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# Nigerian terror: The rise of Boko Haram

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Nigerian Terror: The Rise of Boko Haram

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An Honors Program Project Presented to  
the Faculty of the Undergraduate  
College of Arts and Letters  
James Madison University

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by Kelly Moss

Spring 2018

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Accepted by the faculty of the Department of Political Science, James Madison University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Honors Program.

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PUBLIC PRESENTATION

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### **Abstract**

The Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria was the world's deadliest terrorist group of 2014, second deadliest in 2015, and is one of the most perplexing terrorist groups to arise in the past 50 years. This study sought to identify how Boko Haram rose to power in Nigeria, and found the following factors to be explanatory: Nigeria's weak state capacity stemming from colonialism and poor post-colonial governance, the politicization of religion, and Boko Haram's relationship with other terrorist organizations such as Al-Shabab, Al-Qaeda, and Daesh. This study further analyzed domestic and international responses to Boko Haram, up to present day, and made policy recommendations to counter the group.

### **Dedication**

To the thousands of victims and survivors of the Boko Haram insurgency. May they find peace.

### **Acknowledgments**

First, I would like to thank my family and friends for their unending support, love, and encouragement during this entire process. Without them, this endeavor would not have been possible. I would also like to express enormous gratitude towards my thesis committee for all of their help these past two years. To Dr. Kerry Crawford, thank you for your invaluable mentorship, encouragement, kindness, and support throughout this process and my entire time at James Madison University. To Dr. Owusu-Ansah and Dr. Glenn Hastedt, thank you for being my reviewers. Your advice, guidance, and expertise taught me so much and for that I am tremendously grateful. Finally, thank you to the Honors College for this incredible opportunity and for helping me find my true passion in African affairs.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

“Do African lives matter? There’s rarely a protest when we hear that Africans have been killed on the continent of Africa. There’s rarely a protest every single day when we hear that Boko Haram is killing people. We get protests in front of the State Department all the time – protesting all kinds of human rights violations. Protest people being killed on the continent by terrorists.

We all need to hear the voices of the people. Ordinary men and women in Africa, the United States, and abroad need to raise their voices and send an unmistakable message that Boko Haram’s violence is intolerable, and it’s unacceptable. The outcry in Nigeria and internationally over the kidnapping of the Chibok school girls was impressive – but it was slow. We waited to hear what people would say. Those protests, once they started, helped greatly to raise awareness of Boko Haram’s brutality. But they were only a start.”<sup>1</sup>

- Linda Thomas-Greenfield

Assistant Secretary, Bureau of African Affairs

February 9, 2016

As stated above, Nigeria and the world must do more. While we continue to focus on Daesh<sup>2</sup> in the Middle East, Boko Haram has become smarter, more efficient, and so deadly that in 2015, they had the second highest death toll of all terrorist groups since 2000.<sup>3</sup> Yet, the world is largely silent.

In response to the preceding claims, many would argue that Boko Haram is a domestic problem, not an international one. However, I would contend that while Boko Haram itself may indeed be more of a regional problem, the effects it has on the Nigerian population are anything but. With their increasing use of child soldiers, disdain for human life, geographic spread into Cameroon and Niger, and creation of famine in Northeast Nigeria, the time has come where the world can no longer turn a blind eye to the atrocities being carried out by Boko Haram. At the very least, the group warrants further studying, which is exactly what this thesis will do.

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<sup>1</sup> The Bureau of African Affairs is an office within the U.S. Department of State (Linda Thomas-Greenfield, “Boko Haram and Its Regional Impact,” Speech transcript, The Capitol Visitor Center, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. February 9, 2016).

<sup>2</sup> Daesh will be the name utilized throughout this thesis to reference The Islamic State (ISIS).

<sup>3</sup> Institute of Economics and Peace, *Global Terrorism Index of 2016: Measuring and Understanding the Impact of Terrorism*, Report no. 43, November 2016: 47.

### Why Nigeria?

In addition to being the country where Boko Haram originated, Nigeria plays an incredibly important role on the African continent, as well as the world stage. To better understand Boko Haram, it is first necessary to understand Nigeria as a state.

With a population of over 186 million,<sup>4</sup> Nigeria is not only the most populous country in Africa, but also the seventh most populous country in the entire world.<sup>5</sup> This “giant of Africa”<sup>6</sup> is the single-most rapidly growing country and is projected to grow at a rate of 7.9% to 411 million inhabitants by 2050.<sup>7</sup> This would lead Nigeria to surpass the United States as the world’s third most populous country.

Nigeria has another important role in Africa, as it is one of the few countries that are key to the continent’s stability.<sup>8</sup> Politically, Nigeria is one of the founding members of the African Union<sup>9</sup> and contributes “large numbers of troops to the [United Nations],”<sup>10</sup> making them a regional leader. Consequently, the country has the largest economy in Africa,<sup>11</sup> making them a vital member of the “Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS].”<sup>12</sup> Nigeria’s economic success is largely due to the country’s position as an international oil giant, which constitutes virtually all government revenue. Because it is their main export,<sup>13</sup> when oil prices fell worldwide and the United States and other countries decreased the amount of oil they were

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<sup>4</sup> United Nations, “Nigeria,” UN data, last modified 2017, <http://data.un.org/CountryProfile.aspx?crName=NIGERIA>.

<sup>5</sup> United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, *World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision, Key Findings and Advance Tables*, Report no. ESA/P/WP/248.

<sup>6</sup> Aderibigbe Victor, “Is Nigeria still the ‘giant of Africa’?” *The Guardian* (Nigeria), last modified September 11, 2017, <https://guardian.ng/opinion/is-nigeria-still-the-giant-of-africa/>.

<sup>7</sup> United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

<sup>8</sup> South Africa and Kenya are two other countries that are key players on the continent.

<sup>9</sup> John Campbell, *Nigeria: Dancing on the Brink (Updated Edition)*: vii.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> “U.S. Relations With Nigeria,” U.S. Department of State, last modified February 21, 2017, <https://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm>.

<sup>12</sup> Campbell, 2013, vii.

<sup>13</sup> “U.S. Relations With Nigeria.”

importing from Nigeria,<sup>14</sup> the country spun into an economic recession, which they only recently came out of.

### **Why Boko Haram?**

According to the Global Terrorism Index, Boko Haram was the most dangerous terrorist group in the world in 2014<sup>15</sup> and was the second deadliest group in 2015.<sup>16</sup> Despite their first large-scale attack being carried out in 2009, the group has the second highest death toll out of all terrorist groups since 2000 (15,600 people).<sup>17</sup> Make no mistake, the magnitude of the above statement cannot be stressed enough; the only group more deadly than Boko Haram is the Taliban,<sup>18</sup> which came into existence over a decade before Boko Haram. Thus, Boko Haram has carried out an unprecedented level of violence in their 16 years of existence. To further put this in perspective, in 2015 alone, the group killed over 5,478 people and averaged 11 deaths per attack.<sup>19</sup> Perhaps most disturbing is the fact that “four out of five [deaths by Boko Haram] are civilians,” making this the “highest targeting of civilians anywhere in the world.”<sup>20</sup> In contrast, civilian targeting by Daesh and Al-Qaeda is two out of four.<sup>21</sup> To emphasize this point, some of Boko Haram’s deadliest attacks are listed below.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> The United States used to be Nigeria’s largest oil importer. Other countries, including Japan, China, and Peru, have completely stopped importing oil from the country (Roseline Okere, “Nigeria loses crude oil export destination to U.S.,” *The Guardian* (London, UK), March 30, 2017, <https://guardian.ng/business-services/nigeria-loses-crude-oil-export-destination-to-u-s/>).

<sup>15</sup> Institute of Economics and Peace, *Global Terrorism Index of 2015*, 4.

<sup>16</sup> Institute of Economics and Peace, *Global Terrorism Index of 2016*, 4.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, 27.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, 16.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, 27.

<sup>21</sup> Institute of Economics and Peace, *Global Terrorism Index of 2016*: 27.

<sup>22</sup> It is difficult for Americans and the American media to truly understand the severity of Boko Haram’s attacks in Nigeria because of the “lack of reliable [reporting]” in Nigeria. (Maiangwa., et.al, “‘Baptism by Fire’”: Boko Haram and the Reign of Terror in Nigeria,” *Africa Today* 59 (2012): 2).

Table 1: Boko Haram's Deadliest Attacks

Year	Attack	Death Toll
January 20, 2012	Two vehicle-borne IED's were detonated in Kano, Nigeria. <sup>23</sup>	200+
April 14, 2014 <sup>24</sup>	<u>Chibok School Girls</u> : Over 276 girls were kidnapped from a Boarding School in the Northeast Nigerian town of Chibok. This was Boko Haram's most notorious abduction case, as it garnered international attention and created a worldwide social movement called "#BringBackOurGirls." In June 2017, the Nigerian Government reached a deal with the group, which freed over 100 of the Chibok girls. <sup>25</sup>	Unknown
January 3-7, 2015 <sup>26</sup>	<u>Baga Massacre</u> : Boko Haram carried out a series of killings and destroyed 16 villages in Northeast Nigeria. It is one of the deadliest attacks Nigeria has ever experienced. <sup>27</sup>	Estimated to be around 2,000. <sup>28</sup>
April 23, 2015	Boko Haram opened fire in the village of Kukuwa-Gair. It was the seventh most fatal terrorist attack in 2015. <sup>29</sup>	174+
July 28, 2017	While searching for oil, Boko Haram ambushed a group of people in Northeast Nigeria. <sup>30</sup>	40+

By the end of 2015, Boko Haram had spread from three to five countries (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Nigeria),<sup>31</sup> showing that the group was becoming more "audacious,

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, 48.

<sup>24</sup> "Nigeria Chibok abductions: What we know," *BBC News*, last modified May 8, 2017, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-32299943>.

<sup>25</sup> "More than 40' killed in battle with Boko Haram in Nigeria," *BBC News*, last modified July 28, 2017, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-40740323>.

<sup>26</sup> Institute of Economics and Peace, *Global Terrorism Index of 2015*: 41.

<sup>27</sup> It is impossible to definitively say how many people were killed in the attack, due to contradictory reporting out of Nigeria (Institute of Economics and Peace, *Global Terrorism Index of 2016*, 50).

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, 12.

<sup>30</sup> Yemisi Adegoke, "UN: Half of world's population growth is likely to occur in Africa," *CNN Africa View*, last modified June 25, 2017.

<sup>31</sup> Institute of Economics and Peace, *Global Terrorism Index of 2016*, 53.

sophisticated, and coordinated over time.”<sup>32</sup> The immediate result of this spread was a 157% increase in terrorism-related deaths in Chad, Cameroon, and Niger,<sup>33</sup> which offset the 34% decrease in attacks in Nigeria that year.<sup>34</sup> This increase was particularly seen in Cameroon and Niger, which moved up to #13 and #16 as the most terror-afflicted states in the world.<sup>35</sup> Thus, despite setbacks occurring in their home state of Nigeria, the group has demonstrated its resilience and has continued to wreak havoc.

In addition to spreading to other countries, Boko Haram had another major development in 2015: a pledge of allegiance to Daesh. In this pledge, Boko Haram’s leader at the time, Abubakar Shekau, declared Boko Haram to be the “Islamic State’s West African Province.”<sup>36</sup> This “demonstrated to followers the seriousness of Boko Haram’s message,”<sup>37</sup> which was further solidified when Daesh’s leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, accepted the pledge that same month. As months passed, it was unclear as to whether the pledge actually affected any of Boko Haram’s actions. It later surfaced that the pledge may have splintered the group, due to a disagreement over leadership. This resulted in Daesh claiming to have symbolically replaced Abubekar Shekau, due to his indiscriminate killing of Nigerian Muslims. However, the reality is that we don’t really know the extent of the relationship between the two. What we do know is that in 2014, Daesh and Boko Haram accounted for 51% of terrorist related deaths in the world<sup>38</sup> and in 2015, four groups were responsible for 74% of terrorism related deaths worldwide: Daesh, Boko

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<sup>32</sup> Maiangwa, et al., “Baptism by Fire,” 41.

<sup>33</sup> Institute of Economics and Peace, *Global Terrorism Index of 2016*, 20.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>36</sup> *Boko Haram: The Islamist Insurgency In West Africa: Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade of the Committee on Foreign Affairs*, 114th Cong., 2nd Sess. (2016)(statement of Representative Ted Poe, Chairman): 2.

<sup>37</sup> Zacharias P. Pieri, and Jacob Zenn. “The Boko Haram Paradox: Ethnicity, Religion, and Historical Memory in Pursuit of a Caliphate,” *African Security* 9, no. 1 (March 1, 2016): 67.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

Haram, The Taliban, and Al-Qaeda.<sup>39</sup> Thus, even if the relationship between Boko Haram and Daesh is tenuous, it is cause for serious concern.<sup>40</sup>

Not surprisingly, Boko Haram's attacks have had dramatic effects on Nigeria and its population. To begin, they have created mass food insecurity in the Northeast portion of the country. As a result, in January of 2017, the United Nations called for "1.05 billion dollars to reach 6.9 billion people in Northeast Nigeria."<sup>41</sup> The following month, they warned that this area was on the brink of famine and that food shortages were affecting 11 million Nigerians (5.5 million being children).<sup>42</sup> By mid 2017, the United Nations had received \$660.7 million dollars, which was 62.7% of their overall goal.<sup>43</sup>

Since 2009, Boko Haram has also caused over 2 million people to become internally displaced.<sup>44</sup> From Northeast Nigeria alone (Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe States), over 1.6 million people, 1 million of them being children, were displaced.<sup>45</sup> These statistics indicate that Boko Haram has significantly increased the number of Nigerian children in conflict. Even worse, their increasing use of children, particularly girls, as suicide bombers has become one of their most common tactics.<sup>46</sup> These actions are not only abhorrent, but a blatant violation of the international norms put in place by the United Nations for protecting children during armed

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<sup>39</sup> Institute of Economics and Peace, *Global Terrorism Index of 2016*, 3.

<sup>40</sup> Institute of Economics and Peace, *Global Terrorism Index of 2015*, 4.

<sup>41</sup> Amy Harrison, "Nigeria's food crisis: by the time famine is declared, it's too late," *The Guardian* (London, UK), last modified June 12, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2017/jun/12/nigeria-food-crisis-un-response>.

<sup>42</sup> Michelle Faul, "UN: 120,000 Nigerians likely face Boko Haram-created famine," *U.S. News*, last modified February 8, 2017, <https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2017-02-08/un-120-000-nigerian-likely-face-boko-haram-created-famine>.

<sup>43</sup> "Nigeria," OHCA (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), 2017, <http://www.unocha.org/nigeria>.

<sup>44</sup> Nelly Ating, "They survived Boko Haram, now returnees are fighting hunger," *CNN Africa View*, last modified July 18, 2017, <http://www.cnn.com/2017/06/29/africa/boko-haram-survivors-hunger/index.html>.

<sup>45</sup> "Northeast Nigeria Crisis Response End of Year Factsheet," Infographic, UNICEF, 2016, [https://www.unicef.org/appeals/files/UNICEF\\_Nigeria\\_Factsheet\\_30\\_Sept\\_2016.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/appeals/files/UNICEF_Nigeria_Factsheet_30_Sept_2016.pdf).

<sup>46</sup> UNICEF Nigeria, *Beyond Chibok: Over 1.3 million children uprooted by Boko Haram violence*, by Laurent Duvillier, 2015: 2.

conflict.<sup>47</sup> The actions that constitute a violation of this norm include killing or maiming children, recruiting kids as child soldiers, rape and other sexual violence, abduction, attacks on schools/hospitals, and any denial of humanitarian access.<sup>48</sup> Unsurprisingly, Boko Haram has, and continues to, actively utilize each of these tactics to terrorize Nigeria. Yet another way that Boko Haram has targeted children is through education, or lack thereof. Due to their adversarial approach to Western education and their stronghold in Northeast Nigeria,<sup>49</sup> the state is suffering from “mass illiteracy.”<sup>50</sup> This problem is so severe that in December of 2016, UNICEF reported that only 18% of school-aged children in the Northeast attended temporary learning spaces and schools.<sup>51</sup>

Finally, Boko Haram has increased sectarian conflict in Nigeria, particularly between the North (predominately Muslim) and the South (predominately Christian). This increase can partly be attributed to Boko Haram’s labeling of Southern Nigeria as “one of its adversaries because that area facilitates the spread of Western civilization in the country.”<sup>52</sup> As a result, they have vowed a “reign of terror on southern Nigeria.”<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> The United Nations Security Council put these specific violations in place in 2009 (United Nations Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, *International Legal Foundations of the Six Grave Violations Against Children During Armed Conflict*, October 2009).

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Aghedo Iro, and Osumah Oarhe, “Bread Not Bullets: Boko Haram And Insecurity Management In Northern Nigeria,” *African Study Monographs*, 35 (December 2014): 219.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid, 205.

<sup>51</sup> “Northeast Nigeria Crisis Response End of Year Factsheet.”

<sup>52</sup> Maiangwa, et al., “Baptism by Fire,” 46.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

### Thesis Overview

It is clear that Boko Haram is not just a Nigerian fight, but a global one.<sup>54</sup> With their heinous attacks and radical ideology, the group not only threatens regional stability, but continental and global stability as well.

Furthermore, Boko Haram defies the stereotype that the United States tends to attribute to terrorism, which involves a specific religion (Islam) and region of the world (the Middle East). While it is true that Boko Haram claims to carry out their attacks in the name of Islam,<sup>55</sup> their rise in West Africa exemplifies the susceptibility of states to terrorism. And while steps can be taken to fight terrorism, no state can entirely eradicate or prevent it, which is why we must observe how these groups arise around the world.

This thesis does that and more by analyzing the factors that contributed to the rise of Boko Haram in Nigeria, tracking domestic and international responses to the group, and creating policy recommendations to counter the group. By studying these topics, Nigeria will be better able to identify, thwart, and address the systemic causes of terrorism in the country. Ultimately, it is this researcher's hope that future terrorist groups in Nigeria can be stopped before becoming another Boko Haram.

