in Moroto, Pian in Nakapiripirit and Pokot in Amudat district.[1] The inhabitants of the region are called Karimojong and speak the Akarimojong language.

Figure 1. Map of Uganda showing Karamoja region.
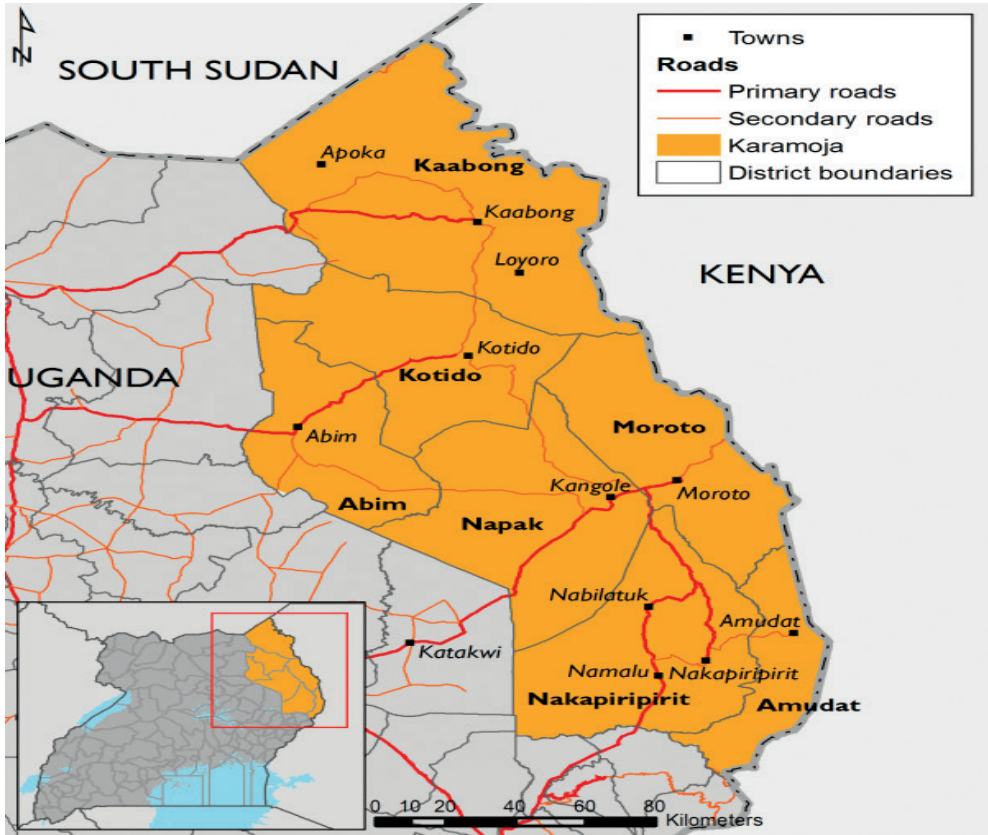
Source: Famine early warning system, 2016.

The Ethur clan is an agricultural community, depending solely on agriculture for their livelihood. Crop production is predominantly sorghum, maize, millet, groundnuts, sunflower, cowpeas, simsim, beans, cassava and potatoes. This clan does not rustle cattle although they are in Karamoja region.[2] Their dialect is equally different; speaking ethur language. The rest of the remaining clans in region are cattle keepers. They keep cows, goats, sheep, donkeys and camels. Livestock production is the core of their economic activity, with production focused primarily on cattle products; milk, meat, butter, cheese and ghee. Therefore, cattle keeping form the bulk of their livelihood although there is very minimal agricultural activity, mainly the growing of sorghum and cucumber. This largely pastoral area is a semi-arid zone, not well-suited for agricultural production given that it has the lowest annual rainfall in Uganda. Dry season begins in October and ends in March in a normal year. Rainfall is often erratic, with the rainy season typically running from April to September of the year.[3]

Figure 2. Karimojong herdsmen grazing cattle in Jie, Kotido district.

Source: Karamoja integrated disarmament and development programme.

Karamoja is one of the poorest and most chronically food insecure region of Uganda. Plagued by decades of conflict, instability, cattle rustling and inconsistent climatology, the region is marginalized and underdeveloped. Inter-ethnic conflict has historically driven insecurity, instability and lagging socioeconomic advancement.[4] Control for limited resources (water, pasture, etc.) and political dynamics are underlying drivers of the poor human development in the region.

Karamoja region exhibits Uganda's lowest human development indicators with minimal physical infrastructure, education, health facilities and employment opportunities.[5] A greater part of the region being occupied by cattle keepers, there is cattle rustling and counter-rustling among the different clans. In the rustling episodes, a lot of suffering is meted out to the victims; killing, maiming of people, destruction of properties and creation of wide spread fear among the survivors.

Origin of guns in Karamoja region

Several years after Uganda became a British Protectorate in 1894, Karamoja as a region remained un-administered by the British for long because the semi-arid conditions in the region were not attractive for the production of cash crops like cotton and coffee to service the industries in Britain. However, Karamoja offered significant opportunity for trade in ivory and slaves by Arab and Greeks (Welch, 1969). As the number of elephants in the region reduced, the value of ivory increased and traders increasingly offered to exchange firearms for ivory from the Arabs (Barber, 1964). Modern arms were exchanged for ivory and slaves, which ignited weapons proliferation in the region. The arms eased the process of acquiring livestock by the Karimojong through rustling.[6]

It is argued that some of the traders were involved in some of these raids in order to appease the Karimojong, thereby increasing the scale and intensity of the raids. It was observed that while all this was going on, the Government had no detailed knowledge of the region, and the firearms trade in particular. Although the Protectorate government believed that both the human and economic cost of administering the remote Karamoja region was too high, a decision was made to conquer Karamoja because, in military terms, the British could no longer ignore Karamoja, lest they lose it to Arab traders. In 1911, the Protectorate Government decided to close the region to all traders, allowing only one opening at Mbale, with occasional patrols in the area. The traders were blamed for the lawlessness in Karamoja. By 1912, a permanent Northern Garrison had been established to undertake the pacification of Karamoja. This was achieved by shooting people, burning their huts and seizing livestock.[7]

In 1971, a military coup took place in Uganda in which Idi Amin overthrew Milton Obote, one who received power from the colonial government. Obote's army fled and abandoned the arms stores in the regional headquarters of Karamoja, Moroto. The Karimojong broke into the arms stores, looted the guns and ammunitions. Coupled with the flow of guns from conflict-torn Sudan, Ethiopia and northern Kenya, the stock of guns in Karamoja region increased. Hitherto, the conflicts in Southern Sudan and Ethiopia continue to cause arms flow to Karamoja region, further intensifying cattle rustling.[8]

Attempts to disarm the Karimojong

The National Resistance Movement (NRM) Government of Uganda, the government in power, has attempted to disarm the Karimojong four times in its 36-year reign in power. Between 1986 and 1999, the Karimojong intensified their rustling of cattle which devastated much of Karamoja and the neighboring districts. Due to pressure from politicians in neighboring districts, Parliament passed a resolution calling for a comprehensive range of measures to tackle the tragic problem of cattle rustling and illicit arms in the region. The first phase was launched from December 2001 to December 2003. This phase required voluntary return of arms by the armed Karimojong warriors. However, the minimal deployment of the Uganda People's Defense Forces (UPDF) in Karamoja and Local Defense Units (LDU) failed to contain rapacious rustling by armed Karimojong on defenseless populations in other districts. As inter-clan rustling and revenge rustling flared up in the whole of Karamoja, even the clans who had disarmed re-armed. By November 2003, the government began a fresh re-designing of disarmament in the region.[9]

The second disarmament phase started in September 2004 to February 2006. In this phase, some progress was made, but inter-clan rustling of cattle continued. This phase focused mainly on community mobilization, sensitization and stakeholder consultations. Despite some achievements being registered, inter-clan rustling continued leading to the third phase of disarmament exercise.[10]

The third phase started from 2006 to 2010, in which the military took center stage. Some successes in the recovery of guns were registered, for example, a total of 400 guns were recovered in Nakapiripirit district. However, road ambushes and revenge killings continued throughout Karamoja region. The continued cattle rustling and counter-rustling justified the introduction of Cordon, Search and Disarm operation by the army. This operation registered significant peace as there were few incidents of cattle rustling from 2010 to 2020. However, it appeared as if this period of peace was a period of re-armament of the warriors.[11]

In early 2021, there were intense cattle rustling incidents in Karamoja which forced the government to launch the fourth phase of disarmament in July 2021. This phase is continuing hitherto, with the Karimojong warriors targeting intelligence security officers and civilian informants for passing information to the army. Field reports indicate that the Karimojong warriors are daring the army by rustling cattle from kraals protected by the army. These phases of disarmament of the Karimojong without lasting peace pose a question; what motivates the Karimojong to continue cattle rustling despite sustained government pressure to disarm them? This article traced the answer to the Karimojong culture and the commercialization of cattle rustling.[12]

Karimojong cultural attachment to cattle

The motivation for cattle rustling in Karamoja is premised on the culture of the Karimojong people. The cultural and religious life of the Karimojong revolves around animals, without which life would be meaningless.[13] All important events in the course of social life are marked by the presence of cattle as an essential component of rituals marking births, initiations, marriages, deaths as well as the redress of wrongs done to members of society. Friendships are started and strengthened with gifts of cattle. All the major ceremonial celebrations of pastoral life have cattle at their centre: these include *atuwa* (ritual communal killing of name-oxen), *akitocol* (elders feast), and *akiwudakin ngaatuk* (driving the animals to their enclosure).[14] *Akiriket,* the solemn assemblies of social life, would be impossible to conduct without the ritual killing of oxen as an essential part of it.

The Karimojong relationship with cattle is characterized by features recognized as central to pastoralist culture. Cattle are different from all other domestic animals; this can be discerned from the way the Karimojong relate to them. Cattle are never counted anonymously; they are always recognized one by one according to their physical characteristics or behavioral features; and each of them has a particular name derived from the color of their skin or the shape of their horns. Particularly important is the relationship between an individual Karimojong herder and his specifically selected beloved ox (*emong ngolominat*):

> Having shown a preference for a certain animal, a young shepherd receives it as a special gift from his father, and from that moment the youth acquires a new name by which he is identified once he has grown up. The name states that he is the owner of the ox, e.g. *Apalokori*, means; *Apa* (owner) *lo* (of the ox) *kori* (colored like the giraffe), *Apalodou* (owner of the ox white like clouds (*edou*)). This assimilation between man and animal is better understood by the behavior of the owner towards his animal: his musical and poetic activities are centered on his ox. When he moves on long journeys to the grazing grounds, festive gatherings and dancing parties and his prowess in wars, he praises his ox. He swears in the name of his ox when he is serious about something: *Aberengoloti'mong akwangan!* (I swear by my white ox). In periods of severe drought, he deprives himself of water and quenches the thirst of his ox first. He will never kill his ox even if it is necessary, but ask his friend to do the killing in a ceremony of *atuwa,* and replaces it with another one of similar characteristics. When a name-ox is rustled by enemies, the owner even commits suicide.[15]

Cattle have an intrinsic value as the means upon which the whole fabric of the social and religious life of the Karimojong depends.[16] Cattle are their pride, the object of their poetic composition and songs. Enjoying an almost human status, cattle are friends and companions of the Karimojong warriors during the long and lonely days of the dry season, which are spent far away from families, homes and villages looking for pasture. The Karimojong will undertake whatever is required to ensure the survival of their cattle, no matter what the cost in terms of personal sacrifice and deprivation. For cattle, the Karimojong fight and die in defense or acquisition of it. Novelli summarizes the position of cattle in Kaimojong society:

> When born, the father has a child because of the passage of cattle, he is linked to siblings by common interest in cattle allocated to his mother's compound, to half-siblings by common interest in a single herd which will be their shared inheritance. He has a decent group and a clan which is symbolized by a common cattle brand. His most distinctive name is derived from cattle, forms and feeds

a family of his own with cattle. His adult life is centered on defending the cattle he has, and fighting to acquire more. When he dies, he is wrapped in cattle hide and laid in a grave beneath cattle kraal. In short, to Karimojong as individuals and society, nothing is more important than cattle. Herding is more than a mode of livelihood; it is a way of life.[17]

This cultural attachment forms the main motivation for cattle rustling among the Karimojong as their whole life, from birth to death, is centered on cattle.[18] This explains why the owner of a name-ox can commit suicide if the name-ox is rustled because his honor and social esteem is stripped off. Therefore, the Karimojong warriors find rustling and counter-rustling of cattle the only way of ownership of cattle to assure this esteem. In the rustling process, a lot of atrocities are committed.

Commercialization of cattle rustling

Other commentators cite commercialization of cattle rustling as the current driving factor for cattle rustling. They argue that the cultural motivation for rustling has gradually transcended to a commercial reason.[19] The Uganda Peoples' Defense Force (UPDF), the national army, has acknowledged the commercialization of cattle rustling saying that the rustlers make contact with businessmen, and after stealing the animals from grazing grounds, they load them on to waiting trucks along the road sides. Veterinary officers even issue movement permits for the animals before rustling takes place. However, the proceeds from selling cattle have not been traced to feed into any terrorist activities.

Figure 3. A Karimojong woman practicing target in rustling.

Source: *Field data (2020).*

Besides killing, people are maimed, *manyattas* (villages) are burnt with food stuff in granaries. When returning from a failed cattle rustling mission, the warriors become very ferocious because of coming without cattle. They ambush motor vehicles and motor cycle riders and kill people. The survivors are left in terror.[20]

Table 1. Animals rustled, people killed and maimed; from 2010-2020.

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Cows rustled	2,125	6,866	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	193	3,460
Goat rustled	278	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12
People killed	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19
People maimed	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15

Source: *Uganda police annual crime reports, 2010-2020.*

From table 1 above, it is evident that in 2010, 2011, 2019 and 2020, some data on cattle rustling were recorded. However, for the rest of the years, there were no records captured. This is because rustling takes place in the jungles under risky conditions of violence. Records of people killed, maimed, cows and goats stolen are not easily accessed by the police. Being a commercial venture too, the animals rustled are immediately sold off and slaughtered, making it difficult to get any record. Besides, the police detectives who normally capture records of crime consider cattle rustling as a military matter and don't venture much into its investigation, hence leaving much data unrecorded. With these difficulties, the statistical data on cattle rustling cannot be precisely ascertained, although press reports are awash with stories of the act and associated atrocities.

Understanding terrorism

The term "terrorism" was initially coined to describe the reign of Terror, in the period of the French Revolution from 1793 to 1794, during which the Revolutionary Government directed violence and harsh measures against citizens suspected of being enemies of the Revolution. In turn, popular resistance to Napoleon's invasion of the Spanish Peninsula led to a new form of fight, the "guerrilla", derived from the Spanish word *guerra*, meaning "little war". As a weapon of politics and warfare, the use of the term terrorism can be traced back to ancient times. In ancient times and in various forms, terrorism is as old as governments and armed struggles. Although the term is not subject to a universally agreed definition, terrorism is broadly understood as a method of coercion that utilizes or threatens to utilize violence in order to spread fear to attain

political or ideological goals. Contemporary terrorist violence is distinguished in law from ordinary violence by the classic terrorist Triangle; A attacks B, to convince or coerce C to change its position regarding some action or policy desired by A.

Figure 4. Terrorist Triangle.
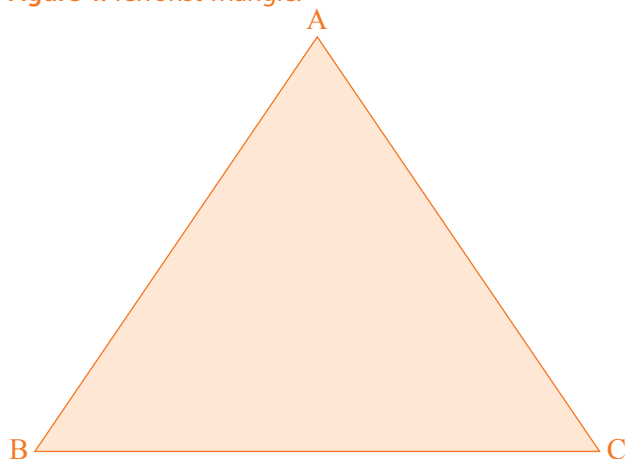
Source: Author's construct (2022).

Applying the triangle on Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) terrorism on Uganda as an example, Allied Democratic Forces (A) attacks civilians (B) in order to force Uganda Government (C) to change its position on fighting (A), the Allied Democratic Forces. The attack spreads fear as the violence is directed unexpectedly against innocent victims, which in turn puts pressure on third parties such as the international community to change their policy or position on ADF. Contemporary terrorists utilize many forms of violence and indiscriminately target civilians, military facilities and state officials to achieve their objectives.

Several documents, agencies and countries have defined and given terrorism various meanings. The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English defines Terrorism as; the use of violence such as bombing, shooting or kidnapping to obtain political demands.[21] It adds that a terrorist is someone who uses violence such as bombing, shooting, etc to obtain political demands.

The United Nation General Assembly Resolution 49/60 of 1994 titled "Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism," contains a provision describing terrorism. The Resolution describes:

Criminal acts intended or calculated to provoke a state of terror in the general public, a group of persons or particular persons for political purposes are in

any circumstance unjustifiable, whatever the considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or any other nature that may be invoked to justify them.[22]

The Arab Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism adopted by the Council of Arab Ministers of Interior and the Council of Arab Ministers of Justice in Egypt, 1998 conceived terrorism as:

Any act or threat of violence, whatever its motives or purposes, that occurs in the advancement of an individual or collective criminal agenda and seeking to sow panic among people, causing fear by harming them, or placing their lives, liberty or security in danger, or seeking to cause damage to the environment or to public or private installations or property or to occupying or seizing them, or seeking to jeopardize national resources.[23]

The UN Security Council Resolution 1566 (2004) gives terrorism yet another definition:

Criminal acts, including against civilians, committed with the intent to cause death or serious bodily injury, or taking of hostages, with the purpose to provoke a state of terror in the general public or in a group of persons or particular persons, intimidate a population or compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act, which constitute offences within the scope of and as defined in the international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism, are under no circumstances justifiable by considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or other similar nature, and calls upon all States to prevent such acts and, if not prevented, to ensure that such acts are punished by penalties consistent with their grave nature.[24]

In 2005, the United Nation Panel on terrorism further described it as "any act intended to cause death or serious bodily harm to civilians or non-combatants with the purpose of intimidating a population or compelling a government or an international organization to do or abstain from doing any act".[25]

The European Union (EU) defines terrorism for legal/official purposes in Art.1 of the Framework Decision on Combating Terrorism (2002). The EU provides that terrorist offences are certain criminal offences set out in a list comprised largely of serious offences against persons and property which:

Given their nature or context, may seriously damage a country or an international organization where committed with the aim of: seriously intimidating a population; or unduly compelling a Government or international organization to perform or abstain from performing any act; or seriously destabilizing or destroying the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a country or an international organization.[26]

The United States defined terrorism under the Federal Criminal Code and lists the crimes associated with it. Chapter 113(B) defines terrorism as:

"… activities that involve violent… or life-threatening acts… that are a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or of any State and… appear to be intended (i) to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; (ii) to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or (iii) to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping; and…(C) occur primarily within the territorial jurisdiction of the United States…".[27]

Further, the United States Patriot Act of 2001 list terrorist activities as:

• Threatening, conspiring or attempting to hijack airplanes, boats, buses or other vehicles.

• Any crime committed with the use of any weapon or dangerous device, when the intent of the crime is determined to be the endangerment of public safety or substantial property damage rather than for mere personal monetary gain.

• Threatening, conspiring or attempting to commit acts of violence on any protected persons, such as government officials.[28]

Further, the Federal Bureau of Investigation defines terrorism as the unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a Government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives.[29]

Besides, State terrorism has been defined as:

Acts of terrorism conducted by governments or encouraged and funded by an established government of a state against its own people or in support of international terrorism or a state making its resources; financial, political,

training and intelligence available for terrorists to create political and economic instability in another country.[30]

Terrorism is often, though not always, defined in terms of four characteristics:
1. The threat or use of violence.
2. A political objective, i.e. the desire to change the status quo.
3. The intention to spread fear by committing spectacular public acts.
4. The intentional targeting of civilians.

In Uganda, the Uganda Anti-terrorism Act 2002 defines Terrorism as:

Any act of violence or threat of violence carried out for purposes of influencing government or intimidating the public and for a political, religious, social and economic aim, indiscriminately without due regard to the safety of others or property.[31]

This Act was designed to suppress acts of terrorism, punish persons who plan, instigate, support, finance or execute acts of terrorism; prescribe terrorist organizations and punish members of, or who profess in public to be members of, or who convene or attend meetings of, or who support/finance or facilitate activities of terrorist organizations. It was also designed to provide for investigation of acts of terrorism and obtain information in respect of such acts including the authorizing of the interception of the correspondence of and the surveillance of persons suspected to be planning or to be involved in acts of terrorism and provide for other related matters.

Table 2. Statistics of terrorist incidents in Uganda from 2010-2020.

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Cases reported	1	10	8	8	9	18	15	12	16	10	2
People killed	78	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
People maimed	89	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Source: Uganda police annual crime report, 2010-2020.

From table 2 above, it is only the year 2010 which provides a clear picture of what happened in terms of people killed and maimed in a terrorist act. This was the 2010 Al-shabab bombing of revelers in Kampala, Uganda, who were watching the finals of the 2010 Football World Cup. For the rest of the years, terrorism cases were reported, but no people were killed or maimed either. These statistics do not give a true picture of terrorist incidents in the country.

The terrorist assassinations of security officers, Muslim clerics and judicial officers registered in the subsequent years after 2010 by the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) were recorded as "murder by shooting" or "attempted murder" in the crime reports. Similarly in July 2021 in the southern part of the country, some people were shot dead or hacked to death by groups of people (Monitor news paper; 24/7/2021). This act was blamed on Allied Democratic Forces terrorist group. In October 2021, a bomb went off in one of the police posts in Kampala city and the Islamic State (IS) group claimed responsibility, pushing the Counter-terrorism police to heighten security alertness in major installations and public places of mass gatherings (churches, mosques, markets and bus/taxi parks) (British Broadcasting Cooperation (BBC) focus on Africa news; 15/10/2021)). The authorities have always down played these terrorist incidents and dubbed them as ordinary crimes for fear of jeopardizing foreign investment and tourism. Therefore, the police do not record them as terrorist incidents.

Much of the terrorist activities in Uganda have been blamed on ADF and Al-shabab terrorist groups who infiltrate the country from their bases in the Democratic Republic of Congo and carry out their heinous acts. However, while the Government and other people consider these acts as terrorist acts, some cynics have often commented that one's terrorist is another person's freedom fighter. Like beauty, terrorism is in the eye of the beholder, hence the difficulty and controversy in defining and understanding it.

Analysis of cattle rustling visa-vis terrorism

This article has attempted to give a comprehensive understanding of cattle rustling and terrorism. From the foregone, cattle rustling is violently executed with the use of lethal weapons (AK 47) occasioned by killings, maiming, destruction of properties and instilling intense fear in people. It is planned, organized and operated secretly and usually from an underground network. The Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (EAPCCO), a top body of police forces/services that plan crime prevention in East Africa, echoes this understanding and asserts that cattle rustling is stealing or planning, organizing, attempting, aiding or abetting the stealing of livestock by any person from one country or community to another, where the theft is accompanied by dangerous weapons and violence.

This understanding of cattle rustling is shared with terrorism. Although terrorism does not have a universally agreed definition, hence understanding, it is broadly conceived as the use of coercion/violence and threats in order to spread fear. The use of violence to cause death, serious bodily injury, fear, panic and intimidation has also been cited in the understanding of terrorism by the United Nations bodies cited

in the text. The use of violence to destroy life and property, cause fear and panic in the population and forms the hallmark of the two phenomena. To this effect and to a large extent, the modus operandi of cattle rustling and terrorism are similar. This brings the two phenomena close to one another.

Despite the similarities, there is a remarkable distinction between cattle rustling and terrorism. While terrorism is better understood in terms of the Terrorist Triangle, this conceptualization is absent in cattle rustling. Unlike terrorism, cattle rustling is not intended to coerce anybody to change position as far as rustling is concerned. Another distinction lies in the motivation to commit acts of cattle rustling and terrorism. The motivation for cattle rustling lies majorly in the cultural aspirations of the Karimojong as cited by Pazzalia (1982), Novelli (1988) and Okello (2020). The Karimojong warriors rustle animals to satisfy their cultural aspirations as exemplified;

"....... his most distinctive name is derived from cattle, forms and feeds a family of his own with cattle. His adult life is centered on defending the cattle he has, and fighting to acquire more. When he dies, he is wrapped in cattle hide and laid in a grave beneath cattle kraal. In short, to Karimojong as individuals and society, nothing is more important than cattle" (Novelli, 1988a).

Similarly, for cultural reasons, a Karimojong finds it difficult to kill his name-ox;

"....... he will never kill his ox even if it is necessary, but ask his friend to do the killing in a ceremony of *atuwa,* and replaces it with another one of similar characteristics. When a name-ox is rustled by enemies, the owner even commits suicide" (Okello, 2020).

This motivation assures an attachment to cattle which perpetuates cattle rustling. Commercial motive has also been cited to fuel cattle rustling in Karamoja region as noted by Maganda and Greiger (2013), Okoli et al (2014) and Bunei (2016). These authors note a gradual shift from culture to commerce as the driving force for cattle rustling. Although commerce plays a role in sustaining cattle rustling, it is not as strong as culture, since it does not form an integral part of Karimojong life.

Commercial reasons have been cited scantly and minimally for the motivation for terrorism:

"....... substantial property damage rather than for mere personal monetary gain" (United States Patriotic Act, 2001), and .... social and economic aim, indiscriminately without due regard to the safety of others or property" (Uganda Anti-terrorism Act 2002).

This scanty and minimal citation of commercial gain in the understanding of terrorism signifies that it is not a strong motivation. It is therefore not comparable to the strong commercial motivation in cattle rustling.

However, the strongest motivation for terrorism lies in the philosophical, ideological, religious, political, ethnic and racial orientation of the perpetrators:

"....... are under no circumstances justifiable by considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or other similar nature ...." (United Nation Resolution 1566).

Similarly, the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 49/60 of 1994 cites political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic and religious as being very crucial in the motivation for acts of terrorism:

"....... calculated to provoke a state of terror in the general public, a group of persons or particular persons for political purposes are in any circumstance unjustifiable, whatever the considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or any other nature that may be invoked to justify them" (UN General Assembly Resolution 49/60, 1994).

Similarly, the Anti-terrorism Act 2002 of Uganda emphasizes political and religious motives:

.... violence or threat of violence carried out for purposes of influencing government or intimidating the public and for a political, religious .... (Uganda Anti-terrorism Act 2002).

It therefore follows that these numerous citations of political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic and religious inclinations denote that it is the major driving force in terrorism, hence motivation. This orientation of the perpetrators of terrorism is not cited in cattle rustling. Therefore, this presents a significant distinction between cattle rustling and terrorism.

Conclusion

Following the analysis of cattle rustling and terrorism, and recognizing that there are similarities between them, there are much more fundamental differences than similarities. The political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic and religious orientation characteristic of terrorism is conspicuously absent in cattle rustling in

Karamoja region of Uganda. This difference sets the two phenomena far apart. Therefore, cattle rustling as practiced in Karamoja region of Uganda is not an act of terrorism. It is therefore not necessary to charge the perpetrators under the Anti-terrorism Act 2002 of Uganda as argued by the ASTU personnel.

The article recommends that the ASTU personnel and the Ugandan law enforcement personnel in general, take keen interest in understanding the distinction between cattle rustling and terrorism in order to make appropriate decisions in the exercise of their duties. Similarly, scholars of terrorism should consider researching into cattle rustling in countries where the act is practiced such as Kenya, Ethiopia, Tanzania, South Sudan, Nigeria and Cameroon in order to understand the dynamics in relation to terrorism.

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Attack on Schools in Nigeria: The Crime-Terror Nexus

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Abstract Schools and other educational institutions are generally classified in International Humanitarian Law as private property irrespective of ownership, and the deliberate targeting of academic buildings is deemed a war crime in both international and non-international armed conflicts. This paper examines the incidences of attacks on schools and scholars in conflict situations in Northwest and Northeast Nigeria over the last decade, as well as the identities of assailants, attack patterns, relationships between groups, and motivations of attackers. By comparatively analyzing the typology of school-focused assaults associated with the two distinct groups involved in the attacks – fundamentalist Islamist organizations and organized criminal groups – the study reviews the applicability of international law to the deliberate and systemic attack on schools and the abduction of schoolchildren by combatants as an operational strategy in Nigeria. Regardless of motivation, attacks on scholarship by armed groups in Nigeria violate international law, and this must be emphasized in international and local discourse.

1. Introduction

Nigeria's two adjourning geopolitical regions at the edge of the Sahel are sites of two different ongoing violent conflicts that have developed and evolved independently (Barnet et all, 2022). In the Northeast region, the decade long conflict triggered by Islamist fundamentalist led by Boko Haram and its spawns has caused around 350,000 deaths, displaced over 3 million residents and destroyed public infrastructure in a region already blighted by poverty and poor socioeconomic outcomes (Reuters, 2021). In the Northwest, groups of violent non-state actors, widely referred to as bandits, are systematically strangling Nigeria's most populated geopolitical zone, with distressing consequences. In 2019, bandits were reportedly responsible for almost half of all violent deaths in Nigeria (Daily Trust, 2019).

One of the direct impacts of these ruinous conflicts is the worsening of the already bad educational indices in the regions. 69% of Nigeria's 18.5 million out of schoolchildren are in the region (Premium Times, 2018). Many of these out of school situations are directly caused by attacks on learning spaces, teachers and on students. According to a report, between 2015 and 2019 (GCPEA, 2020), there were 100 reported attacks on schools in Nigeria and there has been an increase in the number of these attacks between 2020 and 2021, which resulted in the closure of schools by state government across Nigeria's Northwest and Northeast regions.

There is a strong link between education and the attainment of developmental goals, therefore these attacks undermines the very foundation of economic growth and perpetuates a cycle of conflict and poverty, particularly for the two regions that are already blighted by extreme poverty and poor socioeconomic outcomes. Beyond the physical effects of attack on schools that results in loss of life, injury and destruction of school infrastructure, it is very difficult to measure the psychological effect of murder, disappearance and destruction of institutions that are supposed to be places of learning and refuge. Also, in a number of occasions these attacks are primed to terrorize students, teachers and the public, from academic institutions.

These attacks by Islamist groups and organized criminal groups, known as bandits in the two regions form a part of global pattern of attacking scholarship and scholars as a war tactics and this brings International Humanitarian Law into the picture. In spite of the grave implications of these attacks, there is no global monitoring framework for attacks on schools and attacks on schools get less attention than other violations of International Humanitarian Law involving children (HRW, 2009).

Throughout this paper schools, educational institution, structures and building for education will be used interchangeably to mean facilities used in educational training

and their immoveable components but special religious schools are excluded in the definition of schools.

2. Status of Schools in International Law

Questions on the status of schools and academic institutions in conflict situations go back to 1863, with the Lieber Code. The Code proves that "property belonging to […] establishments of an exclusively charitable character, to establishments of education, or foundations for the promotion of knowledge, whether public schools, universities, academies of learning or observatories, museums of the fine arts, or of a scientific character such property is not to be considered public property […]" (Lieber Code, 1863). In addition, the Hague Convention 11 defines 'educational institutions' as private property (Hague II, 1899).

Article 56 of the 1907 Hague Convention explicitly provides that "The property of […] institutions dedicated to […] education, […] even when State property, shall be treated as private property" (Convention IV, 1907). The Roerich Pact defined "historic monuments, museums, scientific, artistic, educational and cultural institutions as neutral" (Roerich Pact, 1935).

Deducible from the foregoing is the fact that schools in International Humanitarian Law are generally classified as civilian and private property. This reinforces the assumed neutral quality of scholarship and school structures. However, Arai is of the opinion that the classification of Article 56 by the 1907 Hague Convention of property of institutions dedicated to sciences and arts as private property is fictitious, but none the less, he asserts that the classification was intended to give 'it a privileged position in terms of its protected scope' (Arai, 2009).

The Roerich Pact in Article 1 designates "historic monuments, museums, scientific, artistic, educational and cultural institutions" as neutral entities and are expected to be respected and protected by belligerents. Personnel of these institutions are equally cloaked with same respect and protection. There is a near unanimous view among scholars that the protection afforded schools in International Humanitarian Law is inferior to those accorded hospitals and religious buildings and that school buildings have to be occupied by civilians to be clothed with privileged status in conflict situations.

Within the ambit of definitions of 'civilian' provided by Additional Protocol I, educational structures would be considered one as long as the their essential raison d'être remains the education of the civilian population. Included in the definition of

school structures would be regular and standard school buildings, in their different manifestations across cultures and societies, but also temporary structures that offer academic training to civilian population. Going by the Article 50(3) of Additional Protocol I the fact that school obtains the services of armed guards does not change its protected status as a civilian entity. However, the ratio of military-civilian population in a school building will raise the question of proportionality (Lewis, 2006).

The laws and customs regulating warfare on land, air and at sea imposes a duty on belligerents to take necessary steps to spare buildings dedicated to public worship, art, science or charitable purposes, historic monuments and hospitals. This section looks at the jurisprudential subheads under which schools are protected in international humanitarian law.

From 1899 and 1907 when the Hague Conventions came into existence, it has since then become an international norm that civilian facilities are generally protected from military attack. Article 25 of Conventions embodies this basic principle of International Humanitarian Law. Although, educational institutions are not specifically listed they are derivatively covered as long as they are undefended buildings. Article 27 of the 1899 Hague Regulations which is impari material with Article 27 of the 1907 Hague Regulations and Article 5 of the 1907 Hague Convention provides that: 'In sieges and bombardments all necessary steps must be taken to spare, as far as possible, buildings dedicated to religion, art, science, or charitable purposes, historic monuments […] provided they are not being used at the time for military purposes'.

This rule imposes a duty of care on commanders in conflict to distinguish schools and other objects in this categorization in the course of taking decisions on their targets. These provisions are considered customary Law and its primary provisions apply in non international armed conflict (Frits, 2007). Article 51 of Protocol 1 additional to the Geneva Convention, which addresses International conflict, further reinforces this protection of schools as civilian entities. It requires that civilian objects be protected from indiscriminate attack and the dangers linked with military operations. Article 13(1) of Protocol II additional to 1949 Geneva Convention extends the coverage to non-international conflicts.

Article 3(d) of the Statute of International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia confers jurisdiction upon the Tribunal to try, among others war crimes, 'seizure of, destruction or willful damage done to institutions dedicated to religion, charity and education, the arts and sciences, historic monuments and works of art and science'.

Also, the Rome Statute explicitly outlaws attacking schools deliberately and classifies such as war crime in both international and non-international armed conflicts. Article 8(e)(iv) further states that a "serious violation" of the Statute occurs if "the perpetrator intentionally directs attacks against buildings dedicated to religion, education, art, science or charitable purposes, historic monuments, hospitals and places where the sick and wounded are collected, provided they are not military objectives" (Rome State, 1998).

3. Attack of Schools in Nigeria

i. Profile of Attackers

A. Islamist Fundamentalist Groups

Prior to the emergence of Boko Haram in 2002 and the explosion of fundamentalist violence in 2009, Northern Nigeria has a long history of Islamist fundamentalist movements and some dating back to the Dan Fodio-led Islamic revolution of the nineteenth century (Alasia, 2015). However, the first attempt at imposing a religious ideology on a secular, independent Nigeria was the Maitatsine uprisings of 1980 to 1985, which affected the cities of Kano, Kaduna, Yola and Bauchi (Adesoji, 2010). Scholars have compared Boko Haram insurgency to the Maitatsine uprisings in terms of philosophy and objectives, organizational planning and operational use of violence (Isichei, 1987).

The group Jama'atu Ahli-Ssunna Lidda'awati wal-Jihad ("People of the Sunnah for Preaching and Jihad) which goes by the moniker 'Boko Haram' (while there is contestation about the etymology of the term, it is widely believed to mean 'western education is sinful' in Hausa language(BBC, 2013) is an Islamist movement that has its origin in North Western Nigerian city of Maiduguri. The group is believed to have been founded in 2002 by Mohammed Yusuf in the city of Maiduguri as a puritanical Islamic sect seeking to impose Islamic Sharia Law on Northern Nigeria and dismantling the current educational and social governance structures in the region (Morten, 2012). Boko Haram like its distant predecessor focuses on imposing its version of Islamic ethos on the Nigerian state. The group asserts that western styled government systems, especially the school system which is perceived as heavily influenced by Christianity contradicts the Quran and are a colonial imposition intended to permanently subjugate Muslims society and values. Therefore, the sect not only rejected Western education, culture and modern science as totally unIslamic, it advocates strict adherence to puritanical Islamic values (Onuoha, 2014).

Boko haram in a decade of engaging in active insurgency against the Nigerian state (2009-2019) have caused between 20,000 to 30,000 deaths and displaced more than 2million people around the Lake Chad basin (Omenma, 2020).

While Boko Haram remains the main face of Islamist extremism in Nigeria, there has been an evolution in the leadership structure, modus operandi and outlook of the Jihadist group and also there are new entrants into the Islamist terror market in the North-western region of Nigeria. In 2016, there was a split in the leadership of Boko haram and a breakaway faction sworn allegiance to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), the second faction remained under the leadership of the late Abubakar Shekau and the third faction known as the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) was formed under Abu Musab al-Barnawi, one of the sons of original founder of Boko Haram (Eromo, 2019).

The splinter in the terror franchise in Nigeria has further complicated the already burdened Nigerian state and worsened security and public policy challenges for the Nigerian government and other regional stakeholders as these terror groups have different focus. ISWAP tends to carry out more surgical strikes against military-aligned targets and installations, while Shekau and the ISIL favor softer targets and civilian installations (Eromo, 2019). No doubt, Boko Haram and its splinter franchisees are the foremost threat to regional security in the Lake Chad region.

The International Criminal Court in 2013 declared the conflict as non-international armed conflict. The Office of the Prosecutor stated that: "the required level of intensity and the level of organization of parties to the conflict necessary for the violence to be qualified as an armed conflict of non-international character appear to have been met […] the Office has therefore determined that since at least May 2013 allegations of crimes occurring in the context of the armed violence between Boko Haram and Nigerian security forces should be considered within the scope of article 8(2)(c) and (e) of the Statute" (OTP, 2013).

B. BANDIT GROUPS

Bandits are a collection of the various criminal groups involved in kidnapping for ransom, armed robbery, cattle rustling, sexual violence, pillage, and attacks on traders, miners, farmers and travelers particularly in Nigeria's North West region (Kuna and Jibrin, 2016). Essentially, banditry is a composite crime and the groups involved are many. While, banditry is extending into other Nigerian geopolitical zones, the Northwest is the epicenter of this security crisis in Nigeria.

The literature on banditry in Nigeria is sparse, however it has been suggested by important stakeholders familiar with the operation of bandits that there are more than 100,000 well-armed bandits operating across the northwest region. (Punch, 2021). According to Rufai (2021), there are around 62 different bandit groups operating in just one of the sub-regional entities- Zamfara State and across the entire region, there are around 120 bandit camps and bandits in possession of more than 60,000 AK-47 Rifles. Some member of these bandit groups are well experienced criminals, who are very familiar with the geographical terrain of the region, and have a network of informant in the security services and across communities in the region (This day, January 4, 2021).

While there is disproportionate global attention on Boko Haram and other Islamist fundamentalist groups in the Northeast region, the impacts of banditry on local populations in the Northwest region has been equally devastating. Bandits were reportedly responsible for more Nigerian deaths than Boko Haram, armed robbers, kidnappers and gangs combined, and were reportedly responsible for 47.5% of all violent deaths in 2019. (Daily Trust, 2019) According to another report in one of the states in the region, between 2011 and 2019, bandits killed at least 6,319 people, kidnapped 3,672 people and destroyed more than 500 villages. (This day, 2019).

Bandits operate in informal and independent clusters, without formalized command structures. The primary bases of operations of these groups are in rural communities across the region and profit and personal enrichment drives banditry rather than political, ideological or any sectional interest. (Ladan and Iguda, 2019) In addition, extortion, ransom and other criminal funds from banditry drives the regional trade in small arms and light weapons and lubricates transnational crime in the wider Sahel region (Campbell, 2021).

Public discuss around the origin, intent and nature of banditry in Nigeria has been very controversial and public commentators push different theories. The most prominent narrative in literature historicizes banditry in context of control resource conflict between farmer-pastoralists' conflicts in northern Nigeria (Kuna and Jibrin, 2015). The second perspective considers banditry as one of the new manifestations of terror and a continuation of the historical Fulani Jihad of the 20th century that targeted farming communities across northern Nigeria (IEP, 2015; SB Morgan, 2015). While the third perspective, which is the most controversial, views banditry as government-sanctioned violence geared towards depopulation of communities and Islamization of the extended northern Nigeria, particularly non-Hausa and Fulani dominated regions. This third perception centers around public discontent with the government's handling of pastoralists' violence in northern Nigeria (ACAPS, 2020).

The intensity of the attacks by bandits on communities and residents of North-West Nigeria has triggered the campaign for the classification of bandits as terrorists by policymakers, security agencies, the media and citizens. The Nigerian government in January 2022 officially declared two of the numerous bandit groups as terror organizations, leaving many of these bandit groups outside the purview of the anti-terrorism law in Nigeria.

ii. Typologies of Attacks

A. Ideologically Driven Attacks: Attacks by Boko Haram

One of the distinguishing features of the Boko Haram group in Nigeria is the deliberate singling out of school buildings, teachers and students as targets for attack in furtherance of the group's Jihadist ideology. The former leader of the group, Abubakar Shekau has persistently called for attack on schools, describing western education as 'plot against Islam'. In 2012, he issued an audio declaration declaring that 'You have primary schools as well, you have secondary schools and universities and we will start bombing them [….] that is what we will do'(GCPEA, 2014) Also, in an amateur video broadcast in 2013 the group's leader said that "teachers who teach western education? We will kill them! We will kill them in front of their students, and tell the students to henceforth study the Qur'an (Guardina, 2013)".

Between 2013 and 2018, as a result of deliberate targeting of schools by Boko Haram more than 1,400 schools mostly in northeastern Nigeria have been destroyed, 2,295 teachers killed and 1,000 students abducted (UNICEF, 2018). As a result of these attacks on places of learning in the northwest, close to 40% of school-age children cannot attend school (Obaji, 2021). The group has equally targeted universities and tertiary educational facilities in Nigeria (UWN, 2011)

Boko Haram's most notorious attack on academic institutions in the region was on the night of April 14, 2014, when the group attacked Government Girls Secondary School in Chibok, burnt down the school building and abducted more than 250 students who were writing their Senior School Certificate Examination. The group on various occasions acknowledged carrying out the attack on the school. The abduction drew international attention to the ongoing conflict in North-Eastern Nigeria and midwife the global 'bring back our girls' movement. The school just like all other schools attacked by the group was undefended civilian entities that have the responsibility of providing education for children in a region with one of the highest out of school children in the world.

B. Ransom Driven Attacks: Bandit Attack on Schools

The driving incentive for banditry is profit and personal enrichment rather than political, ideological or any sectional interest and this understandable when you put in perspective the fact that in the Northwest region poverty and lack of economic opportunity is a common denominator. Banditry offers such tempting prospects that both farming and herding cannot and bandit target schools as one of the most lucrative source of revenue in the region (Osasona, 2021).

Borrowing from the Boko Haram playbook, bandits across the North West region have perfect the act of targeting schools as source of lucrative ransom. Between 2020 and 2021, bandits attacked 20 schools in the region, about 1,436 schoolchildren were abducted, 16 students were reportedly killed, while 200 children are still unaccounted for (The Cable, 2021). Between December 2020 and February 2021, bandits abducted 768 students within the space of 78 days. The breakdown of the figure include 344 schoolchildren of Government Science Secondary School, Kankara on December 11, 2020; 80 pupils of Islamiyya School, Mahuta, Katsina on December 20, 2020; 27 boys at GSS College, Kangara, Niger State on February 17, 2021; and 317 schoolgirls of Government Girls Secondary School, Jangebe, Zamfara State, on February 25, 2021 (Punch, 2021). Due to the risk posed by bandits to the security of schools, respective state governments shut down 618 Schools across the region in 2021 (This Day, 2021).

Like in others attacks, where bandits were non-discriminatory in attacking all communities of faiths and ethnicity across the region, bandits have targeted government owned schools and privately owned institutions, Islamic religious schools and Christian missionary schools in a bid to kidnap students and teachers for random. The unique geography of the region has aided bandits in their operations by providing sanctuaries and operational bases for bandits.

The main incentive of selection of schools for attacks is money and the ease of undertaking such attack putting in consideration the geographical isolation of most of the targeted schools. According to a report, more than $2.4m was paid as ransom for the release of schoolchildren in five separate mass kidnapping incidents in the North-West between November 2020 and February 2021 (Punch, 2021). Also, one of state governments was reported to have paid about $76,000 for the release of kidnapped students in another incidence (Campbell, 2021). Schools are very lucrative soft target for bandits.

4. Crime-Terror Nexus in School Attacks in Nigeria

Crime-terror nexus fundamentally refers to the operational, resource and environmental convergence of violent criminal organizations and terror groups, who usually have different focus and would ordinarily deploy different tactics towards achieving their ends. There are five broad manifestations of these convergences. The first is co-existence, which implies the operation of criminal and terrorist groups in the same territorial area. The second is the cooption of the other group's tactics to achieve strategic advantage, for instance a criminal organization using terrorist strategy for strategic advantage. The third nexus is a symbiotic engagement between criminal groups and terror organizations in areas of group expertise and the fourth nexus refers to the merger of criminal groups with terrorist organizations, and vice versa. And the last nexus refers to intergroup transformation from either a criminal organization to a terrorist group or the reverse (Dishman, 2001).

The crime-terror nexus in Nigeria becomes more complicated with the huge number of bandit groups, their continuous organizational evolution and the number of changes in the operational strategy of these bandit groups. While criminal organizations and terror groups often change their operational focus and identity, however, it is the dominant opinion of scholars that criminal organizations and terror groups remain what they are at their inception, irrespective of subsequent activities or how they evolve to make money (Shelley, 2005).

The evidence is not conclusive on the exact areas and nature of collaboration between bandits and Islamist fundamentalist in the region. There is evidence, however, of collaboration and of violent confrontation between the bandit groups and Islamist fundamentalist groups in the region. While Bandits dominate Nigeria North West Region in terms of human resource, social network and military assets, there are growing evidence of the presence of Islamist fundamentalists in the region (Premium Times, 2022).

There is growing evidence about the participation of terror groups alongside bandits in attacks on schools in the northwest region. There are reports of the late Abubakar Shekau's terror group (JAS) participation in the December 2020 mass abduction of more than 300 schoolboys in Katsina State and also that the engagement between these bandits and JAS predated that particular mass abduction incident (Barnett, 2021). While the nature of the relationship between terror groups and the bandits in this particular indecent is still unclear, the fact that attacks were carried out together highlights some of the emerging areas of mutuality between bandits and Islamist groups in the region.

One clear area of convergence between bandit and terror groups in the region is the adoption of the Boko Haram strategy of mass adoption of schoolchildren to fund criminal operations. This mastery by bandits of the political economy of kidnap for ransom and extortion points to a mutual understanding and copying of operational methodology earlier used by terror groups by bandit. Bandits actively used schoolchildren kidnapping for ransom as a strategy to fund their operations, a tactic is similar to the one earlier deployed by Boko Haram with the kidnapping of school children in Chibok primarily to raise funds (Premium Times, 2018).

Another area of operation convergence between bandits and terrorists in the region shared usage of arms of logistics by the two groups. There has been records of arms trade between bandits and terror groups particularly the Islamic State in West Africa Province (ICG, 2020). The progressive sophistication of arms borne by bandits validates the argument of collaboration between the two groups.

5. Conclusion

Conflicts driven by Islamist terror groups and bandits have worsened socioeconomic outcomes in Nigeria's Northwest and Northeast geopolitical zones, two regions already blighted by enormous poverty. Continuous attacks on schools, students and teachers as an added dimension to the conflict will hinder the future prospects of the region putting in perspective the strong link between education and socioeconomic. Current attacks not only undermine the very foundation of economic and social growth, it perpetuates a cycle of conflict and poverty.

Terrors groups and bandits in the region have attacked schools, kidnapped, maimed and killed students and teachers, destroyed educational infrastructure. Beyond that, students and teachers have been psychologically scarred and communities terrorized from sending children to school. In spite of the grave implications of these attacks, there is no national monitoring framework for attacks on schools, a coherent response strategy that balances the right to education with security and also regionally, attacks on schools get less attention than other violations of International Humanitarian Law involving children.

The 1907 Hague Regulations, the 1949 Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, and Customary International Law explicitly prohibit deliberate attacks on scholars as civilians, deliberate objects on civilian objects, which include education institutions not being used for military purpose. These provisions are binding in both international and non-international armed conflict as well as on states and non-state belligerents.

The Islamist insurgency in the Northeast has been declared as non-international armed conflict, which interposes the application of International humanitarian law on all parties to the conflict, one of which is the express prohibition of attack of schools. While bandits by their organizational structure and operational system hardly meet the set criteria for the application of International Humanitarian Law rules applicable in Non-international Armed Conflict. However, the convergence of operation by terror groups and criminal organizations adds a different perspective to the terrain of culpability internationally and domestically.

However, in the tableau of international humanitarian wrongs compiled against these armed groups, attacks on scholarship are often not stressed as egregious violations of the laws of war. Education is a sine qua non for long-term sustainable peace and human development and undermining it is no less a crime than other violations of International Humanitarian Law.

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Digital Fragility, Assorted Risks and Terrorism Confluence

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« Use of internet is a double-edged sword for terrorists »

~ Maura Conway ~

Professor of Cyber Threats Law at Swansea University's Hillary Rodham Clinton School of Law.

Abstract The world has seen widened internet penetration with resultant increase on data demand and use. While greater internet penetration is bridging inequality gaps in access to services, it has become an ignition point for data protection and privacy concerns. These developments present an aura of risks to individuals or countries as a wave of espionage characterize data governance systems and value chains. This article provides a discursive relationship between digital leakages, risks and gains as economies, political parties and coalitions, corporations and extreme radical left terrorist individuals and groups jockey to advance their objectives. While data generation and harvesting has emerged as a big business, there are grave concerns surrounding how data is obtained, fished, assembled, analyzed and used. This is because data collection can be done without express knowledge of individuals. Even where and when individuals knowingly provide information to corporations and authorities, there are policy guidelines inadequacies on data storage and destruction and many people do not understand how information provided or collected can be used, often to their detriment. Article identifies accruable risks and pointers to building a data secure future ecosystem and stimulates discourses aimed at containing malicious acquisition of data, limit criminal acts and catch up with emergent technologies.

Keywords

Consent,
Cyberattacks,
Intrusion,
Radicalization,
Terrorism.

Introduction

In an increasingly digitizing world, there are grave concerns about massive interception and collection of personal data by government, corporations, terrorists and organized criminal gangs, its ulterior use to control, influence and monitor subjects. Maelstrom of discontent generally revolves around consent and surety that data mined or obtained for a primary purpose is not used specifically for a secondary intent without owner's permission. Increasing data value has resulted to a rustle for data acquisition through agents and double agents (Coleman, 2021; Lewis, 2021).As a result, hustle for espionage, cyberattacks, privacy intrusion, and physical assaults of individuals or groups is turbo-charged in an ever more connected global environment (Niazi, Sharif & Zubair, 2022).As this competition continues to define economies, political parties and coalitions, corporations, subsidiary and conglomerate markets, extreme radicals and leftists including terrorist individuals and groups are jockeying on data developments as a propulsive nerve to commit atrocities (Nazi et al., 2022; Rao & Manvi, 2022).

Data constitutes a set of critical facts and is a two-edged sword (Krieger, 2021; White, Blok & Calhoun, 2022). On one hand, if ethically mined or obtained and put into right hands can enable innovation and formulation of objective trends and patterns for decision making. For instance, when data identifies what problems and where, this catalyzes cross-pollination of ideas, shaping what interventions, when and why. On the other hand, if data is obtained by criminals, it can only advance criminal acts [*actus reus*].

Organized criminal groups like Al Qaeda and affiliate Al Shabaab operatives in East Africa are digital flares–constantly utilizing technological aids in planning, communicating, recruiting and executing atrocities with the aim of forming of a caliphate [*khilāfah*] (Keeney & Von Winterfeldt, 2010; Lewis, 2021). In Christchurch, New Zealand, an attacker livestreamed shootings on online social networks in the 2019 murder of 51 people (Macklin, 2019). It was ensconced through investigations that the attacker was radicalized online (Powell, 2022). In Africa, online social networks like Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, YouTube and Telegram have hurled covert and overt recruitment into violent extremism and terrorisminone of Nairobi's Al Shabaab radical dens of Majengo(Hubi, 2019).These platforms provide for public and private comments, retweeting [↻], like [👍], dislike [👎], share [➦], use of handles [@] and hashtags [#] to plan, create traffic and relay strategic digitally mediated information that is fluid – one that can be downloaded and uploaded, abridged, translated, manipulated to create disinformation, mal-information and misinformation or converted from one graphic file format to another (Rifai, 2016).

Personal data acquisition through surveillance or by any frugal avenues including research that does not adhere to data ethics infringes on privacy, bordering on illegality (Rao & Manvi, 2022; Smith, 2000; Zalnieriute, 2015). Elsewhere, data has been used for crime prediction and mitigation but there are serious concerns on racial bias that have been raised (Boccio, 2022). At the height of the Russia-Ukraine war, two Russian nuclear plant workers were detained on allegations of sharing location and equipment of the site with Ukraine (Independent, 2022). There are greater concerns about spying and espionage; how data is used to influence consumer behavior, product pitching and market segmentation, among others (Freedom House Report, 2022; Lewis, 2021; Trzaskowski, 2022). While data is an engine that is powering governments and businesses, on the flipside, it enables hunting for dissidents and control of populations. The Heritage Foundation (2020) report details cautionary revelations on porosity of Africa's digital security architecture to Beijing, which has constructed or renovated about 186 critical African government buildings. The tailwinds buffeting Chinese surveillance on Africa, the report further details, have tentacles to monitor American and African officials and business leaders.

As Big Data burgeons, data governance systems and value chains are shifting to the detriment of ordinary citizens, marginalized communities and targets (Trzaskowski, 2022; Yu, 2021). Foundational worries have to do with the influence of digitization on people's privacy and what they do, fragility of the digital ecosystem, and online terrorist recruitments that are becoming a hard nut to crack. Moreover, widened internet penetration while bridging inequality gaps in access to services has at the same time opened hell gates for surveillance of government officials and private citizens – fueling character assassination (White et al., 2020). Spectral physical and inter-temporal surveillance techniques tailored to make subjects docile are executed overtly or covertly and data assembled in a single or central point by government, private buildings guards, schools, hospitals, marketing, tour and travel agencies, websites and online social network platforms (Lewis, 2021; Mukiri-Smith, 2019). Amid the data harvesting frenzy, one research put into focus trade-offs and spin-offs of keeping private lives private and customers identities anonymous. Tech Shielder findings reveal motivation to provide improved user experience and tailoring personalized offers as a driving force for deanonymization of customers' identities, which weakens their data privacy protection (Tech Shield, 2022).

Social connection, physically or digitally, involves data generation. This makes it possible for data collection and interception, intrusion, exposure and misuse by criminal gangs and terrorists. For instance, social media account setup demands provision of personal data including name, physical address, mobile number or email address (Young & Quan-Haase, 2013). This data, as Tech Shield (2020) details, is

harvested and accessible by third parties. Alongside these data, a visit to a building would demand provision of identification card number, vehicle registration number, signature, time in and out of buildings and serial number of computers (Hasnat & Hasan, 2018; Zhang et al., 2017). Data generated this way are often captured in log books. There are instances where CCTVs and other devices capture additional biometric data including facial image, thumb print and body temperature (Ahmed & Sintayehu, 2022;Ross, Banerjee & Chowdhury, 2022). Mukiri-Smith (2019) explains that these identification documents are scanned and placed in a pile with other visitors' documents [carelessly], exposing otherwise private data to the public. There are also instances where obtained mobile data is used to generate a gate pass, which is sent to the visitors' mobile number, a clandestine trick to ascertain authenticity of the details provided by visitors. These tactics fall short of the general principles that must guide collection, storage and use of personal information (World Bank, 2019).

While data capture of this kind has emerged as a new way of building security and safety of visitors and buildings they visit, it can be used for ulterior motives including marketing, whereby individuals are sent notifications on their mobile phones, emails and social media accounts without their consent using robocalls and robotexts (Gilbert, Vitak & Shilton, 2021). Stockpiling of visitors' identification documents opens window of access of details that can enable their tracking – where they live and what they do- without their permission (Mukiri-Smith, 2019). It is plausible that if terrorists intercepted or accessed this type of data, they can use it to hack individual online accounts, kidnap, recruit, raise funds, impersonate, spread fear, disinformation mal-information and misinformation.

New Age of Terrorism

The advent of advanced technology has marshalled data fishing and assembling, Big Data analytics and Artificial Intelligence precision planning (Misra et al., 2020). Following the 9/11 attacks in the United States of America, the world painfully realized the existential threat that is posed by terrorist groups who agitate for their fundamental freedoms, rights and ideology ruthlessly. Fundamentally, these groups emanate from society and camouflage as ordinary individuals going about their usual businesses. They attend schools and attain high level qualifications (United States Department of Justice, 2019). They picnic, congregate at places of worship, fund or attend sport tournaments, use government portals and visit government buildings to get services as much as they acquire and assemble critical information clandestinely. In this new age of terrorism, it is confounding whether website translation capabilities deepen open data governance or makes tracking of government plans including financial strengths.

Use of digitally mediated techniques to communicate obscures identification, interdiction and disruption of activities perpetuated by terrorist groups. Radical terrorist groups are well-resourced and organized (Hasnat & Hasan, 2018;Passas, 2022). Often, they have used unconventional tactics to advance their criminal interests (Torres-Soriano, 2021). Considering that these elements are willing to die in committing their atrocities, it has become delicate balancing between allegation of government using its own citizen as cannon fodder, extra judicial claims and viability of the legal infrastructure to forestall the menace (Van Stapele, 2016).

Digital tactics Used by Terrorist Organizations

Terrorist organizations use hybrid of tactics to propel their ideological orientation. The level of usefulness of the internet around the globe has revolutionized how humans conduct their affairs. It is safe to say that the capabilities of the internet continue to make human life easier but it is fraught with new challenges which persist. Internet technology makes it easy for individuals to communicate with relative anonymity and ease to an almost limitless audience. All fields have embraced the use of the internet including health sector, education, commerce, transport, logistics and security, enabling efficient transactions. Put differently, despite the gains that have been achieved, there are challenges that have to do with dark uses of the internet for criminal purposes or "incitement to radicalization towards violent extremism" [otherwise, "violent radicalization"] (Alava et al., 2017; Torres-Soriano, 2021).The breadth and the intricacy of the Internet have eliminated borders, allowing people to connect with each other around the world. Although this development has stimulated social and economic growth, corporations profit from shared content that arouses great emotions, such as images depicting violence (Ferguson & et.al, 2021).Since everyone is connected through the internet, snooping tactics are used to obtain personal data and organizational data with an ulterior aim of targeted surveillance and control (Ahmed & Sintayehu, 2022; Boccio, 2022; Lewis, 2021; Torres-Soriano, 2021). It has been observed that technology provides fertile conditions for recruitment, financing, training and incitement to commit acts of terrorism, alongside gathering and dissemination of propaganda (United Nation Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC], 2012).

According to the Rand Europe Westbrook Centre which focused on the role of the internet in the radicalization of 15 terrorists and extremists in the United Kingdom, the internet has a significant influence in the radicalization process of the violent extremists and terrorists (Von Behr, 2013). This is because the internet creates more opportunities for individuals to be radicalized and acts as an "echo chamber", where individuals find their ideas supported and perpetuated by other like-minded

individuals. In addition, the internet accelerates the process of radicalization, while also allowing radicalization to occur without physical contact with like-minded terrorists while at the same time increasing opportunities for self-radicalization (Alava et al., 2017; Hubi, 2019; Von Behr, 2013).

Penetration of online social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Tik Tok, Snap Chat, Telegram among others, make communication and sharing of information facile (e.g.,Kudrati, Hayashi &Taggart, 2021;Morris& James, 2017). Ordinary users and terrorist elements use these online social networks to set agenda, share and consume information. Statistics suggest that ideological radicals and terrorists use pseudo accounts to shape users' attitudes and tendencies, recruiting many into their rank and file (Salman, Mustaffa, Mohd-Salleh & Ali, 2016; Young & Quan-Haase, 2013).

Institute of Strategic Dialogue reveals that Facebook has become a highly-coordinated online propaganda machine that relies on thousands-strong networks of Somali, Swahili and Arabic language on Facebook profiles and pages to seed disinformation, mal-information and misinformation, among 9.95 million users in Kenya, as of 2022 (Daily Nation, 2022). There are also worrying statistics on the increasing online gaming, tournaments that are used as terrorism radicalization dens.

Ferguson et. al. (2021) suggest that Islamic State professional-grade propaganda and recruitment videos copy popular computer games to woe potential recruits. Recruiters paint the image that the societal problems faced by the population is a deliberate creation of the government of the day and that unless they are included, interventions made to reverse the situation are *haram*. Terrorists also employ erroneous religious teachings to appeal to users. For instance, "Boko Haram" whose real name is Jama'atu Ahli-Ssunna Li Adda'wa wal-Jihad pledged allegiance to the Daesh who are using digitally mediated tools to diffuse their propaganda (Alava et al., 2017).

According to Jones (2013) the internet has changed the course of terrorist activities. Individuals like Anwar al-Awlaki (now deceased), Adam Gadahn, and Shaykh Abdallah Ibrahim al-Faisal have utilized YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, internet chat rooms, and other forums to distribute propaganda, recruit new supporters, and seek financial aid, argument that Avis (2016) also holds. Viability of these undercover tactics have been tested in East Africa by Al-Shabaab Al Mujahedeen, ensnaring Kenyan youth to join the terrorist group as foreign fighters.

Al-Shabaab have in the past used fake social media advertisements suggesting that the United Nations is offering job opportunities for people who do not have advanced levels of education, a bait that has trapped otherwise genuine job-seekers.

In 2022, a Kenyan woman and others survived by a whisker after she was lured for a job in Thailand only to land in the had of Myanmar rebels. According to the Daily Nation (2022) she was exploited and her work entailed:

> "… selling raunchy images of female models via the internet. The men would then be required to pay for the images or pay to speak to the models via digital currency."

While in captivity, they would be coerced to share the models' images on online social networks such as Twitter, TikTok, Instagram, Telegram and many men fell victims as they would provide WhatsApp numbers with a promise of a personalized experience. The individual who linked the Thai agent had a history of linking people to Iraq and Dubai, a pointer to third-party digitally-mediated supply-chain atrocities.

Increasingly, radicalization by Al-Shabaab operatives in Kenya has predominantly been through online social networks (Rink & Sharma, 2018). Arguably, unethical application of technology has led us to a dystopian digital world that is dehumanizing, unpleasant and that indoctrinates sympathizers through internet advocacy (Hubi, 2019). This explains greater penetration of radicalization trends at the coast to far-flung areas of Meru, Bungoma, Kakamega and Nyeri (Huho, Mashara & Musyimi, 2016).

Digital fragility

Landau (2015) warns that a mobile service that provides users with real time route information also collects real time location data without users' knowledge. While users are asked to authorize collection of data on their gadgets, they can inattentively click "Agree", compromising their privacy. This is further compounded by low literacy levels and users' ignorance to read Terms and Conditions that are absurdly lengthy, have small font sizes or 'boring' (The Guardian, 2011). Unless governments compelled corporations to implement automated privacy controls, users' data will be susceptible to fraudsters (O'Hara, & Shadbolt, 2014), including terrorists who are eager to impersonate. Perhaps, the most pressing tussle, as O'Hara, & Shadbolt, (2014) have observed is how national security can be balanced against privacy and other functions of government that include protection of critical information that can be used against its citizens or country.

Ali (2012) explains that common frauds associated with identity theft include ID or passport, financial, tax, medical, resume, mortgage, money laundering, counterfeiting, smuggling, illegal trafficking and terrorism, among other frauds. Convergence of

social, political, technological and economic factors facilitates data leakage or acquisition – something that is quickened by insider theft, petty theft including street phone snatching, snatching of wallets, purses and personal or company computers. Poor storage or disposal of financial receipts and logbooks, bribing to get personal information through insider dealings, phishing, vishing and smishing, hacking, social engineering that include pre-texting that rides on "smooth talking" – a common techniques that prison convicts use to ensnare unsuspecting citizens to provide personal information. Such schemes can support terrorism funding. There is wardriving or tracing of personal data on unsecured Wi-Fi, skimming or use of magnetic strip duplication powering terrorism financing at automated teller machines. In addition, criminals can target hospital records to access patient's data for insurance claims. This trend spiraled between 2017 and 2022 as shown on Figure 1.Deductively, data security walls are weak augmented with poor collection, storage and transfer methods used. Moreover, personnel handling this data could be playing an insider role. When data of this nature is leaked to the public, it becomes a weapon that victimizes, kills and spreads rumors to the detriment of targets.

Figure 1: Global Health Data leaks of 500 or more records, 2017 – 2021.
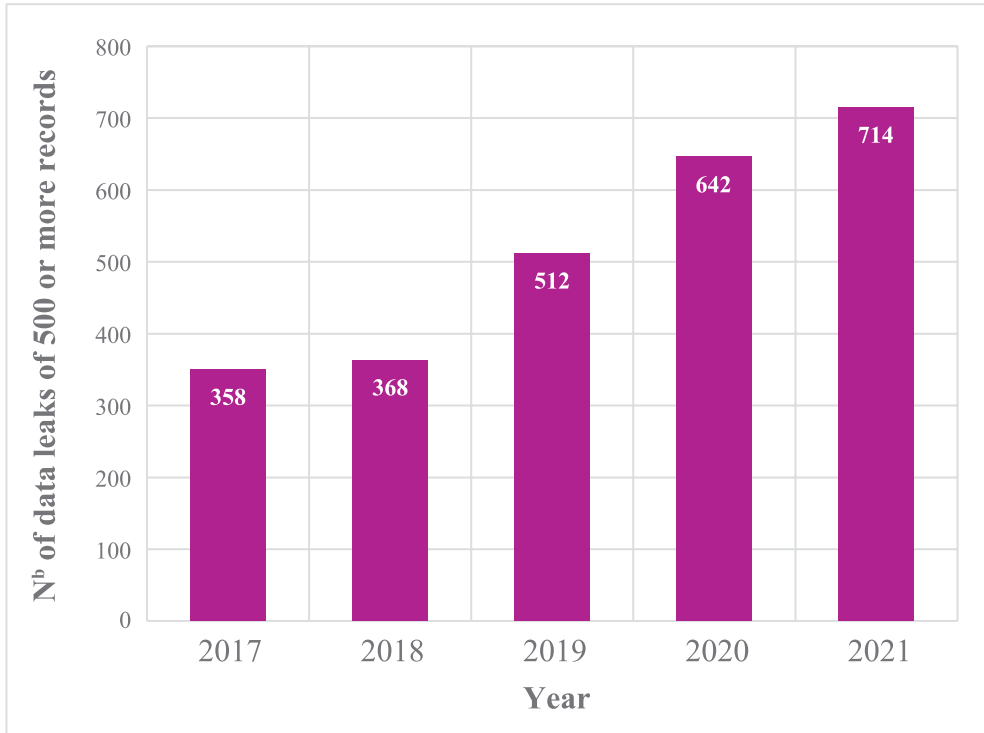
Source: Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), which focuses on emergent information on regulatory changes, data breaches and other related aspects. Visualized by authors.

There are concerns that in-app browsers amplify users' security and privacy risks. For instance, a Java Script code on TikTok enables tracking and collection of all keystrokes using passwords and credit card information (ABC News, 2022). In addition, digital fragility of this nature was a bone of contestation in the aftermath of Roe v. Wade in the United States where digital data fishing especially Facebook data was used to prosecute abortions (Shachar, 2022).In contrast, after years of toing and froing to unmask the identities of robbery-with-violence and gang-rape at Senti-Kumi in Likoni, Mombasa, on the night of September 16, 2017, where a man was killed and a woman accompanying him gang-raped, technology was used to nap the criminal elements involved in the dastardly incident(Daily Nation, 2022).

It is the analysis of the phone's International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) that was stolen during the heinous Likoni incident that helped in identification of individuals who used the phone. IMEI is 15-digit number unique code that precisely identifies the device with the SIM card input. While the first 14 digits are defined by GSM Association organization that represent the interests of mobile network operators globally, the last digit is generated by an algorithm named Luhn formula (IMEI.info, 2022). It is highly recommended for consumers to use IMEI checker before buying used or new device to ascertain validity and originality of their devices. Considering that laptops also use mobile networks and have serial numbers, it is prudent that consumers ascertain validity and originality of their devices, know that they are personal gadgets that must be protected by very strong passwords using a mix of characters since computers may carry personal information and that if they get in wrong hands, can be used to plan and execute criminal acts. IMEI and serial number codes can trace a gadget to the user or owner; owners must be alert that in-app tools can enable collection and analysis of what they use these gadgets for – a classical double edge sword.

According to the Weak Password Report (2022), "123", "12345678", "a123456", "Aa123456", "password1", "password", "abc123", "1qaz2wsx", "111111111" and "welcome" are the top 10 passwords used in Server Message Block (SMB) attacks. Use of these passwords makes it easy to intrude via brute force and password because they are easy-to-guess on grounds that people reuse and follow common patterns.

Anecdotal theories: ideal versus realist claims

Ideally, citizens should be free from fear and want, enjoy all liberties without fear borne neither out of intimidation nor victimization and have access to equal opportunities regardless of gender, race, religion, origin or any other diversity factor in an ideal context where societal systems work interdependently to guarantee human expectations. This is contrasted with realist scholars who have argued that humans are innately selfish,

brut and domineering. Deductively, people would strive to exercise real or perceived power on others. Suggestively, the realist theory drives the idea that individual who enjoy real or perceived power are biased towards those they can benefit from while negating the rest, a perceived global status quo. This bias, convincingly, breeds human rights related vices that perpetuate exclusion, inequality and inequity. Societal vices such as negative ethnicity, corruption, human rights violations, unequal distribution of resources and marginalization, political inequality, health inaccessibility and insecurity have been termed as push and/or pull factors to violent extremism. Violent extremist organizations use this state of affairs as motivation to execute atrocities, something that acquisition of personal data is activating. This includes radicalizing members into terrorism rank and file on a promise of rewards.

Legal Premises

Kenya is among select African countries that have developed and is implementing Data Protection and Privacy Legislation (UNCTAD, 2022). This milestone, as Makulilo and Boshe (2016) suggest is borne from a difficult past that include deepened M-Pesa services subscription that saw heightened use of personal data to identify individuals – ID, mobile numbers, email [and their financial potential because of amount and frequency of transactions]. Back in 2012, an internet traffic monitoring tool - Network Early Warning System (NEWS) roll out across telecoms service providers was challenged in court successfully as it contravened Article 31 of the Constitution, which protects citizens against infringement of their communication privacy. De Souza (2018) in her review of Kenya's digital democracy decries that advances in technology deepen democracy. This is strengthened by claims that Cambridge Analytica and Facebook have been used to influence elections outcomes against the will of the people (Isaak & Hanna, 2018).

Extreme concerns about personal data privacy have to do with extents obtained data can be misused; an aspect that Makulilo and Boshe (2016) have correctly detailed that "M-Pesa subscriber have used personal information to catch cheating partners". They argue that it is worrying that M-Pesa customer information is captured in an open book with obscurities on the period M-Pesa agents keep it, to whom it is submitted to and eventual destruction or archival modalities used. For the aged and assisted customers, the duo paints a glaring image involving password sharing with agents to make transactions, which unknown to many risks their privacy and security.

Pursuant to Article 239(6) of the Constitution, the National Intelligence Service Act, 2012 Section 36 provides for limitation of right to privacy or grounds that a person's communications may be investigated, monitored or otherwise interfered

with provided a warrant has been obtained by the High Court to do an investigation. These limitations are expounded by the Prevention of Terrorism Act, 2012. The Kenya Information and Communication Act, Cap. 411A15 (1) provides for the protection for the consumption of telecoms services by way of listening, tapping, storage, or other kinds of interception or surveillance of communications and related data relayed on a Kenyan licensed telecommunication system. Provision is strengthened by Section 46a (f) and (b) that requires broadcasting services to protect the right to privacy of all persons and Section 83 (2) (c) that provides for adhere to procedures that ensure that the secrecy and privacy of the electronic signatures are assured in electronic certification services (Kenya Law Reports, 2010; Kenya Law Reports, 2013).

In Petition N° 427 of 2018, the Petitioner sought an interpretation whether Section 63 of the Finance Act, 2018 and Section 31(c) of the Banking Act are in conflict with Article 31(c) of the Constitution and therefore denied, infringed, violated or threatened a right or fundamental freedom in the Bill of Rights. Section 63 of the Finance Act, 2018 and Section 31A of the Banking Act, required banks and financial institutions to maintain a register of the next of kin for their customers. While this was argued to amount to infringement of customers' right to privacy and therefore unconstitutional, Court guided that 'next of kin' and use of minors as next of kin represented classic vagueness of a statue and that resulted to invalidity of a statue. By the same token, the HIV and AIDS Prevention and Control Act N° 14 of 2006 prohibits any person to record, collect, transmit or store records, information or form in respect of HIV tests or related medical assessments other than as prescribed under the Act (Kenya Law Reports, 2006).

Notwithstanding the outbreak of the Coronavirus Disease in late 2019 when there were necessary lapses in enforcement of certain data rights and freedoms, the Data Protection Act of 2019 is perhaps the most promising legislation as regards data privacy and protection. *Inter alia,* Section 8 (1) (*f*) provides that the Office of the Data Commissioner shall receive and investigate any complaint by any person on infringements of the rights under thisAct; (*h*) carry out inspections of public and private entities with a view to evaluating the processing of personal data; (*i*) promote international cooperation in matters relating to data protection and ensure country's compliance on data protection obligations under international conventions and agreements; and (*j*) undertake research on developments in data processing of personal data and ensure that there is no significant risk or adverse effect of any development on the privacy of individuals (Kenya Law Reports, 2019).

Conclusion

Data generation, acquisition and use mean big business for governments, corporations who want to control, influence and monitor subjects. Without metricized data governance interventions, fault lines created could provide data access to criminals including terrorists who want to recruit, fundraise and impersonate personalities.

Internally, governments are using undercover data mining techniques to device systems that can improve governance and protect the general population by detecting and deconstructing clandestine schemes. Across jurisdictions, there is a growing concern on espionage and unethical obtaining and use of data, which must be controlled. If not, this could easily spark wars that will be hard to end.

Recommendations

The world is exposed to terrorism and assorted risks mainly because of increased use of internet to socialize and transact. Generally, reserving scale of potential hazards from full-range manifestation requires collaboration, coordination and consolidation of ideas to inject ideas that can strengthen data governance. Specifically, going forward:

1. Advances in technology must be matched with ethical data governance systems and data value chains that empower, respect and protect privacy of individuals by upholding general principles that guide collection, storage and use of personal data. This may require development of a tested system that can detect, delay and disrupt occurrence and multiplication of activities borne of otherwise avoidable fragilities.

2. Policy legislations must be alert of the danger that terrorists portend in an ever-changing technological ecosystem and how risks can be spread and threaten peace and security.

3. International bodies, regional organs and local institutions must focus in information sharing on cyber security dynamics and partner with [private] data owners in building a data-secure ecosystem, as life becomes increasingly data-driven. Citizens must be appraised on risks associated with internet use and personal data harvesting. There is need for robust law enforcement training that will encompass contemporary practices.

4. Considering technological advancements are fast and fluid, policy discourses about data must be continuous to catch up with new developments.

5. Dynamisms that technology presents demand constant evaluation of viability of legal and policy instruments to protect citizens' data privacy. This will by extension contain use of internet as terrorism recruitment highway.

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Beyond Perpetrators: Exploring the Youth-Peace Nexus in Countering Violent Extremism in Sub-Saharan Africa

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Abstract The expanding reach and destructive consequences of violent extremism are among the major challenges to peace and security in the 21st century. In Africa, the steep rise in violent extremism represents a challenge to global security and development. Not only has the recruitment of youths by violent extremist groups become worrisome, the role of youths in perpetrating and masterminding violent extremism is a major challenge confronting the continent in recent times. In sub-Saharan Africa in particular, violent extremism is setting in motion a dramatic reversal of development gains and threatening to stunt prospects of development for decades to come. The sub-region faces a unique vulnerability to violent extremism that is shaped by persistent underdevelopment and incomplete peacebuilding and state-building in key regions. Thus, there are immense challenges faced by governments in delivering peace and stability, and in ensuring that the pace and benefits of growth keep up with the expansion of the most youthful population in the world. Away from the focus on military approach to security, African governments are increasingly recognizing the need for development-based approaches to countering violent extremism **but because of their involvement in violent extremism, youth are often either essentialised as a source of violence and insecurity, or are held up as a limitless economic resource with a potential to transform the future of African development. Despite this, an effective countering violent extremism initiative in the sub-region needs to recognise and promote the significant and varying roles of young people as equal partners at all levels. Youth empowerment remains a veritable means to fast track development, engender and sustain peace in the region. To this end, youth should be empowered economically and educationally as well as mainstreamed in the formulation and delivery of tailored strategies aimed at preventing and countering violent extremism**.

Introduction

Violent extremism has become an issue on the front burner of the discourse by governments, policy makers, international governmental and non-governmental organisations, security experts, development experts and counter terrorism experts worldwide. This is because, over the past decades, the phenomenon of violent extremism has emerged as one of the biggest threats to global peace and security. The 21st century has witnessed more extremist activities than in the previous ones as no country or region is immune from their impact with the world now a global village (United Nations, 2015a). The rise and subsequent growth of violent extremism has thus become a global challenge as well as an area of interest that requires urgent attention.

While violent extremism has been on for decades, the proliferation of terrorist attacks since the 9/11 attacks and the rise of the Islamic State (IS) are only the most visible manifestations of this threat in recent years (Kofi Anan Foundation, nd). With the world now a global village, every country is within the reach of violent extremism with its extensive and far-reaching impact. From the developed to the developing world, extremist activities continue with their toll on the security of lives and property.

Africa in particular has been susceptible to the activities of violent extremists as a result of weak institutions, porous borders, inadequately trained or ill-equipped security forces, religious fundamentalism, historical grievances and a lack of economic opportunities. As a result, violent extremist groups such as Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Boko Haram and al-Shabaab, have seized on the opportunities provided and subsequently contributed to insecurity across the Sahel, the Lake Chad basin and the Horn of Africa (Sharland, Grice & Zeiger, 2017).

Violent extremism has had a devastating impact on the continent as it continues to witness an "arc of upheaval and distress" (UNDP Report, 2019). About 33,000 fatalities are estimated to have been caused by extremism between 2011 and 2016, with related displacements and economic devastation contributing to the worst humanitarian crises ever seen on the continent as well as almost US$84 billion expended per year on securitization (UNDP Report, 2017; UNDP Report, 2019). The fatality figures could be more. For instance, in Nigeria alone, since 2009, Boko Haram has claimed the lives of about 350,000 people in the northeast while an estimated three million have been displaced in the Lake Chad region according to the Council for Foreign Relations (CFR, 2022). In the Horn of Africa, al-Shabaab has killed at least 4,000 civilians from 2009 to 2019 based on a conservative estimate while in the Sahel, AQIM has killed several people since 2007, in addition to thousands of civilian deaths by other groups over the years (Mroszczyk & Abraham, 2021). Violent extremism therefore continues to pose a direct and manifest challenge to the gains enjoyed by many countries in the sub-Saharan region over the years, and threatens to stunt development outcomes for generations to come if left unchecked.

The task of addressing violent extremism is daunting and looking away from their initial focus on militarized and securitized approaches, countries and their partners have come to realize that the solution to addressing violent extremism does not lie in the use of force alone but in development approaches. This has led to the emergence of programmes to prevent and counter the phenomenon. However, for these efforts to be successful, it will be necessary to take a critical look at the forces which shape violent extremism.

At the centre of violent extremism are young people who join violent extremist organisations voluntarily or under duress. Owing to the quest for adventure, the need to belong, hero-worship, the global reach of recruitment agencies through the internet, and their vulnerability among others, this group has become easy prey for recruitment into violent extremist organisations. Thus, across the globe today, youth are the major perpetrators of violent extremism.

Despite their involvement in violent extremist activities, it is becoming increasingly recognized that young people can be at the centre of any programme geared towards preventing and countering the phenomenon. This is because youths are pivotal to the development of every nation, although the extent of development is inevitably dependent on how involved the youths are in the process (Kumuyi, 2022). It is therefore necessary to have an inclusive programme where youths are equipped to participate in preventing and countering violent extremism. This will involve targeting their potentials, their enthusiastic energy and their capacity to attempt and

adopt new ways of thinking. This study as part of the effort to address the challenges posed by violent extremism in sub-Saharan Africa stresses the importance of mainstreaming youths into countering violent extremism efforts.

Youth and Violent Extremism

Youth can be referred to as the time of life between childhood and adulthood. The United Nations defines youth as persons between the ages of 15 and 24 recognising that this varies without prejudice to other age groups listed by member states such as 18–30. In much of sub-Saharan Africa, the term "youth" is associated with young men from 15 to 30 or 35 years of age and this is the age or sense in which youth is understood in this study.

The youth age is characterized by strength, energy, vigour, the quest for adventure, restiveness and the tendency to resist control especially when they are not satisfied with the state of affairs around/involving them specifically or the society to which they belong in general (Ajodo-Adebanjoko, 2020a). Thus, youth restiveness is one of the tragedies of the 21st century and the greatest security challenge confronting the world. Restiveness coupled with the quest for adventure and their vulnerability among others, have made young people to be disposed to recruitment by violent extremist groups. Since 2014, the Boko Haram group has been reported to have abducted over 10,000 boys and trained them as foot soldiers and since then there has been a steady flow of young people comprising both genders, into the group either voluntarily or by duress (Hinshaw & Parkinson, 2016).

Apart from those young people who are forcibly conscripted into violent extremist groups, there are other youngsters who voluntary join such organizations. Among these are victims of social isolation or exclusion who are 'lonely'. For this group, a terrorist cell may be the only 'family' they have. Some in this category may have been denied the needed love and in most cases viewed as out-casts and good-for-nothing. The life of rejection often drives them to extremist groups where they are accepted and are willing to do anything to show that they are good for something. This could be understood from the backdrop that humans have an innate desire for acceptance but when the immediate environment does not provide this and an individual finds a group readily available and willing to accept them, they will be more than willing to be part of such a group.

There are other youths who join violent extremist sects as a result of the need for adventure. Some young people are attracted to violent *jihadi* movements because of the excitement and glamour it supposedly offers. Many believe that membership of a

violent extremism organisation will offer the chance to become a hero who wins respect and admiration amongst peers, especially when such an individual has known rejection all his life. The feeling of being powerful and belonging to a close network of friends which they cannot achieve through other avenues accounts for their membership of these organizations. This may be explained from the angle that adolescence and youth is a period of experimentation, of identity formation, of a struggle for autonomy, acceptance and a time of dealing with issues of intimacy. In addition, insecurity about belief and cultural rootlessness breeds fanaticism and extreme fundamentalism.

The social media also plays a large role in the radicalization of young people who are the majority of its users globally. As of 2017, there was an estimated 3.9 billion internet users across the globe, accounting for more than half of the global population and as of June 2019 Nigeria, acclaimed one of the countries with the biggest number of internet users had 123.49 million internet users (Clement, 2019; Clement, 2020).In recent years, extremists have used the internet as a tool to recruit radicalised individuals and it is believed that it will continue to play a crucial role in the recruitment, indoctrination and training of future extremists. The social media are used as a strategic tool to try to incite violent behavior (Alava, Frau-Meigs, Hassan, Hussein & Wei, 2017) and young people are targeted every day by violent extremists, directly and through mainstream media. A study sponsored by UNESCO between 2012 and 2016 found that the Internet at large is an active vector for violent radicalization that facilitates the proliferation of violent extremist ideologies with protagonists of violent extremism heavily spread throughout the Internet (Awan, 2012). Violent extremists' ability to communicate effectively, especially through social media has become clear.

Since the invasion of Iraq in 2003, there are an estimated 5000 terrorist-related websites now available and with the fast-paced evolvement and accessibility of technology the fear is that future terrorist attacks may be more lethal (Moghadam, 2006). Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) used encrypted messaging services to perpetrate the Paris attacks and 90,000-200,000 pro-ISIS messages were posted daily in 2015 (Anan, 2016). Among extremist groups in sub-Saharan Africa, the Islamic State in West African Province (ISWAP), a splinter group from Boko which pledged allegiance to ISIS in 2016, is said to be the most sophisticated and effective in terms of employment of technology in its operations as well as the effective use of media (Ajodo-Adebanjoko, 2020b).

Extremist groups are heavily spread throughout the Internet and use the cyberspace in different ways, from online recruitment to the broadcasting of violent content. The media of radicalization is usually chatroom, Facebook, twitter and YouTube.

Chatrooms provide the space where at risk youth without previous exposure are likely to come across radicalizing religious narratives while Facebooks are often used as a decentralized center for the distribution of information and videos or a way to find like-minded supporters and show support. Twitter increases the communication potential for recruiters since it is difficult to trace the identity and the source of the tweets while YouTube is the main video-sharing platform of choice because of the difficulty in tracing the identity of people posting content and offers the possibility for users to generate comments and share contents. (Crettiez, 2011; Menkhaus, 2014). The social media have thus become the means by which contemporary conflicts are literally being played out.

Today, youths constitute majority of members of extremist groups, a fact not divorced from the fact that they are most affected by issues such as poverty, marginalisation and social exclusion and unemployment among others. They also comprise the majority in countries marked by armed conflict or unrest. It is estimated that more than 600 million youths live in fragile and conflict-affected settings, and are not only victims but perpetrators of such conflicts as well as violent extremism (Machina, 2018).

While it is true that youths are perpetrators of violent extremism, it is also being recognized globally that they can become equal partners in countering the phenomenon. The Security Council Resolution 2250 on *Youth, Peace and Security* recognizes youth not just as perpetrators and victims of conflict, violence and extremism but also as fundamental drivers and critical partners in global efforts to prevent conflict and promote lasting peace, and calls on Member-States for the inclusion of young people in efforts to promote peace and security in their communities (United Nations Experts' Draft Report, 2017). The United Nations' Action Plan to Prevent Violent Extremism (2015) also states that young people are invaluable members of civil society who play a critical role in the struggle against violent extremism and therefore call for their involvement in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) efforts.

Violent Extremist Groups in Sub-Saharan Africa

For the past two decades, the threat posed by violent extremist groups that espouse fundamentalist religious narratives has grown substantially across Africa while in recent years, the landscape of violent extremism in the sub-region has grown increasingly fractured and complex (Hallowanger, 2014; USAID, 2021). The threat of violent extremism has grown so much on the continent that in 2020, three of the top ten countries in the world in terms of violent extremist risk were

in Africa: Afghanistan, Iraq, Nigeria, Syria, Somalia, Yemen, Pakistan, India, Democratic Republic of Congo and Philippines (Mroszczyk & Abraham, 2021; Global Terrorism Index, 2020).

The three regional 'hotspots' of violent extremism in sub-Saharan Africa include: The Lake Chad region, the Sahel; and the Horn of Africa while spill-over countries include Cameroon, Chad, Kenya, Mauritania and Niger; and 'at-risk' countries, the Central African Republic, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda (Buchanan-Clarke & Lekalake, 2016; UNDP Report, 2019).

In 2014, Boko Haram which operates from the Lake Chad region, surpassed the Islamic State (IS) as the deadliest extremist violent organization with an estimated 7, 512 casualties that year representing a 317% increase from the previous year according to the Institute for Economics and Peace (2015). ISWAP has devastated livelihoods in the Lake Chad Basin.

The Sahel is also a hub of violent extremism. In addition to governance and security weakness which provide a conducive environment for extremist groups, the 2011 Libyan civil war and subsequent collapse of Mali's security apparatus led to the region being inundated with light and heavy weapons from the state's immense arms stockpiles paradoxically enriching the arsenals of a range of non-state actors including violent extremist groups (Steinburg & Weber, 2015; United Nations Security Council, 2013). Unlike in the Lake Chad region, several smaller violent extremist groups are found in the Sahel with the most active groups being Ansar Dine, AQIM and al Mourabitoun and despite their differing goals, they share a common Salafist/Islamic ideology (Lacher & Steinburg, 2015) and are mostly active in Algeria, Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania and Niger. More than a two hundred violent extremist attacks have been carried out in the region with far reaching consequences on civilians.

In the Horn of Africa, al-Shabaab remains a dominant force with an estimated 25% of its members being Kenyan nationals (BBC, 2014). The group's deadliest attack in Kenya which occurred at the Westgate Shopping Mall in Nairobi in September 2013 resulted in 67 deaths and more than 175 wounded while the attack on Garrisa University College left 148 dead and 79 injured (Buchanan-Clarke & Lekalake, 2016). Conflict in the sub-region allows violent extremist groups to operate with relative impunity and carry out attacks throughout the region sparking a surge in migration and smuggling with regional trade routes that encouraged legitimate trade now increasingly facilitating the flow of small arms and light weapons, drugs, people and violence (USAID, 2021).

The presence of ISWAP, AQIM, Al Shabaab and other extremist groups already established in sub-Saharan Africa makes the region already ripe for ISIS to spread its ideology. Affiliation with foreign extremist groups like ISIS and Al Qaeda that are competing for influence, power and access to resources on the continent has further increased extremist activities in the sub-region. Specifically, the Sahel region has emerged as a key battleground in the conflict between Al Qaeda and ISIS where affiliates such as the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) and the Al Qaeda affiliate Jamaat Nasr al-Islam wal Muslimin (JNIM) has resulted in unprecedented violence and alarming humanitarian consequences resulting in a five-fold increase in casualties between 2016 to 2020 while competition between affiliates has also exacerbated conflict in the Horn of Africa where Al Qaeda-affiliated al-Shabaab and the Islamic State in Somalia (ISS) have fought to become the dominant jihadist group in the country since 2015, leading to declaration of war on one another in 2018 (Mroszczyk &Abraham, 2021).

In the same vein, religious justification for violence has increased the activities of extremist groups in the sub-region. In recent years, the traditional, more tolerant Sufi form of Islam has been replaced by more radical and divisive Salafist interpretations which have given impetus to Sunni jihadist groups like al-Shabaab, Boko Haram and AQIM. These Salafist teachings have found acceptance among disaffected groups in the face of youth unemployment, corruption and bad governance and led to the fertilization of extremist ideals.

Violent extremist views have their roots in the colonial era and the undemocratic rule that characterized many post-independence governments and led to the growth of anti-Western and jihadist movements across the Middle East and the wider Islamic world (Moore, 2016). These movements had one thing in common and this is the fact that they advocated conservative religious rule as a cure for modern societal ills such as corruption and immorality among others (Buchanan-Clarke & Lekaleke, 2016). By the 1990s, these ideologies spread to Africa and aided by porous borders, poor security apparatuses, weak governance, corruption, ethnic divisions, and high youth unemployment, they created conditions under which violent extremist groups thrived (Institute for Economics & Peace, 2014).

Violent extremist groups thus emerged as a result of deprivation of basic needs such as employment, education and infrastructure suffered by people within the region, particularly young people. According to Nasser-Eddine, Garnham, Agostino and Caluya (2011), individuals scoring poorly on socioeconomic variables are at risk of radicalisation or violence. Frustration becomes the underlying trigger of radicalization which ultimately leads to violent extremism because when humans are frustrated they may use aggressive means to negotiate the frustration (Rinehart, 2009).

Violent extremist groups may begin as social movements which begin as peaceful, grassroots movements but eventually metamorphose into violence or other radical forms of collective action such as guerrilla warfare, insurgencies, and dissident movements. Violence may also be an inevitable product of the strain members of the society feel when the society fails to provide them with the legal means of attaining culturally valued goals and when rules no longer control behavior, the result is deviance (Okoro & Akunesiobike, 2018). The Boko Haram sect for instance, emerged initially as a peaceful movement which eventually became violent because of the frustration of its members which resulted from the use of force by security personnel and indiscriminate killing of the leader as well as members of the group. While this may not be the case of other groups, the factors which encourage the rise and growth of violent extremism in the sub-region are similar: injustice, religious fundamentalism, bad governance, corruption, porous borders, lack of or ineffective security. Sub-Saharan Africa has thus become the focus of extremist incursion not only as the threat from violent extremism appears to be worsening but also as the strategic African and non-African coalition response has not been able to adequately tackle the challenge (Ajodo-Adebanjoko, 2020b).

Exploring the Youth-Peace Nexus in Countering Violent Extremism in Sub-Saharan Africa

Most of the world's violence is said to be carried out by youth (Sommers, 2019). Weber (2013, p. 335) underscores this point of view when he stated that "Young men are the protagonists of virtually all violent political action as well as political extremism with a potential to threaten democracy". Globally, the last two decades have seen an increased focus on the role of youth in situations of social and armed conflict and violence especially young men as the perpetrators of violence and a threat to security and stability (Mukuna, 2019). While the majority of youth, even in deeply conflicted societies, do not join violent extremist groups, the majority of those who join such groups are youth (Sommers, 2019).

Over two-third of the Africa's population across the continent is under the age of 35 years – making it the "youngest" continent. While the nature of the youth challenges varies across regions, there are growing concerns that lack of opportunities – including the lack of (decent) jobs – and the limited inclusion of the youth in decision making processes undermine social cohesion and pave the way to the youth rejecting the social construct and engage in gang violence, crime, organized crime, gender violence, political radicalization, and armed conflicts, in particular violent extremism (Mukuna, 2019). Young people are often brainwashed, deceived or forcefully radicalised and recruited to serve as foot

soldiers for violent extremist groups. The age range of youth who are members of violent extremist organisations is put at the late teens or the 20s. Between 2014 and 2016, the Boko Haram group reportedly abducted 10,000 boys and trained them as foot soldiers who carried out series of attacks in the country. Since then, there has been a steady flow of young people comprising both genders, into the group either voluntarily or by duress. In Kenya, Al-shabaab has gained a strong foothold in Kenyan towns, and carried out a number of attacks throughout the country. Over the past decades, the country has experienced approximately 600 terrorist attacks, with the group claiming responsibility for the majority of these attacks (Mukuna, 2019). The threat in Kenya is further worsened by radicalized Kenyans contributing to the spread of Al-shabaab's ideology. Radicalization in the country has been on the rise with an intensification of youth indoctrination to join violent extremist groups.

In the face of challenges posed by violent extremist groups in Africa, governments and organisations in the region are increasingly looking beyond military solutions towards a holistic approach to countering violent extremism (CVE). This is in recognition of the fact that military options often exacerbate conflicts. Measures for addressing violent extremism in sub-region has often been based largely on security-led approaches such as the African Union–backed regional force from Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) countries including Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Nigeria, and the Republic of Benin, the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) and Operation Barkhane by France among others. However, these security-led approaches have largely failed to contain the geographic footprint of violent extremisms in the sub-region and thus, development-oriented approaches are being advocated and this has led to the adoption of P/CVE efforts which seek to address root political and economic causes of violent extremism (Zeiger & Aly, 2015). These development approaches place emphasis on the environment in which violent extremism thrives.