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<sup>54</sup> Linda Thomas-Greenfield.

<sup>55</sup> Boko Haram does not represent Islam or its million of peaceful, Muslim adherents. As President George W. Bush stated days after the September 11<sup>th</sup> attack on the United States of America, "The face of terror is not the true faith of Islam. That's not what Islam is all about. Islam is peace. These terrorists don't represent peace. They represent evil and war. When we think of Islam we think of a faith that brings comfort to a billion people around the world. Billions of people find comfort and solace and peace. And that's made brothers and sisters out of every race -- out of every race" (President George W. Bush, "Islam is Peace," News release, September 17, 2001).

### Methodology

This thesis is primarily qualitative<sup>56</sup> and utilizes the case study method<sup>57</sup> to analyze the origins of Boko Haram in Nigeria and provide policy domestic and international policy recommendations. The state of Nigeria is studied in its entirety with the intention of figuring out why Boko Haram emerged in the country and what contributed to its stronghold in the Northeast region. To do so, the following factors are analyzed: the state capacity of Nigeria, the politicization of religion, and Boko Haram's relationship with prominent international terrorist groups, specifically Daesh, Al-Shabab, and Al-Qaeda. These factors ultimately speak to Nigeria's ability to respond to domestic problems. This data was acquired and accumulated through academic literature, The Global Terrorism Index (2014, 2015, 2016, and 2017), media sources, NGO reports, as well as domestic and international government documents.

A case study was chosen for a multitude of reasons. First, it allows for the in-depth study of a specific case, while actively avoiding oversimplification and inaccurate generalizations. It does so by focusing on "in-depth inquiry over coverage: understanding 'the case' rather than generalizing to a population at large."<sup>58</sup> This approach is necessary since this thesis is not meant to be generalizable to every terrorist group. At most, it would provide narrow generalizations<sup>59</sup> for other terrorist groups in Nigeria, which are contingent on some "shared key characteristics as the [case being] studied."<sup>60</sup> Second, Nigeria is the state where Boko Haram originated and gained

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<sup>56</sup> Qualitative research is defined as "empirical research where the data [is] not [solely] in the form of numbers" (Keith Punch, *Introduction to Social Research: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., N.p., 2005, 3).

<sup>57</sup> A case study is defined as studying one, or multiple, cases in great detail using a variety of methods with the general objective to develop "as full an understanding of that case as possible" (Punch 2005, 144).

<sup>58</sup> Bridget Somekh and Cathy Lewin. *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*, 2005, 33.

<sup>59</sup> Alexander L. George, and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, N.p., 2004, 22.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid*, 25.

power. By 2015, “nearly 90% of the 15,600 deaths by Boko Haram”<sup>61</sup> were located in Nigeria, which made the state the third most affected state by terrorism that year.<sup>62</sup> By solely and extensively studying Nigeria, a better understanding can arise as to why Boko Haram rose in that state and not another. The final reason for the case study method is because it allows for specific policy prescriptions to be put forward, which can be uniquely tailored to Nigeria and Boko Haram.

In addition to those stated above, there are two other benefits of case studies. To begin, case studies give a holistic focus to a topic, by “preserving and understand[ing] the wholeness and unity of [a] case.”<sup>63</sup> It does so by exploring a specific activity, group, etc., from multiple methods and data sources, leading to a “rich description” of a phenomenon.<sup>64</sup> Furthermore, case studies allow abstract concepts, such as democracy, to be measured. This leads to strong conceptual validity, which is “extremely difficult to do in statistical studies.”<sup>65</sup> Strong conceptual validity is beneficial because it allows those concepts that differ from culture to culture, such as political freedoms and liberty, to be independently examined. Lastly, the case study method allows (hypothetical) causal mechanisms and new hypotheses to be explored. Statistical studies omit all contextual factors, “except those codified in the variables selected for measurement,”<sup>66</sup> making it difficult to look at the intervening variables of a case and “identify what conditions present in a case activate the causal mechanism.”<sup>67</sup> Since this thesis aims to identify the causal mechanisms of the Boko Haram insurgency, a case study method is necessary. Furthermore, it may lead to new hypotheses that could not be identified by other statistical methods, since the

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<sup>61</sup> Institute of Economics and Peace, *Global Terrorism Index of 2015*: 27.

<sup>62</sup> Institute of Economics and Peace, *Global Terrorism Index of 2016*:10.

<sup>63</sup> Punch 2005, 144.

<sup>64</sup> Somekh and Lewin 2005, 33.

<sup>65</sup> George and Bennett 2004, 19.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid*, 21.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid*.

statistical approach “can identify deviant cases that may lead to new hypotheses, but in and of themselves, ... lack any clear means of actually identifying new hypotheses.”<sup>68</sup>

Although there are many benefits to the case study approach, it is also necessary to discuss its inherent shortcomings. First, there is the risk of case selection bias, which could “[result] in inferences that suffer from ‘systematic error.’”<sup>69</sup> This can lead to the overstating, or understating, of the relationship or phenomena in question. The second problem with case studies is their lack of representativeness and generalizability. Since case studies do not seek to “select cases that are directly ‘representative’ of diverse populations...[they] should not make claims that their findings are [generalizable] to such populations except in contingent ways.”<sup>70</sup> This is because the greater the explanatory richness of a case, the less explanatory power it has across cases.<sup>71</sup> Thus, there appears to be a trade off between theoretical parsimony and the establishment of explanatory richness of a case.<sup>72</sup>

Despite the inherent shortcoming to case studies, this method ultimately provides invaluable information on the historical, religious, and demographic composition of Nigeria, as well as the origins of Boko Haram. This information can then be used to craft policy recommendations for the Nigerian Government and the international community. If this method were not utilized, studying Boko Haram would be virtually impossible, since other qualitative and statistical methods could not adequately address the multitude of contextual factors that may have contributed to the rise of Boko Haram.

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid, 23.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid, 31.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

### *Literature Review*

Terrorism is not a new phenomenon and it will persist in the future. While case studies themselves may run into problems with generalizability, we can still utilize and apply the general literature on terrorism to study contemporary terrorist groups. This information will provide insight into Boko Haram and will lead to a better understanding of contemporary terrorist groups, as well as terrorism itself. Specific attention will be paid to the logic of terrorism, the goals and strategies of terrorist groups, how the international community and individual nation states typically respond to terrorism, the demise of terrorist groups, and the origins of Boko Haram.

#### *The logic of terrorism*

Despite there being an enormous amount of research done on the subject, there is no consensus over the definition of terrorism. For example, The Global Terrorism Index defines it as “the threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a nonstate actor to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation,”<sup>73</sup> whereas Andrew Kydd and Barbara Walter describe it as “the use of violence against civilians by nonstate actors to attain political goals.”<sup>74</sup> However, these two definitions do illustrate some widely accepted beliefs about terrorism: it must have a political aim and it must involve violence. Gaibullov and Sanders agree with this notion and state, “the two biggest characteristics of terrorism are violence and political social objectives.”<sup>75</sup> For these reasons, this study considers terrorism to be the threatened or actual use of force and violence against civilians, or a state, by nonstate actors to obtain political objectives.

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<sup>73</sup> Institute of Economics and Peace, *Global Terrorism Index of 2015*, 6.

<sup>74</sup> Andrew H. Kydd and Barbara F. Walter, “The Strategies of Terrorism,” *International Security*, 31, no. 1 (2006): 52.

<sup>75</sup> Khusrav Gaibullov and Todd Sandler, “An empirical analysis of alternative ways that terrorist groups end,” *Public Choice* 160, no. 1-2 (2014): 28.

Political aims can be defined as goals, which target some form of the following: regime change, territorial change, policy change, social control, or status quo maintenance.<sup>76</sup> At first, this notion of preconceived political aims appears to be false, since some groups seem to be solely religiously motivated. Yet even religiously motivated terrorist groups have political aims. They strive for social control, which affects the political composition of a state. Hence, social control can be considered a form of political control, which means every terrorist group, including Daesh and Boko Haram, has political objectives.<sup>77</sup> But to say that all terrorist groups have a cohesive, coherent, political aim is extremely dangerous because ascribing political significance to terrorist groups can actually give legitimacy to their cause.

It is certainly true that the utilization of violence is a necessary condition for a group to be categorized as terrorists. Terrorist groups use violence to instill fear into their victims to achieve their ultimate goals. Gaibullov and Sanders elaborate on this by claiming, “violence in the absence of [political or social goals] merely are criminal acts for extortion or sociopathic reasons.”<sup>78</sup> This argument is accurate, since political goals are a precondition for terrorism. Once a group targets a particular “other” without any political goals in mind, then it ceases to be classified as terrorism and is then considered ethnic cleansing or genocide.

Another aspect of terrorism involves the recipients of terrorist actions. Some, such as Kydd, claim that terrorist actions are only those that aim at civilians. Others claim that state officials, by nature of their occupation, are legitimate targets of terrorist attacks. However, the definition that will be employed in this thesis will classify violence against state officials as terrorism. Within the discussion of recipients, it becomes necessary to also address the nature of terrorist attacks. Although some scholars, such as Michael Walzer, claim that terrorist attacks are

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<sup>76</sup> Kydd and Walter, 52.

<sup>77</sup> These groups desire to establish an Islamic Caliphate.

<sup>78</sup> Gaibullov and Sandler, 28.

unique in their randomness,<sup>79</sup> this is not an adequate characterization. Since terrorist groups desire to incite fear as a way to achieve their ultimate goal or goals, the most effective and efficient way to do so is to attack areas, people, and cities of great prestige and significance. Thus, these attacks may be calculated, but appear to be random, further inciting fear into the state and civilian population. Robert Pape touches on this with specific reference to suicide terrorism, a tactic frequently employed by Boko Haram. He states:

The vast majority of suicide terrorist attacks are not isolated or random acts by individual fanatics, but rather, occur in clusters as part of a larger campaign, by an organized group to achieve a specific political goal... The strategic logic of suicide terrorism is specifically designed to coerce modern democracies to make significant concessions to national self determination.<sup>80</sup>

This tactic is effective because it creates an atmosphere of uncertainty; the population fears that an attack could occur at any time or place.

Also related to the logic of terrorism is the formation of terrorist groups. In order to better understand Boko Haram, it is necessary to look at how traditional terrorist groups typically form. Since this requires a much bigger conversation, including the capacity of states, this discussion will take place in Chapter 2: The Rise.

### **The goals of terrorism**

The goals of terrorism are the “ultimate desires”<sup>81</sup> that terrorist groups hope to achieve. Although these groups must have political objectives, they can also have religious, social, and economic goals. Some of these are detailed in the table below.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, New York, NY: Basic Books, 1977.

<sup>80</sup> Robert A. Pape, “The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism,” *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 3 (2003): 344.

<sup>81</sup> Kydd and Water, 52.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid*, 53.

Table 2: Goals of Terrorism

Goal	Definition	Political Objective	Social Objective	Economic Objective	Religious Objective
Regime Change	Desire the overthrow of a government. Seek to replace it with supporters of the terrorist group, the terrorist group itself, or those similar to the terrorist group.	X			
Territorial Change	Desire the establishment of a new state, to join another state, or take territory away from the state/government.	X			
Policy Change	Desire a change in a state actor or a state actor's policy.	X	X	X	X (Sometimes)
Social Control	Constrains the behavior of individuals, rather than the state.	X	X		X (Sometimes)
Status Quo Maintenance	Support for an existing regime or a territorial arrangement against political groups that seek to change it.	X	X		

Adapted from Andrew H Kydd and Barabara F. Walter, "The Strategies of Terrorism," *International Security*, 31, no.1 (2006).

It is also important to note that these goals are not mutually exclusive, as terrorist groups can have several, or even all, of the above goals.

In order to figure out the goals of a terrorist group, it is necessary to observe their rhetoric and actions. For example, it is clear that Daesh aims for regime, policy, and territorial change, as well as social control. They desire to establish an Islamic Caliphate throughout the world and seek to eliminate Western influence in the Middle East. This is evident through their online magazine and videos that show killings and anti-Western messages. Some other terrorist groups include The United Self-Defense Forces of Columbia, who desire regime change and status quo maintenance, and Al-Qaeda, who seeks regime, territorial, and policy change.<sup>83</sup>

### **Strategies that terrorist groups employ**

Strategies are specific actions that terrorist groups take in order to achieve their broader goals. Although specific methods differ from group-to-group, Kydd and Walter have compiled

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid, 55.

five overarching strategies that terrorist groups typically utilize. They are displayed in the table below.<sup>84</sup>

*Table 3: Terrorist Group Strategies*

Strategy	Aim
Attrition	Used to persuade the enemy that the terrorists are strong enough to impose considerable costs if the enemy continues a particular policy.
Intimidation	Used to convince the civilian population that terrorists are strong enough to punish disobedience and that the government is too weak to stop them, so that people behave as terrorists wish.
Provocation	Occurs when terrorists target their own population. Used to induce the enemy to respond to terrorism with indiscriminate violence, which radicalizes the population and moves them to support the terrorists.
Spoiling	Used to persuade the enemy that moderates on the terrorists' side are weak and untrustworthy.
Outbidding	Used to convince the public that terrorists have greater resolve to fight the enemy than rival groups, and therefore are worthy of support.

Adapted from Andrew H Kydd and Barabara F. Walter, "The Strategies of Terrorism," *International Security*, 31, no.1 (2006).

Each of the above strategies is effective in its own way. Attrition forces the countries that are targeted by the terrorists to conduct a cost/benefit analysis to see if the costs of fighting the terrorist group will be too large to incur. These costs could be a multitude of things, such as economic burden, human lives, cohesiveness of the state, and "state level of interest."<sup>85</sup>

Ultimately, terrorist groups hope that this strategy will cause the state, person, or population to accede to its demands. Groups that utilize the strategy of intimidation must effectively prove that they are capable of harming civilians. Boko Haram has done this through episodes of mass violence, suicide bombings, and kidnappings. Provocation is perhaps the most morally problematic strategy since it involves directly harming civilians, whereas spoiling is the most politically sophisticated technique, because it is designed to undermine potential peace resolutions between the two actors. Finally, outbidding involves "winning" over the civilian population by portraying their adversaries as weak. It is imperative that actors fighting terrorist

<sup>84</sup> Ibid, 51.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid, 60.

groups recognize the strategy being employed so that they respond wisely. If this is not done, then these actors could unintentionally further legitimize the terrorist group by responding in the manner that the group desires.

Of these strategies, Boko Haram most commonly employs intimidation, provocation, and spoiling. By viciously attacking their fellow citizens, regardless of creed, age, and sex, Boko Haram aims to show the population of Nigeria that they are in control. Although it may not increase support for the group, it does cause citizens to follow the group, due to fear of provocation. In addition, since the Nigerian Government has not been cohesive in their response to Boko Haram, some citizens have turned to the group out of frustration. Once this occurs, Boko Haram then convinces these followers that moderate Muslims, Christians, and the Nigerian Government, are enemies of Allah.

### **Terrorist group longevity**

In her research, Audrey Cronin claims that “modern terrorist groups don’t last long” and that “more than half disappear within 10 years.”<sup>86</sup> While it is difficult to address the accuracy of this claim, past research indicates that a variety of characteristics contribute to the prolonged life expectancy of terrorist groups. Perhaps the most important characteristic is the groups’ political affiliation. According to Cronin, terrorist groups can be categorized as having one of the following political affiliations: right wing, left wing, or ethnonationalist.<sup>87</sup> Religious fundamentalist groups are not included in her research, since the dominance of contemporary religious terrorism began in the early 1990’s.<sup>88</sup> However, she does state that these groups have an

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<sup>86</sup> Audrey Kurth Cronin, “How al-Qaida ends: The decline and demise of terrorist groups,” *International Security* 31, no. 1 (2006): 13.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Gaibulloev and Sandler, 29.

“inherent staying power of spiritually based motivations.”<sup>89</sup> Gaibullov and Sandler agree with the notion that “religious fundamentalist terrorist groups pose a greater challenge to the existing order [than other types of terrorist groups].”<sup>90</sup> This is because they are the least likely to join the political process, compared to right wing, left wing, and ethnonationalist terrorist groups.<sup>91</sup> Of these three classifications, Cronin believes that ethnonationalist terrorist groups have the longest average life span since they have “support from [the] local populace of the same ethnicity for the groups['] political or territorial objective.”<sup>92</sup>

Brian Phillips agrees with this notion and provides further insight into the longevity of terrorist groups. He claims that larger terrorist groups with violent rivalries are more likely to be successful. His rationale is that violent rivalries increase the life expectancy of terrorist groups by “encouraging civilians to pick a side to support, fomenting innovation, providing additional incentives to group members, and spoiling peace talks.”<sup>93</sup> Matthew Levitt agrees and even states that the relationships between terrorist groups are what make international terrorism so deadly,<sup>94</sup> which is further reason to be concerned about the relationship between Boko Haram and Daesh.

In addition to violent rivalries, location plays a role in the longevity of terrorist groups. Gaibullov and Sanders assert that terrorist groups in Sub-Saharan Africa “are more inclined to end by joining the political process than those based in the Middle East and North Africa.”<sup>95</sup> This finding suggests that “base country elevation and jungles”<sup>96</sup> contribute to an increased group life

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<sup>89</sup> Cronin, 13.

<sup>90</sup> Gaibullov and Sandler, 29.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid, 37.

<sup>92</sup> Cronin, 13.

<sup>93</sup> Brian J. Phillips, “Enemies with benefits? Violent rivalry and terrorist group longevity,” *Journal of Peace Research* 52, no.1 (2015): 63.

<sup>94</sup> Matthew Levitt, “Untangling the terror web: Identifying and counteracting the phenomenon of crossover between terrorist groups,” *SAIS Review of International Affairs* 24, no. 1 (2004): 34.