In adopting a holistic approach, attempt is made to strengthen the capacity of countries in the sub-region to counter violent extremism. Beginning from 2006, USAID for instance began to promote a regional perspective that facilitates trans-boundary analysis, fosters cross-border approaches and leverages partnerships with regional institutions and in 2009, it launched peace through development, a three-year project operating in Chad and Niger that marked the Agency's first attempt at CVE. In recent years, it has sought to support direct CVE programming in communities at risk of violent extremism influence while focusing on the critical log-term goal of building sub-regional capacity (USAID, 2021). Beside this, there have been other efforts by individual governments to counter violent extremism such as Nigeria's Soft Approach to Countering Terrorism, the National Counter Terrorism Strategy

(NACTEST), a service-wide collection of counter-terrorism efforts coordinated by the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA), and the National Action Plan for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism. However, the youth peace-nexus in countering violent extremism has remained less explored as most counterterrorism efforts do not include young people who are the main perpetrators as well as victims of violent extremism. As a result of this neglect, the potentials for young people to act as a vital resource in policy and planning on countering violent extremism (CVE) have remained largely untapped.

The involvement of young people in violent extremism has led several segments of society to stereotype them as the problem while overlooking the fact that the solution to the phenomenon and other threats to safety and stability can be found in working with them, and tapping into their talents and potentials to reform and rebuild society (Ekpon, 2017).The importance of youth as equal partners in development has been recognized worldwide and this has begun to take centre stage in many countries since the turn of the 21st century. Beginning in 1965, the United Nation General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respects and Understanding between the Peoples, thus, stressing the importance of the role of youth, especially their potential contribution to security and development. Following this was another UN General Assembly Declaration in 1979 proclaiming 1985 as 'International Youth Year, Participation, Development, Peace' to increase awareness of the situation, needs and aspiration of youth, with a view to engaging them in the development process (Dokuboh, 2018). The adoption again by the General Assembly of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the year 2000 and beyond further shows the importance of the universal concern about the issues of youth. Outside this, there have also been series of declarations and focus on the issues of youths and development such as the Amman Youth Declaration of August 2015, the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security of December 2015, and United Nations Security Council Resolution 2282 on the Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture, which underscore the important role youth play in preventing conflict and maintaining peace and security. In the area of violent extremism, the 2015 UN Plan of Action Against Violent Extremism recognizes the positive role young people can play in countering violent extremism (UN, 2015b; Obi, 2017).

At the regional level, organizations like the African Union (AU), and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have long-standing Youth Charters and policies. **The African Youth Charter outlines young citizens' rights and responsibilities, affirming that "(the) youth are partners, assets and a prerequisite for sustainable development and for the peace and prosperity**

of Africa". Article 11 of the Charter gives every young citizen "the right to participate in all spheres of society". While some national governments have similar frameworks but they are yet to fully mainstream youth in peace processes. The AU in particular has a comprehensive counter-terrorism framework that promotes law-enforcement, intelligence gathering, traditional military responses as well as soft approaches (Sharif & Richards, 2016). Following the Islamic State's call for Jihadists to make their way to the African Provinces, in 2014, the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the AU adopted a communique at its 455th meeting, at the level of Heads of State and Government, on the prevention and combating of terrorism and violent extremism in Africa. This communique seen as a second action plan called upon the AU Commission to intensify its efforts in the establishment of a Counter Terrorism Fund, the elaboration of an African arrest warrant for persons charged with or convicted of terrorists acts and the establishment of specialised joint counter-terrorism units at the sub-regional and regional levels within the framework of the African Standby Force (ASF), an effort which complements the AU's Nouakchott (2013) and Djibouti (2015) processes which bring together heads of intelligence from across the Sahel and East Africa regions to share information and strengthen regional security co-operation against translational threats (Sharif & Richards, 2016). Also, the PSC recommends the inclusion of countering radicalisation and extremist ideologies as a core component of the expected revision of the African Plan of Action on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism and Violent Extremism, and encourages Member States to promote national community-based prevention programmes which include youth, women and religious leaders for prevention and fight against violent extremism and radicalisation and(Africa Union, Peace and Security Department, 2022). Additionally, the AU Commission's Directorate of Citizens Diaspora Organisation (AUC-CIDO) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft fur internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) jointly launched the iDove pilot project using innovative youth-led approaches to highlight the soft power of religion in preventing and countering violent extremism, and foster inter and intra-faith dialogue (The African Union Commission, 2020).

Various youth-led and youth organized civil society organizations are also involved in mobilizing and training youth to play positive roles in conflict prevention, countering violent extremism, and peacebuilding and some of these include; Extremely Together, an advocacy group managed by the Kofi Annan Foundation with the support of the European Commission, One Young World, and the Amersi Foundation which bring together exceptional young leaders to prevent violent extremism. Through this forum, ten young activists from across the world, each with a track record of working with grassroots communities and effectively challenging intolerance and extremist

voices, have come together to encourage, mobilise and inspire other young people to follow their lead. Other initiatives that have youths at the centre of addressing violent extremism include the Elman Peace Centre's Drop the Gun, Pick Up the Pen (EPHRC), a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) established by a youth and for young people to address violent extremism. It has successfully disarmed, rehabilitated and reintegrated thousands of young women and men co-opted into clan militias by warlords. Others include; Pakistan Youth Alliance, a youth-led NGO that works on counter violent extremism, peace-building, conflict resolution, and the social welfare of the under-privileged, YTFPDI–Tolerance Academy, a mobile peace-building academy that gives young people tools and skills to propagate messages of peace, Youth Justice Board for England and Wales, a group that Collates information on interventions to prevent religious radicalisation and violent extremism. There is also Uganda Muslim Youth Development Forum, a nonpartisan, youth-led and faith-based development organisation that promotes dialogue and development, #NotAnotherBrother, a crowd-funded counter-narrative campaign to prevent youth from joining ISIS and International Youth Action Against Terrorism, a youth-firm that counters violent extremism in East Africa. The success of some of these initiatives points to the fact that young people can play critical roles in countering violent extremism if they are mainstreamed in CVE efforts.

Since violent extremism affects everyone, there is the need for a 'whole of society' response to a growing threat to peace and security, sustainable development, human rights and the rule of law, and humanitarian action (Sharland, Grice & Zeiger, 2017). To this end, the following strategies are suggested as part of the efforts to mainstream young people in CVE:

Education is critical to any role young people might play in violent extremism. Therefore, making young people more aware of the evils of violent extremism through education and critical thinking is the first line of defence against violent extremism. Formal education plays a significant role in this regard. The type of education provided should equip young people to identify and ultimately reject online and offline extremist propaganda. Where it has not been done, it will be necessary for the governments to revise their school curriculums and incorporate CVE as part of the courses. This should be at every stage of a child's educational development.

It is imperative for governments, local authorities, international agencies, private sector and civil society organizations, including faith-based organizations and religious leaders, to expand the role of youth in CVE efforts by recognizing and supporting what young people are already doing in preventing violence and violent

extremism and building upon existing capacities, networks and resources of young people in the sub-region.

There is also the need to promote social inclusion or social equity by ensuring that policies to counter violent extremism involve young people. An effective CVE approach should recognise and promote the significant and varying roles of young people at all levels, including in families, communities, civil society, educational institutions, the private sector, and in government. Governments should partner with relevant actors to ensure that young people can participate in peacebuilding activities and efforts to counter violent extremism. This is because, 'the creation of open, equitable, inclusive and pluralist societies, based on the full respect of human rights and with economic opportunities for all, represents the most tangible and meaningful alternative to violent extremism' (Guterres, 2017, p. 4).

Governments at all levels should also support youth initiatives financially and ensure that corrupt practices which hamper the successful and smooth delivery of support packages to youth groups and organizations in the fight against violent extremism, is addressed. External actors–both national and multilateral need to also focus primarily on tackling poor governance and helping in development (Chatham House, 2021).

The private sector also need to support youth P/CVE initiatives through funding, job creation and provision of material support to youth-led organizations and networks, formal and informal youth groups, and individual youth initiatives.

An understanding of the ways in which societies are manipulated into the extremist fold is a necessity in any P/CVE efforts (Bukarti, 2021). Thus, understanding the story behind youth-membership of the groups and what sustains them is crucial to defeating the sects.

While waiting to be mainstreamed in the CVE process, young people in the sub-region can do the following:

They can form or belong to associations and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and through these fora counter violent extremism by mobilizing young people who refuse to join violent extremist organisations. By this, they stand to enjoy one another's support and add strength to their efforts to prevent radicalisation, resist the spread of false and intolerant ideas, and help young people who have been radicalised to reintegrate successfully and peacefully in their societies.

Youth can also adopt targeted interventions. They can intervene to help people who are on a path towards radicalisation but are not yet involved in violent attacks and such interventions can prevent individuals from joining dangerous groups and doing harm to themselves or others. Targeted interventions are important dimension of CVE and are most likely to succeed when they occur early and involve friends, parents or relatives who are close to the person at risk. As part of the targeted intervention, youths can inspire young people like themselves to make a positive difference, work together to help them in their struggles to resist extremism, promote peace and security locally and regionally, and make their voices heard in mainstream and social media.

They can also organise conferences, symposia and seminars focused on the role of youths in national security, peacebuilding and P/CVE. They can obtain funds for these through writing proposals to organisations that are ready to sponsor such activities.

Partnership with youth organisations is also key. Young people can partner with other youth organisations, NGOs and advocacy groups within and outside the sub-region that are involved in CVE efforts. Such synergy will bolster their efforts in CVE initiatives.

Youth ex-extremists can also be agents of positive social change by assisting households and communities to respond resiliently after violence. They can play a vital and irreplaceable role in efforts to build social resilience, bring societies together, generate prosperity and employment, and resolve personal, community and larger-scale conflicts and grievances, many of which drive radicalization (Kofi Anan Foundation, nd).

Further, young people can be important shapers of religious narratives that oppose violence and be part of efforts to promote peacebuilding and religious tolerance.

Despite its negative uses, the social media remain a major tool in the hands of youths in their fight against violent extremist groups. The Internet creates opportunities for young people who are majority of its users to counter violent extremism. Young CVE activists can use technology innovatively to prevent radicalisation and recruitment. They can form and maintain an online platform or presence for this purpose. It is important however that young people who work to counter violent extremism innovate imaginatively and make full use of their ability to employ social media creatively because the challenge is not just to oppose violent extremism but to develop better alternatives for people who are drawn to radical propaganda.

Young people can also be part of localized efforts to tackle violent extremism. As a core part of families and communities, they have vital contributions to make to a more expansive understanding of the local context for CVE, including violent extremism in all its forms and manifestations, and its underlying factors. They can help formulate and deliver tailored CVE responses that are more localized, inclusive, credible, resonant, and therefore sustainable and effective. This is helpful as youth-mainstreamed CVE needs to more appropriately address localized youth-based recruiting, organizational youth dynamics, local youth dynamics, and other localized needs in order to be most effective.

Conclusion

Half of the world's populations today comprise youths and this group constitutes majority of members of extremist groups as well as the most affected by violent extremist activities. Ironically, this group is not given the best of considerations to play critical role with regards to national security particularly in the area of countering violent extremism as they are mainly perceived as the main perpetrators of the act. **Despite this, the solution to violent extremism and other threats to safety and stability can be found in working with young people, and tapping into their talents and potentials to reform and rebuild society. It also lies in truly listening to them and letting them drive the solutions**. Youth is an opportunity, not a threat and as such, young people should be perceived as important citizens and as potential ambassadors for peace and leaders in countering violent extremism. **Thus, for counter-extremism approaches to succeed, including prevention programmes, they must recognize the roles young people can play in this regard. Accordingly, making the youth-CVE connection emphatic is recommended because youth are, by far, the primary target group for recruitment into violent extremist groups**.

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A Critical Review of Youth Ownership in Countering Violent Extremism in Africa

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Abstract
Violent Extremism among the youth has been increasing in Africa with the intensification of youth indoctrination to join violent groups which has led not only to amplifying structural problems and complicating the gap in policy responses and practices but also brought a rapid growth to address the fragmented literature review and research studies spanning multiple disciplines that has been directed toward the role of youth in preventing, curbing and countering violent extremism. This rise has reflected the reality of the lack of clarity within Africa and the international community in addressing the issues of youth and violent extremism in a coherent and comprehensive manner as such resulting to a recent development to the emergence of the term ''youth ownership in countering violent extremism'' in Africa. This paper finds a number of themes that cut across a range of disciplinary approaches and suggests that the concept of youth ownership could provide the basis for a common framework for countering violent extremism. More generally, most African youth-led actions on countering violence are often non-functional, non-participatory, short-lived or frequently driven by the calculation of immediate gains. Further, the paper argues that the nature of violent extremism is undertaking a change towards transcontinental, trans-regional transnationalism and, despite its often localized context in existing violence, extremism has continued to attract internal and external actors, as youths are the centre of this attraction. In this sense, this aim of this paper give a comprehensive overview on understanding youth experiences with violence and exclusion in Africa, have found and generated new thinking about interventions and strategies for youth to be included in countering violent extremism or take ownership of countering violent extremism. In this context, the African continent need to adopt a holistic multipronged, multi-level engagement, viewing, engaging and mainstreaming of youth participation and inclusion focusing on countering violent extremism work through a youth-led approach and investment. However, through secondary sources, this paper highlights and shares the novel and original insights particularly novel research findings from cohorts including solutions and recommendations emerging from the broader literatures and ongoing debates. This is targeted at promoting youth ownership in the context of countering violent extremism in Africa as such help in devising and shaping more appropriate policies to prevent, curb and counter youth engagement in violent extremism.

Introduction

Countering violent extremism is currently a hotly debated topic, it has become a dimensional construct that is linked to youth ownership particularly as countering violent extremism requires a sophisticated, comprehensive response from the youths who remain the risk population. Therefore, there is need to unpack the meaning of the term "extremism" in the prevention acts of violence contexts and offer a more comprehensive framework that incorporates the many different dimensions that constitute youth ownership as a core element particularly as perspectives on youth are distorted by contagious stereotypes that associate young people with violence extremism and shaped by pervasive concerns that this has contributed to the marginalization, exclusion and stigmatization of youth by framing young people as a problem to be solved and a threat to be contained. Moreover, the myths and assumptions of these dimensions has fuelled"policy panic", particularly as it relates to the youth bulge and violent extremism including offering new insights towards examining the involvement of youths who are a known as the fulcrum in every society play as perpetrators of violence and their consequential role they play in preventing, curbing and countering violent extremism, more generally how youth ownership in countering violent extremism in Africa is expressed. Further, this significantly reshapes institutionalised initiatives and targeted actions towards the discourse on youth, peace and security programmatic responses and priorities including existing resolutions and protocols which are referred as "conscious actions and processes to protect young people involvement in, and the negative stereotypes and ill effects of, violent extremism and insecurity, and to promote and support the contributions of youths to peace efforts and decision making processes in violent conflict and post-conflict situations including the recovery of youths affected by violent extremism.

Recently, there has been a surge across a range of studies in research and policy actions in the discourse on youth countering violent extremism work and of the youth, peace and security agenda, which is been being acknowledged as a growing mandatory path for youth ownership particularly in view of the multifaceted exclusion issue of youths which is routinely overshadowed by youth bulge concerns in the sphere of peace and conflict studies which is often mistakenly understood from the related context of violent extremism that are illuminated by quantitative and qualitative data and correlations that not the views of the youth and also by the impact of several youth intervention variables. This has not only led to a tendency which view youths as an undifferentiated mass who cannot be discourage against violent extremism or as an increasing risk of violent extremism and such risk is mediated by the effect from two underlying key factors (structural and social agency of youths concerns) towards a variety of unmet needs. This reality is prosaic or can

probably be explained by recent concerns in the Western world and an intense global debate about African as the epicentre of youth extremism in the world, in particular, recording high incidences of extremism regularly.

Given the current trend to subsume the issue of youth prevention, curbing and countering into a general body of "violent extremism" approaches and given the wide-ranging review and rapidly expanding body of literature, there is an urgency to gaining a clearer picture of the current status of the youth ownership in countering violent extremism literature.However, it is important to stress that from the 1990s, Africa has experienced a variety of violent extremism, putting the continent and international attention on the significant role played by youths in the incidences of violent conflicts and further heightened the attention and concern of policy institutions and governments across the continent towards the participation of youth in conflicts and violence. In this sense, young people continue to constitute the core of perpetrators and victims, while also representing a significant number of over two-third majority of the African population (almost 70% are 35 years or younger), estimated to account for three quarters of Africa's 1.2 billion population making it the "youngest" continent and this youthful demography remains a significant for the future of the continent as well as a challenge. Besides, their engagement in promoting alternatives to countering violent extremism is therefore crucial for any counter-terrorism initiative to succeed in the continent as most of the countries in Africa where these violent extremism movements exist have a large population of youths but it is increasingly clear that these large youth population does not correlate with the emergence of violent extremism as the situation is more complex and context specific even due the vulnerability, availability and susceptible recruitment, engagement and involvements to violent extremism are mainly youths.. Interestingly, Africa had to a large extent through various member states, institutions and mechanism made successful record of policy action towards youth countering violent extremism but the significant proliferation that emerged from violent extremism across sub-Sahara Africa created serious concerns for serious investigations. In this sense, the Africa continental body (the African union), its related regional economic communities (RECs) and their member states adopted several normative instruments, including charters, protocols, declarations, policies and programmes that address the needs of young people broadly and the related gap in their marginalization and exclusion to peace and security as well as countering violent extremism. Bearing these in mind and the gap in literature about the youth ownership in countering violent extremism in Africa which is yet to be explored, this paper capture recurring ideas that emerge across the disciplines, which are articulated in a variety of ways but seem to share underlying perspectives and generate improved information on youth with reference to enhancing countering violent extremism efforts in Africa. The paper shares central

conclusions stemming from the analysis for the field of countering violent extremism, as such, it seeks to make a contribution to clarifying existing perspectives on and approaches to curbing and countering violent extremism by tracing narratives that appear to be crucial in reviewing youth ownership in countering violent extremism in Africa in research and action.

Contextual Overview of Countering Violent Extremism Frameworks

Since early 1990s, there have been increasing convergence and coordination on two key agendas: (i) countering violent extremism and (ii) youth, peace and security. The convergences of these two agendas have paved way to partnering and working with youth at all decision making level and across all sectors in preventing and countering violent extremism. Bearing these in mind, literature analysis reviews that the dynamics of youth involvement and drive in violent extremism remains a subject of much intense debate in academic and policy circles, and the description of the concept of youth ownership in countering violent extremism is a new phenomenon that is limited in literature and research study. In Africa, the prevention of acts of violent extremism is gradually increasing and incorporating long-term development strategies, treaties and initiatives including youth ownership as a core element. This narrative captures the fact that youths are becoming a key solution to prevent violent extremism as majority of young people reject extreme violence and are been acknowledged as a growing mandatory path for any initiative, strategies or projects to countering violent extremism. Cognisant of this reality, with the adoption of three resolutions by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) adopted three resolutions between 2015 and 2020, namely UNSC Resolutions 2250 (2015), 2419 (2018) and 2535 (2020) on youth, peace and security entirely dedicated towards calling on member states to recognize the important role of young people agents of change mostly in preventing and resolving conflicts and in sustaining and also promoting peace and security. Further, the second resolution reiterate the necessity for stakeholders to take young people's opinions into account and expedite their involvement in peace and decision-making processes at all levels; and identify the role young people can play in negotiating and implementing peace agreements and in preventing and resolving violent conflict. The third resolution, adopted in July 2020, also institutes a regular biennial reporting obligation on youth, peace and security by the United Nations (UN) Secretary-General, which is a step forward in the overall mainstreaming and promoting youth ownership in peace and security agendas and works at local, national, regional and international levels, particularly since youth engagement in peacebuilding and peace processes is impromptu and intermittent. The reporting obligation will therefore offer a snapshot on how the ongoing processes

and engagement can be enhanced and deepened in future processes. Additionally, the 2016 UN Plan of Action for Preventing Violent Extremism also dedicated significant attention to youths and their importance when developing counter violent extremism strategies (Ndung'u & Shadung, 2017).

Thus, distinctly and complementarity to the UN resolutions, the role and involvement of youth gained traction with the Africa Union (AU) Constitutive Act which explicitly took cognisance of youth as important partners to strengthen solidarity and cohesion and promote peaceful ties among 'our peoples'. Further, the African Union Commission's (AUC) strategic plan 2004- 2007 prioritized youth development and empowerment towards a peaceful and meaningful future. As noted, the African Youth Charter (AYC) in 2006 adopted by the peace and security council (PSC) of the assembly of heads of state and governments in Banjul, the Gambia, which is a strategic continental framework for African states, that crystallizes the cognition and gives path way for youth empowerment, development and participation in all spectrums of peace and security at continental, regional and national levels. This identifies the rights, duties and freedoms of African youth and their constructive engagement in decision-making processes and the developmental aspirations of Africa. Specifically, Article 17, of (AYC) identify the significant role of the youth in promoting peace and security in Africa and also outlines young people's rights and responsibilities, affirming that "(the) youth are partners, assets and a necessity for sustainable development and for the peace and prosperity of Africa". Further, Article 11 of the charter gives young people "the right to be involve in all spheres of society and becomes a potential milestone asserts their ownership and sense of belonging" through their active involvement in decision-making bodies and process, strengthening their knowledge capacity and mobilizing them to proactive role as change agents of peace. It provides technical and financial support to build the institutional capacity of youth organizations. As part of efforts to implement Article 11 and 17 of the AU youth charter, the youth for peace (Y4P) Africa programme was created with the aim of effectively engage, involve, and collaborate with young people as well as youth groups in all spectrum of promoting peace and security on the continent. Besides, their roles and contributions is targeted towards changing the negative perception of youth as harbingers of violence or problems to be solved to partners for peace. Significantly, the AU youth charter was developed regionally in collaboration with the regional economic communities (RECs) and regional mechanisms (RMs) to support and encourage the call for member states to mainstream meaningful participation, domesticate the AU youth charter through national action plans, localise practical operationalization and promote effective youth involvement in all spectrums phases of conflict resolution, prevention of violence, countering of violent extremism, transforming conflict, and peacebuilding

in Africa through RECs/RMs. Bearing this in mind, the African Union (AU) has set an example further for the rapid implementation and prioritizing youth ownership by managing to integrate the YPS agenda into the institutional processes of its peace and security architecture in the context of "Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want" and the "Silencing the Guns" initiative which acknowledges the role of young people and addressing the needs of youth in achieving the objective of ending all wars in Africa particularly in the aspirations 4 which calls for a Peaceful and Secure Africa based on functional mechanisms for peaceful prevention and resolution of conflicts, and the cultivating of a culture of peace and tolerance among Africa youths through peace education. Also Aspiration 6 of the Agenda which summaries commitments to the active involvement of young Africans in decision-making in all aspects (including peace and security); and the elimination of all forms of exploitation, marginalization and discrimination of young people; and the mainstreaming of youth issues in all development agendas. These frameworks and decisions serve as the foundation for the African Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment (APAYE), the AU's overarching programmatic document to guide and influence the efforts and contributions of key partners and stakeholders involved in youth empowerment and promoting peace on the continent. Thus, the APAYE advances youth development, catalyse members' states action and accelerate implementation of flagship programmes which critical to youth, peace and security.

Bearing these in mind, the AU's Agenda 2063 is guided by the AU normative Constitutive Act via Articles 3(f) and (g) which highlights the promotion of peace, security, and stability on the continent and the promotion of democratic principles and institutions, popular participation and good governance as core objectives. The declared philosophies governing the AU also underpin its commitments on youth, peace and security as well as 4(c), (i) and (m) which call for the participation of African people in the activities of the Union. Further, article 20 of the PSC protocol mandates and encourages organizations to participate actively in the efforts at promoting peace, security and stability in Africa. Article 3(a) summaries as a key objective the promotion of peace, security and stability in order to guarantee the protection of life and property, the well-being of the African people and their environment, including the creation of settings helpful to sustainable development. Also, the PSC at its 807th meeting in 2018 on Youth, Peace and Security, called on Member States to develop and implement national action plans and eliminate all structural barriers to youth participation in peace and security. The PSC also "demanded the AU Commission on supporting the role of the youth in promoting peace and security in Africa. Consequently, the Youth, Peace and Security agenda is a product of the AU commitment to engaging civil society groups in all aspects of its activities as it concerns young people as expressed in the 2008 Livingstone Formula; the mechanism set up by the Constitutive Act of

the African Union (Article 8 (10) (c)), and the Rules of Procedure 21 and 22 of the PSC permitting for the civil society participation in Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (CPMR), training and advocacy activities of the PSC focusing on the concerns of young people.

Accordingly, the African Governance Architecture (AGA) was established in lieu of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Good Governance (ACDEG), which underlines the connection between the observance of democratic principles and peace. The African Governance Platform adopted a five-year Youth Engagement Strategy (AGA-YES 2015-2020) to promote meaningful youth involvement in democratic governance processes; promote youth engagement in the AU shared values agenda on peace and enhancing the capacity of youth and youth-led or youth-focused organisations/networks to meaningfully participate in democratic governance processes and peace at all levels. Further, interfaith dialogue on violent extremism as a joint initiative by the AU Commission Directorate of Citizens and Diaspora Organization (AU-CIDO) and GIZ, is youth-led is designed to highlight and leverage the soft power of religion in preventing violent extremism in Africa particularly among young people to foster intra- and interfaith dialogue and mutual respect, and use digital resources to counter the recruitment of youth into violent extremism, and evolve a countermovement to prevent violent extremism. It uses non-violent approaches to support young people's ideas and engagement to problem solving and the strengthening of social cohesion across religions and countries on strategies for preventing violent extremism. Along this view, the African Union Youth Envoy Action Plan 2019/2020 highlights a resolution on advocacy through the position of an envoy on youth with a mandate to serve as a representative of and advocate for the voices and interests of African youth to the relevant AU decision-making bodies and advocating for youth, peace and development agenda including the implementation of the African youth charter and Agenda 2063. Most importantly, inline with Article 12 of the AYC, several Member States of the African Union have developed a national youth policy, which is cross sectoral in nature in view of the consistent challenges confronting young people. National Youth Council (NYC) has equally been created to foster youth participation and coordinate the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the policies. Most of the national youth policies offers cardinal roles and tasks for young people in the field of peace and security. Other programmes such as National Youth Services Schemes or Programmes have created such the country acceleration strategy (CAS)aimed at strengthening partnership with Member States to advance their national youth development agendas with high impact and scalable interventions and models in the areas of Education, peace etc. Besides, regional Initiatives (RECs/RMs) across Africa have also originated a series of policies and programs on youth development or

mainstreamed youth issues into their peace and security agendas. The have included peace and security among the priority areas and mainstreamed youth participation in policy and programming and also strengthen the capacities of young people in crisis and conflict prevention, and youth contribution to early warning for peace and security including expansion of regional and country level actions to respond to the priorities of young people in all their ramifications. These resolutions and policy actions acknowledges the imperative of empowering and prioritizing of youth as their role in attaining and sustaining a free and liberated Africa is paramount. However, in reviewing the general literature about the state of youth involvement in Africa, there is need to acknowledge a lack of research both empirically and theoretically about the youth ownership in countering violent extremism in Africa which is yet to be explored in in many different violent settings. In considering recent violent extremism, this paper through an inclusive and participatory research approach capture recurring ideas that emerge across the disciplines, which are articulated in a variety of ways but seem to share underlying perspectives and generate improved information on youth and countering violent extremism in Africa.

Violent extremism and youth ownership countering violent extremism in Africa

The terminology surrounding violent extremism and the context of countering violent extremism is evolving, complex and still largely debated (Nasser-Eddine, Garnham, Agostino, & Caluya, 2011). In the literature, these terms remain unclear, ill-defined and elusive (Southers, 2013) as they are predominantly used interchangeably and often intermingled as a social label in discussions on terrorism and other forms of conflict and violence particularly applied to those who have a distorted interpretation of religious ideology or connotations to justify the use of violence to achieve specific socio-political aims terrorism (Nasser-Eddine et al., 2011, p. 9). The amalgamation of these terms and the lack of a common working definition present a number of prevailing issues towards their understanding. Specifically, this is due to a variety of reasons, chief among them the fact that many terms used in this field do not have commonly accepted definitions and remains tainted with ambiguity. Thus, it is important to that are few stand-alone definitions of violent in the literature; as such, outlining the question of definition; an often read definition refer violence extremism as the use of violence, in line with a conceptual and ideological commitment to achieve political, religious, or social goals. Another definition refer that violent extremism has been often used to the reference to ideologies that oppose societal principles and values, and justify the use of violence in order to advocate particular beliefs – including racial, religious, or political (Neumann, 2011). Therefore, the concept of violent extremism is broader, because it accommodates any kind of

violence, as long as its motivation is deemed extremist. Bearing this in mind, violent extremism remains a cardinal threat to the existence of a contemporary of Africa and a destabilizing factor that keeps spreading across Africa despite years of counter-extremism by governments and international actors with its impact affecting youths in different ways both as recruiters, perpetrators and victims. However, violent extremism demographic patterns since 1990s in Africa is mostly concentrated in the hotspots of the Sahel, Horn of Africa, the Lake Chad Basin, to the West Africa's coastal states and North Central and Southern Africa coastal island of Mozambique. Considering this, Africa and its youth at the epicentre of the scholarly and policy debates on youth and violent extremism, additionally, interrogating the logic of youth involvement in violent conflict in Africa is the central problematique that has dominated much of the literature on armed conflicts and increasingly mass protests over the past two decades. Consequently, countering violent extremism (CVE) is a new term that lacks a consistent definition but some common view refers counter violent extremism (CVE) as a spectrum of policy, programs, and interventions designed to prevent individuals from engaging in violence associated with radical political, social, cultural, and religious ideologies and groups. According to Romaniuk, CVE is the use of non-coercive means to dissuade individuals or groups from mobilizing towards violence and to mitigate recruitment, support, facilitation, or engagement in ideologically motivated terrorism by non-state actors in furtherance of political objectives. (Khan, 2015). The popularity of the concept and agenda of CVE tend to be dictated and sometimes instrumentalised primarily by policy consideration that seek to address the drivers and/or root causes of extremist violence through preventive measures as the main impetus is the mobilization as actors in prevention and countering efforts.

Accordingly, as the threat of violent extremism continues to grow and change in Africa, it has been generalised that it tremendous has negative effects on the young people in the continent as they are victims or perpetrators and also resulting on their capacity and willingness to act as agents of positive change. While youth can be change agents, they are also vulnerable to external shocks, lack of opportunities, and conflict. The Covid-19 pandemic has worsened challenges faced by young people and limited their potential positive impact on development. Ultimately, underlying this, is the fact that a great majority of youths in Africa are neither exploited, killed, abducted and taken as prisoners nor they are also brainwashed, radicalised, deceived or forcefully recruited to serve as foot soldiers for violent extremist groups. Attribution from this trend of victimhood or perpetrators if not reversed has long-lasting human, health, security, economic and social costs particularly in disrupting youth livelihood, thus having a secondary effect on curbing youth population from gaining access to basic quality of life, development and opportunities to participate in decision-making

and civic life. In this context, according to a report, more than 400 million youth (aged 15–29) experience and reside in setting affected by violent extremism, armed conflict or organized violence. Also, in Africa, referred as a continent with some of the highest level of violent extremism and with the youngest population in the world, according to the Global Terrorism Database, over the last 10 years, Africa experienced the most terrorist activity in the world (Global Terrorism Index, 2020). It is estimated that more than 900,000 youths are directly active in violent extremism and over 4 million indirectly affected. However, countering violent extremism remains one of the most intractable challenges confronting the Africa and its member states. According to UNDP, "Since the beginning of the 21st century there has been more than a nine-fold increase in the number of deaths involvement from violent extremism, from 3,329 in 2000 to 32,685 in 2014" (UNDP, 2015).

Thus, with recent rising cases of youth participation in violent extremism which is prevalent in Africa, it is imperative that however articulated, efforts to achieve counter violence extremism requires an ample overview of what drives this violence extremism in any given environment, and in pursuit of such, the push' and 'pull' factors offer a convenient means through which to structure an understanding youth involvement in violent extremism drivers, other such systems of categorization may also be adopted, e.g. distinguishing between 'motivators' and 'enablers'.

This paper review found out that these factors interplay and varies on a wide context of macro, meso, and micro levels of analysis. As such, a number of studies found out that push factors such as marginalization, inequality, discrimination, injustice and many others drive individuals particularly to violent extremism whereas pull factors such as fragile states, absence of rule of law, endemic corruption, political elites impunity, poverty and many more encourage the drive to violent extremism. However, it is imperative to understanding that longstanding development challenges in Africa, alongside environmental degradation, political and social marginalization, organized crime, and weak governance have not only complicated the delivery of security and stability for Africa citizens, but also contributed to creating an enabling environment for violent extremist and terrorist groups. However, this study has identified a broad range of factors that can heighten the appeal of such groups and their ideologies and tactics. Besides, political factors such as governance deficit, state failure, prolonged and unresolved conflicts, lack of trust between government and the citizenry and other grievances play significant role in driving and escalation of violent extremism, as well as social and psychological factors concerning group and individual identity have also emerged as driving factors. Thus, a number of studies have found poverty, injustice, exclusion, unemployment and marginalization are an explosive combination that causes people to lose hope and to become easy prey

to violent extremist groups. That is to say that they act as a catalyst for potentially violent extremism drivers but this paper argues that political and religious leaders play an important role in the indoctrination and manipulation of the youth, attractive ideas and causes including through financial incentives and material incentives. These factors are associated in part with the political and socioeconomic disaffection of young men, and increasingly young women, who join terrorist groups such as Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab and other violent extremism groups across Africa. As such extremist groups have continue taking advantage of such these factors including hardships and vulnerabilities, as well as of young people's anger, fear, despair and feelings of injustice, increasing the risk of radicalization and recruitment and exploitation by violent extremist groups. Also the COVID-19 outbreak that has proven detrimental and affects disproportionately young people who in the most vulnerable situations, were not engaged in education, training or work.

Nevertheless, the rapid growth in research directed toward countering violent extremism in has resulted in a rich but fragmented body of literature spanning multiple disciplines. This paper finds a number of themes that cut across a range of disciplinary approaches, policies and programmes and therefore suggests that the concept of youth ownership in countering violent extremism could be central for a common framework for all aspects of prevention and countering violent extremism. However, thus far the notion of ''youth ownership to countering'' extremism has often focused on youth-inclusive/youth-focused and youth-centred actions and engagements as insufficient attention exacerbated by lack of evaluations, also rare systematic data and evidences has been given to instrumentalising the potential role of youth contextualised strategies and solutions, who have been echoed and rated as the greatest actors and targets both as perpetrators and victims including the most vulnerable and also linked in all aspects of violent extremism (Ndung'u & Shadung, 2017: 7). These perspective of limited literatures shows that the datasets on violent extremism and youths and its relation to national and regional contexts in Africa is inadequate. As a result, youth ownership perception in countering violent extremism will play a major role in amplifying new narratives on dealing with not only the challenges posed by youths who are dominantly involved in violent extremism but also facilitating more effective and meaningful solution into broader perspective of violent extremism narratives (Idris & Abdelaziz, 2017). With the issue of the role of youth in countering violent extremism gaining ground in recent years, thus, efforts aimed at countering violent extremism have emerged at the global stage with unprecedented speed and attracted substantial investment and policy thinking on securitised perspectives on youth in Africa. This is unsurprising as the adoption of the key United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 (UNSCR 2250) on Youth, Peace and Security in December 2015 and the African youth charter (AYC) in May

2006 and the related the 2016 UN Plan of Action for Preventing Violent Extremism, the Youth for Peace (Y4P) Africa programme and AU Youth Decade 2009-2018 Plan of Action are strategic resolutions that emphasise the key role of youth as agents of change and their importance in peacebuilding and also dedicated to fast tracking the development and implementation of supportive policies and programmes for young people including the urgent need for stakeholders to mainstream the efforts and ownership of youths in countering violent extremism. These paved the path way for domestication and localization of the UN and AU resolutions on Youth, Peace and Security to regional frameworks and member states national action plans on youth and youth-led efforts firmly within the broader inclusive peace and security discourse and more significantly the countering of violent extremism architecture. This is because these frameworks and action plans plays a critical role in boasting concerted effort at grassroots in build capacities, including technical and institutional knowledge, both in ownership and supporting coordination and prioritisation obligations pursuant to relevant UN and AU resolutions on the perception as positive agents of change in the context of countering terrorism rather than either victims or perpetrators of violence. However, these are applauded responses, which raises questions and also positioned to promote youth participation and enhance the engagement of young people as is the vision of the UN and AU's youth, peace and security agenda which ideally magnify youth ownership in countering violet extremism. Additionally, an inclusive strategic approach that empowers more actors and focuses more attention on youth-led interventions to counter violent extremism involves, inter alia, the institution of different thematic working groups on youth peace and security in Africa, the creation of African high level ministerial conventions, the development of more dynamic and complete set of policies, research analysis and academic programs which is part of an international, regional, national and locally-owned and relevant multi-sectoral approaches to implement youth ownership initiatives and also supports the implementation of key regional documents, tools and national action plans in line with the vision of the AU and UN plan of action on to counter violent extremism.

Considerably, there is substantial literature on the drivers of youth vulnerability to violent extremism but much of this is either generic, country-specific or regions-specific. Thus, this paper clarifies these literatures which places much importance upon the contextual drivers – the 'enabling', 'push' and 'pull' factors of violent extremism which disproportionally affects young people in Africa, manifesting in many specific concerns; As such the enabling factors are fragile states or weak institutions with ineffective security services and problems in implementing rule of law, poor governance or ungoverned areas inside the state, state support for violent extremist groups and pro-active religious agendas where "pro-active", refers to influencing pressing cultural demands on others. Further, the push factors are the

negative social, economic, cultural, political, corruption, and political features in the context of societal environment that aid in "pushing" vulnerable individuals onto the path of violent extremism. Push factors are what are generally known as "underlying/root causes" such as poverty, inequality, limited access to quality and relevant education, unemployment, intimidation, illiteracy, discrimination, limited political and civil liberties, unresolved conflicts, rule of law and human rights abuses, injustice and political/economical marginalization. Pull factors, on the other hand, are the positive characteristics and advantages of extremist groups that "pull" vulnerable young people in joining violent extremism. These include grievance, frustrations, ideology and sociological motivators such as ideological alienation, cultural adaptation, discrimination, kinship and brotherhood ties, reputation building, prospect of fame or glory and sense of belonging, and other socialization benefits (Shtuni 2015). These drivers help in identifying specific challenges at both the individual, group, community, national, regional, global and structural levels. In addition, there have been a large literature gap about the neglect on the role that a variety of formal institutions including state security forces, the media, civil society organizations (CSOs) and political parties play as drivers of violent extremism as they in most cases their tasks have often been tinged with suspicion particularly of encouraging or sponsoring perpetrators of violence in order to further their interests, thereby engaging or creating more extreme forms of violence, sometimes with mass public support. Also, there are level of intermediaries in which these groups partners as it prolongs and hinders resolutions to the threats of violent extremism in Africa. Besides, the philosophy and misconception of "do no harm" and gender sensitivity that is embedded in cultural and religious norms of discriminating women and their uptake of violent extremism have to a large extent fuel violent extremism, as young women have greatly adopted violent stance, wielding their influence as such acting as recruiters, financiers, and propagandists. Interestingly, these drivers are complex, multifaceted and intertwined such that important specific "pull" and "push" factors arising from dissatisfaction with and rejection of the socio-economic and political system, weak state capacity and failing security, social exclusion, harden social divisions, lack social opportunities, unemployment, elite impunity, lack of family care, illiteracy, poor governance, demographic divides, social inequality, rejection of growing diversity in society including victimization, prospects of making fame, mental manipulation and religion ideological misinterpretation (such as obtain paradise and fighting perceived religious enemies) have mostly been attributed to what manifests and fuels violent extremism by terrorist groups in Africa such Boko Haram, the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), Al-Shabaab, the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara, Ansar al-Islam, al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb among others offer alternatives and gain traction on young people to violent extremism. At the same time, the challenges youth face in violent extremism has led several

segments of society to stereotyping them as the problem both as targets and culprits and fails to capture the fact that they are part of the solution and this subsequently leads to inadequate policy responses. Bearing this in mind and the growing concern in academics and policy making, it has been clear in recent years that steps have been taken forward, measures and strategies including range of commitments and array of initiatives have also been identified to support, involve, encourage, engage, partner and empower young people as well as what role they play and what represents their interest in countering violent extremism (Wimelius et al., 2018). Thus, balancing these narratives in the context of a continental framework on youth, peace and security in Africa, there have been constrained by a variety of issues such as limited financial resources and access for youth initiatives, lack of coordination or mechanisms for inclusive engagement among youth groups and other stakeholders, weak organizational and technical capacities of youths, poor coordination and inclusivity among youth groups, limited awareness to mainstreaming of youth agendas and their potential contributions to counter violent extremism, limited role and space for youth in countering violent extremism initiatives, systematic mistrust, lack of access to decision-making, lack of capacity building, limited technical resources on youth programming into peacebuilding programs and lack of evidence-based approach to programming on youth, peace and security, particularly as these affect Africa. Accordingly, as youth encircle the main concern of countering violent extremism, there is five (5) overarching priority implementation areas in line with the counter violent extremism resolutions and policies that places emphasis on participation; protection; prevention; partnership; disengagement and reintegration of young people, as this paves way for the inclusive mainstreaming and effective programming of youths in the development and implementation of a holistic continental strategic approaches on youth, peace and security.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Violent extremism and Youth ownership in countering of violent extremism sit at the forefront of today's policy discussions and has attracted a lot of attention and critique from academics in recent years(Percy-Smith & Thomas 2010, 1) and it has been it has been widely suggested that youth involvement in all matters that affect their lives (Crowley & Moxon 2017, 13). Thus, this have conceptualized numerous debates surrounding the phenomena from rich but fragmented body of literatures spanning multiple disciplines and as such it has been questioned whether countering violent extremism (CVE) without youth participation can be counterproductive, ineffective and stigmatizing. Bearing this in mind, youths are Africa's greatest asset, thus, the present and future of Africa in countless ways, particularly by their demography; Africa has about 420 million young people aged 15 to 35 and this number is

anticipated to increase to 830 million by 2050. This is to say that Africans youth are major stakeholders in the realisation of Africa's dream of a conflict-free continent as they are stigmatized as victims and perpetrators of violent extremism but they also represent a significant resource to be tapped by stakeholders through targeted resolutions, policies, programmes and initiatives that is central to this paper. As a result, this paper reinforces the evolution of peace, security and legal frameworks through the call for youth involvement in countering violent extremism or call for more action on youth, peace and security in Africa. In response, the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 (UNSCR 2250) on Youth, Peace and Security in December 2015 and the African youth charter (AYC) in May 2006 and the related the 2016 UN Plan of Action for Preventing Violent Extremism, the Youth for Peace (Y4P) Africa programme and AU Youth Decade 2009-2018 Plan of Action are broad-based agendas that strategically provide the basis for a common framework for youth involvement and ownership against the multiple drivers of violent extremism. Interestingly, the convergence of these agendas presents an opportunity through five priorities of participation, protection, prevention, partnership, disengagement and reintegration of young people, as this creates a way for mainstreaming and programming of youths at all levels and across sectors, in preventing and countering violent extremism. Further, it identifies certain drivers, and enabling structural factors that have no easy or quick solutions and also prevent youths against countering violent extremism and concludes with suggestions for enhancing the approach and effectiveness of CVE related to youth ownership. To sum up, the narrative above revolves around some key recommendations (i) Make the CVE-youth connection emphatic by constructive support youth participation at all levels of programming for peace and security (ii) institutionalize affirmative actions on youth quota in peace and security by reviewing policies and practices that cause the diminishing of opportunities for youth by engaging appropriate stakeholders. (iii) support youth peacebuilding organisations and their initiatives with sustained funding, as they are at the forefront of preventing violent extremism and have the necessary trust, as well as skills and knowledge of the context to implement peace initiatives and disengage those involved in violence. (iv) broaden programming component on youth, peace and security by focusing youth intervention in peace and security across all sectors, and supported by more research and analysis on reintegration and rehabilitation trends and forms, including specific youth needs. (v) expedite youth roles as leaders, partners and beneficiaries in peace and security by investing on young people. (vi) increase educational approach to leverage the diversity of young people with awareness of variation in specific youth needs especially vulnerable and marginalized young people mostly in Africa. (vii)clarify contextualized meanings, definitions and identities of youth in the perspective of violent extremism. (viii) foster joint and inclusive process to enhance ownership, trust and accountability between youth and policymakers and institutions (especially AU,

RECs and Member States). (ix) involve youth in all stages of programming on peace and security through tailored approaches in broad consultations, surveys, research analysis, systematic documentation and calls for position papers to maximise their contributions to the design, implementation and evaluation of policy and programme responses. (x)undertaking initiatives in secure establishments and safety for young people at risk of violent extremism as this will highlight the sensitivity to internal dynamics (inequalities, rivalries divisions and tensions) among youth, an evidence base of "what works" in youth countering violent extremism. (xi) strengthening the capacity of youth organizations through the provision of trainings and creation of a supportive climate. (xii) Involve local authorities, civil society, and the private sector in efforts to building driver-based policies and overcoming youth marginalization and strengthen youth resilience, considering local context. While such recommendations are very important, youth ownership can be contingent on implementing certain crosscutting issues on an enabling mechanism of capacity building, institutional commitment, effective funding and investment, local-level coordination mechanism, funding and donor engagement, including effective advocacy, knowledge management and holistic strategic communication capacities.

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RETHINKING LOGIC OF TERRORIST ATTACKS: A CASE OF AL-SHABAB

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Abstract   What shapes the logic of attacks among terrorist groups? How do these groups choose their target and what implications do such choices have on a terrorist group's survival? These questions continue to preoccupy the attention of counterterrorism strategists and practitioners. Understanding a terrorist group's potential targets is a key consideration in developing an effective response measure. This article focuses on the Somalia-based terrorist group Al Shabab and examines the group's approach and logic of attacks. It compares the group's targets in Somalia and neighboring Kenya. The paper argues that there is a consistent pattern of targeting civilians in Kenya while the group attacks in Somalia seem to target mostly government officials and infrastructure. Two things can inform such an approach (1) by avoiding direct targeting of civilians in Somalia, Al Shabab aims to avoid backlash from the locals who can opt to support government counterterrorism efforts at the expense of the group. (2) by targeting government officials, the group is not only able to show the weaknesses of government officials but also exploit the grievances caused by government failure to deal with critical issues such as unemployment, high cost of living, and poor infrastructure among others. (3) civilians being attacked in Kenya are part of the group's narrative of dealing with 'non-believers'. The study concludes that Al Shabab is keen on managing its use of violence on specific groups in different locations in order to justify its role and existence as well as advance both its narrative and avoid surprising its survival.

Keywords

Al Shabab,
Logic of Attack,
Somalia,
Kenya,
Counterterrorism.

Introduction

A review of existing literature reveals that most studies on violence and terrorism have focused on the lethality, definitions, causes, actors, and frequencies of attacks (Crenshaw,2007; Hoffman,2018; Ruby,2002; Martin,2017). While these studies offer important insight into understanding conflict and violence, they do not offer explanations as to why specific groups and regions are likely to be attacked. Understanding the why and which groups are vulnerable to attacks, peace, and counter-terrorism efforts can also be tailored to be more effective.

Of course, attacks on civilians have been analyzed in existing studies but in isolation without assessing the choice of attacks on civilians in the context of other choices that could be selected such as state properties, and military barracks of decision-makers (Nyadera, 2018). Therefore, by looking at studies that focus on attacks on civilians in isolation we can conclude that they have several shortcomings. These include but are not limited to not explaining discriminatory attacks as a strategy. They also fall short of exploring if other options that can be attacked are complements or substitutes.

Keen observation of terrorist groups' activities will reveal certain patterns. These patterns can be visible in the group's recruitment strategies, messaging approach and logic of attacks. However, many studies especially those examining terrorist activities seem to ignore these crucial questions. Perhaps this is a result of the existing popular accounts that seem to generalize terrorist attacks as random and indiscriminate (Telesca & Lovallo, 2006). Historical accounts show that terrorist attacks are not necessarily random or indiscriminate but rather the choice of who and where to be targeted is often deliberate, and intentionally chosen to achieve specific goals and objectives (Kluch & Vaux, 2016; Safer-Lichtenstein et. al., 2017; Hansen, 2022).