<sup>95</sup> Gaibullov and Sandler, 36.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

expectancy, since the terrain presents terrorists with opportunities to hide against military adversaries.<sup>97</sup> Thus, groups with multiple bases of operation are more likely to have increased longevity.<sup>98</sup>

Based on the above classifications, Boko Haram, by its very nature, poses a significant threat to Nigeria. With its location in Sub-Saharan Africa, tumultuous relationship with Daesh, and label as a religious fundamentalist group, past research suggests that Boko Haram may be a formidable foe to the Nigerian Government for years to come.

### ***How terrorist groups typically end***

Past research, although sparse, indicates that certain occurrences and actions contribute to the demise of terrorist groups. For example, religious groups are less likely to join the political process, since members are less likely to compromise on religious matters.<sup>99</sup> In addition, groups that have regime change, empire construction, and social revolution as their end goals are typically less inclined to join the political process.<sup>100</sup> Audrey Cronin also examines how terrorist groups end and presents seven critical elements that lead to their demise. These seven elements can be external or internal and are the:<sup>101</sup> capture or killing of a leader, failure to transition to the next generation, achievement of the group's aim, transition to a legitimate political process, undermining of popular support, repression, and transition from terrorism to other forms of violence.

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<sup>97</sup> This is especially relevant to this thesis because the United Nations characterizes Nigeria as being part of Sub-Saharan Africa. ("About Sub-Saharan Africa: Africa at a turning point," United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Africa, <http://www.africa.undp.org/content/rba/en/home/regioninfo.html>.)

<sup>98</sup> Ibid, 30.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid, 27.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Cronin, 17.

When a leader is captured or killed, it “provides critical insight into the depth and nature of the group’s popular support and usually represents a turning point.”<sup>102</sup> However, Cronin says that this could actually “backfire by creating increased publicity for the group’s cause and perhaps [make] the leader a martyr who will attract new members to the organization.”<sup>103</sup> Regarding the failure to transition, “the internal process that occurs during the transition from first- to second-generation terrorist leaders is very sensitive,”<sup>104</sup> which is why it can end a group. In addition, some terrorist groups dissipate when they believe that their main goal has been met. Since terrorism aims at a political goal, “the opening of negotiations can be a catalyst for the decline or end of terrorist groups, potentially engendering a range of effects.”<sup>105</sup> Cronin, like Gaibullov and Sandler, also believes that “a common effect of political processes is the splintering of groups into factions that support the negotiations (or their outcome) and those that do not.”<sup>106</sup> Thus, it could actually be beneficial for countries to begin political negotiations with certain terrorist groups, as it could accelerate their demise. Furthermore, Cronin asserts, “terrorist groups generally cannot survive without either active or passive support from a surrounding population.”<sup>107</sup> However, this statement is misleading because it makes the assumption that the population supports the goals of terrorist groups and even encourages them to carry out violence against their targets. Furthermore, it is not applicable to the majority of contemporary terrorist groups. For example, the majority of Muslims in Syria and Iraq do not support Daesh and are diligently fighting for their defeat. The same can be said for Boko Haram in Nigeria, who employ particularly barbaric tactics. Lastly, repression (military force) and other existing threats

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid, 18.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid, 22.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid, 24.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid, 25.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid, 27.

may encourage terrorist groups to turn to “criminal behavior or more classic conventional warfare.”<sup>108</sup> If this occurs, then these groups would cease being considered terrorist groups and would take on new classifications.

### **Responses to international and domestic terrorism**

The rise of terrorism (both international and domestic) demands a response from the international community, as well as individual nation-states. Yet, although terrorism has become such a prevalent, modern political tool, there is still uncertainty as to how these actors should respond. This uncertainty is largely due to the concept of responsibility. For each terrorist group, the situation must be assessed to determine whether it is the responsibility of the state, the international community, or both, to deal with the group. In the case of Boko Haram, this thesis will argue that it is both the state and the international community’s responsibility. For this reason, state reactions to international and domestic terrorism must be addressed.

Regarding international terrorism, it is difficult for the international community to create a comprehensive, purposeful course of action. One explanation is because the “world community [is] ideologically divided for and against the terrorists.”<sup>109</sup> Paul Wilkinson believes that these ideological divisions hamper international coalitions against terrorism since some states view terrorism as a “legitimate, even heroic”<sup>110</sup> political tool. A more plausible explanation is the international community’s inability to agree over political issues, such as the extent to which to United Nations should intervene in domestic affairs, conflicting views on economic policy, and different conceptions of nonintervention. These differing views make it exceptionally difficult to form effective international coalitions. However, despite these difficulties, the United Nations

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid, 31.

<sup>109</sup> Paul Wilkinson, “Terrorism: The International Response,” *The World Today* 34, no.1 (1978): 9.

<sup>110</sup> These states are typically considered state terrorists, or rogue states, and include North Korea, Iran, Iraq, and Libya.

has successfully passed counter-terrorism resolutions. The most comprehensive resolution is the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which was adopted in September of 2006.<sup>111</sup> This resolution is significant, as it was the first time that the General Assembly agreed upon a “common strategic and operational approach to fight terrorism.”<sup>112</sup> It is reviewed and amended every two years, and has four main pillars: identify the conditions that allow terrorism to thrive, establish measures that directly combat terrorism, create measures that build state capacity and strengthen the United Nations, and ensure human rights for all people.<sup>113</sup>

Like the international community, individual nation-states have a difficult time responding to the growing threat of international terrorism. They must anticipate and continuously thwart attacks, typically through the use of intelligence systems. These systems, Wilkinson states, are “an essential requirement for combating international terrorism...[and] time and again it is top quality intelligence that has enabled security forces to act in time to foil a terrorist attack before it can take place.”<sup>114</sup>

Whereas the international community typically addresses international terrorism, domestic terrorism is handled by the host-country. This perception, that domestic terrorism should be remedied by the affected nation-state, typically leads to a hands-off approach by the international community. Their belief is that terrorist-ridden states typically lack effective intelligence systems, credible court of laws/judicial systems, and “open dialogue between minority and majority groups.”<sup>115</sup> As a result, it is widely believed that nation-states must address their

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<sup>111</sup> United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, “UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy,” United Nations, <https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/ctitf/en/un-global-counter-terrorism-strategy>.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Wilkinson, 11.

<sup>115</sup> Portland State University, Criminology and Criminal Justice Senior Capstone, “Domestic Terrorism: A Review of the Literature,” (2013): 8.

internal shortcomings in order to effectively counter domestic terrorism. However, this view can be exceptionally dangerous because it could lead the international community to delay intervention in a state, even when it is necessary. This occurred during the Rwandan Genocide when the United Nations and member states failed to intervene and stop the ethnic cleansing of the Tutsi. Thus, when a state is incapable of fixing the economic, political, or social problems that are fueling terrorist groups, international intervention may be warranted.

As previously stated, the international community typically does not respond to domestic terrorism. This type of terrorism rarely elicits an international response, due to the norms of non-intervention and sovereignty. These norms discourage the international community from intervening in a state, unless human rights violations are taking place or the host-state clearly asks for assistance. Yet even when these do occur, it does not guarantee a response from the international community. Overall, this lack of action can be detrimental to the host-state, the international community, and the civilian population involved.

### ***Overview of Boko Haram***

Boko Haram,<sup>116</sup> which translates to “Western civilization is haram,”<sup>117</sup> is a radical Islamic terrorist group that was established in the Nigerian state of Borno in 2002.<sup>118</sup> Its founder and first leader was Muhammad Yusuf, “an Islamic theologian trained in the Salafi strand of Islam.”<sup>119</sup> Yusuf’s views became the ideology of Boko Haram, which can be summed up as the “opposition

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<sup>116</sup> It is important to note that the group does not refer to itself as Boko Haram, but Jama’atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda’awati Wal-Jihad, which translates to “people committed to the propagation of the Prophet’s teachings and jihad.” (Mohammed Aly Sergie, and Toni Johnson, “Boko Haram,” Council on Foreign Relations, last modified March 5, 2015, <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/boko-haram>).

<sup>117</sup> The definition of haram is “forbidden by Islamic law” (“Haram,” *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11<sup>th</sup> ed., (Springfield, Massachusetts: Merriam-Webster, 2003), <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/haram>).

<sup>118</sup> Pieri and Zenn, 71.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

to the totality of Western culture upon which its educational system is founded.”<sup>120</sup> This ideology translates into Boko Haram’s main goals, which include the “establishment of a socio-political system based on its conception of the traditional Islamic model,”<sup>121</sup> the creation of “[a] system of education based purely on the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah as understood by the earliest generation of Muslims (*Salafs*),”<sup>122</sup> and an economic system characterized by trading and farming instead of capitalism.<sup>123</sup> The group has declared war on its enemies, which include anyone who opposes their teachings or beliefs, including the Nigerian Government, state forces (i.e. police), and the civilian population (i.e. Muslims, Christians, etc.).

The group carried out small-scale attacks against Nigerian security officials until July of 2009.<sup>124</sup> During that month, the group had an exceptionally violent exchange with Nigerian Government officials, which led to the death of Muhammad Yusuf by state police forces. His successor, Abukar Shekau, was enraged by Yusuf’s death and stated that Boko Haram had “the intention to retaliate.”<sup>125</sup> In the years that followed, the group carried out attacks against the state of Nigeria and rose to international prominence after its 2014 kidnapping of over 250 Chibok schoolgirls.<sup>126</sup> This incident sparked international condemnation and the creation of the #BringBackOurGirls social media campaign. As a result, the United States deployed “80 members of its armed forces to Chad [to help look for the girls],”<sup>127</sup> and “Canada, France, Israel

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<sup>120</sup> Hakeem Onapajo and Ufo Okeke Uzodike, “Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria: Man, the state, and the International System,” *African Security Review* 21, no. 3 (2012): 27.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>124</sup> Roman Loimeier, “Boko Haram: The Development of a Militant Religious Movement in Nigeria,” *Africa Spectrum* 47, no. 2/3 (2012): 150.

<sup>125</sup> Onapajo and Uzodike, 30.

<sup>126</sup> Pieri and Zenn, 72.

<sup>127</sup> U.S. troops were pulled out several weeks later due to an unsuccessful retrieval campaign. They were replaced with intelligence efforts. (Charlotte Alfred, “Remember #BringBackOurGirls? This Is What Has Happened In The 5 Months Since,” *The Huffington Post*, last modified September 19, 2014, [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/09/14/nigeria-girls-kidnapped-5-months\\_n\\_5791622.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/09/14/nigeria-girls-kidnapped-5-months_n_5791622.html)).

and the U.K. sent special forces to Nigeria.”<sup>128</sup> These efforts were largely unsuccessful and in 2015, Boko Haram further gained the attention of the international community when it pledged allegiance to Daesh, who now refer to the group as the “Islamic State’s West Africa Province.”<sup>129</sup> This alliance raises concerns over the sophistication and capabilities of Boko Haram, which the international community should not ignore.

The final issue that must be addressed is the classification of Boko Haram. This thesis considers the group to be a domestic terrorist group with regional aims of destabilization and political change. However, although Boko Haram may not have cells operating in Europe or around the world, their global impact is still significant. With their intention of becoming a regional influencer, global interests, allies, and people, may very well find themselves under attack by Boko Haram. Thus, while they may currently be a domestic problem, the international community should be watching.

### **Conclusion**

After looking at past research on terrorism, it is clear that Boko Haram warrants further studying. First, the conditions that gave rise to the group must be identified, so that Nigeria can effectively prevent another group from following in Boko Haram’s footsteps. Second, the concept of responsibility must be discussed; specifically, whether it is the sole responsibility of the Nigerian Government, the international community, or both, to dismantle the terrorist group. Finally, domestic and international response to the insurgency should be critically analyzed. If there is to be any hope at eradicating Boko Haram and preventing future terrorist uprisings in the state, then Nigeria must have a cohesive, coordinated response that targets Boko Haram at its source. If this is not done, then Boko Haram will continue to exist, and potentially continue

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<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> Pieri and Zenn, 67.

expanding, for years to come. Ultimately, this study seeks answers to the questions stated above and to truly understand Boko Haram and the threat they pose.

## Chapter 2: The Rise

The rise of Boko Haram can be attributed to three main factors: Nigeria's weak state capacity, the politicization of religion, and their relationship with other terrorist organizations (specifically, Al-Qaeda, Daesh, and Al-Shabab). Some of these factors can be traced back to the colonial era, which has had clear, lasting influences in Nigeria, while others go back a few years or decades. Ultimately, this chapter aims to counteract the notion that Boko Haram's creation in Nigeria was unpredictable and firmly argues that the emergence of the group is unsurprising when taking these factors into consideration.

### Factor 1: Weak State Capacity

A weakened state rarely prospers. "State capacity is one of the defining characteristics of any political system [and can be defined as] the ability of a government to administer its territory effectively."<sup>130</sup> States characterized as being weak are "inherently weak because of geographical, physical, or fundamental economic constraints."<sup>131</sup> They are "basically strong, but temporarily or situationally weak because of internal antagonisms, management flaws, greed, despotism, or external attacks."<sup>132</sup> Furthermore, weak states tend to "harbor ethnic, religious, linguistic, or other inter-communal tensions" and have increasing urban crime rates, as well as large levels of "venal corruption."<sup>133</sup> Having a weak state capacity is exceptionally dangerous because it can create a power vacuum in which nonstate actors gain influence, following, and power in the afflicted area; this is evident in Iraq and Syria with Daesh. In Nigeria, this weak state capacity is due to colonialism and poor post-colonial governance, which led to the creation, and subsequent rise, of Boko Haram.

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<sup>130</sup> Andrew G. Walder., ed. *The Waning of the Communist State: Economic Origins of Political Decline in China and Hungary*, University of California Press, 1995, 89.

<sup>131</sup> Robert I. Rotberg, *Failed States, Collapsed States, Weak States: Causes and Indicators*, 2003, 4.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

*Colonialism in Africa*

The modern political geography of Africa can be traced back to the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885, which “laid down the rules for the European partition of the African continent”<sup>134</sup> and divided the country into different spheres of influence. During this conference, arbitrary boundaries were drawn throughout the continent without any regard to the diverse ethnic, religious, and cultural groups that were suddenly amalgamated. At the end of the conference, each colonial power had a different sphere of influence. Great Britain controlled a variety of territories stretching from South Africa to Northern Rhodesia (Zambia).<sup>135</sup> Germany had territories in Southwest and East Africa, including modern-day Cameroon, Tanzania, and Togo, while Italy claimed Somaliland and part of Ethiopia.<sup>136</sup> Spain received Equatorial Guinea, Portugal controlled Malawi and Zimbabwe in Southern Africa, and Belgium claimed what is now the Democratic Republic of Congo.<sup>137</sup> However, these spheres of influence paled in comparison to that of the French, which controlled countries such as Burkina Faso, Senegal, Mali, and Niger (French West Africa), as well as Gabon and the Central African Republic (French Equatorial Africa).<sup>138</sup>

As a result, the continent was comprised of countries that were a myriad of “grotesque shapes and varied sizes.”<sup>139</sup> Countries, such as Mali, were “so large and diverse that effective government becomes difficult,” while countries like Burundi were “too small to make viable

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<sup>134</sup> Ieuan Griffiths, “The Scramble for Africa: Inherited Political Boundaries,” *The Geographical Journal*, July 1986: 204.

<sup>135</sup> Saul David, “Slavery and the 'Scramble for Africa,’” BBC News, February 17, 2011, [http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/abolition/scramble\\_for\\_africa\\_article\\_01.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/abolition/scramble_for_africa_article_01.shtml).

<sup>136</sup> “125 years of the Berlin Conference,” Modern Ghana, 2010, <https://www.modernghana.com/news/266087/125-years-of-the-berlin-conference.html>.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> Griffiths, 204.

economic markets and are below the threshold of any possible industries.”<sup>140</sup> The lasting effects of this decision can still be felt in Africa today.

*Colonialism and the creation of Nigeria*

Although it was not carved from the Berlin Conference, the impacts of colonialism on Nigeria help explain many of its modern-day problems, including Boko Haram. As Ambassador John Campbell states, “Nigeria has danced on the brink [of state failure] from the very beginning.”<sup>141</sup> Prior to the British annexation of Nigeria in 1861,<sup>142</sup> there were a succession of ethnic empires, including the Hausa-Fulani and Yoruba, two of Nigeria’s largest ethnic groups.<sup>143</sup> However, the most recent ethnic empire to rule Nigeria was the Sokoto Caliphate,<sup>144</sup> a powerful Islamic Caliphate that is thought to have been one of the “largest slaveholding [empire’s].”<sup>145</sup> The Caliphate was created in 1804 by the Hausa-Fulani ethnic group and was run by the Sultan of Sokoto,<sup>146</sup> which was, and still is, the highest Muslim position in all of Nigeria. The Sokoto Caliphate ruled until its defeat by the British in 1903.<sup>147</sup>

In 1861, the British annexed Lagos and made it a royal colony for commercial interests, primarily palm oil.<sup>148</sup> Modern Nigeria came into existence in 1914, when the British forcefully amalgamated “three disparate, but adjacent territories...that [were] acquired over a century.”<sup>149</sup> These territories, referred to as blocks, included: Lagos and Yorubaland,<sup>150</sup> the Oil Rivers

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<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Campbell 2013, 2.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>144</sup> Audu Mohammed S., and Osuala Uzoma Samuel, “The British Conquest and Resistance of Sokoto Caliphate, 1897- 1903: Crisis, Conflicts and Resistance,” *Historical Research Letter* 22 (2015): 39.

<sup>145</sup> Campbell 2013, 3.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>147</sup> Audu and Samuel, 42.

<sup>148</sup> Campbell 2013, 2.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid, 1.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid, 4.