For example, according to data from the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) (2013), the attacks carried out by the NPA in the Philippines between 1990 and 2007 of the over one thousand attacks, 73% of the those targeted were government institutions, property, and officials such as the police while few of its attacks were directed to non-government entities. If you are to compare this trend of attacks with that of Fatah's military wing, the Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade, whose majority of attacks in the last ten years consisted of soft targets and fewer attacks on government entities.

These two groups enjoy local support, have secular ideologies, their leadership structure is strong and hierarchical, and have control over territory. They also lack access to huge natural resources and direct support from the state yet despite these

similarities, their choice of target seems very different (Cunningham, Gleditsch & Salehyan 2009).

Studies such as Salehyan, Siroky & Wood (2014), Asal et al. (2015), and Weinstein (2007) present a case that these group targets would be civilians. As seen in the two examples, this is not the case. Furthermore, such divergence in the choice of targets for attacks is not unique to the two groups only. In Syria, the choice of who and where to attack by the majority of the non-state actors involved in the violence between 2012 and 2015 shows a very interesting trend (Nyadera & Islam, 2020). An analysis of the targeted entities by the different groups reveals that 40% of the *Jabhat Fateh al-Sham* group were directed towards civilians, the Islamic State of Syria and the Levant carried out 75% of its attacks on civilians while 81% of the attacks carried out by the Free Syrian Army (FSA) were directed towards government entities (Brown & Schulzke 2015).

What this framework seeks to explore is why do we have different groups opting to attack different targets. In the case of Somalia, this is a critical question since the targets of attacks by groups such as Al Shabab also vary when the attacks a carried out in the country or neighbouring countries. The dilemma in this debate is under what circumstances are civilians likely to be attacked more.

Analytical Findings on Al-Shabab

In studies by Polo & Gleditsch (2016), Drake (1998) Kalyvas (2006), Weinstein (2007), Abrahms & Potter (2015), Asal*et. al* (2009), attacks on civilians are seen as being motivated by ideological commitments, lack of attractive alternatives to attack or principal-agent problems rather than a cost-effective strategy. In the case of Somalia, understanding the strategy of the groups involved in the conflict is an important starting point to understanding how the actions of those groups affect national and regional security (Nyadera & Ahmed, 2020). In particular, by understanding the choice of target, these studies have explored the balance between mobilizing support and inflicting harm on the adversaries (Kalyvas, 2006).

Al Shabab, the main non-state actor involved in Somalia's violence is relatively small and weaker compared to the coalition of countries and other regional and international actors involved in trying to stop the group's activities. Therefore, the choice of its targets needs to ensure maximum utility and support among its followers (Abrahms, 2013). This may explain its decision to target mostly civilians than government officials or assets in neighbouring Kenya and Uganda.

Al Shabab has a much lower resource capacity compared to the combined force of the Kenyan, Ethiopian, Ugandan, Rwandan, Somali armies and the US army currently involved in the counter-terrorism operations in Somalia (Masters & Sergie, 2015). By targeting civilians, the group can get a lot of publicity through the media, it requires fewer resources to target civilians and difficult for the government to predict and prevent attacks on civilians. In addition, looking at the areas Al Shabab has carried out attacks in neighbouring countries, they target civilian places popularly visited by foreigners, education institutions, and revellers watching foreign football matches. These targets are particularly important in gaining local support and legitimacy.

Contrary to their attack on civilians in neighbouring countries, Al Shabab attacks in Somalia tend to target government assets and personnel. This is an important strategy for the group which may not want to lose legitimacy by attacking fellow citizens even though most of their attacks in Somalia also kill civilians. This information is presented in the figure (1&2) below.

Figure 1: Number of targeted attacks in Somalia between 2010 and 2020.
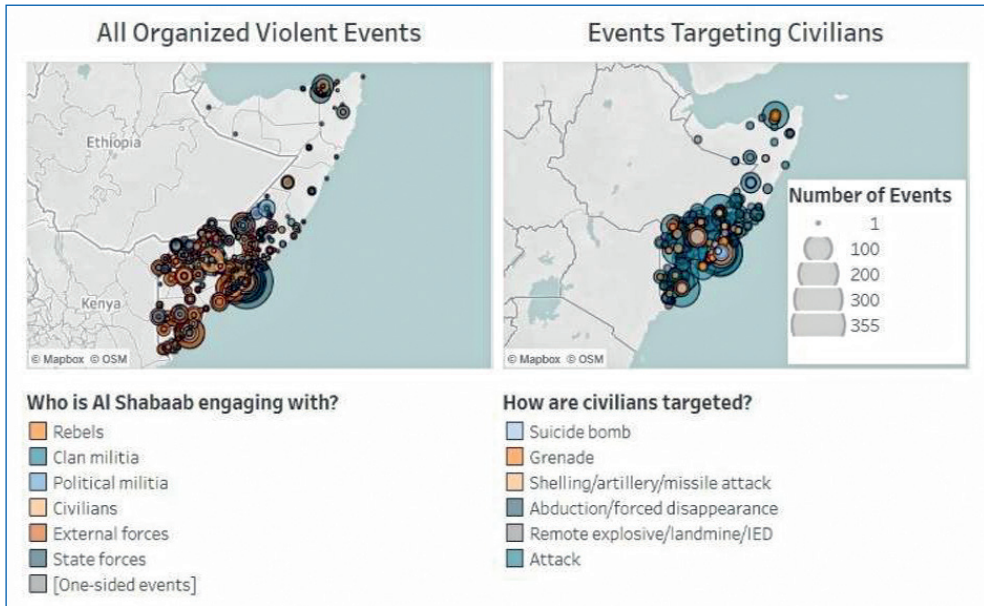
Source: ACLED (2021).

Number of Attacks (n) = 10,811

Total Number of Fatalities (f) = 29,593

Attacks Targeting Civilians (c) = 1,752

Death of Civilians (d) = 3650

NB: the above numbers represent cumulative totals between 2010 and 2020.

Figure 2: Number of targeted attacks in Kenya between 2010 and 2020.

Number of Attacks (n) = 416
Total Number of Fatalities (f) = 1,484
Attacks Targeting Civilians (c) = 286
Death of Civilians (d) = 761
NB: the above numbers represent cumulative totals between 2010 and 2020.

The two figures above show that out of the 10,811 attacks in Somalia by Al Shabab, only 1,752 were directed on civilians. In terms of the fatalities, out of the 29,593 only 3650 were civilians confirming that Al Shabab attacks in Somalia target government entities more than civilians. this is however not the case in Kenya as more civilian fatalities have been recorded. I argue that three issues determine whether attacking government assets is more beneficial than attacking civilians. These include repressive strategies by the government, the existence of strong in-group–out-group cleavage which defines membership, level, and type of support a group. Thus, a combination of the level of antagonism between the general population and the terrorist groups' local constituency and the terrorist reliance on internal vs external support will define the target preference (government or civilian) for a terrorist group.

To put it into context, groups that get much of their support from external actors will not be constrained by the potential of losing local support and will have a tendency of attacking civilians locally and internationally (Carter, 2016). The groups that enjoy local support will be trying to avoid backlash from their local supporters in case they attack civilians. attacks by such groups will thus be directed to government

targets or those with low-output in terms of civilian losses. However, groups that face out-group antagonism but still have local support often find themselves facing competing incentives.

If the government chooses to respond to such groups using discriminatory force (that is targeting their supporters with no direct involvement in the terrorist groups' activities) then such a group may opt to attack civilians in exchange. Groups with low out-group antagonism, meaning those who do not support their activities and are not involved in trying to disrupt the group, behave differently. In this case, there are high chances that despite strong repression from the government, the group is less likely to shift its attacks on civilians and instead increase their retaliation against the government (Koehler, 2020).

Given that most attacks carried out by subnational actors have social or political objectives beyond the victims of the attack, makes these attacks somewhat channels of communication (Di Filippo, 2020; Byman, 2020). However, the objective of sending a message cannot be effective if there is no direct connection between the *purpose* and *target*. That is the choice of a target for the attack also acts as a 'signal' of understanding the terrorist intentions and goals. The group will use its targets to communicate its goals to the audience the message is intended to reach (the state) (Polo, 2020; Gill et al., 2020). One such communication can be interpreted in an instance where a terrorist group opts to attack government assets and infrastructure. The signal here is that the group shows capabilities to strike but opts to minimize the chances of killing or hurting civilians (Conrad & Greene, 2015).

Moreover, a key notable objective of terrorist groups is to discredit the government, make it appear weak and unable to protect its citizens, impair government operations, impede its administrative activities, make state officials demoralized. This can be achieved when attacks are directed towards entities with important symbolism to the government, civilians with roles in government as well as pro-government regimes and local administrators (Kydd & Walter, 2006: 66). There are several examples of such instances such as attacks on new police recruits in Afghanistan by the Taliban who wanted to discourage people from cooperating with the government.

Similarly, the Kurdistan Workers' Party (*Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan* (PKK)) considered a terrorist group by the government of Turkey and the United States targeted and attacked entities that symbolize the Turkish state (Ünal, 2016: 59). Terrorist groups have also opted to destroy communication and transport infrastructure, gas, and oil pipelines, as well as power lines without attracting severe backlash as would be the case if civilians were attacked. Non-state actors perpetuating violence also seek to present attacks on government assets and personnel such as police and the military

as being legitimate targets (combatants). This is particularly useful for groups that seek to show that their attacks discriminate against civilians.

Why Civilian Matter?

Soft targets are those targets that are attacked yet do not have a direct relation with the government or decision-making. These include civilian assets such as restaurants and shops, private citizens, and NGOs. Such targets are easy to attack especially for transnational terrorist groups and they do spread fear much faster. Sustained attacks on civilians can also make the government lose legitimacy (Stanton, 2013). However, Abrahms (2013: 664) opines that a strategy to attack civilians can in the short or long -run be counterproductive since such actions are seen as lacking moral restraint, uncontrolled and indiscriminate. Equally important, targeting civilians puts the subnational group at risk of losing the support of civilians who may be sympathetic to the group's call among the population being targeted.

Indeed, while subnational groups such as terrorists and separatists can attack both soft/ civilian and hard/government assets and personnel, a specific group will tend to have a very *relative* preference for the two. Choosing the target of the attack is not necessarily interchangeable but part of a deliberate strategy to send a particular message or achieve certain goals. For example, a study by Polo (2020) illustrates the variation in the target choice by different groups as shown in figure (3) below.

Figure 3: Percentage of attacks against civilian vs. government targets by different groups (1995-2017).
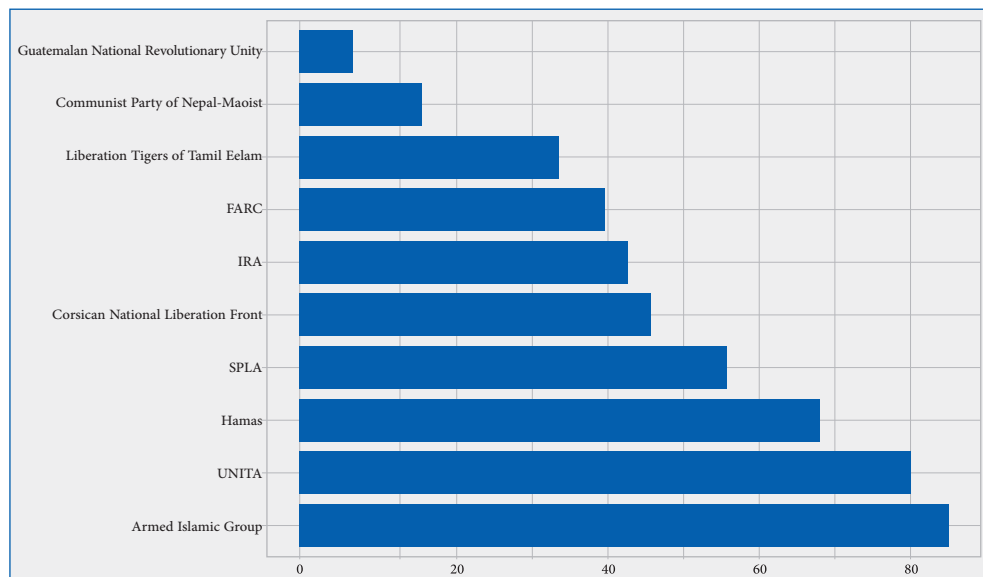
Proportion of civilian targets out of 100 %.
Source: *Polo (2020).*

The figure 3. shows that while some groups have a greater interest in targeting civilian populations, others tend to focus their attacks more on government entities. For instance, between 1995 and 2007, over 85% of the attacks perpetrated by the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity and the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoists were on government targets and less than 20% of their attacks were perpetrated against civilians. In contrast, 70% of attacks by subnational groups such as UNITA of Angola, Algeria's Armed Islamic Group, and Hamas were on civilians.

This trend has been seen in attacks carried out by subnational groups in Somalia. Their strategy to attack more government entities in Somalia and more civilian entities in neighbouring countries offers a unique insight into the groups' strategy and approach. Yet few studies have focused on the general impact of target choice on a group's violence strategy. One interesting study by Sanı´n and Wood (2014) on the role of ideology in selecting target attacks challenges the general narrative that ideology is a strategic source.

For Sanı´n and Wood, ideology is not a strategy but rather a normative commitment which does not explain why a group would change its target as it is with the case of groups in Somalia. Given that most subnational groups have two key objectives, that is to coerce the government and to gain support whether locally or internationally, (Pape, 2003) then their action would be shaped to a larger extent by these two objectives rather than ideology when choosing the target.

While targeting either government or civilian entities is an option for non-state actors, and both have different costs. Attacking civilians may be an easy option but has a higher political cost risk. However, these political costs may not be the same for all groups in all cases. Depending on the identity of the civilian, the political cost can be higher or lower among different groups.

For example, attacking civilians considered to be from an enemy state or 'outsiders', traitors, or even collaborators with external actors may have low political risk among the supporters of the group that carried out the attack. This perhaps explains why the Somali-based group Al Shabab does not face serious backlash from their local supporters whenever they attack civilians in neighbouring countries. Having strong popular support is key objective decadent groups seek to achieve. Most of them are well aware and seek to attract positive public opinion on their course.

This support is necessary since civil wars and large-scale violence perpetrated by terrorist groups rely on the population for material support and recruitment of fighters. Social ties also play an important role in determining the level of backlash

a group could face in the event it attacks civilians. If there are strong social ties between the targeted civilians and communities supportive of violent groups, then the group is at risk of a higher political cost. If there are little or no social ties, the backlash could be lower.

The conceptual framework adopted in this study seeks to examine conflicts more broadly. It is true that while conflicts can emerge internally within a state, their impact across the region cannot be taken for granted. More so given that while there could be similar patterns in terms of actors and drivers between national and regional conflicts, there are unique issues that distinguish national and transnational violence and there thus need different responses and approaches. Table (1) below shows some of the features that characterize internal and regional conflicts.

Table 1: Features of internal and external conflicts.

Level of Analysis	Actors/Agents	Drivers	Events
Internal	Government War Lords Terrorist group Political parties Clan/Ethnic group Local leaders/authorities	Economic factors Religious ideology Political ideology Ungoverned spaces Rebel groups Marginalization	Revolts Attacks on government facilities Protests Calls for cessation Internally displaced persons
Regional	Regional governments Terrorist groups Regional organizations Pirates Transnational kin/clans	Ideology Intervention Interference with domestic issues Support to opposing sides	Terrorism Attacks on civilians Piracy Kidnapping Refugees Collateral damage

Source: adopted from Onditi et al., 2021.

It shows that while peace advocates can be preoccupied with internal events, the result of conflicts that have become transnational can easily become intractable. This is because local agents (such as terrorist groups and pirates) can use their activities at the regional level to generate resources and support for their domestic course. For example, Somalia-based terrorist group Al Shabab has used attacks on Kenya and Uganda to seek support from other international terrorist groups such as Al Qaeda. Similarly, proceeds from illegal activities such as piracy, human trafficking, kidnapping, and black-market goods have profited warring factions inside Somalia (Agbiboa, 2015).

Informally governed spaces have two implications for conflict and terrorism. One, it allows various groups to establish authority, support, and collect revenue in different parts of Somalia (Ojo, 2020). Rivalry for the control of these different territories results in violence with devastating implications on the citizens. It

also allows for the emergence of other forms of criminal activities which are characterized by violence. For example, ships and their crew that are taken by pirates on the coast of Somalia are normally held in territories that are under the control of non-state actors.

This is also true for those who have been kidnapped for ransom as well as trafficking of humans, weapons, and goods. Most of these factors have domestic implications, in many cases promoting violence. The second impact of ungoverned spaces is on regional security whereby groups that intend to cause transnational attacks can have ample space to train, organize and launch attacks from these territories that are not under the control of the government (Downey, 2021; Nyadera, et. al., 2022). While the impact of these ungoverned spaces has not been well examined, the improvement in attacking skills as witnessed during the Westgate Mall, Garissa University, and the Disut 2 plaza attacks show that ungoverned spaces offer fighters an opportunity to get high-quality training. They then use this training to carry out regional attacks. Thus, this study highly recommends that discussions on peacebuilding in Somalia should also integrate strategies on how ungoverned spaces will be addressed.

Intervention strategies

Given the fascination by Al-Shabab to target civilians across the border and mostly government agencies within Somalia, the following response strategies can be adopted;

Re-establishing stable governance systems in Somalia. Al Shabab has been able to thrive in Somalia as a result of the weak governance and institutional structures in the country. While a lot of efforts have been made to try and end the crisis in Somalia, most of these efforts have focused on political institutions and not broader governance issues that touch on service delivery and uplifting the lives of people in Somalia. The frustrations emanating from the suffering inflicted by years of conflict in the country has left many locals vulnerable to manipulation by non-state actors. This has seen young men and women lured to join groups such as Al Shabab with the promise of better fortunes. By addressing the institutional and governance gap being experienced in the country, there is a strong possibility that terrorist groups will also lose key local allies.

Once there is better control of Somalia by the central government, intelligence sharing will need to be strengthened. This does not only apply to local countries but also to international actors including states and non-state actors such as financial institutions, the INTERPOL, migration authorities and trade agencies can

collaborate to share information on financial and asset flows so as to deny groups such as Al Shabab the financial muscle needed to conduct their operations. It will also help undermine the movement of potential recruits and trainers to and from Somalia thus containing the activities of the group. Intelligence-sharing will also expose local and international supporters of terrorist groups who can in turn be targeted. More importantly, it will be easier to develop preventive measures and early warning systems using the information at hand thereby to detect, deter and disrupt terrorism.

Countering- (*mis*) information. In an age of advanced information and communication technologies, the challenge of dealing with misinformation and fake news has become even more complex. Yet terrorist groups seem to have adopted the use of information platforms to reach out to an even larger audience. The use of unrestricted platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and websites allow Al Shabab to extend its messaging and propaganda to a larger audience. In some of it social media posts, Al Shabab shows how it is succeeding to defeat the enemy and provide extremist teachings to its followers. These strategies need to be countered if the group is to be defeated. Social media owners need to be incorporated in counterterrorism activities given the power these platforms offer terrorist groups. While freedom for information is a vital part of human rights, such freedoms should not be extended to groups intent on committing violence and crime or spreading hate. Proper collaboration between social media owners and stakeholders involved in counterterrorism is essential to this success.

Conclusion

As actors at the national, regional and international level grapple with the question of how to deal with terrorist groups, understanding the factors and issues that shape a terrorist group's logic of attack is crucial to the success of a counter-terrorism strategy. The behaviour of groups such as Al Shabab is guided by important considerations of local and international support as well as creating a narrative and perception. These two considerations can support a terrorist group's ability to survive or fail. The patterns that shape how, where, who and when terrorist groups carry out their attacks can be predicted by looking at the issues that shape the group's motivations and targets that are likely to yield better outcomes. From the case of Al Shabab, it is not in the group's interest to attack civilians around the areas it controls or hides. This may encourage the locals not to cooperate with counterterrorism actors and therefore in order to make things work these stakeholders may need to find better incentives for the locals than what Al Shabab is offering them (i.e., protection from attacks).

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COUNTERING THE ISLAMIC STATE IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO: ANALYSIS OF INTERVENTION OBJECTIVES AND COUNTERTERRORISM STRATEGIES

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Abstract   The emergence and evolution of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) from Uganda in the early 1970s and its spread to the neighboring Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) opens up a unique yet problematic understanding of contemporary terrorist organisations. It gives rise to complexities which pose serious challenges in formulating and implementing effective counterterrorism strategies. While the group has in the past affiliated itself with different rebel groups in Uganda and the DRC, it is its association with the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), a global terrorist organization, that calls for deeper scrutiny of the ADF. This paper seeks to examine the origin and transformation of the ADF to the Islamic State in the Democratic Republic of Congo (IS-DRC) exploring its changing association with different groups, objectives, its use of violence, audiences and operational strategies. I assess its links with ISIS and provide possible objectives for national, regional and international interventions. The study concludes by offering a number of strategic alternatives that can be adopted against a group with unclear identity but with the resilience to survive.

Introduction

When Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the then leader of ISIS announced in 2016 that the group had shifted and expanded some of its media, command and wealth resources to Africa, it triggered wide debate over the reality of this declaration. Partly, this is because the United States (US) and its allies the Syrian Democratic Forces had in the same year declared victory over ISIS following the Battle of *Baghouz* which saw the group lose its last enclave. Therefore, for some, the announcement by the ISIS leader that the group was expanding at a time it was besieged and defeated in most battles was propaganda.

Beyond the proclamation, the group went ahead to publish in its official magazine, *Dabiq* that the newfound territory in Africa was part of the caliphate. Its publication even went ahead to give these new territories, what it referred to as provinces new names. For example, the African region stretching from Libya, Morocco, Tunisia, Mauritania, Algeria, Niger and Nigeria as *Maghreb* province (Nyadera et, al., 2020). The region stretching from Chad, Sudan and Ethiopia as *Alkinaana* Province. While the region stretching from Kenya, Eritrea, Somalia, Ethiopia, and Uganda as the Province of *Habasha* (Siegle & Williams, 2017; Nyadera & Bincof, 2019).

However, such a detailed proclamation could not be easily ignored given what the world had witnessed as the groups' ability to take over and control a sizable territory in Iraq and Syria. Additionally, given the losses which the group had incurred from sustained attacks by the global coalition against ISIS, it was justified for one to think of Africa as a potential destination for many ISIS fighters fleeing the Middle East and Asia. Africa was and continues to experience many cases of ungoverned spaces and a rising number of violent and extremist non-state actors could make the region attractive to groups such as ISIS. One country that is potentially vulnerable to the advances by groups such as ISIS is the DRC, which prior to 2016 was already facing serious challenges with governing the vast territory which made it easy for hundreds of rebel groups to operate in the country.

The conditions in the DRC as well as the nature of some of the groups made it attractive for ISIS leadership to reach out to some of the local groups. This study examines the relationship between ISIS and the Allied Democratic Forces (French: *Forces démocratiques alliées*; ADF). This relationship has been critiqued with observers pointing out the absence of more advanced explosive manufacturing capabilities or lack of Arab fighters since the two groups allegedly began to collaborate. While these two and many other concerns may be valid, the lack of direct involvement of Arab fighters or the lack of evidence that the ADF has got better bomb-making knowledge from ISIS may not mean that the is no relationship

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between the two. After all, the ISIS has claimed responsibility for more than 100 attacks carried out by ADF and the arrest of individuals with links to ISIS working with ADF is also another key indicator.

This paper will begin by explaining the origin and evolution of the group, its objectives, grievances and strategies. Secondly, the response of local and international actors towards the group, their objectives and strategies will be examined and this shall be accompanied by the discussion of counterterrorism strategies that could be adopted to combat the ISIS-ADF threat in the DRC before the conclusion.

Analytic Findings on the ADF/ISIS-DRC

The ADF, unlike other rebel groups, chooses a strategy of giving little information with the group issuing very few media statements. This is further made complicated by its shifts in alliances, objectives and operating areas. Nonetheless, early traces of the ADF has been linked to the Tabligh sect that began operating in Uganda in the 1970s with support from Sudan (Mugyenzi, 2000). This Asian Muslim minority group joined hands with other local Muslims with the aim of making Uganda an Islamic state. When Idi Amin Dada became the president of Uganda in January 25, 1971 through a military coup, he attempted to centralize and institutionalize the administration of Islam by federating them under the Ugandan Muslim Supreme Council (UMSC) in 1971. This experiment brought devastating consequences for Uganda as it triggered fierce rivalry and competition between different Muslim leaders in country.

For example, in 1991, a disputed election created two rival camps, one supported by the Tabligh sheiks, competing for the leadership of the UMSC. The dispute was taken to court and the judges upheld the election of a rival team. This judgment sparked the first act of violence by a group that would later become the ADF. A fraction led by Jamil Mukulu stormed UMSC headquarters located at the old Kampala Mosque to protest the judgment, which led to the killing of several police officers and the arrest of Mukulu and his followers (Stupart, 2013). It was after the release of Mukulu and his compatriot Yusuf Kabanda that the two established a rebel group in Western Uganda (Kasasira, 2015; Nyadera *et. al.,* 2019). The group's initial hostilities were directed toward the government of Uganda and when the government forces overran their camps in Hoima, the ADF which at the time was having an alliance with a secular Ugandan group called National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU) was pushed across the border to Eastern DRC (International Crisis Group, 2012).

While in the DRC, the ADF-NALU fighters got immersed further into the complex conflict environment in the DRC and the larger great lakes region as they began receiving support to participate in the proxy war between Mobutu Sesseseko and Yoweri Museveni. Thus, it is arguable that the group's objectives in the early stages were to promote the Salafi version of Islam in Uganda, overthrow the NRM government and was keen on establishing a permanent sphere of influence. This explains why the ADF went further to forge a relationship with the *Vuba* people, a minority group living in *Bambua-Kisika* in Beni town. This enabled the ADF to acquire land, where it set up training camps, recruited many *Vuba* youths, ADF leaders got to intermarry with the *Vuba* women and most importantly this relationship allowed the ADF and *Vuba* leaders to engage in timber and gold trafficking (Titeca & Vlassenroot, 2012). This was important because the group now had territory from where it could launch attacks and resources to sustain its operations.

Importantly, the ADF is not the only group that was operating in Beni, many other local Congolese groups operate in the area and that shaped the group's characteristics. For example, when the Congolese *Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie/Kisangani* (RCD) a local rebel group took control of Beni, the ADF formed an other alliance with them. By the late 1990s, ADFs raids in Uganda had forced over 100,000 people to flee their homes, especially in *Bundibugyo* district where they also abducted hundreds of youths. However, the stability of the ADF began to decline in early 2000. A series of developments would impact the group's activities.

For example, a peace agreement between the government of DRC and Sudan led to a decline in foreign support and reduced local allies. At the same time, the government of Uganda had launched an intense counterinsurgency operation which also co-opted NALU leaders. This was after the government in Kampala agreed to recognize the Ruwenzori Kingdom which was one of NALU's biggest grievances. The loss of NALU as allies was not the only setback for ADF. The Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo (FARDC) launched a major operation in Eastern DRC with the support of UN peacekeepers in the DRC (Stearns, 2018).

Although the ADF presented itself as a Muslim organization, it was not until 2003, that the group began to implement a strict version of the Sharia Law. As we have observed initially the group was comfortable working with secular and non-Muslim groups. The radical approach adopted by the group in 2003 could be as a result of the pressures facing the group from the intense counterinsurgency offensives at national and regional levels within East and Central Africa alongside the loss of allies. In particular, the ADF became more aggressive towards the locals, especially after operations were carried out by the FARDC. Also, from 2003 the ADF was increasingly being accused of looting, kidnapping and violence against farmers.

A UN report also reveals that by 2013, the group had begun to invite Arabic-speaking trainers to their camps pushing for a more radical implementation of Sharia Law (UN Group of Experts on the DR Congo, 2014).

By 2013, the ADF had camps in two areas in Eastern DRC one in *Isale* at the foot of the Ruwenzori Mountains and one in the *Semuliki* Valley. However, following intensive military campaigns by the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO) and the DRC government in the same year, the number of ADF fighters was reduced to about 110. These operations did not affect its top leadership (UN Group of Experts, 2016). Amidst the group's declining fortunes, in October 2014 the ADF began to carry out massacres against the local population.

This change in the group's approach can be attributed to accusations it leveled on the local population that they were either spying or collaborating with government forces. In addition, the ADF also wanted to send a message to the government forces that violence against them was going to be met by even greater violence against civilians and hope to discourage government offensive. At this stage, the group's objective was mostly to maintain its survival and discourage locals from collaborating with the government. Jamil Mukulu sent recordings to the group encouraging it to target FARDC and 'non-believers' because they were giving information about the ADF (Stearns, 2018).

Between 2013 and 2022, there has been consistent violence in Eastern DRC (*see* figure 1) but the lack of pattern on the targets is a cause for concern and makes it difficult to tell who is responsible for the attacks. The number of massacres that have happened in Beni has led to the loss of lives of many people with the ADF/ISIS DRC being blamed for the attacks. For example, the attacks are not aimed at a specific religious group or location. Both urban and rural areas have come under attack through the worst attack took place in 2014 when 120 people were simultaneously killed in the villages of *Tepiomba, Vemba* and *Masulukwede*.

Figure 1: Attacks in the DRC between 2013 and 2022.
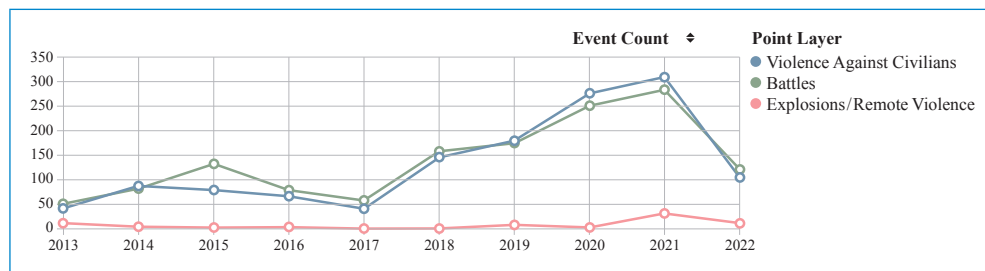
Source: ACLED (2022).

While the debate over who or which group is responsible for violence in Eastern DRC is ongoing, something unique happened that could send shivers to many people and push policymakers to the edge. That is the claim of responsibility by ISIS over attacks carried out by ADF. Despite these claims, outside the Beni region in the DRC and a few attacks in Uganda, ISIS-DRC's international threat has been insignificant. However, the group has been keen to recruit members from across the East, Central and Southern Africa. This may be due to the heavy deployment of Ugandan forces along the border or yet still a change in objective by the group which seeks to create a small, independent community away from interference from outside. This has seen the group set up learning facilities within its camps and maintain a leadership structure dominated by mostly Ugandan-born fighters who have been with the group for a long time.

Its links with ISIS can still be taken seriously despite it being projected in the narrative. For example, Islamic State in the Democratic Republic of Congo (IS-DRC) has sought to establish links with other groups outside the DRC such as Al Shabab which the Ugandan government accused the two groups of collaborating to carry out the 2010 bombings in Kampala. In addition, Al-Hijra an Al Shabab operative in based in Kenya is said to have paid the bail for Jamil Mukulu in 2011 (UN Group of Experts on the DRC, 2015). Perhaps, financial links are the best evidence to connect ADF to other international terrorist organizations such as ISIS. Investigations carried out by the UN revealed traces of Western Union transfers from the United Kingdom totaling $14,970.84 between 2013 and 2014. While the arrest of Kenyan-born ISIS financial facilitator Waleed Ahmed Zein in contact with the group also showed not only the links between ADF and international terrorists but also the nature of such links which are mostly financial.

However, the debate over the extent to which the group has created links or connections with other extremist groups remains unclear. For example, while Uganda, a close ally of the US in the war against terrorism has accused the ADF/ISIS DRC of assassinations of among others senior commander of the Ugandan police, a prosecutor and aformer ADF commander who had been converted and integrated into the Ugandan army as well as the killing of ten Muslim Clerics, President Museveni has often blamed the police and security agencies in Uganda of being vulnerable to infiltration by extremist groups due to corruption (Mwanguhya, 2017). This means that despite the attacks being associated with the ADF/ISIS DRC, the government does not collaborate these accusations well (Aljazeera, 2017). Indeed, even the July 2010 attacks that were blamed on the group have not been well proven with the USA also exhibiting some level of skepticism on the link between the attack and the ISIS-DRC (Kelley, 2018).

A better way to examine the group's potential links to other international terrorist organizations is to assess the videos uploaded on its official social media accounts. About 35 videos were uploaded on Facebook, Telegram and YouTube in September 2017 and years after. The content of these videos varies from propaganda messages to videos showing the aftermath of the group's attacks, to kids being indoctrinated, recruitment messages, surgery of wounded combatants, as well as martial arts and football demonstrations. It is important to note, that the group does not have an official spokesperson or a PR brunch which is unlike other terrorist groups. Analysis of the aforementioned videos can help us generate the following conclusions;

Association with other Jihadi extremist groups: the videos in question depict the group to try and align itself with other extremist Islamic groups. This is because it refers to itself in the video as "The city of monotheism and of those who affirm the same" (*Madina at Tauheed Wau Mujahedeen,* MTM). Or perhaps these efforts are aimed at rebranding the group. What is clear however is that the group has adopted a flag that is similar to other extremist Islamic groups such as Al-Qaeda, Al-Shabaab, and Boko Haram (*see* figure 2 below). This is an important revelation as it shows the group's violent and radical interpretation of the Quran and that can shape some of the counterterrorism strategies that will be adopted.

Figure 2: ISIS DRC Flag.

Source: the Defence Post (2019).

Another indication that ISIS-DRC is aiming to align itself with international terrorist organizations was the recovery of an ISIS published book from an ISIS-DRC fighter killed in Beni in 2018.

The name, MTM has featured prominently in evidence retrieved from ISIS DRC since 2012. One such evidence was a stamp that was recovered during a raid on one of the groups camps (see figure 2 below). It is still unclear whether the abbreviation stands for the name *Madina at Tauheed Wau Mujahedeen,* which would then be

significant as it will show the groups connection with international extremist groups. However, if the abbreviation simply stand for the group's camp in Madina, DRC as alleged by some of its defectors, then it would mean that the group is mainly a local extremist organization.

Figure 2: A stamp with the abbreviations MTM found on some of the ADF/ISIS DRC internal documents during a raid in 2012.

Source: UN Doc S/2013/433 (2013).

Intervention Objectives

Intervention objectives against ISIS‑DRC/ADF should continue to concern policymakers and scholars henceforth and into the near future. This is because we need to rethink the circumstances that led to the declaration that ISIS had been defeated. This pronouncement was based on among other reasons two key assumptions. (1) that the group had lost control of its territory in Syria and Iraq and (2) the killing of its leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. While these are very solid grounds to declare the defeat of ISIS or any other group for that matter, it will be too simplistic to assume that ISIS or its ideology could be a thing of the past. This is evident in other terrorist groups such as Al Qaeda, Boko Haram, and even Al Shabab whose leaders were killed and their operational territories captured yet these groups have been able to overcome such setbacks and continue to pose national, regional and international threats.

If we are to look at counterterrorism from this perspective, then, we are likely to come up with new questions for research and policy formulation and implementation. It is also very likely that one would propose a change in counterterrorism objectives. The first question that is of importance to this study is, was ISIS defeated? If not where is the group now and how is it likely to react to the setbacks it experience. Perhaps even

more importantly, did the group learn any lessons from the alleged defeat in Syria? How is it likely to use such lessons to prevail in future counterterrorism attacks? Secondly, can the DRC offer remnants of ISIS a safe haven? If yes what would that mean for the security of the DRC which is already fractured by years of protracted conflicts and violence? In addition, what would the entry of ISIS into Africa mean for the security of the continent and international security including that of the United States?

These questions can be explored further in future studies. In this section, I will examine some of the possible intervention objectives against ISIS-DRC/ADF. First, the group must be treated with the seriousness it deserves for two important reasons. Firstly, while the existence of the group and the threat it poses to international security remains low key, the fact that the group has been able to survive since the 1970s, all be it, in different forms, shows that it is willing to do anything to survive and that would mean even partnering with extremist international groups such as ISIS. Therefore, the debate on whether or not the ADF is an ISIS affiliate should be concluded by the observation that the group was willing to even create alliances with non-Muslim groups and rebels with completely different objectives. This would mean that should the group welcome ISIS into its territory, then ISIS is likely to take advantage of the ungoverned spaces in the DRC to re-emerge and perhaps pose even a bigger threat in the country and internationally.

The second important reason is the group's willingness to resort to extreme violence. This is another good objective why the US and regional actors should intervene against ISIS DRC. Since 2013, the ADF has been accused of committing massacres in the region and its decision to affiliate to ISIS raises even bigger concerns given the horrors witnessed at the height of ISIS's reign of terror in Syria and Iraq. ISIS-DRC has shown no regard for international law and principles that govern armed conflicts. The group has targeted civilians without any patterns that can help stop the violence being used by the group. With such violence, a combination of ISIS and ADF is likely to expectorate the situation in the DRC and the world.

The killing of ISIS leaders or taking their territory may not have ended the group's objective to establish a physical caliphate. Having failed to create one in the Middle East and Asia, the group is likely to consider some of the fragile states in Africa as an alternative to establish their caliphate. Already, they have sufficient reason to believe that this could be a possibility given the failure of governments, regional organizations and the international community to defeat seemingly much smaller groups than ISIS in Africa. These groups continue to control huge territories in West Africa and the Sahel, the Horn of Africa and some parts of Southern Africa including more recently in Mozambique.

This can give ISIS strategists a strong inspiration to consider Africa a better place to establish their caliphate. Now such motivation can only be defeated if countries including the United States and organizations such as the United Nations and the African Union can take bold responsive measures to ensure that ISIS does expand its influence in the continent given its presence in the Sahel and Mozambique. Other catastrophic incidences such as the rise of Al Shabab and Boko Haram that were not prevented in the early stages should be sufficient lessons for stakeholders to understand the severity of waiting to react after ISIS makes a strong footing in the continent.

Another objective for intervention against ISIS-DRC is to send a clear message to other terrorist groups that may be inspired by the re-emergence of ISIS that their efforts will be futile. Terrorist groups just like other social movements can get inspiration from other like-minded organizations and a show of resilience by ISIS would trigger efforts by other groups such as Al Qaeda to attempt to re-establish themselves too. What we experienced with the almost effortless recapture of Afghanistan by the Taliban could reinforce the idea that extremist groups can be able to resist international pressure. Therefore, these reasons are useful to encourage both local and international actors to intervene. It is also important to note that the DRC and its people have suffered a lot as a result of unending violence that has wrecked the country's economy, education, health and social relations. It is therefore worthwhile that countries with the capacity and willingness to intervene help address the crisis with ISIS-DRC/ADF.

Anti-terrorism and Counterterrorism Strategy

In order to fulfill the intervention objectives mentioned above, we need to adopt a counterterrorism strategy that is holistic and one that could address the challenges of previous efforts. Previous efforts used against ISIS, Al Qaeda, Boko Haram and Al Shabab have focused on the use of force. Perhaps, this has been a necessity since these groups are often left to emerge and serious efforts are made to stop them once they become a threat to international security. Therefore, to address this loophole, an early warning system capable of identifying groups that have potential national, regional and international threats should be in place. This strategy will need more efforts beyond intelligence sharing and should include among other things capacity building, subcontinental initiatives and structures where countries at the subcontinental level can have a forum that meets constantly and communicate findings with a broader global coalition.

Secondly, adopting alternative peace initiatives with the group. This is important since the general narrative of 'not negotiating with terrorists' could be an obstacle to peace. Already, it is clear that capturing territory or killing of terrorist group leaders are not effective means of dealing with such groups and can result in more violence. Negotiation can achieve what the gun cannot if well used and left in the hands of experts and influential political, economic and religious players. Negotiation as an academic field and professional practice has improved significantly and while it has been applied in other instances such as a country invading the other or between individuals and groups, it can also be used with terrorist groups all be it with the necessary precautions. Potentially it can pave way for truth and reconciliation processes that have proved effective in different conflict cases.

Also, efforts can be made to isolate local allies. Terrorist groups tend to thrive by reaching out to local audiences and groups. This approach has worked very well for the ADF but this is also where its weakness lies. For example, when the Ugandan government managed to isolate NALU, a key ally of ADF/ISIS-DRC by addressing the political grievances of NALU, the ADF faced a serious setback. On the other hand, the DRC government was not able to turn the Vuba community into its ally thus giving ADF an advantage in collaborating with them.

This resulted in the ADF accessing land and resources to carry out its activities. By cutting the links between the ADF and local groups in the DRC, it will be very difficult for the group to be an asset for ISIS which will see ADF's lack of popular support locally as a disadvantage. This can be done by addressing the economic problems facing local communities around Beni region, including granting them more freedoms to practice their religion and culture as well as the inclusion of these communities into the governance system of the country. Others supporting measure include empowering women and youths as they are either affected or involved in committing atrocities and ensuring economic activities in the region is thriving. International and regional actors can support these initiatives given the cost of violence.

Furthermore, measures could be taken to cut the funding and illegal trade the ADF and its allies are involved in. This means global efforts to monitor financial movements. Already such efforts have shown some level of effectiveness when Western Union money transfers from Europe to the group in DRC. Cutting financial resources on the group can help reduce the motivation among its fighters and make it difficult for the group to attract recruits. Measures such as sanctions, strict border controls, declaring curfew in terrorist-controlled areas and using technology to monitor the group's activities (including drones) can impact the group's access to resources.

Capacity building for local and regional counterterrorism teams. One of the downsides of using foreign troops in counterterrorism is that it gives terrorist groups room for propaganda and developing narratives that can radicalize locals. The use of force cannot entirely be overlooked in counterterrorism but what matters in some cases is who is using the force. Apart from foreign troops lacking legitimacy, they may also lack a better understanding of local dynamics and that is why establishing strong counterterrorism response units in the DRC and at the regional level will help address these challenges. These units should also include teams that are trained in propaganda and media influence to counter the narratives presented by the ADF. They should also include researchers and individuals focused on terrorism strategy development which is different from fighters.

There are a number of challenges that will emerge in trying to adopt these recommendations. First is the challenge of forging a strong alliance of states and non-state actors that would act and respond swiftly against terrorist groups. Legal complications, sovereignty, unequal capacity and varying priorities against these actors could undermine the efforts. There could also be a challenge of over-focusing on terrorism threats at the expense of other urgent needs such as economic development and governance reforms, especially in Africa. Third, is the challenge with the definition of terrorism which may see authoritarian regimes seeking to classify political opponents or marginalized groups with genuine grievances as terrorists. However, these can be addressed through collaborative efforts and the adoption of systems thinking approach as discussed elsewhere (Onditi*et. al*, 2021).

Conclusion

The case of ADF/ISIS DRC is a unique one and opens up the need for further interrogation of what constitutes a terrorist group. The group's complex and see-mingly changing identity perhaps calls for the definition of a new category of groups with flexible objectives, identity and actions. This definition is important in coining an effective counterterrorism response that will ensure we avoid actions that would otherwise victimize civilians or at the same time delay in taking actions against groups that may potentially cause serious threats in the future. To deal with the increasing challenge of terrorism in the DRC and Africa in general, below are some of the recommendations that can inform policy responses;

• Expand the existing African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) to include an elaborate approach to countering terrorism in Africa. This should include enhancing the Early Warning System to include terrorism threats as well as adopting a clear definition of what constitutes terrorism in order to avoid the confusion, political

misuse and abuse that characterize other forms of violence and mass atrocities. By including terrorism among the threats captured in the APSA framework, then it will be easier to mobilise members and resources to respond effectively to terrorist threats within the continents

• Addressing the problems that result into and from fragile states and ungoverned spaces as an alternative to the military approach to counterterrorism. Such efforts ought to include among other things promoting sustainable development which in turn improves the wellbeing of the citizens and helps to win their trust. This will have a significant impact on intelligence gathering as well as denying terrorist groups the legitimacy and support from the civilian populations. Addressing the problem of fragile states also means addressing structural and deep rooted violence, collective grievances and oppression, impunity and marginalization.

• Strengthening regional collaboration to disrupt illicit financial flows, organized crime, proliferation and spread of small and light weapons, illegal economic activities that help terrorist groups to raise funds, combating online and offline extremism. This will cripple the capacity of many terrorist groups and reduce their operational impact in the continent.

• Embracing a *holistic* counterterrorism approach that includes national, regional and international actors. This is important not only because of the transnational nature of terrorism and its ability to cause disruption beyond national borders and continents but also because affected states tend to have disproportionate capabilities. Collective action against terrorism will hinder the group's ability to get financial, material and emotional support from external actors.

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THE MILITARY AND COUNTER-INSURGENCY/TERRORISM OPERATIONS AGAINST BOKO HARAM TERRORISM INTHE NORTH-EAST, NIGERIA, 2010-2015: ASSESSMENT OF PRESIDENT GOODLUCK JONATHAN ADMINISTRATION

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Abstract The major thrust of this paper is to critically assess the counter insurgency/terrorism operations of the Nigerian military against the *Boko Haram* terrorism in the North East between 2010 and 2015 under the administration of Goodluck Jonathan as the President/Commander-in-Chief of Armed Forces of Nigeria. Although Boko Haram transformed into a violent insurgent group in 2009, by 2014, the group had annexed a significant territory in the North-East, turning it into an Islamic caliphate, thus becoming a major terrorist group in West Africa in particular and the world in general. This happened in spite of the military counter-insurgency operations. The paper highlights and discusses a number of challenges that have rendered the counter insurgency operations of the Nigerian military ineffective or futile in a descriptive and analytical manner utilising materials from periodicals, news magazines, video, YouTube, and existing literature broadly relevant to the study. It concludes that the Nigerian military under the leadership of President Goodluck Jonathan achieve little success towards the defeat of Boko Haram terrorists in the North East Nigeria due to some fundamental challenges such as lack of effective training, corruption, low morale and inadequate equipment. Methodology adopted in this paper is historical, analytical and thematic, utilising materials from both primary and secondary sources.

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Introduction

Insurgency is one of the major daunting challenges that has confronted Nigerian state since the birth of the Fourth Republic in 1999. The degree and intensity of insurgency and militancy since 1999 across different parts of the country became so high that apart from the fact that it attracted global attention, it also contributed to one of the reasons for the inclusion of Nigeria among the seventeen countries in Sub-Saharian African described as the world's most fragile states (Wario and Fatuma, 2012 : 5).

Insurgency and militancy since the birth of the Fourth Republic in 1999 have taken different dimensions such as protracted and asymmetric violence, act of terrorism, bombing, kidnapping, the sinister use of complex terrain (jungles, mountains, creeks and thick forest), psychological warfare, political mobilisation among others. The consequences of these security threats were loss of many innocent lives, problem of internal population displacement, refugee crisis, internal security challenge, denial of human rights as well as threat to the survival of democracy (Adesote and Ajayi, 2021 : 6).

The challenge of insurgency and militancy with the return to civil rule in 1999 could be grouped into two geographical parts of Nigeria, namely Southern and Northern. It began first in the Southern part of Nigeria, most especially the South-South and South-East geo-political zones of Nigeria. First, the security challenge in the South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria was perpetrated by the Niger Delta militants, who formed different ethnic militias such as the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), the Ijaw Youth Council (IYC), the Niger Delta Peoples Volunteer Force (NDPVF), and the Egbesu Boys among others as major platforms for making their grievances (like environmental challenges, political marginalisation, unemployment, absence of infrastructural facilities and so on) known to the Nigerian State as well as the oil companies operating in their region (Ajayi and Adesote, 2013). Between 1999 and 2007, the region of the South-South was described as

a danger zone, occasioned by the militancy of the Niger Delta militants through bombing of oil installation, vandalisation of pipeline, kidnapping of oil expatriate as well clashes with the Nigerian forces (Adesote, 2017: 13).

Secondly, the militancy in the South-East geo-political zone was perpetrated by the emergence of the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) in 1999 by Ralph Uwazuruike. The MASSOB was established purposely for agitating against perceived political injustices being meted out to the Igbo people by the Nigerian State (Nwala, 2013). Its protest against the Nigerian State were further compounded by the emergence of another militant group in the region known as Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in 2012, with the aim of restoring the separatist state of Biafra.