Protectorate,<sup>151</sup> and the Middle Belt and the North, which came from the defeat of the Sokoto Caliphate.<sup>152</sup> These blocks were vastly different and were amalgamated by the British with blatant disregard to the 250+ indigenous groups<sup>153</sup> that resided throughout these territories.<sup>154</sup> Prior to amalgamation, there was no “overarching cultural unity” amongst the different ethnic groups.<sup>155</sup> Hence, the British’s desire for a unified Nigeria was a failure from the very beginning. The country of Nigeria, as well as a Nigerian national identity, “are British creations without indigenous roots.”<sup>156</sup>

In an effort to keep the costs of their colony low<sup>157</sup> and deal with the diversity present in each of the three blocks, the British decided on a “divide-and-rule” policy.<sup>158</sup> With this policy, the British governed Nigeria as two separate entities,<sup>159</sup> with indirect rule in the North (the Middle Belt and the North block) and direct rule in the South (Lagos and Yorubaland and the Oil Rivers Protectorate block). The British decided on a policy of indirect rule in the North because they wanted to preserve the Sokoto Caliphate’s traditional Islamic institutions.<sup>160</sup> This was likely done to appease the various ethnic and Islamic groups that were deeply associated with the Caliphate. As a result, they discouraged and informally banned Christian missionaries from coming to the territory and “recognized traditional Islamic Sharia law.”<sup>161</sup> Overall, this type of

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<sup>151</sup> The British acquired this block in 1878 when the Congress of Berlin recognized British occupation of the area, which was the epicenter of palm oil (Campbell 2013, 3).

<sup>152</sup> British motives for Northern conquest were commercial, strategic, and altruistic (Ibid).

<sup>153</sup> Nigeria has the largest number of ethnic groups in all of Africa (Ibid, 4).

<sup>154</sup> Melvin Leslie Mbao and Olusegun Michael Osinibi, “Confronting the Problems of Colonialism, Ethnicity and the Nigerian Legal System: The need for a Paradigm Shift,” *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences* 5, no.27 (December 2014): 169.

<sup>155</sup> Campbell 2013, 1.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> Unlike other British colonies, such as Kenya, there was little physical British presence in Nigeria (Ibid, 4).

<sup>158</sup> Mbao and Osinibi, 169.

<sup>159</sup> Campbell 2013, 3.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

rule actually ended up disserving Northern Nigeria by preserving its pre-colonial and pre-modern society, where there was little Western education and eventually, technological underdevelopment.<sup>162</sup> On the contrary, Southern Nigeria was introduced to Western institutions and structures. Christianity was also widely adopted and missionaries “promoted modern education and business practices that led to comparative prosperity...[and allowed people] to become small traders and mechanics.”<sup>163</sup> This created ethnic resentment, as the Yorubaland and Oil Rivers blocks “increasingly became part of the modern world, while the North remained largely pre-modern and apart.”<sup>164</sup>

In an attempt to respond to Nigeria’s multiethnic reality, the British eventually moved towards a system of federation.<sup>165</sup> This federation was based on the three initial blocks and was divided into the following regions: The North (capital in Kaduna, dominated by the Hausa-Fulani ethnic group), the East (capital at Enugu and dominated by the Igbo ethnic group), and the West (capital at Ibadan and dominated by the Yoruba ethnic group).<sup>166</sup> Lagos had a special status from these blocks and was considered the overall “political and commercial capital [of Nigeria].”<sup>167</sup> Although each region, and Lagos, had substantial autonomy, this decision by the British had the “unintended consequence of ratifying the preeminence of the three big ethnic groups at the expense of the numerous minority tribes.”<sup>168</sup>

Post WWI and WWII, there began to be talks of Nigerian independence from Britain, particularly in the South. The North was much less receptive to the idea of independence because

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<sup>162</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

they were fearful of “domination by the more economically advanced and modern South.”<sup>169</sup> In 1960, the British Government declared that it was within its national interest to withdraw from their African colonies.<sup>170</sup> In reality, this decision was likely due to the “winds of change inimical to colonialism,” the Cold War, and the “rapid growth of independence agitation in the Gold Coast.”<sup>171</sup> Regardless of the reason, the British announced that they wanted to pursue an independence process that would:

“Generate maximum Nigerian goodwill...and protect British economic and security interests. Its goal was a government structure that took into account, and was acceptable to, the Big Three and the myriad of smaller ethnic groups. The final constitutional arrangements also recognized the profound cultural differences between the North and the rest of the country.”<sup>172</sup>

Thus, the “Nigeria Project” emerged, which was comprised of British and indigenous elites.<sup>173</sup>

Their vision was:

“A huge nation of numerous ethnic groups and religions united by democracy, pursuit of economic development, governance according to the rule of law, and the occupation of an important place on the world stage... They intended for a friendly Nigeria to provide Africans with a seat at the table with other great powers.”<sup>174</sup>

The first concrete step in the “Nigeria Project” was the Federal Character, which was created to resolve “the problems of marginalization, disparity in socio-economic development and education standards of different areas of Nigeria”<sup>175</sup> that were the results of British colonialism. It sought to provide equal access to all Nigerian citizens in public-sector employment, federal offices, and natural resources,<sup>176</sup> and eventually became the fundamental law in Nigeria. Yet,

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<sup>169</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid. The Gold Coast, modern day Ghana, was another territory colonized by the British in Africa.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

<sup>173</sup> Campbell 2013, 5.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

<sup>175</sup> Mbaog and Osinibi, 170.

<sup>176</sup> Campbell 2013, 6.

even after the Federal Character's implementation, the country remained ethnically and regionally united, as opposed to nationally.<sup>177</sup>

On October 1, 1960, Nigeria achieved independence.<sup>178</sup> And in 1963, it became a republic with Nnamdi Azikiwe<sup>179</sup> as its first President.<sup>180</sup> Many Nigerians refer to this time, the late 1950's to the early 1960's, as the Golden Age due to the country's increasing economic and material development, thanks to oil and gas reserves.<sup>181</sup> However, this all changed in 1966 when a multitude of military coups began.<sup>182</sup> By 1967, the country was unraveling due to "unresolved ethnic rivalries combined with competition for spoils that the new [political] system could not contain."<sup>183</sup> During this time, military coups were still occurring; many Northern and Western leaders were murdered. Other Nigerians suspected the Igbo people, which resulted in widespread retaliatory killings of the Igbo and Christians that lived in the North.<sup>184</sup> As a result, the Igbo's fled back to Igboland, seceded, and then established the "independent, predominately Christian state of Biafra."<sup>185</sup> This sparked the Nigerian Civil War, which lasted from 1967-1970.<sup>186</sup> It was fought between Biafra, led by General Ojukwu, and Nigeria, led by General Yakubu Gowon.<sup>187</sup> During the Civil War, Nigeria was supported by the UK, USA, and the Soviet Union, although these countries tried to "minimize their official involvement,"<sup>188</sup> while Biafra received some assistance from France, Portugal, and South Africa.<sup>189</sup> The War ended in 1970 with General

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<sup>177</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid, 6.

<sup>179</sup> Nnamdi Azikiwe was an Igbo (Ibid, 7).

<sup>180</sup> Ibid, 6.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid, 6.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid, 6.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid, 7.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

Gowon of Nigeria conquering Biafra; it is estimated that 500,000 – 1 million people were killed through its entirety.<sup>190</sup> Shortly after, Gowon promoted reconciliation through his “no winners, no losers campaign;”<sup>191</sup> however, an “unspoken consensus [emerged] that no Igbo could ever [again] be the chief of state.”<sup>192</sup>

After the Civil War, Nigeria ventured into a new phase filled with corruption and instability. And in an effort to manage the numerous religious and ethnic conflicts, leaders began creating new states; there are now 36.<sup>193</sup> In 1985, another military coup occurred, led by General Ibrahim Bahangida, which established diplomatic ties with Israel and joined the Organization of the Islamic Conference.<sup>194</sup> The ensuing years consisted of more coups and violent military rulers, until 1998. During this year, the Fourth Republic was established and the President became ostensibly civilian, instead of military.<sup>195</sup> The Fourth Republic is still the current structure of the Nigerian Government and established equal legislative, executive, and judicial branches with over 774 local government authorities.<sup>196</sup> International leaders praised this, yet despite the country officially returning to democratic rule in 1999,<sup>197</sup> not much has changed since overt military rule.

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<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid, 8.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid, 10.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid, 9.

<sup>197</sup> Ayo Awopeju, Olufemi Adelus, and Ajinde Oluwashakin, “Zoning Formula and the Party Politics in Nigerian Democracy: a Crossroad for PDP in 2015 Presidential Election,” *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences* 2, no. 4 (2012): 14.

### Effects of Colonialism on Nigerian State Capacity

From its inception, Nigeria was systemically disadvantaged due to its forced amalgamation by the British into an un-unified state.<sup>198</sup> The long-term effects of colonialism on Nigerian state capacity included an increase in ethnic and religious conflicts, the institutionalization of ethnic rivalry,<sup>199</sup> and mass discrepancies between the Northern and Southern regions. By governing via divide and rule, the British effectively pitted the different ethnic groups against each other, which furthered “inter-ethno-religious suspicion, residential segregation and antagonism among various communal groups...[This eventually led to] strong regional affiliations and loyalty,”<sup>200</sup> as opposed to national loyalty. Thus, Nigeria is effectively a “‘mere geographical expression,’ not a nation.”<sup>201</sup> As a result, ethnic groups must fight against government marginalization.<sup>202</sup> This has caused citizens to have a “receptive disposition towards the use of force or violence as a means of securing one’s group interests,”<sup>203</sup> which is evident in the dozens of military coups that ensued in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### Failure of the Nigerian Government

Although colonialism disadvantaged Nigeria from its inception and led to the government institutions that we see today, research suggests that the Nigerian Government could have prevented at least some of its modern problems.<sup>204</sup> In particular, had the Government not turned towards corruption and kleptocracy shortly after Nigeria gained its independence, then a

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<sup>198</sup> I would argue that a state cannot fully modernize and progress unless there is some semblance of cohesion among its people.

<sup>199</sup> Mbao and Osinibi, 174.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid, 169.

<sup>201</sup> Campbell 2013, 3.

<sup>202</sup> Mbao and Osinibi, 172.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid, 170.

<sup>204</sup> Ibid, 171.

different state may exist today. For this reason, the poor governance of Nigeria must be addressed.

### 1. *Corruption and kleptocracy*

As previously mentioned, Nigeria has historically been plagued by “obscene corruption perpetuated by government officials.”<sup>205</sup> Since the country began tapping into its oil reserves in the 1950’s, a “tiny elite benefitted from the country’s oil wealth... which [has stunted] broad economic and social development.”<sup>206</sup> This continued post-Civil War and led to the “self enrichment of individual military officers [, which was] made possible by immense oil revenues combined with weak institutions of governance little accountable to the public.”<sup>207</sup> This led to rampant inequality between citizens and elites in Nigeria. Thus, despite Nigeria becoming so wealthy, corruption has made its “income distribution among the most unequal in the world.”<sup>208</sup>

### 2. *Political instability*

In Nigeria, the law is seen as being a “political instrument for achieving political gains by the elites.”<sup>209</sup> This fosters mass distrust between citizens and the Government by making people feel that political offices have no accountability to the public. Furthermore, the political instability of Nigeria is made worse by the Government’s lack of transparency, particularly during elections. Perhaps the best example of this is the 1999 Presidential election, where President Obasanjo was accused of “massive rigging.”<sup>210</sup> This did not meet the “minimum standards for democratic elections” and was “marred by serious irregularities and fraud [in at least 11 states].”<sup>211</sup> These included “ballot box stuffing, changing of results, falsification of result sheets, ballot box snatching”<sup>212</sup> and accounts of underage citizens/young children voting.<sup>213</sup>

### 3. *Wavering economy*

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<sup>205</sup> Ibid, 172.

<sup>206</sup> Campbell 2013, 10.

<sup>207</sup> Ibid, 8.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid, 12.

<sup>209</sup> Mohammed Nuruddeen Suleiman, and Mohammed Aminul Karim, “Cycle of Bad Governance and Corruption: The Rise of Boko Haram in Nigeria,” *Sage Open*, 2015: 6.

<sup>210</sup> Campbell 2013, 9.

<sup>211</sup> European Union EU Election Observation Mission, *Nigeria Presidential and Gubernatorial Elections 2003, Second Preliminary Statement Presidential and Gubernatorial Elections Marred by Serious Irregularities and Fraud in Many States*, 2003.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid.

“The economic policies of the federal government are a reflection of the special interests who control it.”<sup>214</sup> Nigeria’s dependence on oil has made it vulnerable to the world oil market, “thereby reducing budgeting and long-term development plans into academic exercises.”<sup>215</sup> They are effectively “held hostage to the will of multinational oil companies whose position is strengthened by Nigeria’s lack of requisite technology to exploit her oil resources.”<sup>216</sup>

These three factors furthered historical divisions and inequality in Nigeria, and, unsurprisingly, led to widespread dissatisfaction amongst its many citizens. This dissatisfaction gave rise to feelings of animosity towards the Government and other Nigerians, which further devolved the country. What resulted was a “perfect storm” of anger and instability, particularly in the North, which Boko Haram subsequently took advantage of. The role of this dissatisfaction and anger is discussed in further detail below.

#### *How Boko Haram rose because of Nigeria’s weak state capacity*

The growing inequality in Nigeria and lack of basic needs has created a “massive vacuum in infrastructural development,” which, combined with poverty, poor governance, and state failure, have been shown to “provide a perfect breeding ground for militancy and subsequent instability.”<sup>217</sup>

Around 2007, Mohammed Yusuf, Boko Haram’s founder, began preaching about his strong disdain for the “inequitable political and economic system in Nigeria.”<sup>218</sup> He, along with many others, perceived this to be social injustice perpetuated by the ruling elites through the “mismanagement of the collective wealth of the nation.”<sup>219</sup> The President of the Civil Rights Congress in Nigeria addressed this topic in a 2011 speech:

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<sup>214</sup> Ibid, 17.

<sup>215</sup> Mbaio and Osinibi, 173.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid.

<sup>217</sup> Suleiman and Karim, 2.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>219</sup> Ibid.

“Yusuf took advantage of [the] poor quality of our educational system, the incessant strikes, and cult activities...the irresponsible leadership at all levels of government, unemployment, poverty, corruption, and insecurity. And as he pointed out such failures, citing verses of the Quran and saying of the prophet, the youths saw him as the leader who will indeed deliver them from malevolence into the Promised Land.”<sup>220</sup>

Yusuf was successful because ideology “has the strong capability to create social mobilization, and the group behind the mobilization can effectively exploit the frustrations in a society to promote its held beliefs.”<sup>221</sup> Thus, the “disgruntled population [of Nigeria]”<sup>222</sup> was fairly quick to accept the notion that the problems facing the nation were primarily due to Western civilization.

The next question that comes to mind is why Boko Haram rose in the northern portion of the country? The answer is fairly simple; Northern Nigeria has been the hardest hit in the entire country. The following factors have played a direct role:

### 1. *Poverty*

Northern Nigeria contains the majority of impoverished people in the country with over “73% of the population [living] in absolute poverty.”<sup>223</sup> With no food, many young Nigerians are joining Boko Haram due to “perceived social injustice by the ruling elite”<sup>224</sup> and the promise of “50 to 150 naira”<sup>225</sup> each [for their service to the group].<sup>226</sup> This is because “people who are poor...are prone and easy to be persuaded by people who could promise them anything.”<sup>227</sup> Thus, it logically follows that some people would partake in the violence of Boko Haram, even suicide bombings.

Furthermore, Northern Nigeria is very rich in solid mineral resources, yet these reserves remain largely untapped because of the country’s reliance on crude oil revenue<sup>228</sup> and the high capital and long-term investment that is necessary for the acquisition of mineral resources.<sup>229</sup> This is unsurprising considering political elites

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<sup>220</sup> Ibid.

<sup>221</sup> Ibid.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid.

<sup>224</sup> Ibid, 6.

<sup>225</sup> In terms of exchange rate, 150 nairas is less than one U.S. dollar (Central Bank of Nigeria, “CBN Exchange Rates,” 2017, <http://www.cbn.gov.ng/rates/exchratesbycurrency.asp>).

<sup>226</sup> Campbell 2013, 14.

<sup>227</sup> Suleiman and Karim, 6.

<sup>228</sup> Ibid, 7.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid.

“always prefer to invest in short-term project[s] that will yield a political profit, not necessarily as a dividend of democracy for the people.”<sup>230</sup> However, this doesn’t minimize the incredible detriment that it has had on their economy.

## 2. Lack of education

In 2012, Borno had a 14.5% literacy level, whereas Lagos (a Southern state) had 92%.<sup>231</sup> This discrepancy can be traced back to the colonial policy of divide-and-rule. In the North, most children in school were, and still are, focused on memorizing the Quran. Few graduate with the skills necessary to participate in a modern economy.<sup>232</sup> As a result, animosity towards Western education has increased because Northerners view it as a form of neocolonialism, dating back to the British. It is also seen as a way to perpetuate Southern control, and perceived superiority, over the North. Boko Haram was able to tap into this lack of education and resentment.

## 3. Unemployment

The Northern economy is largely based on agriculture and the mining of natural resources, with most of the population pursuing agricultural related careers.<sup>233</sup> However, these sectors have been in complete disarray for more than four decades because of “disbandment of regional governments, concentrating power in the central government; and almost total dependency on crude oil revenue.”<sup>234</sup> This dependence on oil has exacerbated tensions and increased resentment of the South because it is the main oil producing area of the country. Thus, unlike the North, the South benefits from Nigeria’s oil monopoly.

## 4. Lack of electricity

Many industries in Northern Nigeria have closed because of widespread power outages.<sup>235</sup> This has led to massive unemployment in the region, since large industries cannot function without electricity. As a result, a cycle is created where people who are laid off do not have the capital necessary to support smaller businesses, which eventually close due to lack of profit.<sup>236</sup>

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<sup>230</sup> Ibid.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>232</sup> Campbell 2013, 14.

<sup>233</sup> Suleiman and Karim, 7.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid.

## 5. *Political dissatisfaction*

Three political events can be attributed to the rise of Boko Haram in the North: the Presidency of Olusegun Obasanjo, the killing of Mohammad Yusuf, and the ending of zoning by President Goodluck Jonathan in 2011. The Presidency of Olusegun Obasanjo, specifically the years 1999-2000, was characterized by the dismissal of Northern political officeholders. This was viewed as “systematic marginalization of the North.”<sup>237</sup>

Years later, in 2009, Muhammad Yusuf was killed by Nigerian security forces, which marked “Boko Haram’s transformation from a peaceful to a violent movement.”<sup>238</sup> Yusuf’s successor, Abubakar Shekau, was more aggressive and much less educated,<sup>239</sup> which “played a major role in radicalizing the movement.”<sup>240</sup>

One year later, in May of 2010, President Umaru Yar’ Adua (a Northern Muslim) died and was succeeded by Vice President Goodluck Jonathan (a Christian Southerner).<sup>241</sup> The following year, presidential elections were held. Under zoning,<sup>242</sup> a political “agreement between the country’s elite to alternate the presidency between candidates from the Christian South and Muslim North,<sup>243</sup> President Goodluck Jonathan should have stepped aside so that another Northern Muslim could be president. In a stunning decision, he decided to run and won, although there is significant doubt about the integrity of this election.<sup>244</sup> This was perceived by the North to be a “continuation of [the] process of marginalization and raised the specter that it had become irreversible.”<sup>245</sup> As a result, Nigeria effectively split into North and South, Muslim and Christian. Boko Haram took advantage of these new, deep cleavages and drew supporters because of their decision to challenge the legitimacy of Goodluck Jonathan’s Presidency. They did so because people “who did not support Jonathan were well disposed to acquiesce to or even support an insurgency against the federal government.”<sup>246</sup>

All of the events and factors discussed above allowed Boko Haram to construct a philosophy that utilized and drew on Nigerian fear, anger, and worry. People felt that Boko

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<sup>237</sup> Campbell 2013, 132.

<sup>238</sup> Ibid, 131.

<sup>239</sup> Yusuf was “graduate educated and very proficient in English” (Boyle 2009).

<sup>240</sup> Suleiman and Karim, 2.

<sup>241</sup> Campbell 2013, 132.

<sup>242</sup> This system began in 1999 (Awopeju et al., 14.), shortly after Nigeria’s return to democracy, and successfully mitigated some of the sectarian, religious, and ethnic tensions within the state (especially between the North and the South).

<sup>243</sup> Campbell 2013, XIV.

<sup>244</sup> Ibid 121.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid, 132.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid.

Haram represented their interests when the Government did not, and could make their concerns heard at all costs.

**Factor 2: Religious politicization**

As previously mentioned, Nigeria is neither unified nor inclusive, primarily due to poor governance and colonialism. However, it would be inaccurate to presume that Boko Haram arose solely because of Nigeria’s weak state capacity.<sup>247</sup> The religious factor must be addressed, especially because “societies divided along religious lines are more susceptible to intense conflicts than those divided by political, territorial, and ethnic differentiations.”<sup>248</sup>

First, it is necessary to discuss the nature of religion. Religion can facilitate social harmony and peace, but across many societies, it has been transformed into the opposite. Instead, religious intolerance, fundamentalism, and extremism have become increasingly popular and have created “the base (sub-structure) upon which other sources of religious violence (super-structure) rest.”<sup>249</sup> These terms are defined below:

*Table 4: Difference between religious intolerance, fundamentalism, and extremism*

Religious Intolerance	<p>“Hostility towards other religions, as well as the inability of religious adherents to harmony between the theories and the practice aspect of religion.”<sup>250</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Encompasses bigotry and animosity towards people with differing beliefs.<sup>251</sup></li> <li>▪ “Identified as the major source of religious conflict/violence in all societies existing as long as the history of mankind, and permeating all forms of human civilization, with attendant destructive tendencies.”<sup>252</sup></li> </ul>
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<sup>247</sup> Isaac Terwase Sampson, “Religious violence in Nigeria: Causal diagnoses and strategic recommendations to the state and religious communities,” *African Journal of Conflict Resolution* 12, no. 1 (2012): 103.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid, 59.

<sup>249</sup> Sampson, 114.

<sup>250</sup> Ibid.

<sup>251</sup> Ibid.

<sup>252</sup> Ibid.

Religious Fundamentalism	<p>“Promotes the literal interpretation of, and strict adherence to religious doctrine, especially as a return to orthodox scriptural prescriptions and doctrinal originality.”<sup>253</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Manifestation of religious intolerance</li> </ul>
Religious Extremism	<p>“Religious fundamentalists who take religious conservatism and intolerance to an unreasonable extent by manifesting violence against those who hold contrary religious views.”<sup>254</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Manifestation of religious intolerance</li> </ul>

It is imperative to state that religious fundamentalism and religious intolerance do NOT necessarily lead to religious extremism or violence. However, when it does, groups such as Boko Haram emerge. These “groups abhor the preaching of other faiths and resort to violence to stop it. They do not submit to any compromise, but demand that their religious doctrines be universally entrenched by brute force.”<sup>255</sup> They also demand that political, social, and economic systems adhere to their religious tenets.<sup>256</sup> For Islamic extremist groups in particular, including Boko Haram, the concept of jihad is employed. Contrary to Western belief, jihad does not translate to “holy war.”<sup>257</sup> In actuality, jihad means, “struggling or striving and applies to any effort exerted.”<sup>258</sup> Some of the things that Muslims are called to strive for in jihad include:<sup>259</sup>

- Recognizing Allah and loving Him most
- Resisting pressure of parents, peers, and society
- Performing righteous deeds
- Freeing people from tyranny
- Helping those who may not be Muslim
- Removing treacherous people from power

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<sup>253</sup> Ibid, 115.

<sup>254</sup> Ibid.

<sup>255</sup> Ibid.

<sup>256</sup> Ibid.

<sup>257</sup> Amir M. Ali, “#18 -- Jihad Explained,” Institute of Islamic Information and Education, <http://www.iiie.net/18-jihad-explained/>.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid.

Thus, true jihad is peaceful and “does not include striving for individual or national power, dominance, glory, wealth, prestige or pride.”<sup>260</sup> Unfortunately, extremists and adversaries of the Islamic faith have manipulated the concept of jihad. Their interpretation encourages the use of violence to perpetuate their ideology, which they claim in the name of Islam. The justification for violent jihad by extremist groups can be explained in the following way:

“Jihad [is] an instrument for purging Islam of modernization with its perceived adulteration of orthodox principles. This explains the predominance of religious violence in the Muslim dominated northern part of Nigeria where inflexible adherence to Islam orthodoxy...continues to grow steadily.”<sup>261</sup>

Other characteristics of violent jihad include enlisting conformity and conversion by brute force. For these reasons, religious extremism is the most dangerous form of religious intolerance.<sup>262</sup>

#### Religious politicization and its hold on Nigeria

Prior to delving into this section, it is important to address one of the most commonly perpetuated myths about Boko Haram and religion; the belief that more Christians have been targeted than Muslims. This is false. While it is true that Christians have, and still are being, targeted by the group, it is widely agreed<sup>263</sup> that Boko Haram’s casualties have largely been Nigerian Muslims, due to the groups “indiscriminate scorched-earth campaign against

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<sup>260</sup> Ibid.

<sup>261</sup> Sampson, 117.

<sup>262</sup> Ibid.

<sup>263</sup> Prominent Nigerian religious leaders, activists, as well as U.S. officials have denounced this notion. They include the Sultan of Sokoto, the highest Muslim leader in all of Nigeria, (Max Siollun, “The Jihadi Too Violent for ISIS,” *Foreign Policy*, October 2016, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/10/03/the-jihadist-too-violent-for-isis-boko-haram-shekau/>), Mohammed Haruna, a prominent political analyst, (*Premium Times* (Abuja, Nigeria), “Boko Haram has killed more muslims than christians, says Mohammed Haruna,” n.d., [https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/93481boko\\_haram\\_has\\_killed\\_more\\_muslims\\_than\\_christians\\_says\\_mohammed.html](https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/93481boko_haram_has_killed_more_muslims_than_christians_says_mohammed.html)), and the former U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria, John Campbell (John Campbell, “Why NOT to Designate Boko Haram a Foreign Terrorist Organization,” Council on Foreign Relations, last modified March 24, 2012, <https://www.cfr.org/blog/why-not-designate-boko-haram-foreign-terrorist-organization>).

anyone...who didn't subscribe to the group's harsh doctrine."<sup>264</sup> The explanation for this targeting is evident in a 2014 video where Shekau stated, "I am going to kill all the imams and other Islamic clerics in Nigeria because they are not Muslims since they follow democracy and constitution."<sup>265</sup>

Overall, Nigerian's are "highly religious people."<sup>266</sup> The country has consistently been ranked as one of the most religious countries in the world, with nine-in-ten people stating that religion is very important to them.<sup>267</sup> Religious politicization can be defined as using religion for the achievement of certain political and economic goals.<sup>268</sup> In terms of extremist groups, it can be used to consolidate power or mobilize support<sup>269</sup> and is clearly evident in Shekau's above statement. It is not a new phenomenon, but has been "part of the broader range of political/religious activism that has dotted the history of Northern Nigeria since Usman Dan Fodio's Jihad in the 19<sup>th</sup> century."<sup>270</sup>

Usman Don Fodio was a 19<sup>th</sup> century Fulani religious and political leader. In 1802, he launched a violent jihad to reform "ungodly practices of Hausa rulers who he considered to be anti-Islamic."<sup>271</sup> Fodio successfully overthrew the Hausa and established the Sokoto Caliphate,<sup>272</sup>

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<sup>264</sup> Siollun, 2016.

<sup>265</sup> John Campbell, *Council on Foreign Relations: U.S. Policy to Counter Nigeria's Boko Haram*. November 2014: 12.

<sup>266</sup> Abimbola O. Adesoji, "Between Maitatsine and Boko Haram: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Response of the Nigerian State," *Africa Today* 57, no. 4 (2011): 99.

<sup>267</sup> Pew Research Center, *Unfavorable Views Of Jews and Muslims On The Increase In Europe*, September 17, 2008: 19.

<sup>268</sup> Benjamin Mainangwa, "'Soldiers of God or Allah': Religious Politicization and the Boko Haram Crisis in Nigeria," *Journal of Terrorism Research*, February 2014: 59.

<sup>269</sup> Benjamin Mainangwa, "Killing in the name of God? Explaining the Boko Haram phenomenon in Nigeria," *The Journal of Social, Political, and Economic Studies* 38, no. 1 (March 22, 2013): 59.

<sup>270</sup> Mainangwa 2014, 64.

<sup>271</sup> *Ibid*, 60.

<sup>272</sup> The Sokoto Caliphate was comprised of the following states: Sokoto, Kano, Kaduna, Bauchi, Adamawa, Niger, Kwara, and some parts of Plateau (*Ibid*).

where Sharia law was used for “ethical and principled leadership.”<sup>273</sup> This Caliphate “laid the foundation for the dominance and politicization of Islam in Northern Nigeria”<sup>274</sup> and ruled until the British defeated them. However, although the Sokoto Caliphate was politically defeated, British indirect rule allowed the values and ideals held by the Caliphate to remain largely intact. In particular, the British “integrated the pre-colonial Sharia courts into the new colonial state,”<sup>275</sup> effectively legislating Sharia law across Northern Nigeria. The remnants of this can still be seen in certain areas of Nigeria today.

Because of the disparate ruling style by the British, Nigerian independence posed a significant issue for the country. Since the North had effectively been ruling itself with Muslim leaders under the British, they felt they had a “predetermined right to rule.”<sup>276</sup> Naturally, they did not want to change the systems that had been in place for centuries, so when a unitary government was created, the North was fairly unhappy. This contributed to “manifestations of religious militancy [in the late 1970’s], whose members remained committed to Islamic religious purity and anti-democratic/capitalist/Westernized objectives.”<sup>277</sup> Perhaps the most notorious of these groups was the Maitatsine, who gained notoriety in the 1980’s. The Maitatsine were comprised of youths, “unemployed migrants, and other disenfranchised Nigerians who felt that the official Islamic hierarchy and the Nigerian Government were unresponsive and indifferent to their needs.”<sup>278</sup> These uprisings are notable because they “represent the first violent attempts at imposing a strict version of religious ideology on a pluralistic, independent Nigeria

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<sup>273</sup> Ibid.

<sup>274</sup> Ibid.

<sup>275</sup> Ibid.

<sup>276</sup> Ibid.

<sup>277</sup> Ibid.

<sup>278</sup> Maiangwa 2013, 58.

by extreme religious movements”<sup>279</sup> and their reasons for organizing are “echoed in the contemporary Boko Haram crisis.”<sup>280</sup> As a result, religious animosity turned violent and “sowed the seeds of bitter rivalry, suspicion, and discord between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria.”<sup>281</sup> This violence hit its peak in 2000 when 12 Northern states implemented Sharia law, in an attempt to reclaim the lost political power “which they had hitherto benefitted immensely from during the colonial era and the decades in which Nigeria was ruled by northern politicians and generals.”<sup>282</sup> This decision effectively:

“Set in motion a process of brinkmanship that poses serious threats to the unity of Nigeria, as complex, multiple, and overlapping divisions and contradictions are reduced to two mutually exclusive primordial camps. Nigerians who in their real lives combine their Christianity or their Islam with ‘pagan practices,’ and who are ideologically ‘progressives’ or conservatives’, or ‘fundamentalists’ or even ‘atheists’, are all pushed into two neat and opposed camps- soldiers of either God or Allah.”<sup>283</sup>

#### *How religious politicization gave rise to Boko Haram*

It is this author’s belief that the politicization of a religion tends to give-way to polarization amongst its adherents, which can lead to religious extremism. At the point of extremism, it becomes easy to justify violence on another group because you perceive them to be infidels, who are evil and unholy. Thus, the only way to get rid of the perceived evil is to destroy it. This perversion of religion leads to the creation of a self-serving “doctrine of action and hatred, where spiritual achievement occurs through destruction rather than personal enlightenment.”<sup>284</sup> This doctrine, coupled with the declaration of Sharia law by some states in

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<sup>279</sup> Ibid, 62.

<sup>280</sup> “The Maitatsine Riots,” Harvard Divinity School: Religious Literacy Project, <https://rlp.hds.harvard.edu/faq/maitatsine-riots>.

<sup>281</sup> Maiangwa 2013, 62.

<sup>282</sup> Ibid.

<sup>283</sup> Ibid, 63.

<sup>284</sup> Maiangwa 2014, 59.

Northern Nigeria in 2000,<sup>285</sup> allowed individuals to rationalize engaging in disruptive and violent acts against the Nigerian Government, who they perceived to be corrupt, infidels, or both. This further divided the nation and exacerbated sectarian suspicions.<sup>286</sup> It also led to the creation of groups like Boko Haram who politicized religion as a means of political dissent against the Nigerian Government. To be clear, political dissent does not always lead to violence, which is evident with Boko Haram pre-2009. The group was largely nonviolent, until the murder of their founder and leader, Muhammed Yusuf by Nigerian Security Forces in 2009. However, lack of frequent violence does not mean lack of animosity. Yusuf was a staunch enemy of the secular Nigerian state and a pinnacle example of a religious extremist.

After the loss of their leader, Boko Haram had even more of a reason to rebel against the Nigerian Government. They began utilizing violent methods and “religious manipulation to divert the attention of [Nigerians] from their harsh living conditions...to make war against their opponents.”<sup>287</sup> They did so by convincing people that:

1. “Any member who fights and dies – by suicide bombing or otherwise – in the process of establishing a Sharia state would automatically become a martyr and gain the reward of Aljanna paradise or heaven.”<sup>288</sup>
2. Sharia law is the only “valuable option for social justice and prosperity.”<sup>289</sup>
3. “Socialism, capitalism, military dictatorship, western education and modern statecraft have all failed because God was excluded from these systems.”<sup>290</sup>
4. “[Nigeria] was an Islamic state before it was turned into a land of kafir (infidel), the current system is contrary to true Muslim beliefs.”<sup>291</sup>
5. The solution to the problems plaguing Nigeria was to “return to the noble, honourable, moral and perfect principles of the rule of Islamic religion [the Sokoto Caliphate].”<sup>292</sup>

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<sup>285</sup> Ibid, 62.

<sup>286</sup> Ibid, 63.

<sup>287</sup> Mainangwa 2013, 62.

<sup>288</sup> Ibid, 60.

<sup>289</sup> Atta Barkindo, “‘Join the Caravan’: The Ideology of Political Authority in Islam from Ibn Taymiyya to Boko Haram in North-Eastern Nigeria,” *Perspectives on Terrorism*, June 2013: 37.

<sup>290</sup> Ibid.

<sup>291</sup> Ibid.

<sup>292</sup> Ibid.

Overall, Boko Haram was very successful in gaining new adherents because religious identity tends to serve as an easy mobilizer for terrorism.<sup>293</sup> It does so by creating “power where there is none or [consolidating] power where there is very little.”<sup>294</sup> This is done through the “purposeful actions of political actors who actively create violent conflict by selectively drawing on religion in order to portray it as religiously inevitable.”<sup>295</sup> Thus, “coupled with its radical ideology and anti-Western position, Boko Haram [became] a tool for murderous expression of political embitterment.”<sup>296</sup>

In closing, it becomes necessary to reaffirm that Boko Haram lacks religious sincerity.<sup>297</sup> Their activities have received widespread condemnation from the Muslim community in Nigeria, including the Sultan of Sokoto<sup>298</sup> and the Emir of Kano.<sup>299</sup> Thus, to reiterate, it is the “politicization of religion, rather than religious differences or identities”<sup>300</sup> that can be attributed to the rise of Boko Haram.

### ***Factor 3: Relationship with other terrorist organizations***

After Yusuf’s death, Boko Haram split into multiple factions,<sup>301</sup> making it difficult to know which faction, if any, has complete authority to speak for the group. Thus, it becomes harder to know the full extent and interaction that Boko Haram has had with other terrorist

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<sup>293</sup> Ibid, 62.

<sup>294</sup> Ibid, 37.

<sup>295</sup> Ibid.

<sup>296</sup> Ibid.

<sup>297</sup> Ibid.