Insurgency in the Northern region of Nigeria became pronounced in 2009 and was initially perpetrated a dreaded and fundamentalist sect known as Boko Haram prior to its allegiance to the Islamic States/Daesh. Although there are conflicting arguments as regards the time this extremist group emerged in the country, the dreaded sect began to unleash systematic attacks on the Nigerian State following the questionable death of its former spiritual leader, Yusuf Mohammed in Police custody on 30th July, 2009.Although the base of operation of the insurgent group is North East, which comprises Borno, Yobe, Bauchi, Gombe, Taraba and Adamawa States, its campaigns of terror were felt in other geo-political zones in Northern region like Kano, Kaduna, Kogi and Plateau States. Between 2010 and 2015, the military under President Goodluck Jonathan adopted several counter-insurgency operations towards the defeat of Boko Haram terrorist group. In spite of these military operations, the campaign terror of the terrorist group continued to wasp stronger.

It is against this background that this paper seeks to assess the counter insurgency operations of the Nigerian military against Boko Haram insurgency in the North East between 2010 and 2015 under the leadership of President Goodluck Jonathan. This paper is divided into five sections. The first section is introduction; the second section deals with emergence and growth of Boko Haram terrorism in Northern Nigeria; the third discusses a reflection on the Insurgents' campaign of terror in Northern Nigeria Since 2009; the fourth section analyses the military and counter-insurgency/terrorism operations in the North-Eastern Nigeria: Assessment of president Goodluck Jonathan administration while the fifth part is the concluding remarks. The methodology adopted in this study is basically historical, utilising qualitative and quantitative methods as well as materials from primary and secondary sources.

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The Emergence and Growth of Boko Haram Terrorism in Northern Nigeria

There are conflicting arguments in the literature on the actual year this deadly and fundamentalist Islamic sect emerged in the Northern part of Nigeria. The years 1995, 1999, 2000, 2002 and 2003 have been freely ascribed to it at different quarters, but, there is general consensus that the group transformed into a violent movement following the killing of its spiritual leader, Yusuf Mohammed in July 2009 (Ajayi, 2012). Since then this group has transited to extreme violence typified by bombings, kidnappings, mass killings, and destruction of symbolic public and private institutions, religious centres and other terrorist's acts, all in an attempt to repudiate western values and create an Islamic Caliphate in their North-Eastern Nigerian stronghold before extending to other parts of the country.

Following the death of their former spiritual leader in July, 2009 the sect was said to have been temporarily driven underground for almost six months before resurfacing in 2010 under a new leader, Abu Muhammad Abubakar Bin Muhammad Shekau, who was said to have been the second-in-command to Yusuf Mohammed (Marc-Antoine, 2014). With the emergence of Abubakar Shekau in 2010, the sect began a systematic campaign of terror, first against the security forces, which included the police and the military as well as those who collaborated with the security forces and second, complemented extreme ideology with extreme violence. This was apparent in the series of campaign of terror that it unleashed on some Northern States of Nigeria in general and North-eastern States in particular between 2010 and 2014.

From a Video released in northern Nigeria in 2011 which contained a direct address by Abu Muhammad Abubakar Bin Muhammad Shekau, it was revealed that, indeed, Yusuf Mohammed himself had anointed Shekau as his successor in a phone-clip video interview recorded apparently by Nigerian security forces after his capture few hours before he died in July 2009 (Adamu, 2013). In this video message, Yusuf declared a fresh war on the Nigerian government as follows:

Muslim brethren, we did not make unlawful anything except what Allah [and the Prophet] has made unlawful. We did not make lawful except what Allah [and the Prophet] has made lawful. This is what we have been saying. We rebel against western inspired knowledge. We rebel against democracy. We rebel against any structure or arrangement not from Allah or His prophet. We have adopted Allah's structure, i.e. the Qur'an and the Hadith on the path of Ahl-Sunna walJama'a. We rebel against the Shia. We rebel against the Tatsine. We rebel against any labeling. You will not find us in [these labels or groups]… But if you look for us in the Qur'an and the Hadith, you will find us there by

Allah's special grace. (Abubakar Shekau, 2010, VCD, Taqaddum, time code 23:53 cited by Adamu, 2013).

By this declaration, the sect formally pronounced its pseudo-Islamist agenda and as well launched its name called Jama'atu Ahlissunnah lidda'awati wal Jihad (JASLWJ), (that is "People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad") which was nicknamed Boko Haram (meaning, book is sinful) (Abimbola and Adesote, 2012). This development was immediately followed by a series of increased sniper attacks on security forces (police stations, police and army check points), increasing use of both improvised explosive devices (IED) and ready-made bombs against public buildings, religious centres, and public places.

Under the leadership of Shekau, the sect metamorphosed into a hardcore terrorist group whose modus operandi not only borrows heavily from Al-Shabab of Somalia, but also established foreign collaboration, especially with the Al-Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), which gave them training on combat and use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) (Danjibo, 2009; Nigerian Tribune 30, January, 2012). This collaboration was confirmed by the deputy spokesperson of the group, Abu Qaqa, after the attack on the United Nations office complex in Abuja on 16th August, 2011, killing almost twenty-three people, including the suicide bomber. He explained that:

Our relationship with Al Qaida is very strong. In fact, our leader (Shekau) and his team were in Mecca for the lesser Hajj to consolidate on that relationship. And we carried out the attack on the UN building when he was about to go into a meeting with Al Qaida leadership in order to strengthen our negotiation position (Salkida 2011b cited by Adamu, 2013).

Also, the words of the Spokesperson for the group could be corroborated with the report of the United Nations published in January 2014 which revealed that:

Boko Haram had established links with Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and that some of its members from Nigeria and Chad had received training in Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb camps in Mali during the summer of 2011 (Tell, March 17, 2014: 21).

Evidences from the available literature on the activities of the sect since 2009 reveal that this terrorist group graduated from a non-violent movement that it was at inception to a major terrorist organisation. Since 2009, the extreme violence that the sect has unleashed on the Nigerian State in general and some states in the Northern part of Nigeria in particular made the United States in particular to describe it as

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a terrorist organisation (Adesote and Ajayi, 2021). The campaign of terror of the insurgent group is addressed in-depth in the next section. We must be quick to state here categorically that as at 2014, the sect, owing to its more deadly activities such as the kidnapping of 276 Chibok secondary school girls on 14 and 15 April 2014 (which attracted international attention); and the capturing of some villages and towns in the North Eastern part of Nigeria made it to enter into a new formidable phase.

A Reflection on the Campaign of Terror of Boko Haram in Northern Nigeria, 2009-2015

Having briefly interrogated the emergence and growth of Boko Haram terrorist group in the preceding section of this paper, our major focus here is to have a glimpse of the campaign of terror of the terrorist group with regards to its modus operand between 2009 and 2015. This section of the paper is very crucial because in spite of the responses of the Federal Government in containing Boko Haram terrorism, the severity of the group's actions and the seemingly unstoppable spread of its activities as well as numerous insurgents involved in its deadly operations reveal clearly that the group is not only growing rapidly but also relatively impregnable. As argued by Adewumi (2014), despite the implicit and sometimes modest successes of the Nigerian security agencies in deterring and reducing the ranks of the extremists, the group has remained emboldened, daring and more vicious.

Significantly, the killing of Mohammed Yusuf and the attempts by the Nigerian security forces to obliterate the group in July 2009 as it successfully did in the case of the Maitatsine movement in the 1980s marked a turning point in the history of the Boko Haram. The sect which is now one of the most ferocious terrorist groups in Africa has since 2009 began to pursue a campaign of terror on the Nigerian state through the adoption of the terrorist option as modus operandi. No doubt, the sect has been mainly responsible for majority of deadly and devastating catastrophic terrorist acts in northern Nigeria in general and North-eastern geo-political zone in particular between 2009 and 2014. Although the activities of the sect were mostly entrenched in some states in the North-East zone (Borno, Yobe and Adamawa) they extended to other states like Bauchi, Gombe and Kano. In fact, according to Bamidele (2012), the year 2011 has been regarded as the deadliest year of Boko Haram's activities since 2009. This submission of Bamidele could be corroborated with the report of the United States of America on the global ranking for terrorism in 2011. According to the report, Nigeria was ranked 9th in global terrorist-country list in terms of attacks; 5th in global ranking for terrorism-based deaths and one of the top 15 countries in the world in terms of kidnapping and hostage taking, suicide bombing, bomb blast and so on (which are elements of terrorism) (Oluba, 2014).

The turning point for the operations of the terrorist group in 2009 began with daring raids, especially on police establishments, and clashes with security agencies for the purpose of releasing their captured members in states like Bauchi, Yobe and Borno and later metamorphosed into the adoption of deadlier operational strategy especially with the emergence of Abubakar Shekau as the new leader of the sect in September, 2010. Since his emergence, the operational strategy of the re-energised insurgent group shifted from mere direct attacks on security officials and security installations with small arms to the use of IEDs, AK-47 rifles, RPG, bomb making devices and assorted ammunitions, fleet of vehicles mounted with anti-aircraft guns, motorcycles and tricycles often in convoys assaulting on government installations, military barracks and police stations, embarking on bombing of public institutions and religious centres (churches and mosques). The intense terror campaigns of the terrorist group resulted in the killings of thousands of people, massive internal population displacement and the kidnapping of hundreds of innocent people.

The effect of Boko Haram terrorism on the socio-political and economic life of the Nigerian state in general and Northern region in particular cannot be overemphasised. As a result of this guerrilla warfare, a former military head of State of Nigeria, General Yakubu Gowon, said that the North East region, especially the affected states where Boko Haram has been operating has literally become "a ghost land and is economically sinking" (Tell, March 19, 2014: 39). The number of casualties with respect to the deadly activities of the group through suicide bombing and general bombing since 2009 was unprecedented. Although there are conflicting reports as regards the total number of lives that had been lost through this terrorist group, it is considered worthwhile to provide some available figures as captured in the literature.

In 2009 for example, over 1,000 people were said to have been killed in north-east Nigeria, with most of them in Maiduguri (Borno State) and some casualties in the city of Bauchi, Damaturu, Potiskum (Yobe State) and elsewhere (Adesote and Ajayi, 2021). Meanwhile, between 2011 and 2013, the intensity of the attacks and bombings by the group increased and their targets included religious gatherings, mosques, churches and schools in the Northern States of Borno, Yobe, Adamawa, Bauchi, Gombe, Kano and Niger. For example, the Boko Haram extended its assaults to churches in late December, 2011 with the attack on St Theresa Catholic Church at Madalla, Niger State, leading to the killing of over 46 worshippers and while several others sustained varying degrees of injuries (Abimbola & Adesote, 2012). Considering the dastardly attacks of the group between 2011 and 2014, it was not only rated the second most brutal terrorist group globally in both the total number of attacks and the number of persons killed, but also made Nigeria to be among the top ten countries in the world with most terrorist attacks in 2012 (Oluba, 2014). This is substantiated in the tables below.

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Akpan et al (2014) stated that over 10,000 people (including women and children) had been killed since the emergence of the group in 2009 up till 2012.Aside loss of lives and the destruction of property, the terror campaign of the group during this period of study has led to massive internal population displacement thereby turning many Nigerians to refugees.With respect to refugee problem created by the insurgents, while some Northern Youth under the aegis of Arewa Youth Forum said on Monday 17th March 2014 that about 100,000 people who had fled from the carnage had become refugees in Cameroun, Chad and Niger (The News, 24th March, 2014: 15), a more authoritative report, from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) revealed that 57, 000 Nigerians had fled from areas affected by insurgency and took refuge in Cameroun, Chad and Niger. The Commission's spokesman, Mr. Adrian Edward, told reporters in Geneva that of the 57,000 people, 17,000 registered as Nigerians while the rest are nationals from neighbouring countries who had lived in Nigeria for years (The News, 24th March, 2014: 17). The commission also reported on 18th November, 2014 that over 13,000 Nigerians refugees initially crossed from Adamawa State to Cameroun following the attack on Mubi by the Boko Haramin late October that year (The News, 28 November, 2014: 45). Their terror campaign had equally resulted in the termination of many innocent lives. While the UNHCR reported that over a million people had been internally displaced since the emergence of the group's insurgency (The News, 24th March, 2014: 16), the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) said that the attacks of the insurgents on Mubi and its environs in Adamawa State resulted in the displacement of 10,496 in five camps situated in Yola South and Fufore (The News, 28 November, 2014: 45).

From late 2013 and virtually all through 2014, the campaign of terror of the insurgents took a new dimension. The group entered into a new transitional phase which was seen in its more deadly attacks against both civilians and state targets. During this period, the onslaught by the group was somewhat indicative of a well-orchestrated strategy which resulted in simultaneous attacks on military barracks, police stations, schools, and colleges as well as several villages and towns which were later declared as Islamic Caliphate. Between 2013 and 2014, the insurgents attacked a number of schools and colleges in Yobe, Borno and Adamawa States. In October 2013, the insurgents attacked the College of Agriculture in Gujba, Yobe State, killing nearly sixty students and a lecturer (Tell, December, 2013). Also, on February 25, 2014, the Federal Government College, BuniYadi, in Yobe State, was attacked by the insurgents and this led to the killing of over 59 young boys (The News, 28 November, 2014:45). The deadliest operation carried out by the insurgents which attracted international attention was the kidnapping of 276 young girls at Chibok Secondary School on April 14, 2014 (Adesote and Ajayi, 2021: 10).

Apart from attacking schools and colleges, the Boko Haram also carried out multiple attacks on military barracks in Borno State between May 2013 and early 2014. For example, in May 2013, it launched a robust attack to take over the 202 Battalion barracks in Bama, Borno State. It was reported that they (insurgents) invaded Bama in a string of vehicles mounted with anti-aircraft guns, carrying AK-47 rifles, RPG, bomb-making devices and assorted ammunition. They subsequently razed parts of mobile police barrack in the town and set many cars and motor cycles ablaze. The attack led to the death of 60 people including 22 policemen, 2 soldiers and 14 prison officials (The News, May 26, 2014: 13). In response to this attack, declared a State of Emergency in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa States. In December 2013 alone, two major attacks were launched on military bases in Borno State notably the Nigeria Air Force base in Maiduguri where it destroyed three decommissioned military aircrafts, two helicopters and wounded some military personnel (Tell, December 16, 2013: 12). Also, on 20 December 2013, several hundred Boko Haram insurgents stormed military barracks outside Bama, close to the Cameroon border, in a pre-dawn raid, torching the compound and killing many soldiers, their wives and children (Daily Trust, 21 December 2013).Although the army said the terrorists tried to escape across the border, fighter jets killed many of them, as well as some helpless civilians (Daily Trust, 21 December 2013).

The coordinated attacks on several villages and towns which were later declared as the Islamic Caliphate was another major campaign of terror of Boko Haram terrorism in the North Eastern States of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa in 2014. For instance, on 24 August, 2014, the insurgents took over Gwoza town, a vast territory in Borno State. Abubakar Shekau declared the town a Caliphate and hoisted their flags in Ashigashiya ward of Gwoza Local Government Area. Following the capture of the town, the Boko Haram turned the Police College in the town into an academy for training their recruits. (The News, 15 September, 2014: 15). With the capture of Gwoza, they marched on and maintained their suzerainty over Damboa, BumiYadi, Gomboru and Dikwa Emirate. They equally invaded many villages in Madagali Local Government Area of Adamawa State. Also, Mubi, second largest city in Adamawa State, was invaded (The News, 15 September, 2014: 15). As at November, 2014, the insurgent group was said to have been in control of over 20,000 square kilometres of Nigeria territory in three North-Eastern States of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa. (The News, 24 November, 2014: 45). The areas under the control of the terrorists covers 10Local Government Areas which is a home of over two million people. The 10Local Government Areas which were said to have been under full or partial control of the insurgents included Bama, Dikwa, Ngalla, Kala-Balge and Gwoza (all in Borno State); (Madagali, Michika and Mubi (all in Adamawa State); and Gujba and Gulani (both in Yobe State) (The News, 24 November, 2014: 45).

Evidences from the above show that the sect has grown from being a localised security problem to a national and regional threat. The group has opportunistically tapped into global Islamic revivalism to pursue its agenda. The next section will examine efforts made by the Nigerian military to contain the activities of this fundamentalist Islamic group.

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There is no doubt that since the emergence of Boko Haram terrorism in the North-Eastern Nigeria in 2009, military approach has been a major strategy adopted by the Nigerian State to contain the growth and spread of this terrorist organisation. This approach comprises the deployment of military forces, formation of Joint Task Force, establishment of a new army division (7th Division in Maiduguri), training of armed forces in counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency, provision of more fund and new equipment and so on. Our argument here is that with these military measures, which were said to have been put in place by the Nigerian State under the leadership of President Jonathan between 2010 and 2015, the insurgent group should have been defeated. Although the Nigerian military recorded some successes, these pale into insignificance when compared with the magnitude of the terrorism. Therefore, it was wrong for the Nigerian state to create the impression that it was on-top of the situation when thousands of lives were lost on daily basis; property worth billions of naira were destroyed; and millions were either displaced or became refugees in the neighbouring countries such as Chad, Niger and Cameroun during this period (Adesote and Ajayi, 2021: 20).

It is unfortunate that the Nigerian military that is considered to be the largest military force in West Africa (with about 60,000 soldiers-strong; Army's 25 infantry battalions) appears incapable of performing little more than basic defensive operations (Adesote and Ajayi, 2021: 20). In fact, in many instances, as reported in the media, the Nigerian soldiers were not only overrun by the insurgent group both at the battle field and in their military bases, but also after the battle occupy the territories which were said to be under emergency rule. For example, it was reported in the media that about 480 Nigerian troops had to retreat across the border to Cameroun at the height of a fierce battalion 2 September, 2014, in a move cynically described by Nigerian Defence Headquarters as "tactical manoeuvre" (The News, 8 September, 2014: 12). After their defeat, the insurgents declared Gwoza a Caliphate and moved their families to the town. Shekau, in a 52-minute video which he released to Journalist, showed how men of the Nigerian Army were running away as the Islamic militia took over the town(The News, 8 September, 2014: 13). Between 2013 and 2014, the insurgents

launched a number of successful attacks on military barracks in Borno State such as the attacks on 202 Battalion Barracks in Bama in May 2013 and so on.

The problem faced by the Nigerian military in maintaining the territorial integrity of the country frequently threatened by the Boko Haram during this period was not unconnected with some fundamental challenges confronting the Nigerian military and the Federal Government of Nigeria. The challenges faced by the Nigerian military in particular include, corruption, lack of adequate military equipment, lack of effective military training, low morale among rank and file, environmental challenge, border problem, favouritism in terms of who goes to the troubled states, lip service approach on the part of officials of the federal government and military, rivalry among security forces, lack of strong political will and commitment, ineffective military strategy, disunity among the Nigerian military, inadequate intelligence gathering and management and so on.

One major challenge that confronted the Nigerian military in their counter-insurgency operations against the Boko Haram insurgents was lack of effective training in counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency. This was evident when the contingent sent for counter-insurgency operation in Mali were declared not fit for combat but rather best suited to man checkpoints and load trucks. It was in the same counter-insurgency operation that the Malian soldiers were considered better trained for combat and were able to fight side-by-side with the French troops (Oluba, 2014). This actually showed the high level of decline in the combat readiness of the Nigerian military. This development is not unconnected with corruption in the force especially among the top officials. In spite of the huge budgetary allocations to the defence and security sector between 2012 and 2014, there was no significant impact on their operations over the five years of combating insurgency in North-Eastern Nigeria. The sector has continued to get the lion's share since the 2012 budget when compared with the previous years. For example, while in the years between 2008 and 2011, budgetary allocations to the sector were N444.6 billion; N233 billion; N264; N348 billion respectively; between 2012 and 2014, it received N921.91 billion, N1.055 trillion and N968.127 billion respectively (Eme & Anyadike, 2013: 13; and Premium Times, May 24, 2014).

Corruption in the Nigerian military manifested in the areas of irregular and short payment of salaries and allowances, inadequate provision of arms and ammunitions to the soldiers on the field to combat the insurgents, insensitivity to the plight of the rank and file, low purchase of military equipment among others. Several of analysts have rated the level of corruption in the Nigeria military as very high. According to the report of Relling Kirly (2009) cited by Oluba, (2014) on the perceptions of

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corruption within the military in the world, grouped it into two least corrupt and most corrupt nations- Nigeria alongside with Venezuela and Bosnia were among the most corrupt. This development could be said to have been partly responsible for frequent cases of mutiny in the Nigerian military, unavoidable loss of Nigerian soldiers in the battle-fields, low morale etc. For example, on the issue of lack of equipment, according to the lead story of Daily Trust, an Abuja based newspaper published on 7 October, 2013 under the headline: War on Insurgency: Operation Blunders, Poor Supplies Causing Military Losses, the paper which quoted military sources revealed that all the military units in the states under emergency rule have understocked armouries (Tell, 16 December, 2013: 48). Evidently, it had been several years since the military acquired large-scale weapons (Tell, 16 December, 2013: 48). Also, revelations were made about this during the trial of group of 59/60 soldiers charged for mutiny at Court Martial that sat at the Army Headquarters, Abuja, under Brigadier-General M.S Yusuf on 15 October, 2014. The Defence Counsel, Mr. Femi Falana demanded from the leader of the prosecution team, Lt. Col. Timothy Opurum, the record of ammunition used in the 4 August, 2014 military campaign, but the prosecution leader could not give authoritative figures of number of weapons used for the operation. Corporal Francis Okoro (third prosecution witness) said that he was one of the six-man team that investigated the soldiers on trial. He admitted that in the course of their investigation, the soldiers complained that they were not given the needed support weapons. He even said that on 12 August, 2014 when he visited the army base before they were moved, he did not see support weapons (The News 17, November, 2014: 15-16).

One could easily conclude from the above revelation that the Nigerian soldiers were poorly equipped to fight the terrorists. This position can be further supported with the report of the Army Headquarters in Abuja over the military campaign of the 7th Division in Maiduguri against Boko Haram insurgents on 12 September, 2014 at the Kafiya forest. At the operation, it was reported that the Nigerian soldiers managed to kill 150 insurgents, but inexplicably lost 16 soldiers, while nine others were declared missing (Tell, 16 December, 2013: 48). What could be deduced from this report aside the fact that Nigerian soldiers were overwhelmed by better armed insurgents of which the Nigerian military would not want to readily admit because of pride and integrity is the likelihood that the true causality figures were not disclosed. This point to the fact that Nigerian soldiers often lost their lives carelessly due to the possession of obsolete weapons. Unlike the Nigerian soldiers, the Boko Haram insurgents fight with weapons like rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) which can take down an aircraft and other sophisticated weapons like General Purpose Machine Guns (GPMGs) mounted on pick-up vehicles and modern Armed Personnel Carriers (APCs). These were put to use in the successful insurgents' attack on military

barracks at Bama in 2013. After the attack, it was reported that the insurgents displayed substantial fire power from many RPGs, machine guns and pick-up trucks mounted with anti-aircraft guns (The News 9, June, 2014: 13). Most Nigerian soldiers were made to confront these insurgents with AK-47 rifles, with no ballistic helmet or fragmental jacket, while relying on their supposedly superior military training to gain an upper hand (The News 9, June, 2014: 13). For example, Captain Saleh, testified before the Court Martial that tried the 59/60 soldiers for mutiny in Abuja that he and his men confronted Boko Haram insurgents for about 25 minutes before they were forced to withdraw because of their (weak) strength compared to the insurgents (The News 17, November, 2014: 16). Thus, in reality, the equipment available to the Nigerian military for its counter-insurgency operations in the North-East were unfit and grossly inadequate during this administration.

There was also the issue of low morale and frustration on the part of majority of rank and file soldiers in the barracks and battle-field. This challenge is allegedly created by the top military officers. In an interview granted by Col. Gabriel Adetunji Ajayi (retd) on the subject: "Why the Army cant Defeat Boko Haram", to *The News* magazine, he alleged that aside the fact that contemporary Nigerian military men lacks nationalism and are afraid to die, Nigerian military officers also lack integrity. He said that there were no bad soldiers but there were bad officers. This was because soldiers are commanded by officers. No soldier will desert his officer in the frontline when the officer is behind the soldiers. Soldiers must believe in the integrity of the officer that he will not mistreat them, cheat them, lead them to unnecessary death, misdirect them and will be very truthful to them (The News 8, September, 2014). In a situation where some or all these qualities are not found in the Nigerian military officers, there is bound to be low morale and frustration on the part of the rank and file. In other words, operational blunders from top military officers often results in either low morale or frustration on the part of junior officers. For example, it was revealed that even the General Officer Commanding (GOC) who escaped death during one of the operations, never visited the war front and even President Jonathan did not visit up to 2014 (The News 17 November, 2014: 15).

Lack of strong political will and commitment on the part of the Nigerian State towards combating Boko Haram insurgency in the North-Eastern Nigeria equally posed a serious challenge to the Nigerian military in their campaign against Boko insurgency. This could be noticed in the area of lack of prompt release of allocated fund for defence and security sector. For instance, Col. Sambo Dasuki, who was represented by Bello Fadile, a Director of Special Investigation Unit in the NSA's office at the public hearing before the National Assembly adhoc-Committee in Abuja in 2013 complained that while there was always the need to tackle security issue

urgently, the 2012 fourth quarter fund for the office of NSA was yet to be released (Tell 17 March, 2014: 48). No doubt, this could be one of the factors responsible for the inability of the security agencies to purchase sophisticated gadgets needed to effectively tackle insurgency in this part of the country.

One other factor that adversely affected the Nigerian military in their CTCOIN operations in North-East Nigeria during this period was environmental. It is important to note that one of the major strategies being used by the insurgents in achieving their objectives is their familiarity with the complex and difficult terrain just like the Niger Delta militants who used their knowledge of the creeks to manoeuvre the Nigerian JTF in many encounters. The same is currently being experienced by Nigerian soldiers in North-Eastern Nigeria which is characterised by mountains, hills, jungles, thick forests like Sambisa forest and so on. Col. Gabriel Ajayi (retd) alluded to this position in one of his interviews in the *Tell* magazine on the subject: Why the Boko Haram war is dragging? He argued that the nature of the environment where the terrorists had long been firmly entrenched gave them upper hand over the soldiers. In other words, the terrorists understand the environment much more than the soldiers (Tell, 1 September, 2014: 19). This could be further substantiated with one of the reports in *The News* magazine based on how Nigerian soldiers were just losing their lives carelessly. The report indicated that 70 soldiers who were on a mop-up operation were ambushed and killed when they entered the strange Sambisa forest (The News 9 June, 2014: 13). Also, on 13 September, 2013, a military operation was abruptly terminated when Boko Haram terrorists laid ambush around Gubio, killing the Commanding Officer and many of the soldiers on the mission (Tell 16 December, 2013: 46).

Inadequate intelligence gathering and the poor management of same as well as the existence of moles within the military circle and political establishments were equally serious challenges capable of derailing any military operation, no matter how well planned. Surprise attacks and military ambushes by insurgents usually derive from this anomalous situation. And indeed there have been several instances in the ongoing counter-insurgency operations in northeast Nigeria in which subversive activities were suspected.

Without doubt the poor performance of the military, under the Jonathan administration, in countering the Boko Haram insurgency made Jonathan (the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces) unpopular and it eventually contributed to its exist with the loss of the presidential election of March 2015. This was in spite of the spirited attempt by that administration to put a stop to the Boko Haram scourge through improved military offensive in the few months leading to that election. For

the records, the insurgents suffered some reverses at this period. In fact, many territories under their control were taken back by the Nigerian military forces. However the "gains" were too little and too late to enhance the political fortunes of President Goodluck Jonathan.

The new administration led by President Muhammadu Buhari, a former military Head of State and retired Army General, has, since May 29, 2015 when it assumed office, been contending with the Boko Haram insurgency. Apart from the fact that this dispensation is outside the scope of our study, we also consider it to be too early to make definitive or finite statements about its performance in the on-going counter-insurgency operations. However, there are indications that the new administration understands the enormity of the task ahead and the restraining factors which handicapped previous efforts. Its initial efforts in securing international assistance; reorganisation of the fighting forces under new leadership; the purge of corrupt elements from the services; acquisition and deployment of more sophisticated weapons; training and re-training of military personnel in counter-insurgency operations; expansion of the membership and scope of the MNJTF; improved funding and judicious application of the funds; are sure pointers to the likelihood of successful decimation of the Boko Haram insurgency in the nearest future.

Concluding remarks

The above discourse has thoroughly examined the Nigerian military, and the challenges of counter-insurgency operations in the North-Eastern Nigeria between 2010 and 2015 under President Goodluck Jonathan administration. Aside the insight into the emergence and growth of Boko Haram insurgency, the work also took a critical look at the campaigns of terror of the insurgent group and the various efforts made by the Nigerian State to contain its spread in Northern Nigeria in general. The paper argues that military approaches recorded limited success in countering Boko Haram insurgency in the Northeast Nigeria between 2009 and 2015 owing to some fundamental factors like corruption, lack of political will and commitment, low morale, environmental challenge, lack of adequate military equipment and so on. It contends that military approach remains fundamental in containing insurgency and so there is the need to adequately strengthen military engagement especially for this purpose. The comprehensive military engagement needed by the Nigerian State to combat Boko Haram insurgency in the North-Eastern Nigeria urgently involves three major strategies as argued by Oluba (2014). They include a winning battle-field strategy (which encompasses a well-trained military and total war); adequate funding and a highly motivated armed forces and battle troops. Apart from these military strategies, the Nigerian State's role especially in terms of the sincerity and

commitment of the leaders to the fight against insurgency in this part of the country was crucial. Also, improved intelligence gathering and management; routing out subversive elements, and the enlistment of the active support of the international community were equally necessary. Except all these approaches are taken into careful consideration, it will be difficult to contain or obliterate Boko Haram completely, especially given the rapidly widening scope of its activities and its alliance with international terrorist organisations.

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ANSAR AL-SUNNAH IN NORTHERN MOZAMBIQUE: CHRONICLING A DEMI-DECADE OF INSURGENCY AND STATE RESPONSE

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Abstract   As a result of state's neglect, socio-economic deprivation (amidst the presence of significant gas deposits and mineral resources), security sector weakness, institutional corruption and poor political leadership, the Ansar Al-Sunna insurgent movement has been threatening Cabo Delgado Province and its proximate areas in Northern Mozambique since late 2017, thereby exacerbating a grave humanitarian crisis, economic sabotage and military destruction. This article, thus chronicled the violence unleashed and observed mass atrocities against the civilian population, military interest and the country's socio-economic potentials as manifestations of the insurgency. Also, it contributed to the scholarship on the drivers and impacts of violent extremism as well as the involvement of foreign mercenaries and transnationality of armed conflicts. This article concluded that with assistance from the Islamic State and its affiliates, the insurgency could degenerate into a regional security concern within the Southern Africa region if the lessons from other uprisings in Africa are not implemented. Hence, recommendations are proffered to the Mozambican State and its development partners on countering violent extremism, de-escalating violence and circumventing the insurgent group from possibly, being a springboard for prolonged rebellions in the African continent.

Keywords

Armed Conflict,
Ansar Al-Sunnah,
Insurgency,
Islamic State,
Military,
Mozambique,
Violent Extremism.

Introduction

Over the decades, the African continent has been challenged with the manifestations of violent extremism, which stifle the continent's peace, stability and development goals. From Boko Haram in Nigeria/Lake Chad Region, Al-Shabab in Somalia, Al-Qaeda in the Maghreb to Islamic State (IS) in the Sahel and other parts of Africa, the proliferation of armed groups in the continent fuels socio-political instability and humanitarian crisis. Twenty-five years after the end of Mozambique's civil war (1975-1992), the Ansar Al-Sunna rebel movement began wreaking large-scale havoc against the civilian population and state forces in Cabo Delgado province (in the country's Northern region), a stronghold of the ruling party; Frelimo and at the same time, a mineral resources hub populated by impoverished Muslim locals (Neethling, 2021). Despite the energy deposit whose exploration was suspended due to the uprising (Cook, 2022), the government has failed to meet the expectations of the grievances-motivated locals interested in the uprising as a response to such failure.

Alternatively referred to as the Mozambican Al-Shabab group, Al-Sunnah Wa Jammah (ASWJ) launched its first brazen attack in Palma town in October 2017, killing scores of people and targeting police formations (Mutasa and Muchemwa, 2021). Since then, the province where the town is located has been experiencing protracted violence by the insurgents linked to the IS, which was initially ignored but has gained momentum in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) security discourse (see fig 1). In managing the country's resources, the massive corruption manifesting in the form of socio-economic deprivation, lack of political leadership, and weakling security sector drive the insurgency. Natural gas infrastructure construction has resulted in massive displacement, and the national government has failed to address this issue (Burrier, 2022).

Hence, the ASWJ revolts against the Mozambican state to displace the existing social order and entrench an Islamic State as an alternative. Many of the group's members are unemployed or otherwise dissatisfied young people who believe that the presence of mineral resources will benefit them. Except for certain recorded movies that ASWJ circulates and was recently used to announce its goal for a Caliphate openly, the group rarely makes public statements or has a website or other traditional medium for interaction (Agence France Presse [AFP], 2020). They fund their atrocities through the illegal trade of ivory and drugs (Hall, 2020). However, the ASWJ movement uses ambush, kidnapping, taxing, decapitation, beheading, arson, bombing and killing as Boko Haram does in Lake Chad Region (Shodunke, 2021). The group's modus operandi draws inspiration from Al-Qaeda affiliates in Africa. Although the scholarly evidence substantiating the link between ASWJ and foreign fighters is modicum, insinuations are rife in academic and policy discourse on the

group's allegiance to the IS. The uprising is being bolstered by the participation of foreign fighters from Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Somalia Tanzania and other IS-infested countries.

In a video released in 2019, the ASWJ fighters were shown pledging allegiance to IS, an action that heralded their sophistication and international connectedness (The Economist, 2020). Hence, the country's traditionally weak security forces have been unable to reduce spate of the attack. Humanitarian catastrophe has resulted from the group's atrocities, such as beheading, abduction and destruction of schools and public facilities. (Burrier, 2022). According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs [OCHA] (2021b), thousands of civilians have been killed and hundreds of thousands have been displaced.

Figure 1: Cabo Delgado Province and its Humanitarian Crisis.
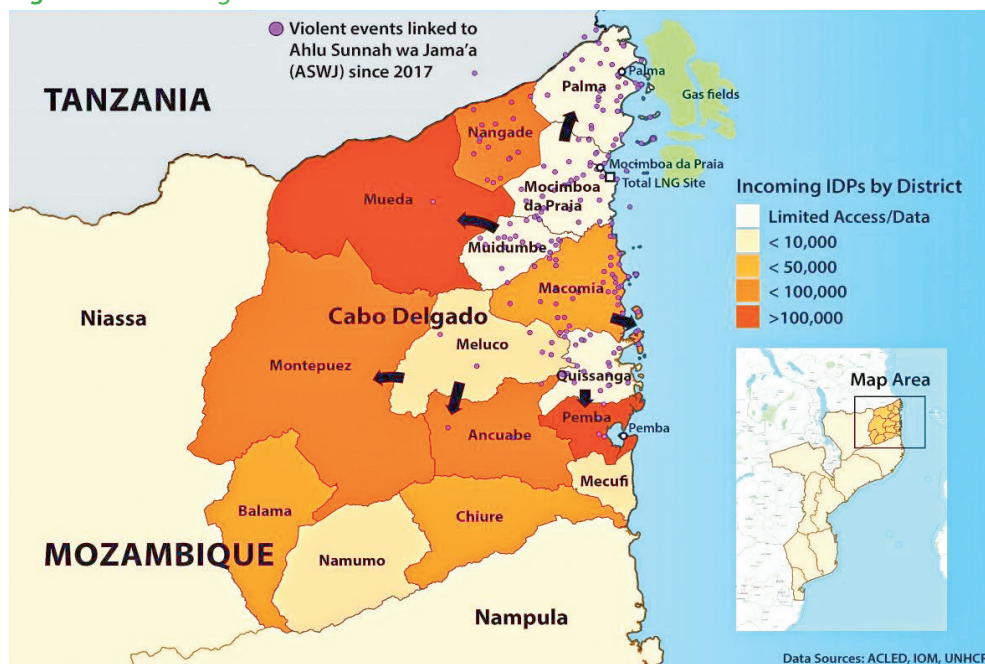
Source: Pirio et al. (2021).

The Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) population in the conflict zones skyrocketed from 172,000 in April 2020 to over 732,000 in April 2021 (International Organisation for Migration, 2022). As of February 2022, 784,000 individuals had been displaced. Most IDPs are housed in host communities, while the rest dwell in IDP camps. Cabo Delgado has increased human rights breaches since 2020, including murders, beheadings, and kidnappings (UN OCHA, 2021a).Beyond human security, the crisis exacerbates a severity of the country's energy sector and economy. The

violence necessitated the declaration of a force majeure and suspension of a $20 billion natural gas processing project by French energy firm, Total Energies; a project designed to facilitate access to large gas fields discovered offshore in 2010 (Cook, 2022). As a result of the escalating violence, the country's ailing economy has been put at risk by suspending the exploration of natural gas deposits.

In response to the violence by ASWJ, the Mozambican government and its international partners have taken strategic measures. The security forces implemented stiff penalties for violators of the travel restrictions in Palma and other districts in Cabo Delgado. In collaboration with the Wagner Group and Russian mercenaries, the Mozambican military commenced counterinsurgency operations in early October 2019 (Sauer, 2019). The United States designated the group as a terrorist organization and "ISIS-Mozambique" in March 2021 (Hanlon, 2022). From the regional front, on July 9, 2021, the first 1,000 Rwandan forces arrived, and within three weeks, they had retaken important regions from the insurgents (Howard, 2021). In addition, Cabo Delgado hosts the Southern African Development Community Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM) in Mozambique, which consists of 2,000 troops drawn from eight SADC member states (Cheathma et al., 2022). These operations have led to modicum success against the insurgents.

Furthermore, available literature has expounded on the activities of ASWJ in Mozambique with a focus on the origin, ideology, motivations, recruitment methods and what drives its campaign of terror. However, little is scholarly known on the accounts of the violence in the origin of the insurgency, Cabo Delgado Province of Northern Mozambique and its proximate locations. As such, this article explains an account of the attacks with a view of informing practical policy directions on the (lethal and non-lethal) counterinsurgency undertakings against ASWJ in Mozambique, the SADC and Africa in general. Also, it aims to contribute to the scholarship on the transnationality of insurgency and armed groups across the African continent and the Middle East Region.

Cabo Delgado Province on a Spotlight

Referred to as Cabo Esquecido (forgotten cape), Cabo Delgado is the northernmost province of Mozambique, whose capital, Maputo, is about 1,700km from the province's capital Pemba. The trade routes along the Indian Ocean built by Arab traders several centuries ago shaped the province's historical and social fabric, which later (in the 8th century) permitted the settlement and accommodation of the Muslims along the coast of East Africa (The New Humanitarian, 2007). As a result, Islamic tradition from Arabian nationalism, traditionalism and modernity were central to the

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province's viewpoints and beliefs (Alden and Chichava, 2020) that birth the Muslim population. Muslims in the province (2.5 million, a majority-Muslim community) account for 18% of Mozambique's Muslim population of more than 27 million people (U.S. Embassy in Mozambique, 2018). Due to the support of the Makondo people for the Frelimo irregulars, Cabo Delgado province was significant in pursuing Mozambican independence in 1960. Yet, the country's eventual independence in 1975 did not translate to a rapid social economic development of the province, the increase in income per capita and the investment were primarily restricted to the southern portions of the country, including Maputo, the nation's capital city, which is located near the southernmost tip of the country (Neethling, 2021).

Figure 2: The Map of Cabo Delgado Province in Northern Mozambique.

Source: Club of Mozambique (2019a).

In the 2010s, energy firms such as US-based Anadarko and Italy's Eni discovered significant gas deposits in the Rovuma Basin and its vicinities off the coast of Cabo Delgado. The three most significant liquid natural gas (LNG) projects in Africa are located in the province; US\$ 30 billion ExxonMobil/ENI/CNPC Rovuma LNG Project, Total's 20 billion USD Project and ENI/ExxonMobil's 4.7 billion USD Coral LFNG Project, (Hall, 2020). The construction of a liquefied natural gas (LNG) plant is a government initiative to profit from Mozambique's offshore energy reserves

(The Defense Post, 2020). Hence, many key participants hoped this would usher in the region's much-required economic growth and development. Unfortunately, the expected outcome has not been the case but rather socio-economic deprivation and state neglect which have been foundational to the current insurgency. In Cabo Delgado province, the high poverty levels and economic marginalization have been fundamental issues for many years. The finding and management of immense gas resources the elites wanted to control through political influence and corrupt dealings appear to have re-ignited disputes and frustrations that had been latent, thus, paving the way for community revolt by the ASWJ movement in October 2017. The violence then spread to the neighbouring provinces of Niassa and Nampula, generating instability and relocation inside the province itself (United Nations OCHA, 2022). Since 2017, there has been an increase in violent occurrences, including attacks on civilian settlement, government personnel, and military sites by the insurgents, whose operations also focus on the coast from Pemba City to the Tanzanian border in Cabo Delgado, Brazil (ACAPS, 2022). Thousands have been killed and hundreds of thousands have been displaced. At least 1,000 ASWJ fighters aim to capture Cabo Delgado's control by leveraging the province's poor administration, social disparities, economic woes, and racial and religious marginalization by the Mozambican government (IISS, 2021).

Strategic Links with Foreign Mercenaries

Over time, armed conflicts have always attracted the involvement of outsiders who share similar ideology with the perpetrators of the conflict as there has been some participation from the IS and its affiliates from previous cases, as well as funding and support from some Middle Eastern countries (Hanlon, 2022). Although the ASWJ insurgency has not been documented in scholarship to be strongly linked with foreign terror groups, there are instances of foreign fighters being in connection with the violence. These situations validate strategic ties between ASWJ and allied groups. Somali's Al-Shabab fighters were recruited for different attacks (Hall, 2020). In 2019, the ASWJ fighters pledged allegiance with the Islamic State, signifying the insurgency, which included the attack on Palma and four of the five northern provinces were under the control of the insurgents by the end of April (Bizimana, 2021).

In furtherance of the strategic ties, the IS and its affiliate in the Democratic Republic of Congo viewed the ASWJ movement as a member of its Central Africa Province and elevated the movement to the status of a "Wilayah" (a province under the control of the IS) (Cook, 2022). The Mozambican authorities attempted to prevent the ties from degenerating into an uncontrollable situation with the arrest and detention of 12

Iraqis on November 12, 2020 after discovering various weapons in their possession (Vieira, 2020). Moreover, the IS affiliates in Africa have been instrumental in several attacks at different locations in Northern Mozambique, for which they claimed responsibility. Two fighters claimed by the Moçmboa da Praia District government to have studied Saudi Arabia, Tanzania and Sudan, were arrested and detained for staging an attack against the police in October 2017 (Club of Mozambique, 2017). The Islamic State of Syria and Levant (ISIL) claimed responsibility for a November 2019 attack that killed some Mozambican soldiers and 5 Wagner Group troops (Sof, 2022). Also, the ISIL claimed its Central Africa Wing successfully attacked the Mozambican Army at Mitopy of Moçmboa da Praia District in June 2019, killing 16 people and wounding 12 (Weiss, 2019).

The Rise of the Militancy, Accounts of Violence and the Attendant Devastations

The emergence of the ASWJ movement can be traced back to 2000, when a different version of Islam was developed by members of the Islamic Council and the Islamic Congress of Mozambique (Morier-Genoud, 2018). They instituted a legal sub-organization in Cabo Delgado province and propagated a severe form of the religion which eventually triggered the birth of ASWJ; a group that claims to be "perfect" supporters of the Prophetic Tradition (Okemi, 2013). However, the ASWJ group became vigorous in 2012 due to the corrupt social order they wanted to challenge because it contradicts the prophetic tradition (Mutasa and Muchewa, 2021). Compared to the national Muslim population, Cabo Delgado Muslims constitute 58% (Fabricius, 2018). Hence, the abhorrence of anti-Islam or secular customs and values in their localities became their agenda which the government initially ignored as a serious security concern.

More than half of the group's members are fluent in Portuguese, Kimwani (a tribal language), Swahili and Arabic; a cultural mix that fuels the narratives of the group's dominance by locals and foreigners (Mutasa and Muchewa, 2021). The group leveraged the existing impoverishment, socio-economic deprivation and neglect by the government to lure aggrieved members to revolt against the government and institute a Sharia-based society that could address their plight. They then donated food to the villages; a gesture that birthed the locals' receptive attitude towards the fighters amidst mounting discontent of unfavourable energy explorations outcomes (Hall, 2020). Discharged and disenchanted Cabo Delgado police officers, border guards and suspected Al-Shabaab fighters from Tanzania and Kenya provided training to the group's militants (Allison, 2018).

While militant camps have been established in Cabo Delgado, there was no public pronouncement from the group in the beginning, but they are making public statements on their goals, including the establishment of a Caliphate linked to ISCAP (AFP, 2020; Fabricius, 2018). Their first attack was launched in Palma town in October 2017; since then, their fighting abilities have increased. They have frequently carried out challenging missions such as concurrent attacks on multiple targets (civilian population and the military) and transborder operations. Their atrocities have recorded several attacks (see table 1). There have been 28 raids on remote communities between January and March of 2019, leading to the casualty of residents, bank robberies, highway blockades and hoisting of their distinctive black-and-white flag (AFP, 2020). In February 2022, ASWJ fighters attacked and burned down five villages in Cabo Delgado, leading to a state of fear in Nangade (Andriano, 2022). There has been an increase in kidnappings and house destruction in Cabo Delgado in 2022 as more than 700,000 people have fled their homes since the onset of the ASWJ's insurgency (Andriano, 2022). At the same time, the group seized and controlled land, such as the port town of Mocmboa da Praia between August 2020 to early 2021 (International Crisis Group, 2022).

Table 1: The Demi-decade Chronology of ASWJ Violence Between 2017 and 2022.