<sup>298</sup> The following quote is from the Sultan of Sokoto during a speech at the Wilson Center in Washington D.C. in 2016: “Carrying out jihad is definitely not Islamic... Islam abhors killing of individual lies, even one. It is said that taking one persons life is taking the life of all of humanity. Those people are on their own [talking about those that kill in the name of Islam]” (Religious Tolerance in Nigeria, Video file, C-SPAN, July 26, 2016, <https://www.c-span.org/video/?413203-1/sultan-sokoto-discusses-religious-tolerance-nigeria>).

<sup>299</sup> “Emir of Kano calls Nigerians to arms over Boko Haram,” *BBC News*, last modified November 17, 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-30080514>.

<sup>300</sup> Maiangwa 2013, 62.

<sup>301</sup> Sergie and Johnson, 2015.

organizations. However, despite this difficulty, it is not improbable that Boko Haram gained valuable insight from direct, or indirect, communication with Al-Qaeda, Daesh, and Al-Shabab. Since these groups are some of the deadliest and most prominent international terrorist groups in the world, these relationships, and their effects on Boko Haram, must be explored.

### Al-Qaeda

In June of 2010, Abdelmalek Droukdel, the emir of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), said that his group “would provide Boko Haram with weapons, training and other support.”<sup>302</sup> Naturally, nations became alarmed at the possibility of these groups working together. In 2011, these fears came to fruition when Abubekar Shekau stated, “Al-Qaeda are our elder brothers... we enjoy financial and technical support from them. Anything we want from them we ask them.”<sup>303</sup> This relationship appeared to evolve in 2012 when AQIM gained territory in northern Mali. It’s believed that Boko Haram set up bases in the AQIM-held territory and helped the group secure the Gao region.<sup>304</sup> This was inferred after Boko Haram raided the Algerian Consulate in Gao and kidnapped, and later executed, its vice-consul.<sup>305</sup>

### Daesh

After months of speculation, the relationship between Daesh and Boko Haram was confirmed in March of 2015.<sup>306</sup> During this time, Shekau pledged allegiance to Daesh and its leader (Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi) and began referring to Boko Haram as the “Islamic State West

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<sup>302</sup> Peter J. Pham, “Boko Haram: The strategic evolution of the Islamic State’s West Africa Province,” *The Journal of the Middle East and North Africa* 7, no.1 (2016): 6.

<sup>303</sup> Terrence McCoy, “This is how Boko Haram funds its evil,” *The Washington Post*, last modified June 6, 2014, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2014/06/06/this-is-how-boko-haram-funds-its-evil/?utm\\_term=.4617319545ad](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2014/06/06/this-is-how-boko-haram-funds-its-evil/?utm_term=.4617319545ad).

<sup>304</sup> Jacob Zenn, “Boko Haram’s International Connections,” Combatting Terrorism Center at West Point, last modified January 14, 2013, <https://ctc.usma.edu/posts/boko-harams-international-connections>.

<sup>305</sup> Ibid.

<sup>306</sup> Pham, 15.

African Province.”<sup>307</sup> Shortly after, Daesh began promoting Boko Haram to its followers and “encouraging Muslims to join Boko Haram and other militants that operate in West Africa.”<sup>308</sup> However, this relationship took a turn on August 3, 2016 when Daesh announced replacement of Abubekar Shekau, due to his “targeting of fellow Muslims.”<sup>309</sup> Their replacement was Abu Musab al-Barnawi, Muhammad Yusuf’s son,<sup>310</sup> who had frequently stated that “attacks on mosques, markets, and other venues belonging to Muslims do not represent IS, they represent themselves... We don’t authorize or approve such attacks.”<sup>311</sup> As is to be expected, Shekau was anything but accepting of Daesh’s announcement. As a result, Boko Haram is thought to have further splintered into different factions, with some pledging allegiance to Shekau and others to Barnawi’s Daesh faction.

#### *How relationships with other terrorist groups gave rise to Boko Haram*

It is necessary to reiterate that Boko Haram’s relationship with the aforementioned terrorist groups is not concrete, conclusive, or completely understood. As previously stated, the lack of a formal organizational structure has made it difficult to track Boko Haram and decipher their true connections with these groups. However, this thesis contends that regardless of informal or formal ties, the increased communication between these groups is likely indicative of Boko Haram’s desire to increase its legitimacy and clout. Through their relationships with other terrorist groups, Boko Haram was able to develop into a full-fledged insurgency. The tactics that Boko Haram likely learned from them are listed below.

#### 1. International Notoriety

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<sup>307</sup> Pham, 2.

<sup>308</sup> Stanford University, “Boko Haram,” Mapping Militant Organizations, <http://web.stanford.edu/group/mappingmilitants/cgi-bin/groups/view/553?highlight=boko+haram>.

<sup>309</sup> Siollun 2016.

<sup>310</sup> Stanford University.

<sup>311</sup> Siollun 2016.

In 2012, Boko Haram officially pledged allegiance to Al-Qaeda.<sup>312</sup> This forced nations around the world to pay attention to Boko Haram and consider whether it had the potential to become the next large international terrorist organization. Thus, from the stance of Boko Haram, this was a smart move that greatly enhanced their international legitimacy.

This increase in legitimacy became clear on November 14, 2013<sup>313</sup> when the United States designated Boko Haram as foreign terrorist organization. Some experts were unhappy with this designation because they felt that it had the potential to further legitimate Boko Haram, promote its consolidation, and “increase the incentives for globally focused terrorist groups to seek deeper linkages with groups in the North.”<sup>314</sup> The Nigerian Government was also “adamantly opposed to the designation,”<sup>315</sup> for many of the same reasons. The then-Nigerian Ambassador to the United States had a lot to say on this subject and asserted that:

“In order to effectively combat Boko Haram, we need American help to be complimentary – not contradictory – to our own efforts. The current well-intentioned efforts by a few members of Congress to classify the Boko Haram as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) actually risk deepening and entrenching the Boko Haram movement, thereby endangering more lives.”<sup>316</sup>

Further legitimacy was given to the group in March of 2015<sup>317</sup> when they pledged allegiance to Daesh. This pledge was of particular concern to the United States and Western Europe because of their close proximity to the African continent, as opposed to Daesh’s home base in Syria.

## 2. Funding

It is widely speculated that Al-Qaeda has given Boko Haram funds<sup>318</sup> and encouraged them to kidnap people, particularly foreigners, for money.<sup>319</sup> This advice proved beneficial for Boko Haram when the group was paid \$3 million for a French family taken hostage in northern Cameroon in 2013.<sup>320</sup> And for the kidnapping of

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<sup>312</sup> Jacob Zenn and Gartenstein-Ross, “Boko Haram’s Buyer’s Remorse,” *Foreign Policy*, June 20, 2016, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/06/20/boko-harams-buyers-remorse/>.

<sup>313</sup> United States Department of State, “Foreign Terrorist Organizations” <https://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/other/des/123085.htm>.

<sup>314</sup> Campbell 2012.

<sup>315</sup> Glenn Kessler, “Boko haram: Inside the State Department debate over the ‘terrorist’ label,” *The Washington Post*, last modified March 29, 2014, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/fact-checker/wp/2014/05/19/boko-haram-inside-the-state-department-debate-over-the-terroristlabel/?utm\\_term=.b71b51fdbe92](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/fact-checker/wp/2014/05/19/boko-haram-inside-the-state-department-debate-over-the-terroristlabel/?utm_term=.b71b51fdbe92).

<sup>316</sup> Ibid.

<sup>317</sup> Pham, 15.

<sup>318</sup> Zenn 2013.

<sup>319</sup> This is a primary tactic of AQIM (Ibid).

<sup>320</sup> Farouk Chothia, “Boko Haram crisis: How have Nigeria’s militants become so strong?” *BBC News*, last modified January 26, 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-30933860>.

wealthy Nigerians, “some US officials estimate that the group is paid as much as \$1 million for [their] release.”<sup>321</sup>

Other funds for the group appear to be secured through bank looting and connections with Nigerian politicians and government officials.<sup>322</sup> Boko Haram has apparently been very successful in securing funds from these sources and had a 2015 “annual net income [of] \$10 million.”<sup>323</sup>

### 3. Recruitment

As previously mentioned, Boko Haram has been very good at recruiting followers through the politicization of religion and anti-government sentiment. However, in 2015, Boko Haram began increasingly using propaganda, especially social media and videos. These propaganda methods were much more sophisticated than those used by the group in the past and “bore signs of the influence of IS [the Islamic State].”<sup>324</sup> In particular, “Boko Haram’s Twitter feed [, called Al-Urwah al-Wuthqa, began] posting a stream of short statements about the group’s activities, claiming operations in a timely manner, in the [mold] of the Islamic State’s one-line tweeted claims.”<sup>325</sup> In addition, their videos transitioned from being grainy at-home productions to professional videos with “designed graphics and high-quality opening sequences”<sup>326</sup> with “multiple languages and well-presented subtitles.”<sup>327</sup> Many of these videos were of beheadings and also “bore remarkable similarities to IS beheading videos.”<sup>328</sup>

Despite their increase in propaganda and technological sophistication, Boko Haram does not possess anywhere near the level of sophistication shown by Daesh. For example, the group still has many spelling mistakes in tweets and videos, amongst other media downfalls.<sup>329</sup> Thus, their in-person recruitment is likely much more successful than their social media efforts.

### 4. Training

After Al-Qaeda captured Menaka in northern Mali in 2012, Nigeria military officials noticed a large increase in the number of Boko Haram militants that were traveling to the area, likely to receive training from AQIM.<sup>330</sup> It is also thought that Boko Haram received training from Al-Shabab in Somalia from 2010-2012.<sup>331</sup>

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<sup>321</sup> Ibid.

<sup>322</sup> Ibid.

<sup>323</sup> Ibid.

<sup>324</sup> BBC Monitoring, “Is Islamic State shaping Boko Haram media?” *BBC News*, last modified March 4, 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-31522469>.

<sup>325</sup> Ibid.

<sup>326</sup> Ibid.

<sup>327</sup> Ibid.

<sup>328</sup> Ibid.

<sup>329</sup> Ibid.

<sup>330</sup> Zenn, 2013.

<sup>331</sup> Ibid.

During that time, the group was likely taught how to more effectively carry out attacks, such as suicide bombings.<sup>332</sup>

## 5. Weapons

There has long been speculation about Boko Haram's procurement of weapons. Much of this mystery involves the apparent weapons trade between the group, Al-Qaeda, and Al-Shabab. Because of their growing relationship with Al-Qaeda in 2012, there were concerns that Boko Haram was going to use man-portable air-defense systems to shoot down commercial planes that were flying into Niger, Chad and Nigeria, which "was a tactic employed in 2002 by an al-Qa'ida-linked Somali terrorist cell."<sup>333</sup> Furthermore, a 2016 interview with Nigeria's National Security Chief, General Abdirahman Sheikh Issa Mohamed, revealed the state's belief that Boko Haram had learned how to build weapons in Al-Shabab training camps.<sup>334</sup>

Boko Haram also gained weapons by ransacking police stations and military bases<sup>335</sup> and smuggling weapons from abroad.<sup>336</sup> Some of these weapons include "rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) with a 900 meter range for attacking hardened targets from long distances and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) for ambushing military and police convoys."<sup>337</sup>

## 6. Shifting Ideology

As previously stated, Boko Haram's ideology moved towards violence after Yusuf's death in 2009. However, this was not the only way that their message changed. During this time, Boko Haram also began to have an increasingly anti-Western agenda, as opposed to a primarily domestic one. This can be partially attributed to AQIM and was evident in a video message from one of Boko Haram's adherents in May of 2010. In it, the combatant says:

"We will carry out our operations anywhere in the world if we can have the chance. The United States is the number one target for its oppression and aggression against Muslim nations, particularly in Iraq and Afghanistan and its blind support to Israel in its killings of our Palestinian brethren. We will launch fiercer attacks than Iraqi or Afghan mujahidin against our enemies throughout the world, particularly in the United States, if the chance avails itself...but for now, our attention is focused on Nigeria, which is our starting point."<sup>338</sup>

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<sup>332</sup> Stephanie Busari, "Boko Haram sought terror training in Somalia, security chief says," *CNN*, last modified February 25, 2016, <http://www.cnn.com/2016/02/25/africa/boko-haram-al-shabaab-somalia/index.html>.

<sup>333</sup> Zenn, 2013.

<sup>334</sup> Busari.

<sup>335</sup> Chothia.

<sup>336</sup> Zenn, 2013.

<sup>337</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>338</sup> *Ibid.*

Whether this combatant speaks for the entire group is unknown, but Boko Haram's shift to a more global perspective is not.

These shifts show Boko Haram's ability to evolve at an almost dizzying rate.<sup>339</sup> Furthermore, it has demonstrated a "great flexibility in ideology and methods, depending on who they choose to align with."<sup>340</sup> This is cause for domestic and international concern and sheds insight as to how the group may respond to future challenges.

### **Conclusion**

To reiterate, the rise of Boko Haram was not sudden, random, or unexpected. The weak state capacity of Nigeria, which can be attributed to colonialism and the failure of the Nigerian Government post-independence, combined with the increasing politicization of religion, created a power vacuum that Boko Haram took advantage of. They responded to Nigerian dissatisfaction with corruption, inequality, and discrimination and became a group that people naturally gravitated towards. Through horrific attacks and atrocities, Boko Haram was able to gain respect and foster relationships with other terrorist organizations, which helped them further develop into the insurgency that we see today.

It is imperative to identify, study, and analyze how terrorist groups arise for two overarching reasons. First, you can't fight against what you don't understand. By understanding the reasons for Boko Haram's existence, it then becomes easier to propose solutions to rectify and counteract the group. Second, it shows shortcomings in both governance and economic systems. In the case of Boko Haram, the Nigerian Government must confront their shortcomings and policies that attributed to the group's rise. For these reasons, the following chapter will address domestic and international responses to Boko Haram, which will inform final policy prescriptions.

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<sup>339</sup> Ofeibe Quist-Arcton, "Boko Haram Takes a Page From ISIS Propaganda Playbook," NPR, last modified March 5, 2015, <https://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2015/03/05/391024563/boko-haram-takes-a-page-from-isis-propaganda-playbook>.

<sup>340</sup> Ibid.

### Chapter 3: Government Response

In order to fully understand the rise and progression of Boko Haram in Nigeria, the response of government actors must be studied. By identifying the shortcomings and successes in government response, future policy can be created based on these findings. For this reason, this chapter first addresses the response of the Nigerian Government since Boko Haram's inception and then looks at the response of international actors involved in the crisis.

#### Domestic Response

##### *The Obasanjo Era (May 29, 1999-May 29, 2007)*

In 2003, Muhammad Yusuf and his followers began engaging in skirmishes with local governments in the North due to violations of “local ordinances.”<sup>341</sup> As friction between these two groups grew, Boko Haram began carrying out sporadic attacks on Nigerian Security Forces, particularly regional officials and police.<sup>342</sup> As attacks increased, Muhammad Yusuf became fearful of being arrested and fled to Saudi Arabia in 2005. He remained there until Northern officials reassured him that he would not be killed upon return.<sup>343</sup> This reassurance led to an “uneasy truce” between Boko Haram and government officials for about four years.<sup>344</sup>

During this time, Boko Haram was considered to be more of a regional problem than a national one. As a result, individual states were left with the responsibility of figuring out ways to quell the group. Due to capacity limitations, regional governments were unable to adequately understand and react to the root causes of Boko Haram's mobilization. Thus, from the very

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<sup>341</sup> Oluwatobi Bolashodun, “Boko Haram will not be over - Obasanjo reveals why the war can't end permanently,” Naij.com, <https://www.naija.ng/1124766-boko-haram-obasanjo-reveals-war-t-permanently.html#1124766>.

<sup>342</sup> American Foreign Policy Council, “Boko Haram,” In *World Almanac of Islamism*, [http://almanac.afpc.org/sites/almanac.afpc.org/files/Boko%20Haram%20August%202014\\_0.pdf](http://almanac.afpc.org/sites/almanac.afpc.org/files/Boko%20Haram%20August%202014_0.pdf).

<sup>343</sup> Ibid.

<sup>344</sup> Ibid.

beginning of the insurgency, the root causes of mobilization were ignored and as the group grew, federal government concern remained stagnant. Years later, in a 2017 BBC interview, President Olusegun Obasanjo acknowledged his government's lackluster response to Boko Haram and stated that they "did not do what [they] should have done."<sup>345</sup> Instead, the group was left to "become a very intractable problem."<sup>346</sup>

### **The Yar'Adua Era (May 29, 2007-May 5, 2010)**

The informal truce between the government and Boko Haram came to an end in July of 2009 when Muhammad Yusuf's followers began attacking police stations in northern states, in an attempt to free captured members.<sup>347</sup> As a result, Yusuf was taken into custody by police and extrajudicially executed.<sup>348</sup> Mass outrage ensued, forcing President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua to open an investigation into the killing.<sup>349</sup>

Days later, under the new leadership of Abubekkar Sheaku, Boko Haram began violently rioting in Borno, Yobe, and Bauchi States.<sup>350</sup> President Yar'Adua could not ignore the violence and created a responsive strategy that utilized "hard [military] power through kinetic operations."<sup>351</sup> This large-scale military response was portrayed by the Administration as being the solution that would finally defeat Boko Haram "once and for all."<sup>352</sup> Once the riots had been quelled by the Military, "national and local leaders concluded that the problem of Boko Haram

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<sup>345</sup> Bolashodun.

<sup>346</sup> Ibid.

<sup>347</sup> Alexander Thurston, *Boko Haram: The History of an African Jihadist Movement*, 2018: 129.

<sup>348</sup> Abdulfattah Olajide, "Nigeria: Yar'Adua Orders Probe of Sect Leader's Death," All Africa, last modified August 5, 2009, <http://allafrica.com/stories/200908050515.html>.

<sup>349</sup> Ibid.

<sup>350</sup> Colonel Solomon Effiong Udounwa. *Boko Haram: Developing New Strategies to Combat Terrorism in Nigeria*, 2013: 8.

<sup>351</sup> Ibid.

<sup>352</sup> Thurston 2018, 139.

had been solved.”<sup>353</sup> All was well until November, when President Yar’Adua became extremely ill and was taken to Saudi Arabia for medical treatment.<sup>354</sup> By February of 2010, due to the President’s prolonged incapacitation, Vice President Goodluck Jonathan was designated by the Senate to be the acting president.<sup>355</sup> Around that time, Al-Jazeera released video footage of “Nigerian security forces shooting unarmed detainees and civilians during the [2009] uprising.”<sup>356</sup> As international outrage mounted, President Yar’Adua passed away in May of 2010, making Goodluck Jonathan the official President of Nigeria.<sup>357</sup>

The decision by the Yar’Adua administration to respond to Boko Haram with brute force was heavy-handed and ineffective. By taking a solely military approach in terms of response, the administration eliminated the possibility of creating solutions to the systemic causes of the crisis. Furthermore, Muhammad Yusuf’s death is directly responsible for the group’s descent into a full-fledged insurgency. However, it is necessary to recognize that President Yar’Adua’s illness likely hindered his administrations ability to effectively respond to Boko Haram.

### **The Jonathan Era (May 5, 2010-May 29, 2015)**

By inheriting the Presidency, President Jonathan also inherited the problem of Boko Haram. At the time of his inauguration, international condemnation was still swirling surrounding the 2009 Al-Jazeera video. Throughout 2010, various organizations, including the U.S. Department of State, began citing human rights abuses by Nigerian security officials in the fight against Boko Haram. These violations included “summary executions; torture, rape [...] arbitrary arrest and detention, [as well as] restrictions on freedom of speech, press, assembly,

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<sup>353</sup> Ibid, 145.

<sup>354</sup> Ibid, 150.

<sup>355</sup> Ibid,

<sup>356</sup> Ibid, 149.

<sup>357</sup> Ibid.

religion, and movement.”<sup>358</sup> Domestic public opinion started changing as Nigerians began thinking that “the security services had been merciless in their response to the 2009 uprising.”<sup>359</sup> Because of this, President Jonathan was very preoccupied during the first year of his presidency.

As Boko Haram attacks continued, the Nigerian National Assembly signed into law the Terrorism Preventive Act (TPA) on June 3, 2011.<sup>360</sup> The act implemented the Counter Terrorism Centre (CTC) and:

“Designated the Office of the National Security Adviser as the Coordinating Office for Nigeria’s Counter terrorism efforts. The Act also gives ONSA the mandates to ‘ensure the formulation and implementation of a comprehensive Counter Terrorism Strategy and build capacity for the effective discharge of the functions of relevant security, intelligence, law enforcement, and military services.’”<sup>361</sup>

Around this time, President Jonathan also created the position of national counter-terrorism coordinator.<sup>362</sup> Shortly after, on August 26<sup>th</sup>, Boko Haram boldly attacked the United Nations headquarters in Abuja with a car bomb, which resulted in 21 deaths and over 73 injuries.<sup>363</sup> It is believed that “Boko Haram wanted to embarrass the Nigerian state in front of an international audience, signal to foreigners that they [were] now targets, and prove that the military’s crackdown in the northeast [had] not weakened the movement.”<sup>364</sup> Since international entities were now involved, President Goodluck Jonathan had to make a change. He started looking at

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<sup>358</sup> United States Department of State Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, *2010 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices*, April 8, 2011.

<sup>359</sup> Thurston 2018, 149.

<sup>360</sup> Sneha Bhura, “Can Nigeria's Anti-Terrorism Law Address the Boko Haram Threat?” Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses, last modified December 2012, [https://idsa.in/africatrends/nigeria-anti-terrorism-law-address-the-boko-haram-threat\\_sbhura\\_1212](https://idsa.in/africatrends/nigeria-anti-terrorism-law-address-the-boko-haram-threat_sbhura_1212).

<sup>361</sup> Federal Republic of Nigeria, “About CTC,” Office of the National Security Adviser, <http://ctc.gov.ng/about-ctc/>.

<sup>362</sup> United States Department of State Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, *Country Reports on Terrorism 2011*, July 31, 2012, <https://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2011/195541.htm>.

<sup>363</sup> “Death toll revised in Nigeria UN attack,” Al Jazeera, last modified August 28, 2011, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2011/08/2011828175626971940.html>.

<sup>364</sup> Alex Thurston, “Nigeria’s Terrorism Problem,” *Foreign Policy*, August 2011, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2011/08/26/nigerias-terrorism-problem/>.

other countries counterterrorism laws to see what Nigeria could learn and potentially implement.<sup>365</sup>

The next major administrative change occurred on January 1, 2012<sup>366</sup> when President Goodluck Jonathan declared a six-month state of emergency<sup>367</sup> in Borno, Yobe, and Plateau States.<sup>368</sup> Along with this declaration came the temporary closure of the country's northern borders, due to the government identifying the area as "transit routes for the movements of arms and insurgents."<sup>369</sup> This gave President Jonathan "greater authority over northeastern state governors, several of whom belonged to the opposition."<sup>370</sup> As a result, relationships between northern governors and the president became tense.<sup>371</sup> Some went so far as to accuse Jonathan and the federal government of "using the insurgency to assassinate critics, intimidate rivals, and provoke intercommunal conflict in the north."<sup>372</sup> However, the most significant event of 2012 was the Lake Chad Basin Commission's (Niger, Cameroon, Nigeria, Chad, Libya,<sup>373</sup> and the Central African Republic)<sup>374</sup> decision to expand the 1994 mandate of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) to fight against Boko Haram.<sup>375</sup> The Task Force consists of Cameroon, Niger, Nigeria, Chad, and Benin and is an "offensive and stabilization mechanism with the

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<sup>365</sup> Emeka T Njoku, "'Laws for Sale': The Domestication of Counterterrorism Policies and its impact on Nigeria," in *The Palgrave Handbook of Global Counterterrorism Policy*, edited by Nicholas Romaniuk, et.al: 10006.

<sup>366</sup> Daniel E Agbibo, "Peace at Daggers Drawn? Boko Haram and the State of Emergency in Nigeria," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, October 18, 2013: 46.

<sup>367</sup> The National Assembly must approve the measure. Ife Olori, "Senate Approves Extension Of Emergency Rule in Borno, Yobe, Adamawa," Naij.com, <https://www.naija.ng/66702.html>.

<sup>368</sup> Thurston 2018, 202.

<sup>369</sup> Colonel Solomon Effiong Udounwa: 9.

<sup>370</sup> Thurston 2018, 202.

<sup>371</sup> Ibid.

<sup>372</sup> Ibid, 203.

<sup>373</sup> Libya became a member in 2008. "The Commission," The Lake Chad Basin Commission, <http://www.cbtl.org/en/lake-chad-basin-commission>.

<sup>374</sup> Ibid.

<sup>375</sup> William Assanvo, et.al, *West African Report: Assessing the Multinational Joint Task Force against Boko Haram*, Institute for Security Studies, 2016: 2.

objective of combating Boko Haram and other groups labeled as terrorists operating around the Lake Chad Basin.”<sup>376</sup> Essentially, it allows members to coordinate actions against Boko Haram, while underscoring the responsibility of individual nation-states.<sup>377</sup> Despite expanding the mandate, the MNJTF was not operationalized until the African Union’s authorization in 2014.

Towards the end of 2012, international organizations and countries continued to cite human rights abuses in Nigeria at all levels of government.<sup>378</sup> A Human Rights Watch Report called “Spiraling Violence”<sup>379</sup> pointed out the danger in these abuses by arguing that they implored Boko Haram to continue carrying out attacks.<sup>380</sup> This condemnation continued into the New Year and coincided with another increase in Boko Haram’s lethality.

On April 16-17, 2013, the Joint Task Force, comprised of the Nigerian Army, Air Force, and police,<sup>381</sup> massacred an estimated 220 civilians in Baga, Borno State.<sup>382</sup> The massacre reportedly began after Boko Haram militants fired at military members.<sup>383</sup> As a result, the JTF began “killing suspected Boko Haram sympathizers and destroying homes.”<sup>384</sup> Shortly after, on May 13<sup>th</sup>, President Jonathan renewed the state of emergency in Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa States and sent more troops to the Northeast.<sup>385</sup> In his justification for the state of emergency, President Jonathan declared that “some northern parts of Borno State have been taken over by

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<sup>376</sup> Ibid.

<sup>377</sup> Ibid, 3.

<sup>378</sup> United States Department of State Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012*, <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/204365.pdf>.

<sup>379</sup> Human Rights Watch, *Spiraling Violence: Boko Haram Attacks and Security Force Abuses in Nigeria*, October 11, 2012, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2012/10/11/spiraling-violence/boko-haram-attacks-and-security-force-abuses-nigeria>.

<sup>380</sup> Thurston 2018, 1999.

<sup>381</sup> Heather Murdock, “Civilian Security on Front Lines to Fight Nigeria's Boko Haram,” *VOA News*, last modified December 9, 2013, <https://www.voanews.com/a/civilian-security-front-lines-fight-boko-haram/1806319.html>.

<sup>382</sup> Ibid, 200.

<sup>383</sup> Ibid.

<sup>384</sup> Ibid.

<sup>385</sup> “Nigeria: Goodluck Jonathan declares emergency in states,” *BBC News*, last modified May 15, 2013, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-22533974>.

groups whose allegiance are to different flags than Nigeria's"<sup>386</sup> and that "no matter what it takes, we will win this war against terrorism."<sup>387</sup> This was one of the federal government's first admissions that Boko Haram held, and was continuing to gain, territory in Nigeria. As a result, Jonathan ordered the immediate deployment of troops "to those states for more effective internal security operations."<sup>388</sup>

Three months later, in August, the JTF was rebranded as the new Seventh Army Division, with over 8,000 troops.<sup>389</sup> This move by President Jonathan was likely due to the negative reputation swirling around the JTF and the Baga Massacre. Shortly after, in September, U.S. President Barack Obama "raised the issue of human rights abuses with President Jonathan"<sup>390</sup> who continued to deny the allegations. Thus, the exchanges between President Obama and President Jonathan appeared "to have had no effect on the Nigerian Government or the behavior of the security services."<sup>391</sup> Criticism of the Jonathan administration peaked on December 12<sup>th</sup>, when former President Obasanjo released a scathing 18-page letter addressed to the current president. In the letter, the former President heavily criticized Jonathan's security stance on Boko Haram and stated:

"Knowing the genesis of Boko Haram and the reasons for escalation of violence from that sector with the widespread and ramification of the menace of Boko Haram within and outside the Nigerian borders, conventional military actions based on standard phases of military operations alone will not permanently and effectively deal with the issue of Boko Haram. There are many strands or layers of causes that require different solutions, approaches or antidotes. Drug, indoctrination, fundamentalism, gun trafficking, hate culture, human trafficking, money laundering, religion, poverty, unemployment, poor education, revenge and international terrorism are among factors that have effect on Boko

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<sup>386</sup> Ibid.

<sup>387</sup> "Nigeria President Jonathan declares State of Emergency in Borno, Yobe, Adamawa," *Premium Times Nigeria*, last modified May 14, 2013, <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/134244-breaking-jonathan-declares-state-of-emergency-in-borno-yobe-adamawa.html>.

<sup>388</sup> Thurston 2018, 201.

<sup>389</sup> Ibid, 203.

<sup>390</sup> Campbell, 2014, 14.

<sup>391</sup> Ibid.

Haram. One single prescription cannot cure all these ailments that combine in Boko Haram.”<sup>392</sup>

In response, Administration officials stated that “Mr. Obasanjo’s attack was ‘reckless, baseless, unjustifiable and indecorous,’”<sup>393</sup> as well as “highly unbecoming, mischievous and provocative.”<sup>394</sup> Later, officials went so far as to accuse the letter of containing “the most reckless, baseless, unjustifiable and indecorous charges levied against [Jonathan] and his administration.”<sup>395</sup>

The following year, in April of 2014, President Jonathan endorsed the National Counter Terrorism Strategy (NACTEST) for implementation.<sup>396</sup> The NACTEST is a “policy framework for counter-terrorism in Nigeria”<sup>397</sup> and articulates, “the nature of the terrorist threat that Nigeria faces, the response guidelines and mechanism, and the role of stakeholders, as well as institutions involved in countering terrorism.”<sup>398</sup> It’s organized into five work streams: Forestall, Secure, Identify, Prepare, and Implement.<sup>399</sup> Forestall “aims to stop people from becoming terrorists,” Secure increases “protection capacity against terrorists,” Identify “aims at pre-emption through detection and early warning,” Prepare tries to mitigate “the impact of terrorist attacks,” while Implement is the “framework for mobilization of a coordinated cross-governmental counter-terrorism effort.”<sup>400</sup> The creation of the NACTEST was likely due to Boko Haram’s increasingly sophisticated attacks, which also likely influenced President Jonathan’s to

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<sup>392</sup> “OBJ blasts Jonathan in 18-page letter,” *Vanguard News*, last modified December 12, 2013, <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2013/12/obj-blasts-jonathan-in-18-page-letter/>.

<sup>393</sup> “Nigeria row over Obasanjo letter to Goodluck Jonathan,” *BBC News*, last modified December 12, 2013, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-25348485>.

<sup>394</sup> Ibid.

<sup>395</sup> Ibid.

<sup>396</sup> Eugene Eji, “Rethinking Nigeria’s Counter-Terrorism Strategy,” *The International Journal of Intelligence, Security, and Public Affairs* 18, no. 3 (2016): 204.

<sup>397</sup> Ibid.

<sup>398</sup> Ibid.

<sup>399</sup> Ibid.

<sup>400</sup> Ibid.

renew the state of emergency in Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa States the following month.<sup>401</sup> This was done despite opposition from multiple Nigerian organizations, including the Civilian Joint Task Force.<sup>402</sup>

As regional security worsened amongst the Lake Chad Basin Commission countries, due to Boko Haram's rapid expansion,<sup>403</sup> the actual reactivation of the Multinational Joint Task Force began on October 7, 2014.<sup>404</sup> During this meeting, members discussed "modalities for the deployment of the multinational force and the establishment of the command headquarters to coordinate its operations."<sup>405</sup> Shortly after, on November 25<sup>th</sup>, the African Union's Committee on Peace and Security (PSC) endorsed the activation of the Multinational Joint Task Force.<sup>406</sup> However, it was not until January 29, 2015 that the PSC "formally authorized the deployment of the MNJTF for a 12-month period"<sup>407</sup> with a recommendation of 7,500 personnel<sup>408</sup> and an initial budget requirement of \$700 million USD.<sup>409</sup> These financial costs were designed to come from Lake Chad Basin Commission member states with Nigeria (voluntarily) being the biggest contributor.<sup>410</sup> Before delving further, it is important to clarify the role of the African Union in relation to the Multinational Joint Task Force. The AU is the "principle partner in the establishment [and efficiency] of the MNJTF [, due to their] experience in the deployment and

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<sup>401</sup> Campbell 2014, 13.

<sup>402</sup> Thurston 2018: 211. The Civilian Joint Task Force differs from the Joint Task Force in that it is completely civilian comprised. The bulk of its members are young Muslims from the Northeast that emerged to counter Boko Haram. Although the group has been criticized for resembling a "vigilante group," it is indisputable that their knowledge of local traditions and dynamics bring an element to the fight against Boko Haram that the Joint Task Force lacks. Zenn, Jacob, "Nigeria's Civilian Joint Task Force," Council on Foreign Relations, last modified July 18, 2013, <https://www.cfr.org/blog/nigerias-civilian-joint-task-force>.

<sup>403</sup> Assanvo, 7.

<sup>404</sup> Ibid, 6.

<sup>405</sup> Ibid.

<sup>406</sup> Ibid 2.

<sup>407</sup> Ibid.

<sup>408</sup> Ibid, 9.

<sup>409</sup> Ibid.

<sup>410</sup> Ibid.

management (political administrative and financial) of peace operations.”<sup>411</sup> They are tasked with providing strategic/logistical support and oversight. This includes: coordinating and managing donor assistance and financial contributions and supplying transport, IT, and other communications equipment.<sup>412</sup> However, in terms of control, Nigeria was unanimously given control of the entire MNJTF for the duration of its mission, due to its “commitment to eliminate Boko Haram and its determination to reassert its leadership.”<sup>413</sup> Furthermore, “from an operational perspective, [...] Boko Haram was mainly likely to occur on Nigerian territory, making it judicious for Nigeria to assume this office.”<sup>414</sup> In order to better understand the MNJTF, its institutional structure and key tenets are laid out below:<sup>415</sup>

*Table 5: Institutional Structure of the MNJTF*

<i>Dimension</i>	<i>Entity In-Charge</i>	<i>Jurisdiction</i>
Political	Lake Chad Basin Commission	Operates under the direct authority of the LCBC and reports on the execution of its mandate.
Strategic/Logistical	African Union	Oversight, including financial contributions, transport, and IT/communication equipment.
Operational (Military)	MNJTF headquarters in N’Djamena, Chad	Consists of personnel from the force-contributing countries (Nigeria, Niger, Chad, Cameroon, Benin) <sup>1</sup> and is led by a Nigerian Commander, Major General Lamidi Adeosun.

Adapted from Assanvo et.al., “Assessing the Multinational Joint Task Force Against Boko Haram,” 2016.

<sup>411</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>412</sup> Ibid.

<sup>413</sup> Ibid.

<sup>414</sup> Ibid, 7.

<sup>415</sup> Certain components were decided during the construction of the “Strategic CONOPS,” which dictates the rules of engagement and operational structure. The AU PSC approved them in March of 2015 (Ibid, 7).

*Table 6: MNJTF Operational Sectors*

<b><i>Sector</i></b>	<b><i>Command Location</i></b>
Sector 1	Mora, Cameroon
Sector 2	Baga-Sola, Chad
Sector 3	Baga, Nigeria
Sector 4	Diffa, Niger

Adapted from Assanvo et.al, “Assessing the Multinational Joint Task Force Against Boko Haram,” 2016.