Date	Events
2017	
October 5	A pre-dawn attack in Mocímboa da Praia, targeting 3 police formations and killing 17 people by a group of 30 armed members affiliated with Al-Shabab and Al-Qaeda terror groups.[1]
October 21	A pre-dawn combat between the state forces and the insurgent group in Maluku, 30km from Mocímboa da Praia, resulting in civilians deserting the village.[2]
November 29	The insurgent group launched an attack in the villages of Mitumbate and Maculo, injuring two, killing at least two people by beheading and burning and destroying a church and 27 homes.[3]
December 17	The group successfully committed an assassination attempt on the National Director of Reconnaissance of the Police Rapid Intervention Unit.[4]

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| December 29 | An attack on Mitumbate village, killing 50 people (women and children) and injuring an unknown number of people.[5] |

2018

January 13	An attack in Olumbi, Palma District, around 8pm in a market and government administrative building, killing five people.[6]
March 12	A strike by an armed group believed to be ASWJ in Chitolo, resulting in the casualty of inhabitants and arson of 50 homes.[7]
April 22	An attack in DiacaVelha near Nangade district and Mangwaza in the Palma district, resulting in the ransacking of houses, killing of a person, burning of four houses and holding three hostages.[8]
May 10	Ten people were beheaded in Monjane, Palma District, by an armed group.[9]
June 5	The killing of seven people with a machete by six armed men, the injuring of four others and the burning of homes in Naunde village, Macomia district.[10]
June 12	An attack in Nathuko village in the Macomia district, decapitating a villager, burning many buildings and killing all animals.[11]
September 21	An attack by insurgents in Paqueue village of Cabo Delgado, involving the death of 12 people, injury of 15 people and the burning of 55 houses.[12]
November 3	A looting and burning of at least 45 houses in Macomia District by the insurgents suspected to be Ansar Al-Sunnah members.[13]

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2019

February 8   An attack by Islamist fighters in Piqueue village of Cabo Delgado, killing seven men and kidnapping four women.[14]

May 3:   An attack in Nacate, Macomia District, killing six civilians. The attacks increased with invading and burning of Ntapuala and Banga-Vieja villages in Macomia District and Ipho in Meluco District in the following weeks.[15]

June 4:   An attack by ISIL's Central Africa Province on Mozambican Army at Mitopy in Mocímboa da Praia District, killing 16 and wounding 12 people.[16]

July 3   An attack in Nangade District, killing seven people and a policeman.[17]

October 15   Rebels killed seven Russian mercenaries and 20 Mozambican soldiers during two ambushes by Islamic State's Central Africa Province (ISCAP).[18]

November 10   An attack on government troops and 5 fighters from the Wagner Group in an ambush by ISIL.[19]

2020

March 23   Islamist militants attacked and captured Mocímboa da Praia from land and sea. After that, they destroyed government buildings and hoisted a Jihadist flag.[20]

April 7   The killing of 52 villagers in Xitaxi village by ISCAP militants.[21]

May 28   Macomia's attack by 90 militants who then raised a standard black flag.[22]

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June 27	The capturing of Mocímboa da Praia by ISCAP militants.[23]
August 11	The capturing of Mocímboa da Praia by ISCAP rebels after days of offensives killing over one hundred Mozambican troops.[24]
September 30	The control of Mucojo administrative post and several villages.[25]
November 6	The beheading of over 50 people in Muatide village by militants.[26]
December 4	An ambush by militants, killing 25 Mozabican troops in Muidumbe.[27]
December 12	A shooting splurge through Nangade district by militants. They also killed 14 civilians and destroyed four vehicles in villages such as Namiune, 25 de Setembro, Naleke, Chicuaia Nova, Litingina, and Lukuamba.[28]
December 29	An attack by ISCAP militants in Monjane village, forcing the locals to flee.[29]

2021

January 7	An attack on the coastal village of Olumboa, Macomia district, leading to the death of 13 civilians.
January 21	A raid of Namiune, Nangade district. The perpetrators beat and beheaded a village leader and kidnapped four boys.[30]
April 23	The killing of 5 civilians and arson of 7 homes after in Palma.[31]
May 8	The killing of 7 Palma-displaced and several civilians after the insurgents sunk two boats ferrying displaced people off Ilha Mucongwe coast.[32]
June 19	An attack on Nova Cabo Delgado, leading to the looting of the village and murder of 8 civilians.[33]

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July 2	An attack on Namande, killing 7 civilians and 3 state militiamen.[34]
August 24	The beheading of 10 fishermen by the ASWJ insurgents in Mucojo.[35]
September 20	An attack on Bilibiza, Nacuta, and Tapara, killing at least 17 individuals.[36]
October 24	An attack on Chitama village in Nangade, killing 3 people (two Mozambican militiamen and the village's leader).[37]
November 25	The proliferation of attacks on Niassa after the insurgents attacked the Gomba village killing at least one state police officer.[38]
December 21	The killing of two state militiamen by the insurgents in Macomia.[39]

2022

January 7	An attack on Nashi Bandi by ISIS fighters, killing two Mozambican militiamen and destroying at least 30 houses.[40]
January 8	An IS-linked attack on Alberto Chipande village in the Mueda district, killing one civilian and one off-duty Mozambican militiaman.[41]
January 28	An attack on Iba in Meluco by the insurgents, killing at least 6 civilians.[42]
February 1	An insurgent attack inIlha Matemo and Matemo, killing 3 civilians.[43]
February 5	A raid of many areas between Macomia and Pemba ambushing a group of (civilian) hunters, killing 4 of them and thieving their food items.[44]

Consequently, the attacks have triggered the proliferation of violence resulting in the massive displacement of around 92,000 people. According to United Nations OCHA (2021), it is estimated that as of June 2021, Cabo Delgado province had over 125,000 displaced persons (IDPs) in 34 displacement camps throughout eight districts. Civilians forced to flee their homes in Nampula and Cabo Delgado provinces sought sanctuary in IDP camps located in Metuge, Chiure, Pemba, and Ancuabe (United Nations OCHA, 2022). The increased influx of refugees in places like Pemba has put a strain on local resources. The government requests humanitarian aid to evacuate 20,000 IDPs from Pemba to new locations in Ancuabe (United Nations OCHA,

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34. *Ibid*
35. *Ibid*
36. *Ibid*
37. *Ibid*
38. The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center. (2021). Spotlight on Global Jihad (January 5-12, 2021). https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/en/spotlight-on-global-jihad-january-5-12-2021/
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42. *Ibid*
43. *Ibid*
44. *Ibid*

2022). Shelter, non-food consumer goods, foodand medical treatment became urgent needs. Thirty-six thousand children from relocated families have had their access to education disrupted (United Nations International Children Education Fund, 2022). Because of increased insecurity, certain humanitarian organizations have ceased activities in the Ancuabe district, citing travel restrictions in the districts of Ancuabe, Chiure, and Metuge (ACAPS, 2022).

As war and human dislocation intensify, more vulnerable people need safety and security. The danger of sexual exploitation and abuse is heightened by shelter overcrowding and a lack of employment possibilities (UN High Commissioner for Refugees, 2021). Kidnapping, rape, forced marriage, and prostitution are all common occurrences for women and girls. The uprising has damaged 33% of Cabo Delgado's health facilities in the public healthcare system. As a result, disease epidemics such as cholera, measles, and COVID-19 have been harder to detect and manage as around 778,000 conflict-affected individuals require therapy for HIV, malaria, or Tuberculosis. (United Nations Population Fund, 2021). This situation could further burden Africa's fragile public healthcare system (Shodunke et al., 2022). As such, it becomes imperative that Mozambican government prioritize the safety and security of its citizens and the preservation of their livelihoods in the embattled region of Cabo Delgado and areas proximate to the conflict.

Counterinsurgency by the Mozambican State and its International Partners

The protraction of insurgency by the ASWJ group has compelled measures, which are predominantly kinetic. While the locations such as mosques and madrasas (Quranic Schools) purportedly believed to be the recruitment hubs for the group were being closed (Fabricius, 2018), the police forces swung into full law enforcement actions through arrest and detention. Following the maiden attack on October 5, 2017, the Mozambican police apprehended 52 individuals suspected to be connected with the attack (All Africa, 2017). The security forces identified six men believed to be the ringleaders in 2018 (Reuters, 2018). The police also apprehended dozens of suspected insurgents in Nampula in 2019 (Club of Mozambique, 2019b). In collaboration with Wagner Group and Russian mercenaries, Mozambique forces commenced counterinsurgency operations in early October 2019 (Sauer, 2019), pushing the insurgents back to the forest in several parts of Cabo Delgado.

Furthermore, the crisis has garnered the attention and efforts of the international community. Many nations, including Rwanda, Russia, Angola, Botswana, EU member states, South Africa and the United States, have sent military contingents, equipment

and advisers to Mozambique to assist the security forces in subduing the insurgency and its manifestations. Following President Filipe Nyusi of Mozambique and President Paul Kagame of Rwanda's meeting in early 2021, the first 1,000 Rwandan troops arrived on July 9, 2021, and cleared insurgents from key areas in three weeks. In the same July, Cabo Delgado received 2,000 troops drawn from eight SADC member states on the approval of the Mozambican government as part of SAMIM. To recapture the two coastal areas, close to enormous natural gas resources; Palma and Mocimboa da Praia formerly controlled by the insurgents, more than 2,000 well-trained Rwandan soldiers were requested (Hanlon, 2022). Due to the spill-over of the conflict to neighbouring Tanzania, the government of Mozambique and Tanzania entered a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to wage the battle against the ASWJ uprising in Cabo Delgado jointly. The MoU included the extradition of 516 fighters from Tanzania to its southern neighbour, the Mozambican province of Cabo Delgado (Al-Jazeera, 2020).

Owing to the presence of mineral resources (gas, rubies, graphite, and gold) in the province triggering resentment from the deprived locals, ASWJ capitalizes on the resentment to propagate the idea of applying Sharia law as the only source of equality and social justice they have been denied of. Hence, the European Union and the World Bank address the problem with a contribution of hundreds of millions of dollars and the creation of jobs to cease violence and ensure peace(Hanlon, 2022). Most of the humanitarian assistance the United States provides to Mozambique, amounting to $55 million in 2022, is designated for Cabo Delgado and the adjacent provinces housing IDPs (Cook, 2022). Mozambique received a Mi-17 helicopter and other military supplies from Russia through a Russian Air Force An-124 in 2019 (Defence Web, 2019).

Due to the above, modicum success has been achieved against the insurgents in their numerical strength and territorial contest. The Mozambican forces and troops from Rwanda, SAMIM, Russia and others have decimated the insurgents, conquered their enclaves and stabilized large areas under contest. With security improvement, places like Mocimboa da Praia town were retaken by the state forces and humanitarian aid reached Palma (ACAPS, 2022). In August 2021, the Rwandan troops conquered strategic road networks in Mocamba da Praia, the cradle of the insurgency, Muidumbe and Quissanga, which were hitherto under the control of the insurgents (Hill and Nhamirre, 2021). One hundred twenty-nine insurgents were killed in a long-violent northern Cabo Delgado province between 2019 and 2020 and 31 fighters between April 11 and April 13 (Reuter, 2020). The country's Defence and Security Forces killed two main leaders of ASWJ that had taken Macomia city of the province (Lusa, 2020). According to the country's security authorities, more than 270 ISCAP rebels were slain in the Awasse district, and seven truckloads of weapons and many terrorists were seized in 2020 (Devisdiscourse, 2020). Several insurgents were captured after state force ransacked their enclaves in different locations. However,

the counterinsurgency undertakings have been challenged with a lack of capacity to simultaneously protect state-controlled regions from ASWJ assaults and prevent an onslaught against the military. In September 2021, the insurgents detonated an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) targeting a Rwandan convoy resulting in material damage only (Cabo Ligado, 2021b).

Two months later, the insurgents attacked a patrol in the hamlet of Neida and murdered seven Mozambican troops (Cabo Ligado, 2021a). An insurgent ambush occurred in December 2021 in the town of Chai, targeting a patrol of South African special forces and Mozambican ground forces (Defence Web, 2022). The raid resulted in the deaths of several Mozambican troops and a solitary member of the South African special forces. More than a few troops were hurt in the attack; a South African special forces operative was killed in action for the first time since the South African Border War. In addition to those challenges by the insurgents, the state's response to these uprisings has resulted in more human rights violations. Mozambican troops allegedly raided Quitunda, looted civilians' properties and killed 10 fishermen in October 2021 in Pangane for violating a ban on maritime activities in Ilha Matemo. Journalists documenting the situation in Cabo Delgado and other conflict zones were detained by government forces, while civilians suspected of aiding the insurgents were persecuted and arbitrarily imprisoned (Cebola & Kleinfeld, 2020).

There were reports of human rights abuse and maltreatment of civilians under the guise of counterinsurgency operations. Fabricius (2018) noted that military operations by the Mozambican troops have translated to abusing the right of Muslim locals in which their places of worship were forcefully closed and their women disallowed religious garb. Additionally, air sorties and aerial bombardments killed 50 inhabitants in Northern Mozambique (Mutasa and Muchemwa, 2021). However, the agility of ASWJ has been weakened. Its combatants have been dispersed from their strongholds due to the joint operations from state forces and foreign missions. Still, the conflict has not been totally obliterated. Some fighters have blended in with the civilian population and may resurge with a higher sophistication later if strategic steps are not taken. As part of policy implementation, the culture of arbitrariness and show/use of force must be addressed to avoid a continued escalation of violence, as in the case of Boko Haram in Northeast Nigeria (Shodunke, 2021a).

Conclusion

The article investigated the accounts of the IS-linked ASWJ conflict, which enters its fifth year this October as the maiden attack was launched in October 2017. Since then, Cabo Delgado and nearby provinces in Northern Mozambique have been witnessing severe humanitarian concerns. To establish an Islamic State (Waliyah) as a replacement

for the (democratic) government seen as corrupt and unjust, the ASWJ movement exploits the locals' pre-existing socio-economic conditions and psychological vulnerabilities to revolt against the Mozambican state. The insurgency occasions mass atrocities that are fuelled by several factors; state neglect, socio-economic deprivation (amidst the presence of significant gas deposits and mineral resources), security sector weakness, institutional corruption, poor political leadership, among others. Although the scholarship linking the insurgency to foreign mercenaries' involvement is scant, the mercenaries have participated in a series of attacks against the civilian population and military interest as ASWJ had pledged allegiance to the IS. Foreign fighters have come from Tanzania, Saudi Arabia, Somali's Al-Shabab and other IS affiliates to launch a rebellion not only in Cabo Delgado but also in other proximate provinces.

As such, the security situation in Northern Mozambique reflects thousands of human casualties, hundreds of thousands of human displacements, kidnapping, forceful extortion and arson of buildings and human settlements. The military and counterinsurgents have also had shares of ASWJ violence; onslaught producing weapons pillage, formation wreckage and death of troops of Mozambique Defence Force, SADC mission, Rwanda and Russia's Wagner Group. Also, it is noteworthy that the crisis has severed the energy sector as major multinational oil firms have suspended offshore exploration, which could transform the Mozambican economy. In addition to humanitarian aid, Mozambique and its development partners, therefore, respond to the ASWJ manifestation majorly via lethal strategies in the form of law enforcement, military conscription and operation and multilateral cooperation with the SADC, US, UK, AU and Rwanda. These responses have produced modicum achievement in the form of the death of ASWJ insurgents and the conquest of territories previously held by the insurgents. However, the counterinsurgency has not been operational without setbacks. The troops were reported to have been involved in gross human rights violations consisting extra-judicial killing of civilians, immoderate use of force, raiding/looting of civilians' settlements and blockade of journalists' access to the conflict zone. Thus, spill-over of the conflict to neighbouring countries remains a concern. Although no other nations from the SADC have been severely affected as Mozambique but considering the complexity and sophistication of ASWJ's counterparts in the Sahel, the Horn of Africa and North Africa, what emerged as local skirmishe could degenerate into a transnational security threat.

As Cabo Delgado (in Northern Mozambique) is proximate to Southern Tanzania that has been attacked recently, the border areas could serve as the hubs for recruitment and transit of insurgency accessories. The availability of food and water resources in Niassa hunting reserves could expedite insurgent activities. Also, the Rovuma river separating the two nations and conflict-ridden Mtwara and Mnongodi villages in the Southern region of Tanzania could facilitate unchecked transit as ungoverned spaces ease the spread of conflict beyond borders. Hence, the possible escalation of violence

in the conflict zone and snowballing to Mozambican neighbours should never be underestimated. The lessons from other insurgencies should inform counterinsurgency and policy-making if the ASWJ conflict is to be obliterated completely.

Recommendations

Given the modicum success achieved by the Mozambican state and its allies and strategic losses recorded so far, it becomes imperative to address the remote and immediate drivers of the insurgency holistically. Rather than being reactive, much of the policy responses should be proactive. Hence, addressing the remote catalysts of radicalization, recruitment for violent extremism and ASWJ is foundational to counterinsurgency. Considering the role of the socio-economic hardship, state's neglect, the government needs to emphasize assuaging the aggrieved locals. Cabo Delgado's youths are impoverished due to a lack of economic possibilities. This situation has produced a dangerous and fertile recruiting ground for disillusioned young people who may be readily persuaded by promises of greater possibilities, particularly amidst a growing youth bulge. In addition to the employment opportunities in the oil and gas industry, there should be robust poverty alleviation programmes, skills acquisition and economic empowerment that target the needy.

In addition to empowerment, addressing religious intolerance is paramount. Eradicating the ASWJ manifestations requires increasing religious cohesiveness in the religiously-tensed communities. Thus, there should be enlightenment by clerics, key opinion makers and community leaders on socio-religious tolerance. This enlightenment will reduce the religious disdain that could translate to aggression. Also, the government should focus on building community resilience that address sectarian and ethnic challenges. There should be dialogue with the elites who can shape the situations as they unfold in their domain. While tackling social and economic problems, the government at all levels must focus on addressing corrupt and sharp practices. The situation in the conflict zone must also be dealt with completely, much beyond socio-economic inputs. Due to widespread corruption that plagues state institutions, ASWJ uses the government's neglect as bait to recruit members who believe the alternative Sharia-based government the insurgents offer will be fair, just and impartial. Their motivation for a rebellion is rooted in the belief that the national government does not their territory fairly but instead exploits its immense natural riches for the wealth of a governing few. As a result, transparency, fairness and social justice should be a priority at every institution. Mozambican government should cultivate and exhibit a strong and wide-ranging political leadership, backed by financial resources, to achieve more open and inclusive governance, a prosperous economy as well as democratic consolidation. The government needs public confidence in countering insurgency and disincentivizing violent extremism. In

addition, Northern Resilience and Development Strategy should be implemented towards the reconstruction and development of the conflict zone. It is noteworthy that corrupt-free governance will address the plight of citizens and as well, strengthen the national military, which is seen as incapacitated to handle the ASWJ threats.

While the above measures are being implemented, the lethal aspects of counter-insurgency need to be bolstered. Criminal prosecution of arrested insurgents should not be relegated as their continued detention is detrimental to counterinsurgency and national security. Mozambique and its assistors need to prioritize heightening military operations to decapacitate the insurgents and their enclaves and conquer the territories they control. Concern for the well-being of soldiers at the theatres of operation should be given the attention it deserves. In addition, the military arrangements should be equipped with what it requires in responding to the antics of ASWJ. For security efforts to keep the insurgency under control, there should be peculiar help rather than a broad overseas deployment that may complicate the dire situation.

In addition to the functioning of SAMIM, there should be result-oriented engage-ment in addressing border porosity and countering organized crimes that facilitate armed conflicts. Regionally, the SADC and East African countries, particularly those conflict-affected; Kenya and Somalia, have significant roles in addressing terrorist movement, training and IED proliferation cells. With financial and technical support from the AU, UN and a host of other development partners, terrorist financing and sharing of criminal intelligence to dismantle IS's networks and threats should be matters of urgent attention. While reinforcing military operations and multilateral cooperation, the Mozambican government should concentrate on developing the country's security arrangements which could address security concerns with little or no foreign assistance for national security's sake.

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TERRORISM, STATE AND THE SEARCH FOR SOCIO-POLITICAL ORDER IN NIGERIA: A LOCKEAN REFLECTION

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Abstract   For over a decade, Nigeria was engulfed in acts of terrorism by the Boko Haram through bomb attacks, suicide bombing and kidnapping of schoolchildren among others. These acts of terrorism have led to the unfortunate death of thousands of Nigerians and have left a huge humanitarian crisis in the northern part of Nigeria. This unfortunate situation has led to the questioning of the role of good governance, democracy and above all the state in ensuring stability, security and peace in a society. The questions that this paper seeks to interrogate are: why is there an increase in terrorist activities in Nigeria? Is there a link between terrorism and good governance? What is the proper place of the state in ensuring the security of its members? This paper examines the relationship between terrorism and good governance with the aim of unraveling the cause of terrorism and marshalling out a method of mitigating it. In order to achieve this aim, the paper makes use of the method of philosophical analysis, which will help us in analyzing and interpreting John Locke's contract theory as a background concept in analyzing the problem of terrorism in Nigeria. Also the method of conceptual analysis will be used in reducing the concept of a state to its basic principles of security and welfare of its citizens. This paper posits that at the core of the problem of terrorism in Nigeria is bad governance, which is the result of the non-adherence to the contract between the citizens and the state.

Keywords

Boko Haram ,
Nigeria ,
Social Contract Theory ,
State ,
Terrorism.

Introduction

The primary function of any government is the protection of life and properties of her citizens. Thus, whenever there is break down of law and order or, when there is high level of insecurity in a country, the citizens are compelled to ask questions about the genuineness and ability of the state to keep its trusty nature. This is because a state is the only authority that claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a defined territory. The monopoly of physical force by the state is aimed at achieving the purpose of the state which is the common good of its citizens and when this is not achieved, questions are raised. These questions are borne out of curiosity and the quest for better representation from the state. The Nigerian state is an example of a state that has directly or, indirectly compelled its citizens to question the ability of the state to live up to its primary duties of security and welfare of its citizens. This is because of the level of insecurity in the country, ranges from terrorism, banditry, herdsmen-farmers clashes to kidnapping and armed robbery among others. In the last 8 years, the level of terrorists attacks have gone high and the group responsible for this is the Boko Haram terrorist group. The activities of this group have led to the death of thousands of Nigerians, the destruction of properties worth billions of naira and the violation of human rights. According to a report released by the Nigeria Security Trackers (NST), violent activities in Nigeria have resulted in the death of 7,253 Nigerians between 2018 and May 2019. The Boko Haram has continued to threaten the sovereignty of the Nigerian state and have become a huge source of worry for Nigerians and the world at large, especially with the transnationalisation of the group's activities. To this end, this paper seeks to unravel the cause (s) of terrorism in Nigeria by examining John Locke's social contract theory. A proper start off point would be to conceptualize the notion of terrorism.

Conceptualizing Terrorism

There is no generally accepted academic definition of terrorism, and this is due to the controversial nature of the concept and the fact that the discipline of terrorism research is relatively young. The term terrorism is not unique to the modern period as it dates back to the 18th Century (Rausch, 2015: 29). Terrorism comes from the French word *terrorisme* and originally referred specifically to the state of terrorism as practiced by the French government during the 1793-1794 reigns of terror. It was referred to as state terrorism. This connotes bloody repression by government agents directed primarily at the non arm bearing masses. Essentially, the most pervasive feature of state terrorism is that, people are detained arbitrarily and usually have no right to judicial process and protection. Other attributes of state terrorism includes summary trials and extra- judicial killings, beatings, torture and death squads by shooting at sight (Ogunboyede, 2014:36).

Terrorism is difficult to define and conceptualize. It covers different kinds of activities. In addition, this is the reason why it has being said that one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter. (Ogunboyede, 2014:36). However, some scholars like Paul Johnson have traced the intellectual background of terrorism to Fanon. It is believed that Fanon's idea of violence gave rise to the modern notion of terrorism as a revolutionary and liberating activity. For Fanon, violence can be used as a tool for liberating and cleansing oneself or a group from the shackles and chains of oppression and domination. Hence, terrorism has been described variously as both a tactic and strategy; a crime and a holy duty; a justified reaction to oppression and inexcusable abomination (Ogunboyede, 2014:36). Merrick Yamamoto describes terrorism as a form of political violence; that is, violence used for a political purpose. The use of 'political' he opined, can be described as concerned with government, the state, or politics and political violence is used to try to obtain some kind of political change, or to prevent political change (Yamamoto, 2015:1). Other forms of political violence include assassination, war, civil war, military strikes, insurrection, ethnic conflict, genocide, state terror, etc. It must be stated that it is hard to differentiate one form of political violence from the other. However, Yamamoto opines that, what sets terrorism apart from almost all other forms of political violence is how terrorism "operates" (Yamamoto, 2015:1). Almost all other forms of political violence operate in the same faction. But in terrorism, the attackers use violence against one set of targets (the targets of violence) as a means to get other targets – third party targets such as groups, government, organizations, and individuals – to take actions that will help averse a political goal (Yamamoto, 2015:1). In corroborating this point, the United States Department of Defense define terrorism as the calculated use of unlawful violence or threat of violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate government or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological (Zumve, 2013:125). Within this definition are three (3) main elements or features-violence, fear and intimidation and each element produces terror in its victims.

Furthermore, there are some key features of every instance of terrorism. In every instance of terrorism, there must and there is always some terrifying act. It always connotes fear and terror. It is the fear that until and unless the attacker`s demands and wishes are carried there will be some unimaginable and unacceptable consequences. It therefore means that the direct targets are not the primary target of terrorists attack. Thus, we can opine that terrorism is a way and means of communication. Thus, terrorists do not primarily aim at the physical but on the psychological effect of their attack. Terrorism uses a strategy that primarily relies on the symbolic strength of the act. The use of terror serves not primarily the purpose of fighting, injuring or destroying the opponent. Rather, its primary purpose lies in the conveying of messages to the target

audience(s) (Bockstette, 2008:8). Other features and characteristics of terrorism are non-state actor – that is a private group or a clandestine state agent, violence, or the threat of violence that is premeditated, unlawful and random or symbolic. In addition, terrorist attacks use violence and the threat of violence against non-combatants and property. Terrorist attacks are intended to affect third parties and elicit responses from them to advance political, ideological or religious goals. Furthermore, terrorist attacks use mechanisms such as coercion, intimidation, provocation, influence, and inspiration to try to elicit desired responses from third parties. To this end, there are various types of terrorism. Wilkinson identified different types of terrorist groups. In his view, we have Ethno-nationalist groups, that is, those identified by ethnicity and political motivation; Ideological terrorist groups – this includes terrorist groups that want to create a state based on an ideology (e.g a communist state); the religious – political groups such as the Boko Haram sect in Nigeria, which aims to create an Islamic theocracy (Zumve, 2013:126). Another identified type of terrorism is international terrorism. This happens when a terrorist act in a particular encompasses victims, targets institutions, governments, or citizens of another country (Iviarguardt et al, 2018). Also, Jenny Teichman provides typologies of terrorism and they are state terrorism or reign of terror, terrorism which consists solely in the assassination of specifically chosen victims, and modern terrorism, which roughly speaking is usually but not invariably a kind of violent nationalistic rebellion carried out in a variety of ways (Teichman, 1989:509). State terrorism is politically charged in most cases. It is carried out by the help of state agents like the military, the police force and other state agencies. It is often aimed at perceived political enemies. On the other hand, other forms of terrorism are carried out by non-state actors and this type of terrorism is politically and religiously charged.

From the forgoing, it is obvious that terrorism causes a lot of harm and pain to man. Morally speaking, can a terrorist act be justified? Is it ethically right to use terror, violence as a means of achieving a group's desires and demands in a democratic state? These questions are important because of the nature of terrorism. Scholars have given different and conflicting answers to the above questions and as such, there is no single answer. Accordingly, coming from the utilitarian angle, an action is right if it will bring about the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people. Does an act of terrorism bring about the greatest good to the greatest number of people that suffer from it? The answer is no, because terrorist activities results in the death and injury of many and the loss of properties. Terrorist act does not benefit the people. It only benefits the interests of the few (terrorist group). Conversely, the terrorist might argue that on the long run his agitation and actions will benefit the interest of the people and bring about the greatest good. Be that as it may, the fact remains that the negative consequences of terrorism is far more than its long term

advantages, if any. Even from the Kantian lens, terrorism cannot be justified as it cannot be universalized. Thus, Wilkinson sees terrorism as a crime against humanity. For him, if we attached any meanings and values to our western liberal and humanist values, and the ethnic and legal systems that have been shaped by this tradition, we must logically recognize the criminal nature of terrorism (Held 306). Terrorism therefore becomes a crime not only to the State but against our shared humanity and should therefore be stopped. To be able to stop terrorism in Nigeria, it is important we take a look at terrorist activities in Nigeria and how it started.

Terrorist Activities in Nigeria

Terrorism in Nigeria is an enigma of some sort. It is arguably one of, if not the major problem facing the country. Terrorist attacks and activities in Nigeria have led to the death of thousands of people and the destruction of properties worth billions of naira. Its effect on the economy and internal peace is alarming to say the least. The group that has brought this inhuman terror to Nigeria, especially the north is the Boko Haram group.

The exact date of the emergence of the Boko Haram sect is mired in controversy with conflicting dates given by different scholars. Thus, Boko Haram's origin is nebulous, but can be faintly back dated to 1995 under one Lawan Abubakar but surfaced prominently in 2002 with the emergence of Mohammed Yusuf who was killed extra judicially by the police in 2009. (Kehinde et al, 2015:31) Historically, the Boko Haram group is known by the Nigerian state to have existed since 1995 under the name of Ahlusunnawal'jama ah hijra. According to Oviasogie, the sect has subsequently flourished under various names like the Nigerian Taliban, Yusufiyyah sect, and Boko Haram (literally meaning western education is a sin) (Oviasogie, 2013:25). As the name indicates, the group is opposed to what it perceives as western based penetration that acts as threat to orthodox values, beliefs and customs among Muslims in northern part of Nigeria. The ideology of the group is grounded in the practice of orthodox Islam. Orthodox Islam in their belief and interpretation abhors western education and western system of administration. This explains the name Boko Haram, meaning western education is a sin.

The first time Boko Haram took up arms against state security apparatus was in 2003 when it strongly attacked police stations and government buildings in Yobe state killing several people and destroying properties (Walker, 2012: 3). Such type of attacks was also carried out in Bama and Gworza police stations in Borno state. Since then, the sect's activities have spread to a total of five northern states, namely Borno, Yobe, Bauchi, Taraba and Kano. These five states plus the Federal Capital

Territory (Abuja) are the most hit by this deadly group. No wonder, in 2014, the Boko Haram was ranked as the most deadly terrorist group in the world in the report released on November 16, 2015 by the Institute for Economics and Peace which stated that the Nigeria-based Boko Haram, overtook ISIL in 2014 to become the most deadly terrorist group in the world.

Terrorism all over the world is politically and religiously charged and Nigeria's experience of terrorism is not exempted from this. The Boko Haram's acclaimed philosophy is rooted in the practice of orthodox Islam which they believe is against anything western. Politically, the goal of Boko Haram is to create an Islamic state in the 12 northern states of Nigeria, with the plan of subsequently spreading to the rest of the country. It is a form of extreme Islamic fundamentalism. The Boko Haram violence has been in the main motivated by the sect's dichotomization between secularism and Islamic values. (Okolo et al, 2014:43). Hence, members of the sect are of the view that the elements of western education system are in conflict with the fundamentals of Islam. Thus, Xan opines that he (Yusuf) did not want mixed schools, or the teaching of evolution in schools. He wanted children to have more time to study their religion. Democracy is also alien to him because he succinctly stated that he will not support a government whose constitution was not based on the Koran (Okolo et al, 2014:43). However, some scholars and investigators are skeptical as to the claim that Boko Haram was founded on strict Islamic ideology. This is because of the group's use of extreme violence as a means of social change. Their style and method have been condemned by most scholars as grossly unrelated to any religion. Hiding behind the facade of religion to perpetrate dastardly acts of killing and maiming innocent people is not Islamic as the Holy Quran abhors such atrocities… Islam is a religion of peace (Salawu et al, 2015:660). Furthermore, empirical evidence demonstrates that the victims of Boko Haram attacks are both Christians and Muslims. As such, one begins to wonder which particular religion the group is fighting for. Some scholars and analysts believe that there is an underlying political agenda to this terror campaign, which is seen as a part of an orchestrated attempt to destabilize the government of Nigeria (Salawu et al, 2015:660). However, if one is to accept the above view, the question would be, which political divide is responsible for this? This all important question arises because of the fact that Boko Haram even before now carried out attacks under the administration of Goodluck Jonathan, and now that there is a new administration from a former opposition party, the group has not stopped in its attacks and bombings. It is really a complex issue.

However, Boko Haram and other terrorist groups are largely a product of wide spread social economic factors like poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, ethnicity, corruption, etc. the foundation of this terror group is more socio-economic than

it is political or ideological. And as expressed by Nchi, poverty and ignorance are fertilizers for insurgency anywhere and in any age. When they combine and cloak themselves in religious, ethnic, or other partisan robes, they become ready incentive for the most brutal and reckless of violence (Okoli et al, 2014:43). A very high percentage of the inhabitants of northern Nigeria are poor. Thus, in corroborating this view, the then governor of Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Charles Soludo expressed that persistent high levels of poverty in the country had become a northern phenomenon. According to Desmond Tutu, Kim Dae-Jung and Oscar Arias Sanchez during December 2001 gathering of Nobel Peace Prize Laureates in Oslo, Norway, the causes of terrorism is located in poverty, inequality and the absence of social justice in the developing world. However, one may ask, is poverty a recent problem? Has poverty or poor people not been in Nigeria for ages? It might be true that poverty has been with man for ages, however, the poverty rate has increased over the years and the northern part of Nigeria which is worst hit by the menace of terrorist has the poorest states in Nigeria. It was observed that of the ten states with the highest incidence of poverty eight were in the far northern zone. These include Jigawa with 97 percent; Kebbi 89.7 percent, Kogi 86.6 percent, Bauchi 86.8 percent, Kwara 85.2 percent, Yobe 83.3 percent, Zamfara 80.7 percent, Gombe 77 percent, Sokoto 76.8 percent and Adamawa 71.7 percent (Ayegba, 95). Corruption is another factor that has made terrorism to thrive in Nigeria. According to one anonymous Nigerian journalist that has access to some senior Boko Haram leaders, corruption became the catalyst for Boko Haram. Mohammed Yusuf the group first leader would have found it difficult to gain many of these people (terrorists) if he was operating in a functional state. His teaching was easily accepted because the environment, injustices made it fertile for his ideology to grow fast, very fast, likes wildfire (Zumve, 2013:126). Most of the people recruited by terrorist groups are the poor who are frustrated and sick of the society.

The Boko Haram insurgency poses a dire humanitarian consequence for Nigeria. According to Okoli and Philip, apart from the Nigerian civil war (1967-1970) no other single event of complex emergency in the country has been as debilitating as the Boko Haram insurgency in terms of humanitarian impacts. (Okoli et al, 2014:44). This can be seen in the level of insecurity, fear in the northern part and the country as a whole. Furthermore, there is a livelihood crisis: several people have been displaced from their homes while others have lost their sources of livelihood. Boko Haram insurgency has led to human right abuses by both the insurgents and the security forces. The most devastating effect is the loss of thousands of lives and injury to many. These acts of terrorism happens within the Nigerian state, thus it is imperative to study the origin of the state and reasons for state creation.

John Locke's Social Contract Theory

The theory of social contract is a very important one in social and political philosophy. This is because it defines and gives meaning to some of the main key issues that baffles most social and political theorists: what is political power? What is the source of political power? What is the limit of political power? What is the source of legitimacy of a state? Although many scholars have written that society should be predicated on a sort of contract, the theory reached its zenith in the hands of Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau. In this paper, our focus will be on John Locke's version of the contract theory.

The starting point of Locke's social contract theory is the state of nature. The state of nature as opined by Locke is not a state of war or lawlessness but a state of law, perfect freedom and equality. Freedom in the state of nature is regulated by the natural law of reason, which detects to everyone the best way to behave and relate with each other. In the state of nature, everyone has two natural power or limitations, "to do whatsoever he thinks fit for the preservation of himself and others within the permission of the law of nature and the power to punish the crimes committed against the law" (Strauss and Cropsey, 1987:496). However, even though the state of nature is one of order and peace, Locke opined that it could become chaotic if men become irrational.

Another important attribute of Locke's state of nature is the fact that there exist some natural rights, which people enjoy. The most basic among these rights are rights to freedom, life and property. In addition, the most fundamental among the three is property right. Furthermore, Locke contends that even though the natural law of reason is evident in the state of nature, man can still become unreasonable and this could lead to a chaotic state with no clear government in place. Thus there came the need for a transition from the state of nature to a civil society. Locke's social contract is "between the citizens initially, and later, between them and the sovereign ruler" (Irele, 1993: 45). Here the sovereign ruler is not absolute and is not above the laws. Hence, in Locke's view government must be limited and not absolute. This is because the relationship that exists between it and the citizens is a reciprocal one. In this sense, the government becomes a trust of the people to protect their treasured rights –rights to freedom, life and property. To this end, the government existence depends on its capacity and willingness to protect the rights of the citizens. Anything short of this brings the forfeiture of the right of obedience by the citizens. Put another way, the people have a right to civil disobedience if their natural rights are not protected. (Irele, 1993:45). Implicit in Locke's theory is the justification for rebellion. Obviously, Locke is quite explicit that the cause of revolution is governmental rebellion against the terms of contract, not any

tendency on the part of the people to anarchy or violence. (Nelson, 1996:201). This is against the background that the chief end of government is the preservation of the lives and properties of the people. Thus, the people have an obligation to obey the government if and only if their rights are protected. Consequently, supremacy power lies with the people. In view of this, the state can be rightly regarded as an agent of the people. Against this background we ask: Is the Nigerian state really an agent of the people? Has the Nigerian government kept its part of the social contract with the people? In the next session of this paper we will attempt answering these crucial questions.

Understanding Terrorism in Nigeria Through the Lockean Lens

The problem of terrorism in Nigeria points us to first the idea of state and secondly to a problem of breach of social contract. Though there are other angles to the instant subject this paper limits itself to the above scope. In this context, we are looking at the chief end of the state, which is the basis of the social contract, in the environment of violence and non-violence. The purpose of the contract is for the protection of the rights of the citizens and at the heart of this is the protection of lives and properties. Thus, the emergence of the state is to guarantee these rights (security) and ensure better life (welfare) for the members of the state. In this light the purpose, aim and *telos* of the state is explicitly clear; the security and welfare of the citizens. On the contrary, the Nigerian state seems to be struggling with its trusty status by not been able to guarantee the security and welfare of its members. It is now an instrument in the hands of a few elites who are only interested in using the state apparatus for their benefit, thus exploiting, manipulating and dominating the majority of the populace. The few elites keep getting richer at the expense of the masses. The lack of security, lack of basic amenities and the high rate of unemployment plus the lack of political participation by the citizens points to a gap in the social contract. This has resulted in wide spread insecurity in the country. In North-East of Nigeria we have the Boko Haram terrorist group, in the North-West there is the deadly presence of armed bandits, in the Middle belt we have herdsmen-farmers conflicts, and in the South we have different shades of kidnapping and armed robbers, all making life extremely difficult for the masses.

To this end, we opine that the Nigerian state is encompassed with insecurity and threats of violence. The combination of all these violent groups has led to the death of thousands of people and the destruction of properties worth billions of naira. Worrisome too, it has brought about a huge humanitarian crisis in the Northern part of Nigeria with thousands of internally displaced persons. There seems to be a failure of the state in ensuring the "good life" for its citizens as spelt out in the

social contract. Terrorism and other forms of criminal violence have brought about the total degradation of human dignity and the daily abuse of human rights by non-state actors.

Under the social contract, the government is a trusty trusted by the people to protect their esteemed rights – rights to freedom, life and property. This is the foundation of the contract between the state and the citizens. Unfortunately, Nigeria is faced with an unprecedented level of insecurity, which is manifests in suicide bombing, kidnapping, armed robbery and ethno-religious clashes. Consequently, gaps in the establishment of good governance, mechanism for social inclusion and security reform mechanism have opened the floodgates to terrorists, armed robbers, assassins and kidnappers, ethnic militia groups, as well the invading rebel forces from neighboring countries to the north of Nigeria to perpetrate their acts (Kehinde and Mobuogwu, 2015: 29).

Some Core Values that Could Mitigate Terrorism in Nigeria

It is our argument in this paper that to tackle terrorism in Nigeria and to ensure development, there is an urgent need to review the place of some democratic values in our polity. By values we simply mean those things that are important, desirable and of interest to one. In the words of Dzobo (1992:225) the major functions of values are to serve as guide and judges for individual actions and to direct the choices and conduct of people in a culture. When the dominant social-political values in a place lead to exploitation, injustice, deprivation, impunity then, there is need for the reordering of values. In the case of Nigeria, there is an urgent need for the reordering of values and the push for a different set of democratic and humanistic values. In this case, we need some fundamental values that are superior to the negative dominant values. These values are to be endorsed because they promote human dignity, human life and peaceful coexistence among people.

One important value that can help in solving the problem of terrorism and bad governance in Nigeria is the idea of community. It is closely related to the communal nature of traditional African society. African communalism is based on the notion of community living. Thus, man's very existence depends on associated activity, in as much as each human being is born an infant... immature, helpless, and dependent upon the activities of others. That many of these dependent beings survive is proof that others in some measure look out for them... human beings are associated, then in virtue of their very structure (Horwitz, 1987:859). Proposing this as a solution, Dewey (Fott, 2009:13) affirm that unless local community life can be restored the public cannot adequately solve its most urgent problems; to find and identify itself. However, if it

be re-established, it will manifest a fullness, variety, and freedom of possession and enjoyment of meanings and goods unknown in the contiguous associations of the past. For it will be alive and flexible as well as stable, responsive to the complex worldwide scene in which it is enmeshed. While local, it will not be isolated. It is the consciousness that I am part of a community, and that it is only in/through the community that my individuality can be fully expressed. It is a view of individuals relationally; a relation in which the well-being of the individual is tied to the well-being of the whole. This communal view is the contrast of the individualistic nature of this 21st century's way of living in Nigeria. This way of living is the root cause of corruption in Nigeria. This in turn, has brought poverty and illiteracy to the land. The lack or absence of this community oneness and unity is the root cause of corruption which also contributes to the incidence of terrorism in the country. On the other hand, communalism is the contrast of the isolated and self-seeking nature of terrorist groups like Boko Haram. By this, we mean that their vision is not that of the community, but that of few individuals. The non-communitarian nature of terrorist groups can be understood against the backdrop of their intellectual origin of terrorism which is rooted in Fanon's idea of violence as a revolutionary and cleansing tool against injustice and oppression. This is an extreme method of achieving one's goals and objectives and as such it is against the principles of cooperation, oneness and deliberation which are the hallmarks of community living. The lack of this community way of living has contributed to the growth and spread of terrorism in Nigeria. Consequently, it is the conviction of this paper that through cooperation and the "I am because we are" consciousness, some of the causal factors responsible for the increase and growth of terrorist activities would be reduced. This is because terrorist groups use violence as a means of solving political and social problems. However, no matter the argument in support of such violent acts, it is a known fact that violence cannot permanently solve political or social problems.

Another important value that will help to mitigate terrorism is dialogue. The notion of dialogue is based on human dignity and respect for the other. This is the opposite of the activities of the Boko Haram group. The use of unlawful violence, which has led to the death of thousands of persons, is against the concept and spirit of dialogue, same is the shutting out of citizens from the day to running of government. In fact, it shows the lack of respect for human dignity. Thus, to solve the problem of terrorism in Nigeria, dialogue must be employed as a means of resolving conflicts. There must be a genuine respect for other members of the society and genuine interest in deliberative discourse in respective of our differences in terms of religion, tribe and race. In line with this, Richard Rorty suggests that democracy consists of "the ability to see more and more traditional differences – tribe, religion, race, customs, and the like - as unimportant, and the ability to think of people widely different from ourselves as included in the range of us (Rorty, 1989:192).

Furthermore, the problem of terrorism in Nigeria must be addressed from the point of education. According to Dewey, education is the key to the success of democracy. If that is true, then lack of education will lead to the failure of democracy. One of the main causes of terrorism in the northern part of Nigeria is the lack of proper education, which is the cause of the high rate of illiteracy in the north. This can be easily seen in the fact that the most poverty stricken and illiterate states are in the far north. The level of poverty in the north is so high and alarming that the then governor of Central Bank of Nigeria, Professor Charles Soludo, branded the persistent high level of poverty in the country as a "Northern phenomenon": it was observed that of the ten states with the highest incidence of poverty, eight were in the far northern zone. These include: Jigawa, with 97% of its people classified as living in poverty, Kebbi, 89.7%; Kogi, 86.6%; Bauchi, 86.3%; Kwara, 85.2%; Yobe, 83.3%; Zamfara, 80.7%; Gombe, 77%; Sokoto, 76.8%; and Adamawa, 71.7% (Ayegba, 2015: 96). In Borno state, the birth place of Boko Haram, 83% of young people are illiterate; 48.5% of children do not go to school (Agbiboa, 2013: 51).

Consequently, if you link a lack of education and attendant lack of opportunities to a high male youth population, you can imagine that some areas are actually a breeding ground for terrorism. The lack of education can lead to so many societal ills. No wonder a very high percentage of those recruited by the Boko Haram group are illiterates. Most of them do not understand the immediate and long term consequences of their actions. These young illiterate terrorists are ruled by emotions and sentiments, and not by the critical part of their being which education helps to unlock. Thus, the place of education is priceless considering what education can do to an individual and to the society at large. It is through education that citizens will be exposed and taught democratic values: which in turn will help them see the reasons for a peaceful co-existence and harmony. Education brings about the refinement of the mind. A refined mind will do more good to the society than harm. This democratic value is highly needed in Nigeria: given the fact that most youths being recruited by terrorist groups are uneducated, and as such, lacks the deliberative and participatory mind-set needed for democracy to flourish. This is not limited to the young ones but also to the leaders and politicians who are not democratically conscious.

Education is not limited to the schools/classrooms. It also involves learning from experiences of the past and present, and participating in taking decisions about the future. Real education involves facing and solving practical existential problems, and not just theoretical issues. The beginning of citizen democratic education is the family. Thus, children are taught democratic values and ideals early and as they grow, they practice those principles. Accordingly, it is the conviction of this paper

that for the society to reap the seed of education, which will bring about a more peaceful and humane society, there is need for the teaching of core democratic and humanistic values at the level of the family and school. Education here must not be limited to the rulers only, but should be available to the masses. This is because, it is only when the citizens are educated and enlightened that they can contribute and participate meaningfully in national issues, and in choosing the right representatives. Consequently, to solve the problem of terrorism in Nigeria, education must be used as a vital tool for human development. In the words of Lipsit (Acemolu, 2005:44), education presumably broadens men's outlook, enables them to understand the need for norms of tolerance, restrains them adhering to extreme and monistic doctrines, and increases their capacity to make rational electoral choices. To this end, there is the urgent need for an educational reform in the northern part of Nigeria: so as to create an educated citizenry that will understand the need for the norms of tolerance, equality, deliberation, unity and dialogue.

In addition, prompt prosecution of terrorists and their financiers will go a long way in curbing terrorism. This point is imperative against the backdrop of the recent revelation by the Nigerian government that some high profile Nigerians are suspected to be financing terrorism in the country. According to the Attorney General of the Federation (AGF), Abubakar Malami, there exists, certainly, reasonable grounds for suspicion that a lot of Nigerians, high-profile, institutional and otherwise, are involved in terrorism financing and they are being profiled for prosecution (Premium Times, May 2021). Democracy entails prompt and diligent prosecution of law offenders as deterrent to other people. Also, quick dispensation of justice will help stabilize the socio-political space.

Conclusion and Recommendation

We examined the problem of terrorism as a consequence and reflection of the failure of the Nigerian state to honor its obligation to the citizens as enshrined in the social contract. We noted that the Nigerian state is faced with high level of insecurity ranging from kidnapping, armed robbery, militancy, political assassinations, banditry, herders-famers clashes and terrorism. The problem of terrorism in Nigeria is due to bad governance, which we traced to the breach in social contract by the government. Our paper conceptualized terrorism, analyzed the problem of terrorism in Nigeria through the lens of John Locke's social contract theory. We concluded that there is a huge gap between the agreement of the contract and what is on ground in Nigeria. That is, the government is not acting as a trustee of the Nigerian people. Consequent upon this, we pushed (recommended) for the embrace of values like dialogue, quick prosecution of terrorists and their sponsors, education, community living as a way

of reordering and reengineering the society. These values are necessary for building a democratic society. This will awaken the people and the government should look for more effective ways of strengthening the cord with the citizens. This it can do by continuously making itself the government of the people and for the people.

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Victims of Terrorism: A Victimological Analysis of Deradicalization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (DRR) Programme of Boko Haram Terrorists in Nigeria

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Abstract   This paper has examined and analyzed the Deradicalization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (DRR) programme of Boko Haram terrorists in Nigeria from the perspective of the victims of the insurgency in Borno and Yobe States. Two theoretical frameworks, one from Victimology and the other from Sociology were adopted to explain the theme of this study. The Victimological typology developed by Benjamin Mendelsohn viewed the victims of the Boko Haram terrorism as complete innocents. Similarly, the sociological explanation of Erving Goffman regarding the rejection by the community members of the ex-Boko Haram fighters who graduated from the DRR programme arose from the stigma of terrorism labeled on them which is difficult to erase. The Researchers approached the problem by collecting qualitative data from In-Depth Interviews (IDI) with the victims and survivors of the attacks. The findings of the study portrayed the victims of the Boko Haram attacks are not aware of the existence of the DRR programme under Operation Safe Corridor in Gombe State which indicated the absence of public policy communication between the Government and the targeted audience. Furthermore, the study revealed that there is deep-seated resentment against the members of the Boko Haram in their communities which is reflected in the rejection of the ex-fighters who underwent the DRR programme in Gombe when they were returned to their communities. The reasons for the rejection are that the member of Boko Haram have not sought forgiveness where they show remorse for their actions. Also, the existence of mutual distrust and lack of knowledge of the whole process of the DRR programme created doubts in the minds of the local population whether such extremists or fundamentalists will relinquish their ideology. Therefore, the study recommends that the victims and survivors should be taken along in the DRR programme to avoid rejection.

Victims of Terrorism: A Victimological Analysis of Deradicalization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (DRR) Programme of Boko Haram Terrorists in Nigeria

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Introduction

Apart from ethnic, religious, and social conflicts that bedeviled Nigeria from 1999 to 2022, the country as at 2022, it is facing internal security challenges ranging from an Islamic group in the Northeast and armed criminals in the Northwest and Northcentral. It is a period that Nigeria witnessed consecutive two decades of democratic government since the country became independent from Great Britain in 1960. In 2009 another form of armed violence was added to the collection of violence in the country which has a religious inclination. A self-acclaimed Islamic jihadist group referred to as Boko Haram (Jama'atuAhlilSunnah Li Da'awatiwal Jihad) by the public because they started their activities in the early 2000s with preaching formal system of education is called Western education in most parts of Nigeria. Before 2009, the group is not popular beyond Northeast, in fact, they were popular in Borno and Yobe States where their pioneer leaders and members came from. However, they started carrying out violent attacks on military formations and civilians in Borno State and later spread to other states in the Northeast region of Nigeria in 2009 after they clashed with the security personnel after an altercation with the Police over wearing of helmet while riding motorcycle in Maiduguri metropolis. Around 2013 and 2015, the terrorist group carried out suicidal attacks in some States in Central Nigeria, killing hundreds of people in Plateau and Niger States including Abuja. The group also launched attacks in some States in Northwestern Nigeria such as Kano and Kaduna States. Several Police stations in Northern Nigeria were the targets of Boko Haram's initial wave of attacks on July 26, 2009, which culminated in a four-day standoff with security forces that resulted in the deaths of hundreds of the group's members, including its founder and first leader, Muhammad Yusuf. Nigerian authorities declared their confidence in their ability to put an end to the group even as the remaining members went underground to plot a deadly uprising. Boko Haram has developed over the past 12 years into one of the most powerful and prominent terrorist organizations in the world. Although the organization sprang to prominence in Nigeria's North East for its bloodshed and widespread kidnappings, Boko Haram is now a worldwide menace that has persisted persistently despite both regional and global military counterterrorism operations. The Boko Haram extremists conduct daily raids and attacks throughout the Lake Chad

Basin, especially in Niger, Cameroon, and Chad. This is making it more difficult to manage other crises in the Sahel and has led to a complex Islamist crisis that is engulfing both sides of West Africa (Bukarti, 2021).

Connected with the above, the Federal Government of Nigeria had introduced several measures both military and non-military to bring an end to the activities of the Islamic fundamentalist group in Nigeria. Nonetheless, the military approach has been able to contain or confine the attacks of the group to Borno and Yobe States since 2015. However, the group has continued to remain violent and constitute threats to security and civilians, particularly in the Northeast where villages were ransacked and inhabitants killed or displaced. Apart from the military approach in the fight against terrorism, the Federal Government of Nigeria had in 2016 initiated a non-military strategy to end the activities of the Boko Haram terrorists. Disarmament, Demobilization & Reintegration (DDR) Programme under the aegis of a military operation codenamed Operation Lafiya Dole (it is a military operation to eliminate the members of the Boko Haram terrorists in the Northeast which was renamed Operation Hadin Kai in 2021). The DRR programme of the Boko Haram members is codenamed Operation Safe Corridor (the operation was established in 2015 to deradicalize, rehabilitate and reintegrate members of the Boko Haram group who surrendered and want to return to their localities). The rationale behind the initiative is to provide an exit for Boko Haram members who wish to leave the group. Therefore, all Boko Haram fighters or members who decided to leave the group must undergo a DRR programme at an orientation camp designated for the programme in Gombe, one of the States in the Northeast that also suffered from the attacks of Boko Haram in the past.

The rationale of the DRR programme is to dislodge the ideology of Boko Haram from the psyche of those who wish to leave to prevent them from rejoining the terrorist group after exiting. International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2021) observes that programme such as DDR of group members who aligned themselves with a religious ideology. Therefore, the separation of an individual from a violent extremist organization (VEO) puts pressure on governments and communities to find an acceptable balance among competing interests. On one side, former associates who receive timely rehabilitation and reintegration support will be more likely to transition successfully into social, political and economic spheres of civilian life. Offering associates a viable future outside their groups can encourage defections and reduce the group's capabilities to harm. On the other side, States have responsibilities to victims and legal obligations to hold accountable perpetrators of serious crimes, coupled with a compelling interest in protecting society from recidivist violence (International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2021).

The central argument of this paper is how Government at all levels have neglected the victims of Boko Haram insurgency in preparing the core mandate of the Operation Safe Corridor in the Northeast. This is because the victims of crime are important in the reintegration aspect of the DDR as the repentant members of the Boko Haram are expected to return to the communities that they committed atrocious crimes and some of the victims are alive and knew they were the perpetrators and offenders. Therefore, the objective of the study is to examine the DRR under Operation Safe Corridor with a view to assess how the victims and survivors of the Boko Haram terrorism perceived the DRR. The success of DRR under Operation Safe Corridor depends heavily on the acceptance of the repentant Boko Haram terrorists in the communities where the wreaked havoc by the members of the community. In this sense, where the repentant terrorists are not reintegrated into their community, there is a tendency that some of them may rejoin the terrorist group.

Statement of Research Problem

Programme or strategy such as DDR and DRR faces a major challenge of rejection from the victims and survivors of the violent attacks by the terrorists. Apart from the challenge of reintegration of the repentant terrorists, other challenge include funding, logistics and sustainability of the programme. A study conducted in Mozambique in the Cabo Delgado region where there is an Islamic terrorist group carrying out terrorist attacks showed that the major challenge was that some of the fighters of the Islamic State in Mozambique (IS-M) are not citizens of Mozambique which means the foreign nationals recruited by the terrorist group and smuggled into Mozambique requires a separate exit strategy to facilitate their return to their home countries. Similarly, the foreign fighters may regroup after the DDR programme and form a new terrorist group. Additionally, the most neglected aspect of DDR and DRR is the victims and survivors of the terrorists' activities because the entire focus is always on the terrorists' activities and their fighters while neglected aggrieved individuals may perceive those who took up arms as having received undue privilege (i.e., cash incentives or job support) over the rest of the community (Estelle and Darden, 2021). The above study in Mozambique has identified some of the shortcomings of the DDR programme in Africa especially the DDR or DRR that focus on terrorist groups where the programme revolves around the terrorists while the victims of the terrorists' attacks are not given the deserved attention to enable the former terrorists to reintegrate with the public which includes their victims.

A study conducted by the USAID (2021) in the Northeastern Nigeria which exa-mined the Demobilization, Disassociation, Reintegration, and Reconciliation (DDRR) of the Boko Haram fighters. The programme was from an evaluation of the United

States Agency for International Development's (USAID) Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) conducted from July 2020-March 2021. The report showed that from September 2018, the Government of Nigeria endorsed a national DRR Action Plan with 853 persons reintegrated to the society in 2021. However, the report indicated that a major problem in the DRR programme in Nigeria is that majority of the repentant Boko Haram members who attended the DRR programme in Gombe city were compelled to join the group when they ransacked their areas and kidnapped them, that is, initially, they do not have the ideology of the group hence deradicalizing them is not as difficult as that of those who joined the group after accepting their ideology (USAID, 2021). The programme has centered on the former fighters of the Boko Haram and how they will be accepted by the community members after a 3-5 years programme in the DRR Camp in Gombe. It is evident also in the report of the USAID that the victims of Boko Haram are not given appropriate attention and how they will feel, interacting and intermingling with people who perpetrated inhumane crimes against them.

Sketch of Reviewed Literature

Ngwang (2021) has assessed the National Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Committee (NDDRC) efforts for ex-fighters of Boko Haram and other militants in the country. The Researcher found the DDRC has made a tremendous positive impact where it was able to gather some ex-fighters in its regional centres. However, the study found that centres face serious challenges in offering decent livelihoods to ex-combatants and in reintegrating them into society as promised by the government. The Researcher concluded that although the committee is still in a continuous process of developing strategies for DRR and in upgrading the DRR centres to meet the needs of ex-combatants, much still has to be done to silence the guns in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon.

Belporo (2021) examined the building of peace through DDR programme: lessons from reintegrating Boko Haram ex-recruits under Cameroon policy. The study found that the programme focused on the deradicalization of the ex-members of Boko Haram members in Cameroon. Essential components of the DDR such as disengagement and training programming as community re-integration of ex-associates were neglected instead the entire focus was on deradicalization. This work of Belporo revealed that the DDR policy for the ex-fighters of Boko Haram in Cameroon not only neglected the victims of terrorism in the policy but significant components in the DDR process were not considered. This is one of the reasons why DDR programme policy in the areas affected by Boko Haram insurgency and similar acts of terrorism have not achieved the desired results.

A study conducted by Altier (2021) on violent extremist disengagement & reintegration: lessons from over 30 years of DDR has examined DRR initiated in different parts of the world including Nigeria. Apart from the sustainability of the programme, the major problem identified is the aspect of social integration that the acceptability of the ex-combatants in their community after undergoing the DDR programme. Orientation and awareness programmes are not initiated to change the mindset or perception of the people who still bear scars of the attacks of the terrorist on their body and memory. This was identified as some of the triggers or drivers of violence in some parts of Africa where victims of violence are neglected in the policy of the Government. Buttressing the foregoing discourse, International Alert (2018) stated that violent extremism is affecting the lives of millions in the Sahel, but the essentially military responses to date have failed to reduce violence and have instead undermined community resilience.

Like in Nigeria, in other countries fighting terrorist groups, there responsive measures to armed violence developed to rehabilitate and reintegrate violent extremist offenders (VEOs) or returning 'Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs), and some of these measures also incorporate CVE elements to prevent recidivism or further radicalisation. These terrorist rehabilitation and reintegration programmes (henceforth terrorist rehabilitation) have been developed in both custodial and community settings. In some cases, they have dealt with voluntary defectors; in others they focus on detainees convicted of terrorism or captured on the battlefield, to prevent post-release recidivism.

Across several programmes in Europe, South and Southeast Asia, and the Middle East, whether dealing with right-wing neo-Nazi gangs or jihadist fighters, the role of families and communities were found to be critical in transforming detainees'behaviour and outlook and preventing recidivism. In some programmes, such as those in Saudi Arabia or Malaysia, and the early iterations of the programme in Yemen, family or tribal elders were integral to guaranteeing the good behaviour of participants and facilitating their reintegration back into their communities. These programmes' focus on family and communities is key given the relative youth of most recruits and their lost or severed connections to family, which had previously created a situation whereby the extremist group was a primary source of support (Cockayne and O'Neil, 2015).

Theoretical Framework

This study attempt to provide an analysis of the DRR initiated by the Federal Government of Nigeria under the aegis of Operation Safe Corridor from the perspective of the victims of the Boko Haram insurgency. This is because one of the integral parts of the DDR is social reintegration, that is, how the victims of the Boko

Haram insurgency will receive and interact with the repentant fighters of the terrorist group. The researchers observed that there is no segment in the DDR programme that focuses on how the victims of the insurgency in the Northeast will receive and interact with the repentant terrorists who have undergone training at Malam Sidi Camp, Gombe State. Victimology focus on the victims of crime, for crime to occur, there must a victim. Therefore, in the DRR, the victims supposed to be pivotal in ensuring the sustainability of the programme. This is because if the ex-fighters are not welcomed by their community members, the environment will become unconducive for them and it may lead to recidivism or rejoin their terrorist group.

This paper has adopted the classification of victims' culpability developed by Benjamin Mendelsohn. Based on the classification, the victims of the Boko Haram terrorism can be classified as Completely Innocent Victims. They are victims who bear no responsibility at all for victimization, they are victimized because of their location in the Northeast which is the epicentre of the Boko Haram terrorism. The majority of the people killed, injured, or displaced by the Boko Haram fighters were as a result of unproven attacks which integrating them in the DRR of Operation Safe Corridor is important for the social integration of ex-combatants.

Additionally, the adopted a sociological explanation of stigma by Erving Goffman (1963) which explained how the ex-combatants of the Boko Haram group stigmatized as terrorists by the members of their community find it difficult to reintegrate with their community members graduation from the DRR Camp in Gombe State. Goffman (1963) relies extensively on autobiographies and case studies to analyze stigmatized persons' feelings about themselves and their relationships to "normal" people. He looks at the variety of strategies that stigmatized individuals use to deal with the rejection of others and the complex images of themselves that they project to others.

Methodology

This study is an explanatory type of research and a cross-sectional study designed to elicit qualitative data from research participants in Yobe and Borno States in Nigeria. The purposive sampling technique was adopted to sample participants who were affected by the Boko Haram insurgency in the sampled States. The criteria used for the selection of the participants are: survivors of the attacks and victims of the attacks and must be an adult. The Researchers selected ten (10) participants, five from each state (Borno and Yobe), Hence, In-Depth Interviews (IDI) Guide was designed and used to elicit data from the participants. The interviews were conducted in Maiduguri in Borno State and BuniYadi in Yobe State. The areas were purposively selected by the researchers because they are among the areas that suffered countless

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attacks by Boko Haram terrorists. The transcribed data were analyzed and presented based on the objectives of the study using thematic style.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Awareness about the Existence of DRR

The majority of the participants interviewed during this study expressed that they were not aware of the DRR in which some former Boko Haram members had undergone training at the Malam Sidi Camp in Gombe. However, some of the participants who showed that they were aware of the existence of the DRR programme in Gombe do not know the aim of the programme. This implies that the affected people were not included in the DRR. Ugwueze, Ngwu, and Onuoha (2022) it contends that the likelihood of successful and efficient reintegration of former Boko Haram militants is greatly undermined by the failure to include local community concerns in Operation Safe Corridor's policy and programming. Similarly, the views of the participants further revealed the absence of policy communication between the Government and the affected citizens, especially in the case of terrorist attacks. This agrees with the conclusion of Sarfati and Donnelly (2022) who stated that beyond these general protection risks facing ex-combatants and communities involved in reintegration processes, members of armed groups designated as terrorist organizations face additional risks of rejection by the victims and survivors of their dastards acts.

The exclusion of the victims of the Boko Haram in the DRR, the scars of the attacks in the minds and bodies of those affected by the terrorist acts creates long-time resentment and stigma against the former fighters or members of the radical pseudo-Islamist group. This correlates with the view of Sarfati and Donnelly (2022) who observed that the victims or their family members are not given the appropriate orientation regarding the ex-combatants. The resultant effects include increased stigma against individuals regarded as terrorists, as well as their affiliates, their families, and even their victims. Some of these risks are increased by the approaches that national authorities take to deal with individuals regarded as terrorists (Sarfati and Donnelly 2022). Additionally, from the side of the ex-fighters, rejection by their community members creates psychological disorders. In this regard, International Organization for Migration (2019) stated that ex-combatants/fighters may be met with mistrust and rejection within their communities, while their return and reintegration into the family can provoke violence and distress within a household.

Reintegration of the Ex-Combatants

In-Depth Interviews conducted with the research participants in Borno and Yobe State revealed that some of the people who suffered from the activities of the Boko Haram directly or indirectly stated that they will never forgive or forget the scars created by the terrorists. They revealed that they will not accept the repentant terrorist after they undergone a DRR programme in Gombe State. This has clearly showed that it will be difficult for the victims and survivors of the Boko Haram attacks in Borno and Yobe States to accept the 601 ex-fighters of the Boko Haram who finished a DRR programme in 2020. It could be deduced that the reason why some of the victims and survivors of the Boko Haram refused to accept the repentant terrorists because to the society is that, the ex-combatants had not expressed any remorse for their heinous acts to the affected people.

Furthermore, the DRR programme, the Operation Safe Corridor, has no stage where there will be an interface or interaction between ex-members of the terrorist group (Boko Haram) and some of the representatives of the affected people at the DRR Camp to assuage the feeling of anger and traumatic experience caused by the Boko Haram. This is supported by Article 130-1 of the French Criminal Code clearly states: "To ensure the protection of society, prevent the commission of further crimes, and restore social equilibrium, while respecting the interests of the victim, the function of sentencing is: 1) to punish the perpetrator; 2) to enable the reform, integration, or reintegration of the perpetrator (Hecker, 2021).

Statistics from the Operation Safe Corridor have shown that the DRR Camp has graduated a few of the clients in batches 2 and 3 since 2016 and a special batch in 2019. That same year, 290 more clients came on 22 November 2019. The DRR programme has three (3) categories of clients: A is for innocents caught in the web of battle. B: is those who willingly surrender and are open to rehabilitation. C is hardliners beyond rehabilitation who will remain in Giwa. In July 2020, a total of the number of 601 category B clients were graduated from the DRR programme in Gombe. The clients who underwent the programme and were ready for re-integration into the society comprised 587 Nigerians and 14 foreign nationals from Cameroon, Chad and Niger Republic (Premium Times, 2020). However, the military authority have not provided a country specific breakdown of the fourteen foreigners who participated in the DDR programme in Gombe State, Nigeria.

The findings of this study further revealed that among the 587 Nigerians who were sent back to their communities, participants during the IDI sessions stated that they returned to Yobe and Borno States which majority of the Boko Haram members and fighters came from. However, the participants narrated that more than one year after the

return of the clients from the DRR Camp in Gombe, they had not come in contact with them. The reason stated by the participants why the ex-Boko Haram members avoid coming in contact with the people whom they attacked or killed their relatives was the fear of reprisal attacks. Therefore, the majority of the returnees decided to start a new life in areas where the residents do not know their background. This implies that the aim of the DRR to reintegrate the repentant Boko Haram members had not been achieved since the majority of the members suffered from stigmatization from the members of their communities. This is buttressed by the explanation offered by a Sociologist, Goffman (1963) on stigma and the management of spoiled identity. Goffman (1963) stated that stigmatized people are those that do not have full social acceptance and are constantly striving to adjust their social identities: physically deformed people, mental patients, drug addicts, prostitutes, etc. he analyzes stigmatized persons' feelings about themselves and their relationships to "normal" people. He looks at the variety of strategies that stigmatized individuals use to deal with the rejection of others and the complex images of themselves that they project to others.

Conclusion

Concluding the qualitative findings during the field survey in Borno and Yobe States, the Federal Government of Nigeria initiated the non-military approach to the war against the Boko Haram terrorists and introduced Operation Safe Corridor which has a DRR programme for the three categories of detainees that lacked proper public policy communication. Residents of Borno and Yobe who were worst hit by the Boko Haram insurgency were not given proper orientation about the process of the DRR programme and need to adopt a non-military strategy to find a solution to the problem that defied military measures since 2009. There were clear indications victims of the Boko Haram in an urban centre such as Maiduguri and semi-urban area like BuniYadi do not understand the rationale behind the DRR which ordinarily, the people in affected areas need to be communicated from the initiation to the implementation stage of the Operation Safe Corridor and the DRR.

Connected with the above, the absence of awareness about the existence of the DRR under Operation Safe Corridor led to the rejection of the clients who graduated from the DRR Camp in Gombe State. Victims, survivors and other residents of Borno and Yobe States had already developed hatred towards members of the dreaded terrorist group (Boko Haram) which will require rigorous and effective public orientation before the residents will accept the repentant members who were deradicalized. The existence of mutual distrust between the public and the members of the Boko Haram group has created doubts in the minds of the victims and survivors that people who committed such horrendous atrocities can relinquish their ideology and become

deradicalized. Therefore, it is the existence of the stigma of terrorism libeled against the Boko Haram members which made the social reintegration component of the DRR difficult to achieve. Some of the victims of the Boko Haram terrorism have reiterated their opposition in accepting back into their communities, prospective rehabilitated ex-terrorists.

Recommendations

i. Government at all levels in Nigeria should ensure the victims and survivors of the Boko Haram terrorism are incorporated in the process of the DRR to enable them to have adequate knowledge and understanding of the programme. Which is the realm of public policy communication.

ii. The Office of National Security Advisor should liaise with the National Orientation Agency (NOA) to engage the victims and survivors of the Boko Haram insurgency in the Northeast where the majority of the DRR clients come from.

iii. Government should design a platform where the clients undergoing the DRR programme will interact with and seek forgiveness from the victims and survivors from the communities they are expected to reside in after the DRR programme. This will serve as a proactive approach to prevent rejection of the clients who graduated from the DRR programme as a result of stigmatization.

iv. Apart from the measures to reduce stigmatization against the clients who graduated from the DRR prgammme, the Government at all levels should compensate the victims and survivors of the Boko Haram attacks with shelter for those who lost their houses. Those who are deformed should be rehabilitated and alternative livelihood options should be provided to become economically independent.

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Evolving Cyber Challenges. Why African States Should Urgently Deal with Cyber Threats

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Abstract   The article critically analyses the dynamic and fast-evolving cyber threats and challenges in the context of African Continental security. It expounds on three main areas and reasons as to why Africa should urgently act together to deal with cyber threats that can potentially undermine smooth growth and development. They include the vulnerable youth population, threats to businesses, especially the small and medium enterprises, and threats to institutions with critical continental mandates. The impacts of cyber threats in the important sectors of security, politics, economy and society have also been discussed with supportive empirical evidence. The centrality of cyber diplomacy as a potential solution to the challenges has been exploited as well as provisions for policy recommendations. The article concludes that African countries will be firmly on the growth and development path in the science-technological era if emanating threats are adequately and proactively addressed.

Keywords   Cyber Threats, Africa, Cyber Security, Cyber Diplomacy, Technology.

Introduction: The Evolving Puzzle of Cyber Threats

In the recent past, cyber security has become a top priority in almost all organizations, both governmental and non-governmental. This has been necessitated by the emergence and evolution of threats originating from the cyber space. The impact of cyber threats is enormous ranging from quantifiable economic figures for companies to almost unquantifiable psychological effects on individuals and governments

for ideological and political cyber-attacks. The evolving cyber threat environment has also had a negative effect on the interventions to prevent, detect and respond against them, the rapid pace of the changes renders even the best-developed defenses out of date within a very short period. Muhati and Rawat point to this rapid change arguing that in the "cyber chase", cyber-attacks have a higher augmentation than cyber-defense which increases the complexity and severity of attacks. Cyber defenders are generally reactive in nature with the cyber – attackers potentially leading and controlling future technology (Muhati & Rawat, 2022). Colbaugh and Glass analyzing these trends term the rapid evolution as an "arms race" between attackers and defenders (Colbaugh & Glass, 2011).

Belani captures our attention with a simplification of a total of seven cyber security threats that require urgent attention as of the year 2020. They include *cloud vulnerability*, *AI-enhanced cyber threats*, *AI fuzzing*, *machine learning poisoning*, *smart contract hacking*, *social engineering attacks* and *deep fake*. These cyber threats which are coded in the complex information technology terms are broken down as follows; *cloud vulnerability* manifests itself as more organizations shift to storing sensitive data in the clouds, making the cloud storages to increasingly become targets of cyber-attacks. *Artificial Intelligence* (AI) capabilities that are used to secure computer systems, can be compromised and used to advance sophisticated cyber-attacks. The *AI fuzzing* which is useful in fixing vulnerabilities in computer systems, can also be exploited to accelerate vendor-related security flaws in the systems. *Machine learning* processes can also be compromised with attackers introducing malicious samples or backdoors to poison training sets and compromise the system. *Smart contract software* which carries self-executing codes are relatively new and attackers and security experts alike are still looking at the vulnerabilities. A cyber 'arms race' between attackers and security experts is ongoing with the scale likely to tilt on either side. *Social engineering* involves attacks which include sophisticated phishing that aids in data breaches and financial fraud. Messaging platforms increasingly becoming vulnerable targets for social engineering. Finally, *deep fakes* are created by swapping people's faces in videos or altering its audio track for purposes serving the interests of the attacker. The interests of the attacker can range from propaganda to misinformation among others (Belani, 2020). The profile of the attacker here should be a source of great concern because the attacker has the capability of turning even the best most up-to-date cyber defenses to their advantage. It is important to look at the profile of the attacker as this may have a bearing on the type of the cyber threats faced by an entity or an organization.

According to (Progoulakis et al., 2021), some of the common types of cyber adversaries include the following; first, cyber criminals who steal digital information and manipulate physical assets for material, ransom and general financial gain.

Second, hostile state adversaries who compromise cyber systems for political advantage, espionage and sabotage. Third, organizational insiders who steal information and vandalize digital infrastructure. Fourth, cyber terrorists who exploit cyber weaknesses and destroy physical assets for political or ideological reasons. Lastly, cyber activists described as those who sabotage cyber infrastructure through targeted cyber-attacks for their own purposes.

Seetharaman contributes to the understanding of cyber-attacks by classifying them in accordance to their impact on the cyber systems. The cyber-attacks can be either passive with no damage to systems like eavesdropping to collect information or active damaging the entire networks (Seetharaman et al., 2021).According to the report of the public-private analytical exchange program, the actors in the fifth domain of the battlefield (cyber) after air, land, sea and space can be classified according to the framework of sophistication. In this categorization, we get several sub-categories which include first, established actors with most advanced tools, second, emerging actors such as nation states and third, opportunistic actors like criminal organizations. The actors in the cyberspace can also be categorized according to their operational intent as follows; profit/financial gain actors, surveillance actors, data and information collection actors and offensive attack actors(Public Private Analytical Exchange Program, 2019). The low cost of entering the cyberspace and the difficulties of ensuring effective control and regulation has contributed to the complexity and the increased number of actors.

The article identifies the evolving cyber threats and their consequences to the various sectors in Africa. Africa has one of the fastest internet penetrations in the world and this combined with other variables available on the continent, makes Africa particularly vulnerable to cyber threats. The vulnerabilities call for the need of an urgent proactive posture in terms of responding to these dynamic threats. The main aim of the paper is to add to the critical understanding of why Africa should urgently deal with cyber threats. The paper highlights the impacts of cyber threats on the continent from the security, political, economic and social perspectives. It also seeks to demystify the complex technology related concepts and break them down in a policy friendly manner. The paper goes on to analyze the vulnerabilities inherent in the *tech-savvy youth population*, the exposed development backbone of the continent the *small and medium enterprises* (SMEs), and the key *institutions driving critical agenda* of the continent. The unique opportunity presented by *cyber diplomacy* is also discussed as the most promising way of dealing with the complex transnational threats where Africa still does not have great desired competencies. Based on the findings, a few lines of policy recommendations to the decision-makers on the continent are suggested by this paper. Information from published sources like peer-reviewed journal articles, books,

media reports, relevant government records, and records from relevant international specialized agencies on the issues of cyber security was utilized. The author ensured the quality of the searched works by reviewing only the most relevant articles as well as the latest since as noted cyber threats are fast evolving.

The Consequences of Cyber Threats

What makes cyber threats even more unique is that damage is wreaked from far transcending state boundaries. Dangerous computer viruses can be dispatched by adversaries from any part of the world with unimaginable destructions. It is increasingly becoming even more difficult to trace the attacks to the source. From the political perspective, state actors and non-state actors alike have been identified as potential sources of cyber threats in the past, especially to democracies and democratic institutions. African countries have gone a long way gradually entrenching the democratic culture and building up the necessary institutional framework. The young democracies on the continent will be the biggest victims of cyber threats. Arguably, even the strongest states and established democracies in the world are not immune from cyber threats. For instance, cyber-attacks doubted to be sponsored by either Russia, China or Iran targeted the United States (US) Democratic Party computer systems as well as candidates and key staffers(Al Jazeera News, 2020). Other important government institutions were also reported to have been infiltrated such as the Trade and Commerce departments(Sanger, 2020). It is interesting to note from this case that the biggest threat of cyber-attacks comes from state actors with strong interests in controlling the outcomes of other state's internal processes such as elections. It goes without saying that there are lots of actors in the international system that are interested in controlling the internal processes of African continents.

On the other hand, the US has also not gone without blame and accusations of being the source of cyber threats especially to world leaders. Then, German Chancellor Angela Merkel directly accused the US of breaching the trust of the allies and partners by bugging her phone calls (Ball, 2013). Former French President François Hollande also officially raised with the White House great concerns about the US eavesdropping and mass surveillance. The US courts ruled that the acts of the US government first exposed by Edward Snowden were inconsistent with the law (Satter, 2020a). It is clear from the concerns raised by these leaders that the monitoring and mass surveillance is not done in the best interest of their country or the interests of the global common good. Amnesty International agrees with the Snowden mass surveillance dossier that "security doesn't have to come at the expense of privacy". In their study involving a sample of 15, 000 respondents spread across all the continents, over 70 percent of the respondents were strongly opinionated against any internet or phone surveillance (Amnesty International UK, 2020).

Closer home, China has been adversely mentioned in attempting to use 'back doors' to obtain information from African Union computer systems in an effort aimed at keeping authorities in Beijing privy to matters involving African leaders and decision-makers (Satter, 2020b), (Chaudhury, 2020), (Fidler, 2018). China is reported to have vast digital surveillance capabilities in Africa with Huawei constructing up to 70 percent of the continent's 4G networks and other cyber infrastructure. According to media reports, Chinese companies operating in conjunction with the Chinese Communist Party on intelligence matters, have built massive infrastructural capacity in the continent which includes 186 critical government buildings such as Presidential Palaces and residences, Ministries of Foreign Affairs as well as Parliament Buildings. Of importance here, is that China continues to be increasingly mentioned in state-sponsored cyber-attacks with the main motivation of stealing information. Apart from accusations of stealing intellectual property rights from US companies, the main "development partner" of Africa also become the face of cyber-attacks on Australia that aimed at government institutions, critical infrastructure and businesses forcing Prime Minister, Scott Morrison to make an official announcement to escalate the matter and raise public awareness (Bogle, 2020).

From the security perspective, cyberspace has contributed to the evolution of the nature and type of threats. The continuously evolving threats require new and urgent interventions. Small unknown actors can cause series harm to the interests of even the strongest actors because of arguably the low cost of entering, operating and exiting the cyberspace. This unique characteristic has made cyber an attractive battleground for terror organizations who utilize it to maximize their impacts globally. Nye discusses the difference in the resource capacity of cyber actors which limits, like in all other warfares, the capability and number of strong actors. Those with resources have the leeway to act and respond to threats as well because of their access to both the physical and virtual dimensions of cyber power (Nye, 2010). Non-state armed actors resort to cyberterrorism intends to intimidate governments and societies for either political, religious or ideological purposes (Tolan, 2003). Modern terrorism is increasingly inclined towards cyber because of its relatively low cost compared to traditional terrorism and the enormous potential to reach a large number of targets while remaining remote and anonymous (Weimann, 2004). The devastating effects of cyberterrorism have made India and Pakistan to make changes to legislation making the offense punishable by death penalty (Reich, 2012). I must state that I believe in the sanctity of human life and I hold different views in regard to the issue of death penalties, the purpose here is to prove beyond doubt that cyber threats are indeed harmful and other territories and jurisdictions are taking strict measures in advance. To simplify the understanding of cyberterrorism as a new complex threat, Mayssa interestingly divides cyber terrorism into two sub-categories which include *hybrid*

terrorism and *pure terrorism*. Pure terrorism is used to refer to direct attacks on the cyberinfrastructure for either disruptive or destructive purposes (Zerzri, 2017).

Terror organizations such as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), which is believed to be the pioneer in exerting cyberterrorism systematically, have attempted to capitalize on the internet to spread their message of terror, propaganda and misinformation. The cyber space has also been manipulated to elicit sympathy and attract international recruits, volunteers and funders of the group's terror campaign. Off-shoots like the *"Islamic State's Defenders in the Internet"* and *"Cyber Caliphate"* have reportedly emerged anonymously reaching out to targets identified for attack. This means that despite the potential of ISIS to launch large-scale international military-style attacks having diminished by the counteractions of the Global Coalition against ISIS, its prowess in the use of the internet is still a matter of serious concern. States' official internet sites have been hacked and defaced by cyberterrorists providing a new challenge. For instance, ISIS hacked into the U.S. Central Command's social media accounts and posted pro-ISIS messages as well as threats (Giantas & Stergiou, 2018). States are forced to compete in the new frontier of the "cyber arms race" with actors who do not observe the law nor subscribe to ethics (Lohmann, 2015).

On the economic front, the main actors have been cybercriminals targeting mostly business institutions such as banks for ransom and profit-seeking. The main motivation for the actors is financial gain although there are also dynamics of stealing copyright and patent information as in the case of the China and US commercial dispute (Mahajan, 2020). According to cybersecurity firm McAfee, cybercrime costs the world economy more than one percent of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) which is approximated to be more than $1 trillion. Other hidden costs beyond the financial costs such as loss of work hours, damage to brand and reputation as well as crisis response costs are also significant(McAfee Corp, 2020). Cybercrime has been described as a booming industry that also offers everything that legal companies offer such as product development and customer service albeit through robbing company A and selling to company B ensuring company B always maintains a competitive edge. According to the World Economic Forum's (WEF) "Global Risks Report 2020" cybercrime is projected to become the second most-concerning risk for global commerce over the next decade until the year 2030 (World Economic Forum (WEF), 2020). The cybercrime magazine predicted cybercrime to cause damages totaling 6 trillion US Dollars globally in 2021. If cybercrime was a country, it would be the world's third-largest economy after the US and China (Morgan, 2021). Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) that form the bulk of African economies are particularly vulnerable because their capacity to fight cyber threats remains limited.

Socially, cyberbullying is one of the causes of stress and other psychological effects forcing the victims to sink into a deep depression. Internet trolling, propaganda, disinformation, fake news as well as other kinds of psychological torturing effects have often led to anxiety. Some African leaders have stayed out of social media because of the targeted insults and constant hacking by cybercriminals. Journalists as well as other critical professionals have contemplated suicide due to cyberbullying allegations with some reportedly receiving death threats or unexplained damage to family and close friends.

Cyber Threats Vulnerabilities for the Continent

This article focuses on three critical areas that make Africa susceptible to the consequences of cyber-attacks. They include the larger number of idle young tech-savvy population, the fragile small and medium enterprises and the critical continental bodies which are the obvious targets of malicious cyber activity. A report by Symantec and the African Union in 2016 on the trends on cybercrime and cybersecurity on the African Continent showed the extent of cyber threats, especially with regards to mobile malware and money transfers (African Union Commission (AUC) & Symantec, 2016). Africa is estimated to be home to more than one billion people with the youngest population in the world. The median age is below 20 years old. The coronavirus pandemic has particularly made life difficult for the youth apart from increasing reliance on internet use.

Young people are constantly looking for job opportunities, social networks, freedom of expression and increased global visibility within the cyberspace. The tribulations of the youth on the continent were witnessed during the Arab Springs that started in North Africa toppling decade-old regimes (Smidi & Shahin, 2017). One thing that stood out was the young peoples' desire and ability to mobilize both on social media and physically on the ground. Generally, among young people, mobile device ownership, social media use as well as the Internet of Things is increasing at a very fast rate. The greatest concern however, is that many young people are using outdated and 'pirated' software on their devices making them easy targets for cyber-attacks. The technological skills of these young people are also targeted by dangerous elements who exploit and use the youth to commit cybercrimes.

The African Union report of 2016 also projected business to expand to an estimated USD 75 billion by the year 2025 with most of them being Small and Medium Enterprises. The report focused on social media scams, email threats, smartphones and the Internet of Things, business email scams, rise of ransomware and crypto locker and vulnerabilities. Interestingly from the report out of 54 countries in Africa, more

than half lacked a legal framework to combat cybercrime (African Union Commission (AUC) & Symantec, 2016). The most common attacks on businesses include email scams, theft of customer data using malware, ransom attacks and disinformation and fake news among others. These attacks damage the business brand, disrupt business operations and painfully result in financial losses. The general lack of updated threat information makes the small and medium enterprises low-hanging fruits for cyber criminals which include terror organizations on the continent such as Al Shabab and Boko Haram. South Africa, for instance, one of the most advanced economies on the continent, is reported to experience approximately 570 cyberattacks every hour (Telecom Review Africa, 2019).

The impacts of cyber threats to the work of the African Union led to the establishment and holding of the first meeting of the African Union Cybersecurity Expert Group (AUCSEG) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 10 to 12 December 2019. At the top of the mandate of the group is advising the African Union Commission (AUC) on cyber security issues and policies, streamlining continental conventions into national laws, forge international cooperation with stakeholders and most importantly conducting research into new and emerging cyber challenges in line with the African Union Convention on Cyber Security and Personal Data Protection (African Union (AU), 2019), (African Union (AU), 2014).

Cyber Diplomacy: The Potential Solution

Cyber diplomacy offers a way-out towards the cyber solution to Africa. Cyber diplomacy comes in handy because the cyber threats are not only unique to Africa but global touching on multiple diversified actors. There are limited international rules of engagement in cyberspace which calls for international cooperation on cyber security as the way forward, the need to use diplomatic resources to secure national interests in cyberspace is even more urgent. The main challenge to cyber diplomacy according to Lancelot is the complexity and difficulties of tracing a cyberattack to the source which minimizes the chances of reprimanding the actors involved in cyber-attacks(Lancelot, 2020). Cyber diplomacy provides the surest way of subduing the threats of cyber-attacks by securing the cyberspace under international law through a coalition of allied states, organizations, the private sector, civil society and experts. Multilateral agreements on cyber norms, responsible state and non-state behaviour in cyberspace and effective global digital governance will go a long way in ensuring desired development levels in the continent are not thwarted by malicious and offensive cyber actors (Tania, 2020).

The cyber cooperation is going to boast efforts towards an international cyber regulatory regime and the development of an international cybercrime treaty. It will

also harness and refocus the African voices at the international level on geostrategic and security implications of future internet infrastructures such as the 5G network currently dominated by Huawei. Cyber diplomacy provides the framework for solving cyber tribulations such as cyber espionage, cyber-attacks, hacktivism, internet censorship and even technical issues that traditionally lack a comprehensive framework of consideration at the highest levels (Barrinha & Renard, 2017). The all-encompassing approach of cyber-diplomacy involves broad areas of diplomacy, conflict resolution, agreements and cyberspace policies, it is more than just the use of technological innovations in the conduct of diplomacy.

Policy Recommendations

This paper suggests the following to cyber security stakeholders on the continent and beyond:

• A comprehensive cyber threats awareness approach should be adopted to ensure all sectors have detailed data and reliable information on cyber threats in order to facilitate the making of the most appropriate decisions and actions.

• There is need of improving the legal framework in this area to seal potential loopholes and capture emerging grey areas exploited by the cyber-criminals.

• Allocate considerable resources towards cyber security just like other security sectors. The budgets allocated for cybersecurity in many African states are still very low not marching the level of threat complexity that cyber provides.

• Effective and efficient interventions to tap into the youth's skills and experiences for positive purposes should be implemented to build resilience and eliminate vulnerability to abuse by the cybercriminals. Youth have already proven their value in fighting menaces like climate change. The youth can, in the same spirit, exceptionally champion cyber threats mitigation.

• There should be increased will for cooperation as no country can deal with the threats alone. Cyber diplomacy and continental frameworks like the Convention on Cyber Security and Personal Data Protection (2014) should be embraced as well as global-level frameworks.

• In addition to adopting cyber security best practices, agencies should embrace free open sharing of credible and reliable information approach to ensure timely response, threat awareness and alertness in other sectors as well as amongst the general population.

Conclusions

Like all other threats, defending against cyber threats should start with creating awareness among the people in the continent, the large majority of young tech-savvy citizenry needs to master the basics of internet safety. Cyber-diplomacy provides a unique solution in terms of sharing best practices, information and harmonizing response to cyber threats. The consequences of slow action are unbearable to all the sectors that drive agenda on the continent leaving urgent precise and pro-active approach the only option in mitigating cyber threats.

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ACSRT Africa Terrorism Dossier: 2022 Mid-Year Africa Terrorism Trend Analysis

Summary   1st January 2022 to 30th June 2022 recorded 699 terrorist attacks that resulted in 5,412 deaths across Africa. In terms of monthly trend, the month of March recorded the highest number of attacks (21%), followed by June (19%). Again, in terms of resultants deaths, March recorded 24% of the total deaths, while June recorded 20% of deaths for the reported period. In comparison to the first half of 2021, the first half of 2022 witnessed rather a marginal decline in the number of terrorist attacks, but a sharp rise in the total number of deaths. The first half of 2021 registered 950 attacks that resulted in 3,883 deaths, while the first half of 2022 recorded 699 attacks that resulted in a total death of 5,412. When comparing the preceding period (2021) to the current (2022), there was a marginal decline of 26% in terrorist attacks, but a sharp increase of 39% in the number of deaths, demonstrating the brutal nature of attacks within the period.

Introduction

Terrorism is a usurper of human security. Insurgency, violent extremism, and itself have continued to be the primary threats to peace, security, national stability, and development on the African continent. The geography of terrorism and insurgency in Africa has dramatically increased over the past decade and, in more particular, the last five years. Regions that previously did not perceive the seriousness of the threat, or were considered to be immune from terrorism, have been targeted by terrorist groups. The threats have remained resolute both in intent and capability, with growing confidence and cohesion in the launching of devastating attacks on civilians, security forces, and critical infrastructure across the continent. The terrorism phenomenon has developed into a complex mix of ideology-driven acts of violence, transnational organized crime, banditry, and insurgency. This is manifested in the multiplicity of armed groups with varying motives and trajectories that are spreading and unleashing violence in Africa.

The International Community, Regional Organizations, Governments, Military, Intelligence and Security Agencies, Civil Society, and Local Communities have all come to terms with the fact that no country or community is immune to the threat of terrorism and that a collaborative whole-of-society approach is required to effectively address the phenomenon. The African Union Commission (AUC), Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Regional Mechanisms (RMs), and Member States, with the support of international development partners, continue to exercise various strategic and operational initiatives at the national, regional, continental and international levels to mitigate the situation. In spite of these combined efforts, the threat continues to mutate with new variants of inter-community massacres, violent conflicts between herders and sedentary farmers, and a gradual but persistent expansion into new territories by Terrorist and Violent Extremist groups who now have presence in all regions of the continent. In the affected areas, the situation undermines the confidence of local populations in the ability of their governments and military to protect them against attacks by the terrorist groups. Local populations in a number of the affected areas therefore live in an environment of absolute insecurity and are at the mercy of the Terrorist and Violent Extremist groups.

The susceptibility of African countries to the threat of terrorism is due to multi-faceted issues including weak institutions, porous borders, historical grievances, political exclusion, and lack of economic opportunities, among many others. These factors have acted as catalysts for extremist ideologies to emerge and fester in parts of the continent. Terrorism could thus be viewed as deriving from multifactorial and extremely diverse dimensions which do not lend to prediction by one single variable. Although collaborative efforts are delivering some effective preventative and counter-measure responses, terrorist and violent extremist organizations continue to hold considerable initiative. This is evident in the sustained attacks by terrorist groups causing debilitating harm and destruction to lives and properties. The effort by governments to counter the message of the terrorist groups, that they have an alternative to provide solutions to the grievances of local communities and improve their well-being, has thus been considerably challenged by the inconsistency and inability of the governments to address the expectations or at least provide the basic requirements of the local communities. The efforts have not been able to yield the expected results due to the relatively weak national economies of many AU Member States and the continued prevalence of several structural and governance gaps that tend to make it rather very challenging to speed up the creation of the necessary socio-economic conditions that could prevent the spread and influence of terrorist and violent extremist groups. Under the circumstances, the expectations of the local communities that the respective governments would ensure their peaceful existence tends to be considerably undermined in those areas where the groups operate.

In the year 2022, the situation shows no sign of improvement. The deteriorating terrorism threat across Africa is evidenced by the increasingly complex and sophisticated attacks launched by terrorist and violent extremist groups. Against this background, the 2022 Mid-Year Africa Terrorism Trend Analysis Report considers the activities of terrorist and violent extremist groups for the first half of 2022, with the view of taking stock of the general terrorism situation and providing policy recommendations aimed at ameliorating the terrorism and violent extremism threats in Africa.

Continental Terrorism Incidents Map
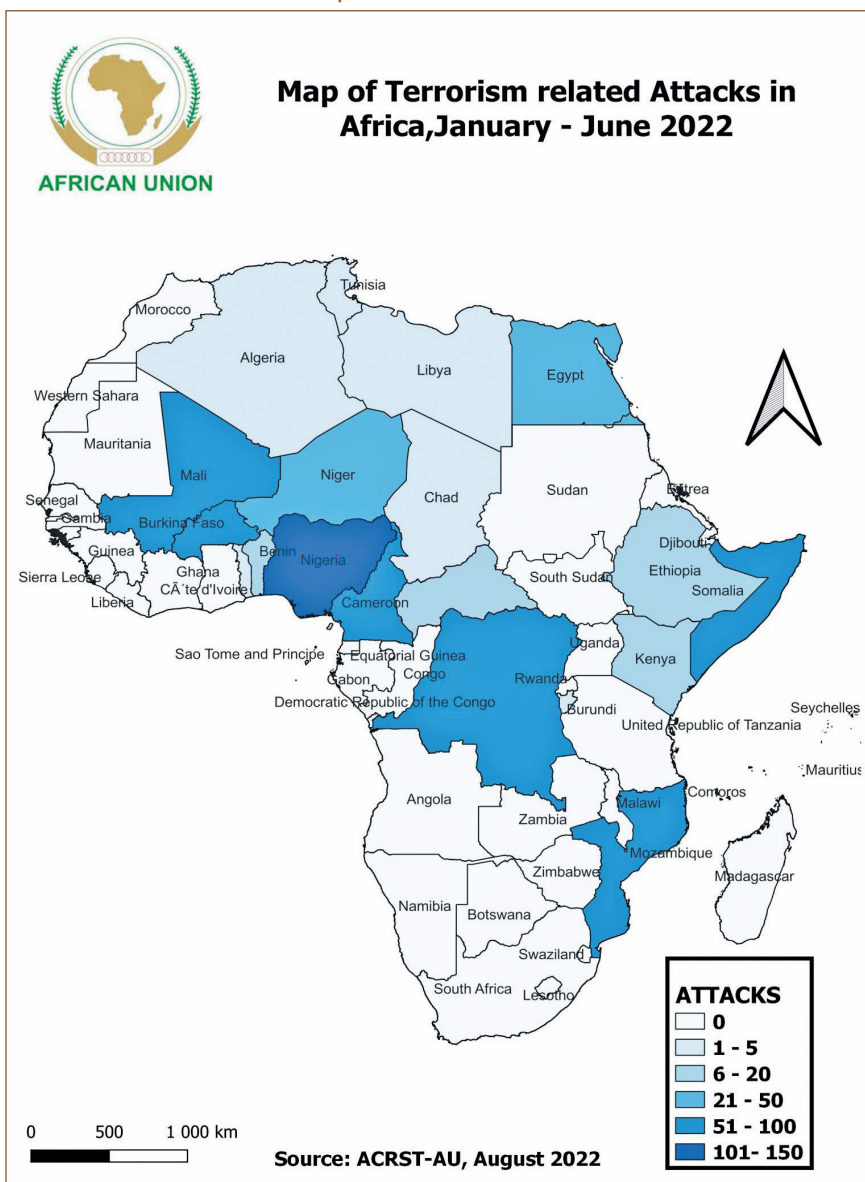
Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis of Data Trend

General Situation. 1st January 2022 to 30th June 2022 recorded 699 terrorist attacks that resulted in 5,412 deaths across Africa. In terms of monthly trend, the month of March recorded the highest number of attacks (21%), followed by June (19%). Again, in terms of resultants deaths, March recorded 24% of the total deaths, while June recorded 20% of deaths for the reported period. In comparison to the first half of 2021, the first half of 2022 witnessed rather a marginal decline in the number of terrorist attacks, but a sharp rise in the total number of deaths. The first half of 2021 registered 950 attacks that resulted in 3,883 deaths, while the first half of 2022 recorded 699 attacks that resulted in a total death of 5,412. When comparing the preceding period (2021) to the current (2022), there was a marginal decline of 26% in terrorist attacks, but a sharp increase of 39% in the number of deaths, demonstrating the brutal nature of attacks within the period.

Countries Most Affected. The five countries most affected by terrorist attacks during the period were: Nigeria, Mozambique, DRC, Burkina Faso, and Mali (*in decreasing order*).

Targets of Terrorist Attacks. While 433 out of the 699 terrorist attacks were launched against Civilians, 235 targeted Military/Security Forces. 19 attacks targeted International Organizations and 10 attacks targeted Governmental Institutions/ Officials. The attacks by Ansaroul Islam, Boko Haram, ADF/ISCAP, ASWJ, and ISGS were mainly against Civilians, whilst Al-Shabaab, JNIM, ISWAP and Other IS Affiliates mostly targeted Military/Security Forces.

Weapons Used/Kidnapping. The terrorist groups used Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs) in 538 out of the 699 attacks and Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) were used in 105 of the attacks. A total of 51 cases of Kidnappings were recorded, in which 541 people were taken hostage with 168 captives being released.

Category Deaths from Terrorists Attacks. Out of the 5,412 deaths were recorded during the period, 3,517 were civilians, 952 were Military/Security personnel and 943 terrorists.

Casualties Inflicted by Terrorist Groups. ADF/ISCAP killed the highest number of people. The group's 34 attacks killed 480 persons (474 civilians, 6 Military/ Security Forces); **ISGS** carried out 24 attacks and killed 416 persons (359 civilians, 57 Military/Security Forces); **JNIM** carried out 39 attacks and killed 372 persons (232 civilians, 140 Military/Security Forces); **ISWAP** successfully conducted 50 attacks and killed 328 persons (189 civilians, 139 Military/Security Forces); **Al-Shabaab**

came across as the group with the highest number of attacks. The group carried out 64 attacks that killed 315 persons (177 Civilians, 138 Military/Security Forces); **Boko Haram** carried out 38 attacks that killed 197 persons (177 civilians and 20 Military/ Security Forces); **ASWJ's** 46 attacks killed 122 persons (57 civilians and 12 Military/ Security Forces); and Other **IS affiliates** carried out 26 attacks and in total killed 107 persons (34 civilians, 73 Military/Security Forces); and **Ansaroul Islam** carried out one attack and killed four persons (All Civilians). **Unknown/Unidentified groups** attacks were 378 and resulted in 2,136 deaths (1,778 civilians, 361 Military/Security Forces).

Casualties Sustained by Terrorist Groups. Al-Shabaab, JNIM, Boko Haram, ISGS, ISWAP, and JNIM suffered highest number of casualties during the period. Military/Security forces killed 594 of Al-Shabaab fighters, 407 members of JNIM and 378 Boko Haram terrorist members. Others ISGS suffered 232 deaths, ISWAP suffered 202 casualties and 158 members of ADF/ISCAP were killed. The rest are Other IS Affiliates (65), ASWJ (42), and Ansaroul Islam (39). 1,175 members of other unknown/unidentified groups were also eliminated within the period.

Focus on Epicentres. Out of the 699 terrorist attacks, the Sahel region recorded 179 attacks with 1,909 deaths, the Lake Chad Basin recorded 153 attacks with 1,229 deaths, the Great Lakes region accounted for 96 attacks and 1,013 deaths and Horn of Africa region accounted for 71 attacks with 504 deaths during the period.

High Profile Attacks

• **02 February**, **Savo**, **Djugu**, **Ituri, DRC**. Armed men believed to be militants of ADF/ISCAP attacked the community killing 58 civilians and injuring another 36.

• **02 May, El Baraf, Middle Shabelle, Somalia**. Armed militants from Al-shabaab attacked the AMISOM/ATMIS military base. At least 33 people were killed including 30 soldiers of Burundian nationality. Security forces in reprisal attacks also killed about 20 militants.

• **05 June, Owaluwa, Owo, Ondo, Nigeria.** Gunmen attacked a St Francis Xavier Catholic Church during mass. At least 50 people including women and children were killed. Federal government blamed ISWAP for the attack.

• **11 June, Seytenga, Seno, Burkina Faso.** Armed individuals attacked a town, near the border with Niger accusing them of collaborating with the security. At least 100 civilians were killed in the attack believed to have been carried by ISGS.
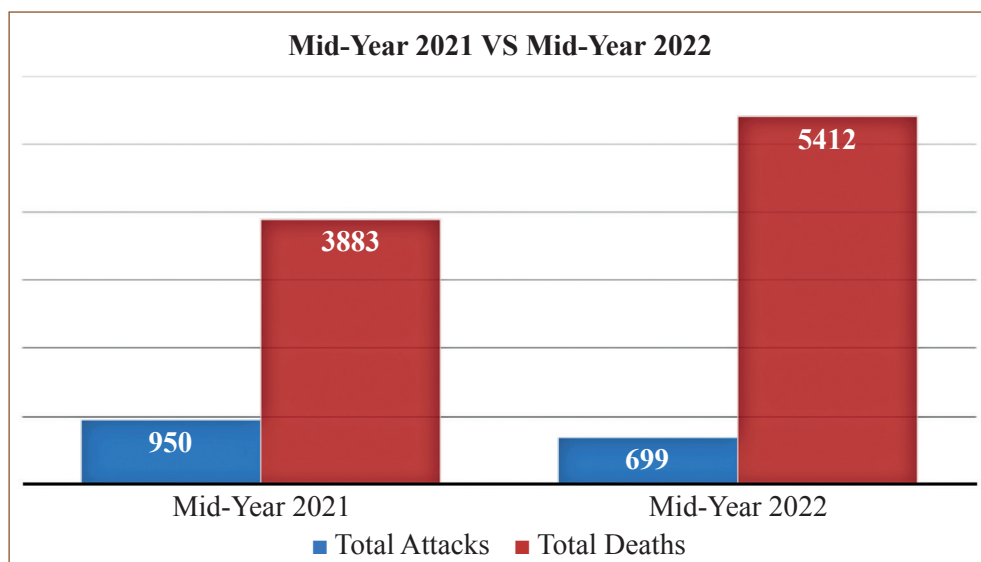
- **18 June, Diallassagou, Bankass, Mopti, Mali.** Armed men on motorcycles raided several villages in the region and killed over 132 civilians. Government blamed the attack on Katiba Macina militants an affiliate of JNIM, although group has denied responsibility.
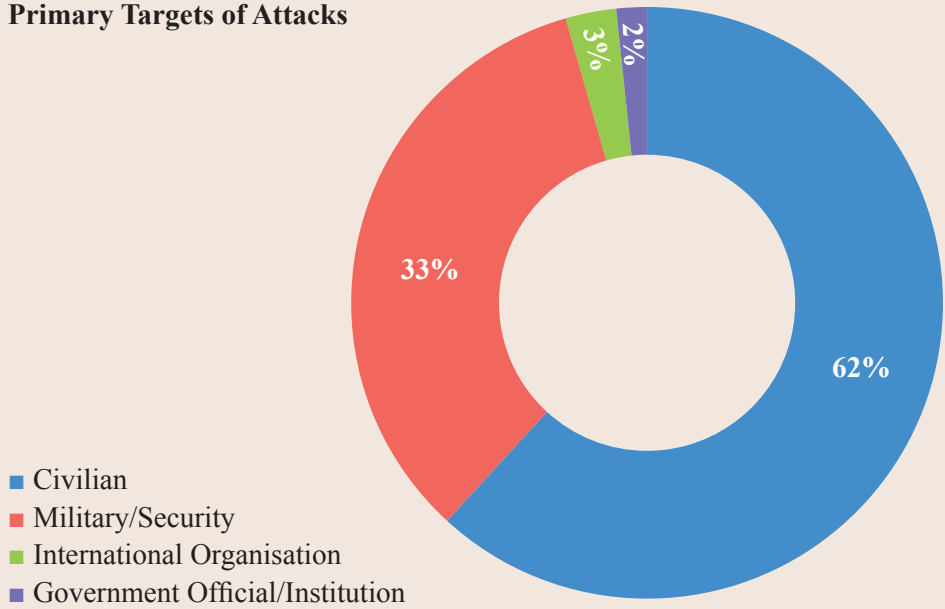
Counter-Terrorism Response

CT operations resulted in neutralizing 2,370 terrorists. Four Military/Security Forces died during those operations across the continent.
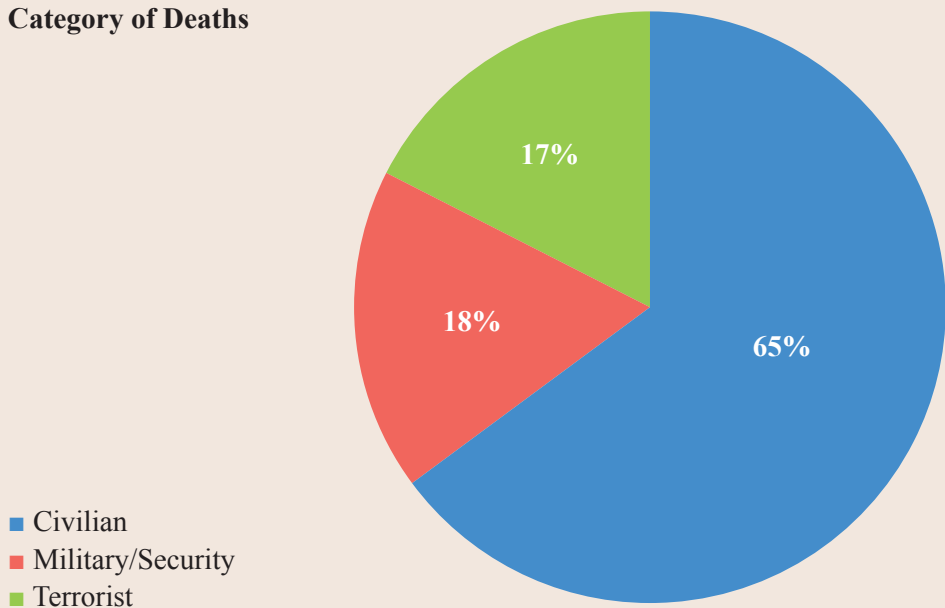
Conclusion/Recommendations

There has been resurgence of terrorists and violent extremists' activities, resulting in continued devastating atrocities against civilians, security agencies, and critical infrastructures. The groups demonstrated cohesion and exhibited great capability of momentum along their mobility corridors and within the territory they control. Despite the numerous CT efforts by state authorities concern, terrorist structures seem to be resilient. Mobilising political will through sustainable financing and bolstering the morale of the deployed troops could help nib terrorism in the bud. In addition to enhancing CT operations across the continent, preventative approaches and mechanisms that seek to build the resilience of local communities by addressing their vulnerabilities could go a long way to deny terrorist and violent extremist groups their freedom of space and movement, thereby culminating into degrading the groups capabilities and cohesion to launch attacks.
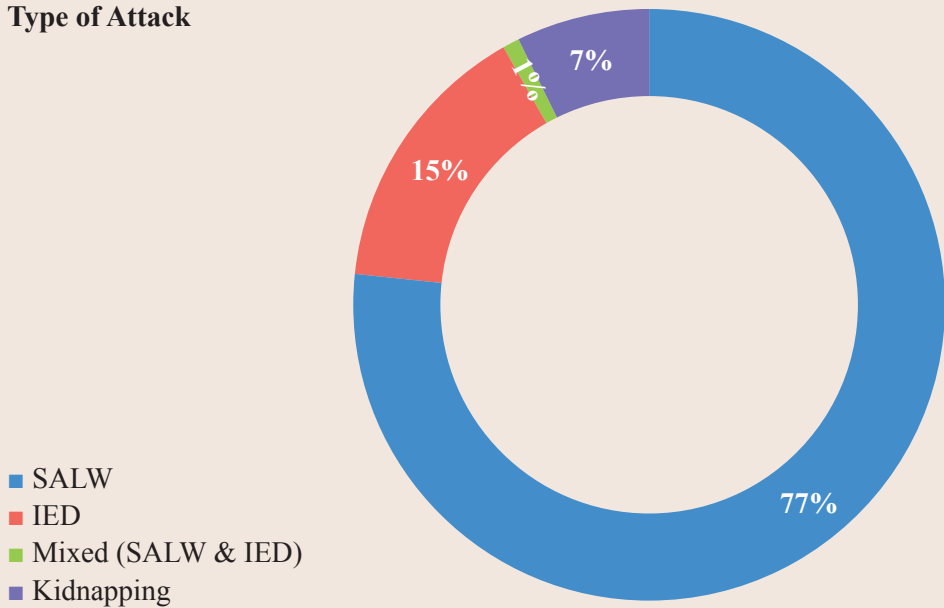

Mid-Year 2021 VS Mid-Year 2022
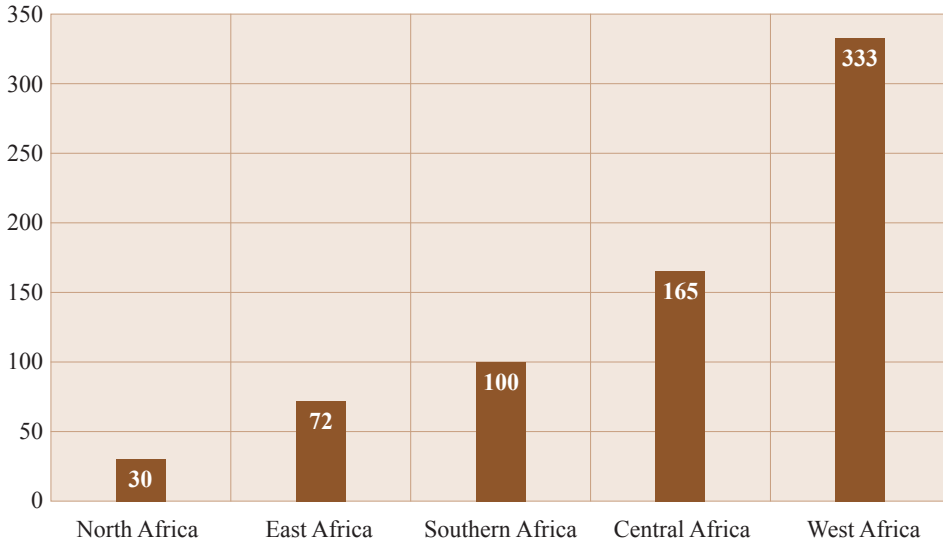
	Mid-Year 2021	Mid-Year 2022
Total Attacks	950	699
Total Deaths	3883	5412

Primary Targets of Attacks

- Civilian — 62%
- Military/Security — 33%
- International Organisation — 3%
- Government Official/Institution — 2%

Category of Deaths

- Civilian — 65%
- Military/Security — 18%
- Terrorist — 17%

Type of Attack

- SALW
- IED
- Mixed (SALW & IED)
- Kidnapping

77%

15%

1%

7%

Number of Attacks Per Region

Region	Number
North Africa	30
East Africa	72
Southern Africa	100
Central Africa	165
West Africa	333

Number of Deaths Per Region

Region	Number of Deaths
West Africa	3189
Central Africa	1299
East Africa	505
Southern Africa	296
North Africa	123
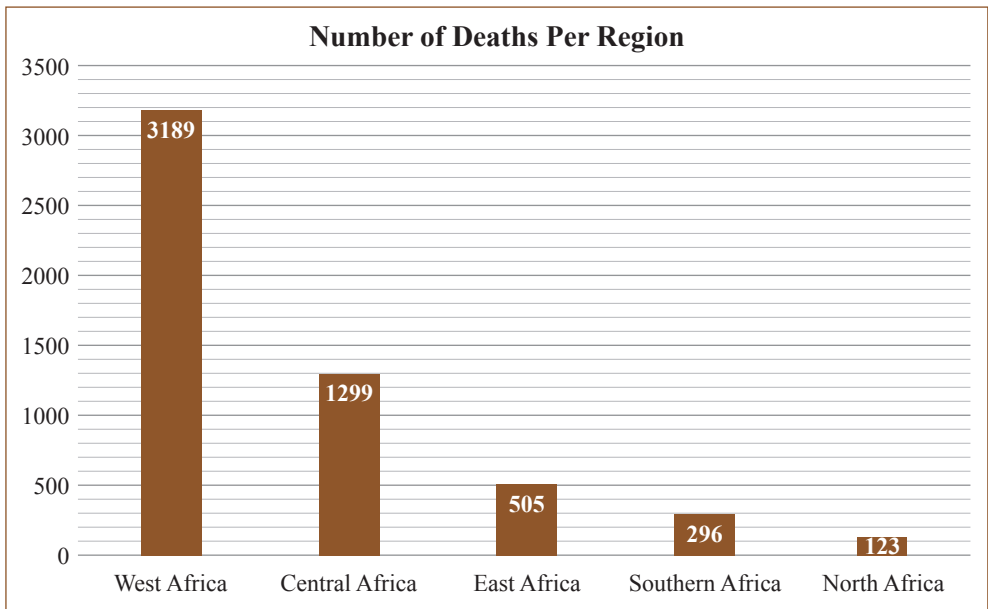
Country Profile

For the period under review, 18 out of the 55 countries in Africa recorded incidents related to terrorist attacks. Only one country (**Tunisia**) recorded an attack with no deaths. The period witnessed deteriorating security situation in Burkina Faso, DRC, Egypt, Mali, Mozambique, and Nigeria. In **Burkina Faso**, a total of 92 attacks were recorded, resulting in 809 deaths. Attacks and deaths in the first half of 2022 have been highly lethal. Attacks have also spread into areas that were previously unaffected. There appears to be resurgence of terrorist activities in the Sinai Peninsula of **Egypt**. The Sinai Peninsula which has been put under control by the Egyptian Army began witnessing complex attacks against security forces. The situation in the **DRC**, has not been improved. 1,049 people were killed in the country from 95 attacks. In **Mali**, terrorist attacks skyrocketed, leaving many civilians and security forces killed. Attacks in Mali were more lethal, as 871 people were killed from 58 attacks. **Nigeria** came across as the country with the highest number of attacks and deaths for the period. Attacks have spread into new States including the Capital Abuja, Kebbi, Kogi, Niger, and Ondo. 128 attacks killed 1,229 people in the country. Insurgents in Northern **Mozambique** also began attacking previously unaffected provinces including Nampula province. The country recorded 100 attacks in which 296 people were killed, mostly civilians.

Algeria, notably, faced heightened terrorist threat from Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) despite effective counter-insurgency operations by the Algerian National Army. On 28 January, two Algerian soldiers were killed in a firefight with suspected AQIM terrorists in Hassi Tiririne region near the border with Niger. Two (2) of the militants were also eliminated. Similarly, on 20 March, three (3) Algerian soldiers were killed in a clash with a terrorist group on the border strip in the Timiaouine region in Bordj Badji Mokhtar near the border with Mali. Terrorist attacks declined in **Somalia** and **Kenya** for the second quarter due to intensive counter terrorism operations. **Togo**, a coastal state that has been spared of terrorist attacks despite its proximity to terrorism-affected countries, began experiencing attacks. On 10 and 11 May 2022, armed men believed to be militants of JNIM attacked a Togolese military outpost located in *Kpekpakandi*, near border with Burkina Faso and killed eight (8) soldiers. Then on 16 June, gunmen attacked an army post in *Goulingoushi*, a town in Savanes region in the far northwest near the border with Burkina Faso and Ghana. Other affected countries include Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, CAR, Chad, Libya, and Niger.

Attacks and Deaths by Country – January to June 2022
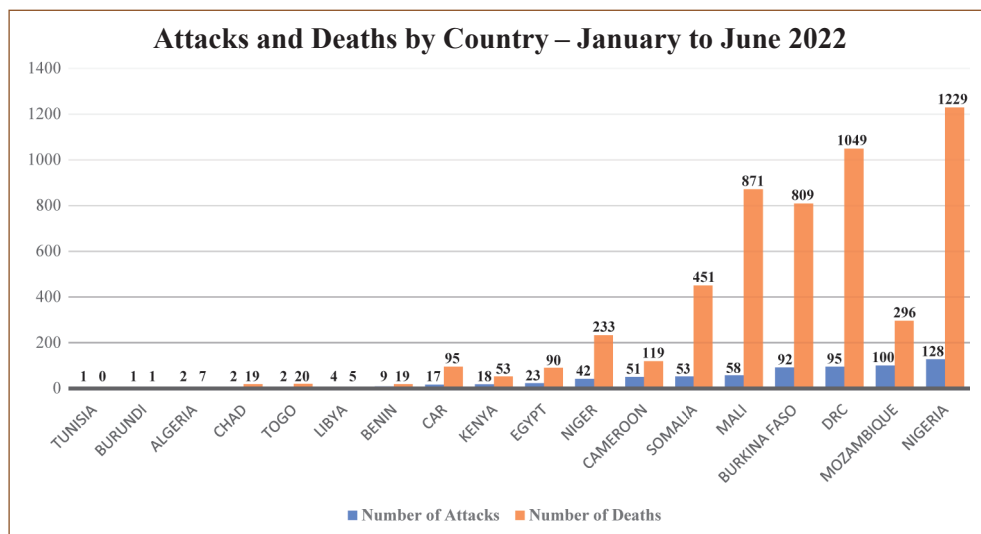
Detailed Records of Countries – January to June 2022

N°	Country	Attacks	Deaths	Injured	Military / Security	Civilians	Terrorists
1	Algeria	2	7	0	5	0	2
2	Benin	9	19	13	15	3	1
3	Burkina Faso	92	809	133	129	437	245
4	Burundi	1	1	3	0	1	0
5	Cameroon	51	119	88	33	77	9

6	Central African Republic (CAR)	17	95	19	35	41	19
7	Chad	2	19	30	19	0	0
8	Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)	95	1049	83	78	977	6
9	Egypt	23	90	19	43	29	18
10	Kenya	18	53	20	8	45	0
11	Libya	4	5	0	5	0	0
12	Mali	58	871	133	140	520	211
13	Mozambique	100	296	18	29	201	66
14	Niger	42	233	58	69	127	37
15	Nigeria	128	1226	125	186	903	137
16	Somalia	53	451	256	130	159	162
17	Tunisia	1	0	0	0	0	0
18	Togo	2	20	13	8	0	12

High Profile Terrorist Attacks for the Period

The Ten Most Fatal Terrorist Attack – January-June 2022.

N°	Country	Place	Date	Group	Deaths	Description
1	Mali	Mopti	18 June	JNIM	132	Armed men on motorcycles raided several villages in the region and killed over 132 civilians. Government blamed the attack on Katiba Macina militants, an affiliate of JNIM.
2	Burkina Faso	Seno	11 June	ISGS	100	Armed individuals attacked the township in northern Burkina Faso, near the border with Niger accusing them of collaborating with the security. At least 100 civilians were killed.
3	Mali	Mopti	04 March	ISGS	97	Armed ISGS members attacked military base at **Mondoro**, killing 27 soldiers and injuring 33 others. Security forces in reprisal attack killed 70 terrorists.
4	Nigeria	Niger State	07 March	Boko Haram	67	Armed men ambushed local vigilante groups members on patrol within **Tungan Magajiya** area. At least 67 people were killed.

5	Mali	Menaka	09 March	ISGS	62	**09 March, Menaka**. Armed men suspected to be members of ISGS attacked the villages of **Tamalat and Insinane,** killing a total of 62 people, comprising 20 MSA members and 42 civilians.
6	DRC	Ituri	02 February	ADF/ ISCAP	58	Armed men attacked a community called Savo, in the district of **Djugu** killing 58 civilians, and injuring 36 others.
7	Somalia	Middle Shabelle	02 May	Al-Shabaab	53	Armed militants attacked AMISOM/ ATMIS) military base. At least 33 people were killed including 30 soldiers of Burundian nationality. Security forces in reprisal attacks also killed 20 militants.
8	Nigeria	Niger State	19 February	Boko Haram	52	Armed men suspected to be militants of Boko Haram attacked the villages of**, Shiroro and Munya**. At least 52 peoples were killed, and 42 villagers kidnapped.
9	Nigeria	Ondo	05 June	ISWAP	50	Gunmen attacked a Catholic church during mass. At least 50 people including women and children were killed, as well as many others injured. Federal authorities blamed ISWAP for the attack.
10	Somalia	Hirshabelle	23 March	Al-Shabaab	48	Al-Shabaab militants exploded a car bomb outside Beledweyne's main hospital where the injured in an earlier suicide bombing were being taken for treatment. At least 48 peoples were killed, and 108 others injured.

Five Most Affected Countries

In all, five countries namely, Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Mali, Mozambique, and Nigeria accounted for 68 per cent (473) of the total terrorist attacks in Africa. Three out of the five countries are in West Africa (Burkina Faso, Mali, and Nigeria) and accounted for 40 per cent (278) of all attacks for the period. In terms of the deaths, the five most affected countries accounted for 79 per cent (4,254) of the total deaths for the period. The three countries from West Africa, that featured in the most affected countries accounted for 54 per cent (2,909) of the deaths for the period. The countries most affected for the period under review are Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, Burkina Faso, and Mozambique

(*in decreasing order*). Nigeria recorded the highest number of attacks (128) and the highest number of resultant deaths (1,229). Although Mozambique recorded the second highest number of attacks (100), the second highest number of deaths (1,029) recorded was from the DRC.

The Five Most Affected Countries

Country	Total Attacks	Total Deaths	Total injured
Nigeria	128	1229	125
Mozambique	100	296	18
DRC	95	1029	83
Burkina Faso	92	809	133
Mali	58	871	133
TOTAL	**473**	**4,254**	**492**

Counter-Terrorism Response Generation

Across the continent, Member States and regional bodies have continued to review and adopt series of counter-terrorism measures including field deployments to deal with the threats of violent extremism and terrorism. The operational successes of the field deployments continue to significantly degrade the capacity of terrorist and violent extremist groups. Security forces continue to engage in sustained, deliberate, and planned counter terrorism operations against terrorist hideouts through airstrikes and grounds operations. For the period under review, aside the 943 terrorists who were killed in attacks carried out by terrorist groups themselves, a total of 2,362 terrorists were also killed in deliberate counter terrorism operations bringing the number of terrorists eliminated within the period to 3,305. The period, however, witnessed cases of admitted civilian casualties by some National Armies involved in CT operation. The need for CT operations to be conducted in compliance with regional and international humanitarian laws and frameworks as well as respect for human rights must be vigorously pursued to ensure the protection of civilian population in such counter offensive operations.

The Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) has inflicted huge losses and caused setbacks on Boko Haram and ISWAP and has significantly degraded the operational capability of the two groups in the Lake Chad Basin region. The frequency of Boko Haram attacks in Far North Cameroon, Diffa Region of Niger, and North-eastern States of Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa have gone down considerably as a result. Similarly, ISWAP's movements within the LCB have also been restricted in a number of instances, forcing the groups to develop operational theatres in other zones

outside the LCB. The efforts of member states of the LCB region in defeating the terrorist groups in the areas cannot be overemphasized. The individual states' efforts, combined with that of MNJTF, have yielded some positive results. The extension of MNJTF mandate, if combined with the needed logistical and financial support could further weaken the momentum and cohesion of terrorists in LCB.

In the Sahel, the French Operation Barkhane and European Union Takuba Forces, G5 Sahel Joint Taskforce, MINUSMA as well as the national armies of the states of the region are the deployments in operation. While National Armies, Operation Barkhane/ Takuba and the G5 Sahel Joint Taskforce have mandates to combat terrorism and transnational organized crime, MINUSMA is mandated to help the Malian government stabilize the situation and extend control of the central government of Mali to other parts of the country. Although MINUSMA does not have a counter terrorism mandate, it has nonetheless been inundated by terrorist attacks on its troops, facilities, and equipment. A significant challenge with the cocktail of deployments in the Sahel is therefore the need for better coordination to ensure effectiveness in the fight against terrorism in the Sahel. Ensuring that the G5 Sahel Joint Taskforce is adequately trained and equipped for the task is a crucial part of this effort. Mali remains central and strategically paramount in the fight against terrorists in the Sahel. The Malian Armed Forces (FAMA) intensified their counter offensive against al-Qaeda and Islamic State affiliates within her territory. The intensification of the CT operations through air and ground operations resulted in the elimination and neutralisation of terrorist elements belonging to JNIM and ISGS. The FAMA exhibited good morale and determination to defeat terrorist groups. Given the resurgence of terrorist activities, regional and international support to Mali and other troops operating in the Sahel region could significantly boost their states of readiness to deal with the threat and therefore improve the security situation in the Sahel.

Counter-terrorism operations in North Africa ; particularly in Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia ; have resulted in the dismantling of several terrorist cells affiliated with IS and AQIM as well as the discovery and destruction of numerous caches of arms and ammunition. In Egypt, a large-scale counter-terrorism operation carried out by the Egyptian army against insurgents in the northern Sinai Peninsula has achieved significant positive results. The CT operation has been intensified in this year since a series of coordinated attacks that have killed many military personnel and civilians, in what appears to be a resurgence of the terrorist activities in the Sinai Peninsula. In southern Libya, where terrorist groups operated most freely, forces aligned with the Libya National Army (LNA) and those aligned with the Government of National Accord (GNA) conducted operations against AQIM and ISIS. Both the GNA and LNA forces undertook CT operations in areas under

their control that degraded the capacity and the capabilities of ISIS to carry out devastating attacks in Southern Libya.

In Southern Africa, the force intervention by Rwandan forces, SAMIM, and Mozambican Defence and Security Forces has assisted greatly to reduce the number of attacks across Cabo Delgado province and regain control of major routes which were blocked and controlled by insurgents. However, due to pressure from these forces, insurgents are reportedly retreating into Mtware region; the southern part of Tanzania bordering Mozambique, as well as to Niassa and Nampula provinces in Northern Mozambique. Apparent lack of coordination among troops operating in either same or different theatres appears to facilitate the insurgents' regrouping strategy. Enhancing operational and strategic coordination between SAMIM, Mozambique Defence Armed Forces (FADM) and Rwandan Forces is a sine qua non in nipping insurgency, violent extremism, and terrorism in the bud in Northern Mozambique.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Across the continent, there has been uninterrupted activities of terrorist and violent extremists' activities, resulting in continued devastating atrocities against civilians, security agencies, military establishment, and critical infrastructures. From the Lake Chad Basin (LCB) to the Sahel region, from the East and Horn of Africa to the Great Lakes region, and from the North Africa and the Maghreb to the Southern Africa region, terrorist and violent extremist groups escalated the level of the complexity and sophistication of attacks. The groups demonstrated cohesion and dexterity and exhibited great capability of momentum along their mobility corridors and within the respective territories they control. Despite the numerous CT efforts by state authorities concerned, terrorist structures seem to be resilient. As a result, terrorist groups continue to expand their geographical reach beyond areas originally operated. The reporting period, 1st of January 2022 to 30th of June 2022 recorded 699 terrorist attacks that resulted in 5,412 deaths across Africa. Notwithstanding the level of momentum exhibited by terrorist groups, counter terrorism operations achieved operational successes across the length and breadth of Africa. Preventative approaches and mechanisms that seek to build the resilience of local communities by addressing their vulnerabilities could go a long way to deny terrorist and violent extremists group their freedom of space and movement, thereby culminating into degrading their capabilities and cohesion.

For the period under review, the Sahel belt of West Africa became hotspots of complex and sophisticated attacks. This may be attributed to the political instability

in Mali and Burkina Faso, the decrease in military offensives against the hegemony of JNIM and ISGS following the withdrawal and redeployment of Barkhane and Takuba Forces, the cascading effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the impact of the Russia-Ukraine conflicts, and the sanctions imposed by ECOWAS on Mali which have aggravated the deteriorating security and humanitarian crisis situations thus making the population more vulnerable to terrorists' recruitment drive. The implication of the political instability in the Sahel on the fight against terrorism and violent extremism cannot be overemphasised. Given the already volatile security situation, there is the fear that terrorist and violent extremist groups could exploit the chaotic political scene to further entrench their positions and expand their activities to West Africa's Coastal Countries and beyond. The impact of the political crises on the military establishment, coupled with the escalating violent extremism situation, may give violent extremist and terrorist groups the opportunity to further consolidate their authority and influence in the areas where they control and even expand to new geographical areas particularly the littoral states. The G5 Sahel Joint Force and its member states have deployed efforts that have knocked the fighting capacity of terrorist groups operating in the Sahel region to a lesser extent. However, intensification of efforts in the mobilization of additional resources for the joint force, particularly financial and technical support, as well as economic development support aimed at addressing the dire humanitarian situation in the Sahel countries could go a long way to ensure peace, stability, and development in the region. Also, the international and regional actions taken to foster political instability in the Sahel must be carefully crafted and implemented in order not to unduly cause more suffering and misery for an already impoverished population and thereby push them into the hands of terrorist and violent extremist groups. While the return to democratic rule is important, the international responses must be exercised with determination, caution, and discretion. The situation requires flexibility, pragmatism, and skilled diplomacy in order not to exacerbate the already precarious security situation.

The period also witnessed an expansion of the threat of terrorism from the Sahel region toward the Gulf of Guinea countries, particularly Benin and Togo. The terrorist groups appear to be executing a grand strategy of expanding their geographical reach, with the aim of controlling national territories to run criminal economies to sustain their violent activities. Without prejudice to the grand strategy being exhibited by terrorist groups, prevailing multidimensional socioeconomic challenges such as local context-specific community grievances, lack of development, and absence of basic services in border communities, climate change impact, governance deficit continuum trajectory, herder-farmer conflicts, ownership and access to land, some government policy initiatives, and the humanitarian crisis compounded by the

COVID-19 pandemic are vulnerability factors in coastal states that could serve as catalysts to fester a further expansion of violent extremism and terrorism. Violent extremist groups in neighbouring bordering countries appear to be exploiting these vulnerability factors and grievances expressed by local communities to gain influence in West African coastal states. In Benin for instance, the decision to hand over the management of the W-Arly Pendjari Park complex to African parks, a South African non-profit conservation organisation, appears to generate some local grievances. The new management of the park has excluded certain very important stakeholders, especially hunters and livestock herders, thus creating local animosity. This appears to be one of the factors enabling terrorist attacks in and around the park in Benin. Given the heightened risk level, littoral states may have to elevate their respective states of preparedness to effectively respond to the fallout of the insecurity in the Sahel and the consequent humanitarian crises based on regular security risk analysis. The need to find innovative approaches to establishing a new social contract by addressing the concerns of the local communities could serve as a preventative measure to the evolving violent extremism threats. Under the current circumstances, the full operationalisation and the implementation of the Accra Initiative could prove strategically, operationally, and tactically relevant in nipping the threats in the bud. In addition, PVE policies and mechanisms that create a conducive economic atmosphere and a sense of belonging, particularly for young people, to be productive and contribute to the socio-economic development of their communities and countries could help ameliorate the vulnerability factors.

The resurgence of IS in Sinai Peninsula witnessed during the reporting period calls for an urgent need to interrogate the recent escalation in IS activity to understand what is emboldening the group's momentum and resilience. The Egyptian government has heavily invested in the Sinai Peninsula with the aim of getting the population to return to their communities. The investments drive is also aimed at assuring the communities the government's commitment and ability to protect them against insurgents' atrocities. Indeed, for a long time, the Egyptian Army weakened the capabilities, capacities, and momentum of terrorist elements in the Sinai. The recent surge in terrorist attacks, if not reversed, could derail the government's efforts and put local economic development initiatives in shambles.

The Northern Mozambique Province of Cabo Delgado also experienced the spread of terrorism into other areas previously not affected. Insurgents advanced into the southern districts of Cabo Delgado province, launching sporadic attacks in Ancuabe and Chiure districts within Cabo Delgado and Nampula province - all areas previously unaffected by the nearly five-year old insurgency. The growing foreign military deployments in Mozambique appear to take precedence over soft approaches

that could address the underlying root causes of violence in Cabo Delgado. Despite the series of CT operational successes of the security forces, insurgent structures seem to be resilient.

The trajectory of this situation, if left to continue uninhibited, could overtime, develop into entrenched insurgencies and would be extremely difficult to dislodge. The kinetic militaristic approaches if combined with local community-based violent extremism prevention initiatives could help defeat terrorism in Mozambique. While there is the need to do more to support counter-terrorism operations underpinned by actionable intelligence in order to improve security and stability, a human security response approach should inform military concepts of operation. Ensuring future stability will require far more than a purely military approach. Placing emphasis on kinetic militaristic strategies to counter violent extremism and defeat terrorism in Mozambique will not be sufficient unless they are conducted in tandem with addressing the root causes, such as perceived marginalization, poverty and social exclusion, injustice, lack of rule of law and issues relating to governance deficits. A Whole-of-Society approach that involves, amongst others, traditional leaders, community leaders, and youth groups is a worthy pathway of eschewing violence and securing harmonious peaceful living and resilience in local communities.

16ᵗʰ EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY
OF THE AFRICAN UNION ON TERRORISM AND
UNCONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES OF GOVERNMENT IN AFRICA
28 MAY 2022
MALABO, REPUBLIC OF EQUATORIAL GUINEA

Ext/Assembly/AU/Decl. (XVI)

DECLARATION ON TERRORISM AND UNCONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES OF GOVERNMENT IN AFRICA

« Robust Response, Deepening Democracy and Collective Security »

DECLARATION ON TERRORISM AND UNCONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES OF GOVERNMENT IN AFRICA

« Robust Response, Deepening Democracy and Collective Security »

WE, the Heads of State and Government of the African Union (AU), meeting at the 16th Extraordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government on Terrorism and Unconstitutional Changes of Government in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, on 28 May 2022 :

GUIDED by existing AU legal instruments, particularly the Constitutive Act (2000) ; the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (2002) ; the Common African Defense and Security Policy (CADSP) [2004]; the AU Non-Aggression and Common Defense Pact, (2005) ; AU Agenda 2063 specifically aspirations 3, 4 and 7 ; and the Johannesburg Declaration on Silencing the Guns in Africa, (2020), as well as the AU Master Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa by 2030 ;

RECOGNIZING the continued relevance of various instruments adopted by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the AU over the past years to address the scourge of terrorism and violent extremism, including the Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, (1999) ; the Plan of Action on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism in Africa, (2002) and the Protocol to the OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism (2004) and the Tripoli Declaration on Conflict Reduction, Sustaining and Promoting Peace in Africa (2009) ;

RECALLING Assembly Decisions Assembly/AU/Dec.256(XIII) on combating the payment of ransom to terrorist groups (2009) and Assembly/AU/Dec. 311(XV) on the prevention and combatting of terrorism (2010) ;

BEARING IN MIND our pledge to silence the guns on the Continent, as contained in the 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration (2013) and Decision Assembly/AU/Dec. 501(XXII) declaring 2014 – 2024 as *the "Madiba Nelson Mandela Decade of Reconciliation in Africa"* (2014) ;

ALSO GUIDED by the principles enshrined in the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (2007) ; the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (1981), and other relevant AU human rights instruments ;

FURTHER REITERATING our Decisions and pronouncements on unconstitutional changes of government in Africa, including Decisions AHG/Dec. 141 (XXXV)], [AHG/Dec. 142 (XXXV) (1999) and Assembly/AU/Dec. 253(XIII) (2009) ; the Declaration on the Framework for the OAU Response to Unconstitutional Changes of Government, (the Lomé Declaration) July 2000 ; as well as the PSC Ezulwini Framework for the Enhancement of the Implementation of Measures of the African Union in Situations of Unconstitutional Changes of Government (2009) ;

REAFFIRMING our commitment to promote constitutionalism ; the principles of separation of powers and independence of the judiciary ; the promotion of political pluralism with the full participation of citizens, in conformity with the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG) and the Union's Declaration on the Principles Governing Democratic Elections ;

REITERATING the Decisions of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) on the issues of terrorism, violent extremism and unconstitutional changes of government in Africa ;

TAKING NOTE of the Reports of the Chairperson of the Commission on Terrorism and Violent Extremism and on Unconstitutional Changes of Government in Africa.

ACKNOWLEDGE THAT :

i) The resurgence of unconstitutional changes of government ; the expanding threat of terrorism and violent extremism across the Continent, including the influx of foreign terrorist fighters, private military companies and mercenaries, the proliferation of armed groups, as well as transnational organized crime, negatively impact the peace, security, stability, sovereignty and territorial integrity of some Member States ;

ii) Africa continues to face structural challenges in adequately addressing the root causes of terrorism, violent extremism, and unconstitutional changes of government ;

iii) Governance deficits ; terrorism and violent extremism are being compounded by the impact of climate change ; and the concern over the use of natural resources by terrorist groups as a source of financing ; and

iv) Despite these challenges, Member States, Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs) and AU Organs continue to make gradual progress towards the consolidation of democracy and constitutionalism, as well as countering terrorism and violent extremism ; and

v) There is an imperative for greater collective action to address the challenges of terrorism, violent extremism and unconstitutional changes of government.

WE HEREBY DECLARE THE FOLLOWING :

A. On Terrorism and Violent Extremism,

1. Our unequivocal condemnation of all manifestations of terrorism and violent extremism across the Continent; and reaffirm our commitment to preserve the indivisibility of the security of African states in line with the Common African Defense and Security Policy and within the spirit of finding African security solutions ;

2. Salute all African citizens and peace operations personnel who paid the ultimate sacrifice as a result of terrorist attacks in the Continent and globally ;

3. Scale up implementation of all relevant AU instruments and Decisions, particularly the 1999 Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism and the 50th OAU/AU Anniversary Solemn Declaration ;

4. Accelerate the signing and ratification of relevant continental instruments, including the Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism; the AU Convention on Cross-Border Cooperation, and the African Charter on Maritime Security, Safety and Development in Africa ;

5. Full operationalization of the African Standby Force (ASF) without further delay and to strengthen coordination with RECs/RMs on its utilization; and to expedite the finalization of the Memorandum of Understanding between the AU and RECs/RMs on the ASF ;

6. Reiteration of Decisions, particularly Assembly/AU/Dec.753.XXXIII of February 2020, and Assembly/AU/Dec.815(XXXV) of February 2022 on the establishment of a Counter-Terrorism Unit within the ASF ;

7. Affirmation of the call for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of foreign terrorist fighters and mercenaries from the Continent; and on the Commission to speed up the conclusion of the revision of the OAU Convention on Mercenaries;

8. Strong rejection of external interference in Africa's domestic affairs and call upon all external actors to cease their support to terrorist groups in the Continent;

9. Reaffirmation of the imperative of adequate, sustainable and predictable financing for counterterrorism efforts on the Continent and consequently renew the call to the United Nations, particularly the UN Security Council, for use of assessed contributions for AU-mandated Peace Support Operations (PSOs), to further strengthen counter-terrorism efforts and promote stabilization in the Continent;

10. The AU Peace Fund is a viable instrument for addressing urgent peace and security challenges on the Continent and commend the contributions by Member States made thus far;

11. Strong commitment to provide adequate budgetary allocation for national initiatives and programmes aimed at strengthening the prevention and combatting of terrorism and violent extremism;

12. Strengthen the fight against local and external financing of terrorism and to accelerate the implementation of the Assembly Decision on the criminalization of the payment of ransom to terrorist groups; and to promote concerted efforts on the improved management of natural resources;

13. Scale up efforts to combat transnational organized crime especially the proliferation of illicit arms, including through enhanced intelligence sharing mechanisms, border management, cooperation and control;

14. Develop a comprehensive Continental Strategic Plan of Action on countering terrorism in Africa, premised on existing national and regional strategies, to enhance coordination and coherence, in order to consolidate coordination and enhance actions;

15. Deploy more efforts and resources to strengthen cybersecurity, including through legislation at national level, ratification of the AU Convention on Cybersecurity and Personal Data Protection and enhanced cooperation; and institute necessary legal and regulatory

action to prevent the abuse of social media; platforms by terrorists, as well as support the development of the Continental Cybersecurity Strategy and the Child Online Safety and Empowerment Policy ;

16. Establish an AU Ministerial Committee on Counter Terrorism to serve as a high-level coordination, monitoring, evaluation and follow up mechanism of the implementation of the commitments made in this Declaration ;

17. Substantially increase support for children, youth and women affected by armed conflict especially terrorism, radicalization and insurgency, in collaboration with RECs/RMs and AU Organs; and initiate concerted actions in building capacity for community-based resilience and stabilization, to promote effective long-term recovery through the post-conflict reconstruction and development programs ;

18. Promote a multidimensional and proactive approach in empowering the youth by reinforcing peace education, tolerance and coexistence in order to consolidate the fight against terrorism and violent extremism ;

19. Strengthen the institutional capacity of the Commission, and specia-lized agencies of the AU including, the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT), the AU Mechanism for Police Cooperation (AFRIPOL) and the AU Centre for Post-conflict Re-construction and Development (PCRD), to build synergies with and improve the efficiency of Member States in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism ;

20. Promote experience sharing and lesson learning among Member States and RECs/RMs to better coordinate and enhance regional and conti-nental efforts in combating terrorism ;

21. Build, diversify and consolidate strategic international partnerships to reinforce cooperation and coordination of efforts in preventing and countering terrorism ;

22. Welcome the initiative of the AU-UN Joint Strategic Assessment (JSA) on security and governance in the Sahel under the auspices of the Chairperson of the Commission **H. E. Moussa Faki MAHAMAT** and the UN Secretary-General
H. E. António GUTERRES; and the appointment of the former Pre-sident of the Republic of Niger, **H. E. Mahamadou ISSOUFOU,** as Chair of the JSA Independent High-Level Panel ;

23. Welcome the outcome of the Meeting of Directors-General and Heads of Intelligence and Security Services of Africa held on 26 May 2022 in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, and, in this regard, call for greater intelligence and information sharing and joint operations through the platform of the Committee of Intelligence and Security Services of Africa (CISSA), as well as the various regional fusion centres, to ensure effectiveness of our intelligence governance initiatives in the Continent.

B. On Unconstitutional Changes of Government,

1. Unequivocally condemn of all forms of unconstitutional changes of government in Africa and reiterate our zero tolerance in this regard ;

2. Recalls Assembly Decision, AU/Dec.818(XXXV) which mandated the Third Africa Governance Report to focus on the nexus between Governance and the 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR); however, given the spate of unconstitutional changes of government on the Continent, Directs the Commission and African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) to remodel the Third Africa Governance Report-2023 to reflect issues related to unconstitutional changes of government ;

3. Recommit to our total adherence to the relevant principles, norms and shared values contained in the AU Constitutive Act, the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the PSC, the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and
   Governance, African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, and the Lomé Declaration ;

4. Determine to further enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of AU support to Member States in political transition and post-conflict situations, to build durable peace, entrench democratic culture and governance, including through transitional justice, and prevent relapse to cycles of violence, within the context of silencing the guns in Africa ;

5. Commend the strides made by Member States in organizing free, fair, credible and transparent elections, despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic; and the continued respect for electoral outcomes and constitutional provisions relating to term limits ;

6. Take due note of and endorse the Accra Declaration arising from the Reflection Forum on Unconstitutional Changes of Government held from 15 to 17 March 2022 in Accra, under the leadership of **H. E. Nana**

Addo Dankwa AKUFOADDO, President of the Republic of Ghana and current Chairman of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government ;

7. Consolidate our efforts to create a conducive environment for the effective participation of women and youth in political processes, as well as addressing the impact of unconstitutional changes of government on children ;

8. Strengthen national, regional and continental mechanisms on early warning and conflict prevention, as well as the interface between the African Governance Architecture (AGA) and the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), to consolidate good governance, particularly constitutionalism and the rule of law through multi-level engagements; and to that end, call on Member States yet to accede to the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), to do so, to concretize national ownership of governance processes.

We are fully cognizant of the ultra importance of building resilient societies, social cohesion, national unity and regional cooperation, as the bedrock for lasting peace, and in the spirit of the Madiba Nelson Mandela Decade of Reconciliation in Africa; institute **31 January** of each year, as *"Africa Day of Peace and Reconciliation"* ; and, to this effect, appoint **H. E. João Manuel Gonçalves LOURENÇO**, President of the Republic of Angola, as AU Champion for Peace and Reconciliation in Africa.

As Heads of State and Government of the African Union, speaking with one voice, mindful of our responsibility and commitment, we recommit to build on the shared vision of Pan-Africanism and the legacy of African unity and solidarity, by upholding constitutionalism, democracy and good governance and to embrace the multidimensional approach to achieve peace, security and sustainable development, in line with the aspirations of Agenda 2063 – The Africa We Want.

Adopted by the 16ᵗʰ Extra Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, at Malabo, Equatorial Guinea on 28 May 2022.

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