*Table 7: MNJTF Divisions*

<b><i>Components of the MNJTF</i></b>	<b><i>Purpose</i></b>
Civilian (Not yet active)	Help the LCBC executive secretary with political, administrative, and financial aspects, since he is head of the mission. <sup>416</sup>
Police (Not yet active)	Help the military with security.
Military (Active) <sup>1</sup>	Deployed to member countries to fight Boko Haram

Adapted from Assanvo et.al, “Assessing the Multinational Joint Task Force Against Boko Haram,” 2016.

Shortly after the African Union’s activation of the MNJTF, President Jonathan again tried to renew the state of emergency in Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe States.<sup>417</sup> The House of Representatives rejected this motion, signifying the beginning of the end for President Jonathan. The incumbent President ended up losing the 2015 election to General Muhammadu Buhari who had led Nigeria’s 1983 coup.

<sup>416</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>417</sup> Thurston 2018, 202.

The hardline military approach taken by President Jonathan did more harm than good in the fight against Boko Haram. First, the increased number of temporary police and military stations in the North provided Boko Haram with more access to weapons.<sup>418</sup> Since security forces were so preoccupied in the North, these groups became inaccessible to civilians.<sup>419</sup> This likely discouraged civilians from sharing important information about Boko Haram with the authorities.<sup>420</sup> Second, the continuous state of emergency “made civilians more isolated and vulnerable.”<sup>421</sup> Authorities instituted curfews and checkpoints<sup>422</sup> and frequently blacked out telephone communication and media access, making it virtually impossible for people to communicate with each other.<sup>423</sup> As a result, early warning systems were crippled, schools and markets were closed, farming ceased, major roadways became blocked, displacement and banditry dramatically increased, and attacks by Boko Haram became so frequent that they appeared to become an everyday part of life for Northern Nigerians.<sup>424</sup> This likely caused an increase in Boko Haram’s membership since the group could easily draw on anti-government frustration. Furthermore, President Jonathan’s “lack of political will and his inability to effectively combat Boko Haram”<sup>425</sup> harmed regional and MNJTF relationships, due to Nigeria being perceived as “an impediment to progress in regional cooperation.”<sup>426</sup> The country’s reputation as a human rights violator furthered harmed this cooperation.

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<sup>418</sup> Ibid, 204.

<sup>419</sup> Eji, 205.

<sup>420</sup> Thurston 2018, 205.

<sup>421</sup> Ibid, 204.

<sup>422</sup> Ibid.

<sup>423</sup> Ibid.

<sup>424</sup> Ibid.

<sup>425</sup> Assanvo, 8.

<sup>426</sup> Ibid. Nigeria has frequently been accused of having a tendency to take action without consultation, as well as their lack of army presence in occupying towns retaken from Boko Haram.

One explanation for the Jonathan administration's failure against Boko Haram is the notion that he "didn't believe that Boko Haram was a serious issue."<sup>427</sup> Instead, some have claimed that Jonathan believed that Boko Haram was a "device by the north to prevent him from continuing as president of Nigeria."<sup>428</sup> In fact, President Jonathan's wife initially suggested that the Chibok kidnapping of 2014 "was a fabrication intended to discredit her husband."<sup>429</sup> This reason, according to former President Obasanjo, explains the remarkable ineffectiveness of the Jonathan administration; "now if that is the situation, you can understand why the right attention was not paid to the issue of Boko Haram when it should have been paid."<sup>430</sup>

### ***The Buhari Era (May 29, 2015 –Present)***

Boko Haram became a major issue in the 2015 election,<sup>431</sup> as "voters' concerns about security intersected with their anger about economic issues, especially corruption."<sup>432</sup> For this reason, General Muhammadu Buhari ran his campaign on the promises that he would strengthen Nigerian security by tackling Boko Haram and addressing widespread corruption in the government.<sup>433</sup> He overwhelmingly defeated incumbent President Jonathan and won "twenty-one of Nigeria's thirty-six states, as well as nearly 54% of the vote."<sup>434</sup>

Shortly after being elected, President Buhari began making significant changes to the Nigerian Security Forces, as well as their approach to Boko Haram. First, he replaced the heads

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<sup>427</sup> Bolashodun.

<sup>428</sup> Ibid.

<sup>429</sup> Thurston 2018, 230.

<sup>430</sup> Bolashodun.

<sup>431</sup> Thurston 2018, 230.

<sup>432</sup> Ibid.

<sup>433</sup> Congressional Research Service, *Nigeria's Boko Haram: Frequently Asked Questions*, by Lauren Ploch Blanchard, 2016, 9, <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R43558.pdf>.

<sup>434</sup> Thurston 2018, 237.

of the Army, Navy, and Air Force<sup>435</sup> and moved the Nigerian Military Command Centre from Abuja to Maiduguri in May of 2015.<sup>436</sup> This decision is thought to have been strategic so that the military could begin attacking Boko Haram's logistics routes.<sup>437</sup> President Buhari then renamed the operation against Boko Haram to "'Operation Lafiya Doly' – 'Peace by Force'"<sup>438</sup> and stressed the need to utilize technology like "satellite images and geographical information system[s]."<sup>439</sup> Within his first year in office, President Buhari heavily invested in various military and security technologies (i.e. drones) and revamped closed-circuit television (CCTV).<sup>440</sup>

President Buhari also demonstrated an immediate re-commitment to regional cooperation, particularly with members of the Multinational Joint Task Force. His first international trips were to member states of the coalition, which he visited between June 3-August 1, 2015. This was a necessary move considering Boko Haram's increasing attacks on neighboring states, which demonstrated "the growing regionalization and even internationalization of the conflict."<sup>441</sup> Fellow members were happy with this recommitment and described President Buhari as bringing "new impetus to the joint response efforts."<sup>442</sup> In July, the President began to repair the fractured relationship between Nigeria and the United States, which had deteriorated under President Jonathan. Prior to meeting with President Obama in

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<sup>435</sup> Congressional Research Service, 9.

<sup>436</sup> Nnenna Ibeh, "Boko Haram:Nigerian military moves command centre to Maiduguri," Premium Times, last modified June 8, 2015, <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/184543-boko-haram-nigerian-military-moves-command-centre-to-maiduguri.html>.

<sup>437</sup> Ibid.

<sup>438</sup> Thurston 2018, 239.

<sup>439</sup> "Security," The Federation of Nigeria, <http://www.nigeria.gov.ng>.

<sup>440</sup> Ibid.

<sup>441</sup> Thurston 2018, 237.

<sup>442</sup> Assanvo, 8.

Washington, D.C., President Buhari wrote an op-ed in the Washington Post, calling on Nigeria's allies, including the U.S., to provide military training and intelligence to counter Boko Haram.<sup>443</sup>

By December of 2015, the Lake Chad Basin Commission and Benin had raised the MNJTF's personnel to 11,150<sup>444</sup> and President Buhari had made security-related visits to the G7, the United States, the United Kingdom, South Africa, Ghana, India, Iran, and Malta.<sup>445</sup> Nigeria's commitment to international partnerships was clearer and stronger than ever. However, President Buhari had a faltering at the end of the month when he claimed technical defeat over Boko Haram.<sup>446</sup> In these remarks, he stated "I think technically we have won the war because people are going back into their neighborhoods. Boko Haram as an organised fighting force, I assure you, that we have dealt with."<sup>447</sup> These statements were widely criticized for exaggerating the military's successes; "each time the army claims to have wiped out Boko Haram, the militants quietly rebuilt."<sup>448</sup> Regardless, this feeling of success was short-lived, as attacks continued into 2016, including an attack on a village in Dalori, Nigeria that left over 50 people dead.<sup>449</sup>

In January of 2016, President Buhari established the North-East Rehabilitation Committee, led by Theophilus Danjuma, with the aim of rehabilitating infrastructure and resettling internally displaced persons in the sub-region.<sup>450</sup> Also around this time, the Buhari

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<sup>443</sup> Muhammadu Buhari "Nigeria committed to good governance and fighting terror," *The Washington Post*, last modified July 20, 2015, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/nigeria-committed-to-good-governance-and-fighting-terror/2015/07/20/8c1acd00-2e21-11e5-8353-1215475949f4\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.eeb26eed2f48](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/nigeria-committed-to-good-governance-and-fighting-terror/2015/07/20/8c1acd00-2e21-11e5-8353-1215475949f4_story.html?utm_term=.eeb26eed2f48).

<sup>444</sup> Assanvo, 9.

<sup>445</sup> Oghogho Arthur Obayuwana, "Managing Expectations Of President Buhari's Foreign Tours," *The Guardian (Nigeria)*, last modified December 27, 2015, <https://guardian.ng/saturday-magazine/cover/managing-expectations-of-president-buharis-foreign-tours/>.

<sup>446</sup> Congressional Research Service, 10.

<sup>447</sup> Ibid.

<sup>448</sup> Ibid.

<sup>449</sup> "More than 50 feared dead in Boko Haram attacks," *The Guardian*, last modified January 31, 2016.

<sup>450</sup> "Buhari names TY Danjuma, Dangote in committee on North-East rehabilitation," *Premium Times*, last modified January 1, 2016, <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/196053-breaking-buhari-names-ty-danjuma-dangote-in-committee-on-north-east-rehabilitation.html>.

administration began receiving criticism for their perceived slow response to Boko Haram. In response, President Buhari stated, “People say we are slow. We are trying to change structures put in place by our predecessors in office for 16 years. If we hurry it, we will make mistakes. That will be a disaster.”<sup>451</sup> Days later, on the 14<sup>th</sup>, the African Union’s Committee on Peace and Security “renewed the MNJTF mandate for an additional 12 months”<sup>452</sup> and on the 29<sup>th</sup>, President Buhari pledged to commit \$100 million USD’s to the MNJTF.<sup>453</sup> Months later, in April, the federal government announced that the military had captured Abu Musab al-Barnawi, the leader of the Boko Haram faction that had pledged allegiance to Daesh.<sup>454</sup> It also introduced Operation Safe Corridor, which was aimed at rehabilitating and re-integrating repentant Boko Haram militants.<sup>455</sup> The following month, President Buhari raised Nigerian MNJTF personnel from around 3,750 to 8,500,<sup>456</sup> which was likely due to the success of the MNJTF in the prior months. One indication of this success was that 4,960 Boko Haram hostages were freed by the coalition in the first five months of 2016.<sup>457</sup>

On August 23<sup>rd</sup>, President Buhari revised the National Counter-Terrorism Strategy (NACTEST) that was implemented under the Jonathan administration. He emphasized a “holistic approach”<sup>458</sup> and “called for multi-sectoral collaboration [where] all government establishments

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<sup>451</sup> Ibid.

<sup>452</sup> Assanvo, 2.

<sup>453</sup> Ibid, 8.

<sup>454</sup> æKhalid al-Barnawi: Nigeria Islamist group head ‘arrested,’” *BBC News*, last modified April 3, 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-35956301>.

<sup>455</sup> Jasmine Buari, “Safe Corridor’ launched for repentant Boko Haram members,” *Naij.com*, last modified August 2016, <https://www.naija.ng/789484-unbelievable-read-government-plans-repentant-boko-haram-members.html#789484>.

<sup>456</sup> Ibid, 10.

<sup>457</sup> Ibid, 12.

<sup>458</sup> Office of the National Security Advisor of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, *The National Counter Terrorism Strategy (NACTEST)*, 2016, <http://ctc.gov.ng/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/NATIONAL-COUNTER-TERRORISM-STRATEGY.pdf>.

would [cue] into NACTEST for maximum achievements.”<sup>459</sup> This new strategy was designed to “involve all stakeholders in the battle by encouraging Nigerians to unite against terror in spite of their religious, tribal, political leanings.”<sup>460</sup> It also stressed the responsibility of religious leaders “to use their various places of worship to enlighten their followers through a change of mindset to embrace morality and love of God.”<sup>461</sup> Shortly after this announcement, Operation Safe Corridor reported that it was taking in over 800 Boko Haram fighters for rehabilitation.<sup>462</sup> President Buhari finished out the year by working alongside the International Committee of the Red Cross and the government of Switzerland to negotiate “the release of twenty-one Chibok schoolgirls.”<sup>463</sup>

In the first month of 2017, President Buhari left for a short vacation to London. His stay ended up being prolonged, due to an undisclosed illness.<sup>464</sup> Two months later, on March 10<sup>th</sup>, the President returned to Nigeria with questions swirling around his still undisclosed illness.<sup>465</sup> As time progressed, President Buhari appeared to be improving and in May, his government even orchestrated the release of another 82 Chibok girls.<sup>466</sup> Although the administration didn’t publicly detail the terms of the release, several senior officials have gone on record saying that the negotiations included “the release of five captured [Boko Haram] militants and a total of €3

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<sup>459</sup> “We are determined to defeat Boko Haram – Nigerian govt,” *Premium Times*, last modified October 5, 2017, <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/regional/north-east/245146-determined-defeat-boko-haram-nigerian-govt.html>.

<sup>460</sup> Ibid.

<sup>461</sup> Ibid.

<sup>462</sup> “800 Boko Haram members for rehabilitation in Gombe,” *Punch*, last modified August 1, 2016, <http://punchng.com/800-boko-haram-members-rehabilitation-gombe/>.

<sup>463</sup> Thurston 2018, 288.

<sup>464</sup> “Nigeria’s President Buhari extends medical leave in UK,” *BBC News*, last modified February 6, 2017, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-38879150>.

<sup>465</sup> Sewell Chan, “Nigeria’s President, Muhammadu Buhari, Returns Home, but His Health Remains a Mystery,” *The New York Times*, last modified March 10, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/10/world/africa/president-nigeria-muhammadu-buhari.html>.

<sup>466</sup> Thurston 2018, 288.

million.”<sup>467</sup> Immediately after meeting the newly released Chibok girls, President Buhari was flown back to London on medical leave,<sup>468</sup> which lasted until August 21, 2017.<sup>469</sup> During the President’s absence, the country’s economy faced an oil-driven recession and experienced an increase in Boko Haram suicide attacks.<sup>470</sup> In October, two months after returning to Nigeria, President Buhari went to Turkey to foster a partnership to stop Boko Haram and other insurgent groups.<sup>471</sup> Despite this, attacks continued and on November 21<sup>st</sup>, Boko Haram attacked mosque in Adamawa, killing 60.<sup>472</sup>

Mid-December, Governors from Nigeria’s 36 states and the National Economic Council<sup>473</sup> approved the Buhari Administrations request to take \$1 billion USD from the Excess Crude Oil Account to fight Boko Haram.<sup>474</sup> President Buhari believed this money could be used to purchase equipment, procure intelligence and logistics, and more.<sup>475</sup> Towards the end of the month, the African Union’s Committee on Peace and Security decided to renew the MNJTF’s

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<sup>467</sup> Joe Parkinson and Drew Hinshaw, “Freedom for the World’s Most Famous Hostages Came at a Heavy Price,” *The Wall Street Journal*, last modified December 24, 2017, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/two-bags-of-cash-for-boko-haram-the-untold-story-of-how-nigeria-freed-its-kidnapped-girls-1513957354?mod=e2tw>.

<sup>468</sup> Dionne Searcey. “President Buhari’s Prolonged Absences Put Nigeria on Edge,” *The New York Times*, last modified May 8, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/08/world/africa/nigeria-boko-haram-buhari-chibok.html?mcubz=0>.

<sup>469</sup> Dionne Searcey, and Tony Iyare, “President Buhari Returns to Nigeria, Facing Serious Challenges,” *The New York Times*, last modified August 21, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/21/world/africa/muhammadu-buhari-nigeria-boko-haram.html>.

<sup>470</sup> Ibid.

<sup>471</sup> Chijioke Jannah, “Boko Haram: Nigeria, Turkey in partnership to deal with insurgents,” Daily Post, last modified October 19, 2017, <http://dailypost.ng/2017/10/19/boko-haram-nigeria-turkey-partnership-deal-insurgents/>.

<sup>472</sup> Loke Bisbjerg Nielsen, “Far From Defeated - Boko Haram Gears Up for a Deadly Christmas,” All Africa, last modified December 14, 2017, <http://allafrica.com/stories/201712180373.html>.

<sup>473</sup> Godwin Etakibuebu, “Another one billion dollars to fight Boko Haram?” *Vanguard*, last modified December 27, 2017, <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2017/12/another-one-billion-dollars-fight-boko-haram/>.

<sup>474</sup> Ibid.

<sup>475</sup> Ibid.

mandate against Boko Haram for another year, starting on January 31, 2018.<sup>476</sup> Sadly, the year ended on a violent note, as Boko Haram carried out Christmas Day attacks in Maiduguri, Gaboru, and Damboa with an estimated 28 victims.<sup>477</sup> Yet, in his 2018 New Years Eve speech, President Buhari declared that “we have since beaten Boko Haram [...] Isolated attacks still occur, but even the best policed countries cannot prevent determined criminals from committing terrible acts of terror.”<sup>478</sup>

So far, President Buhari has been lauded for taking a more “proactive approach than his predecessor toward countering [Boko Haram],”<sup>479</sup> which has led to a dramatic decrease in deaths. In 2014, Boko Haram was the most dangerous terrorist group in the world.<sup>480</sup> In 2015, the group dropped to second deadliest, behind Daesh.<sup>481</sup> Most recently, in 2016, Boko Haram dropped to the third deadliest terrorist group in the world with 1,079 deaths.<sup>482</sup> This was an 80% decrease in the number of deaths from the previous year, making Nigeria the most improved state via terrorism.<sup>483</sup> The GTI attributes this steep reduction to the success of the MNJTF, as well internal fractures within the group.<sup>484</sup> They also contribute the decline of Boko Haram to a

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<sup>476</sup> “738th PSC meeting on the renewal of the mandate of the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF) against the Boko Haram terrorist group,” Reliefweb, last modified December 14, 2017, <https://reliefweb.int/report/nigeria/738th-psc-meeting-renewal-mandate-multi-national-joint-task-force-mnjtf-against-boko>.

<sup>477</sup> Ruth Maclean, “Boko Haram says it carried out Christmas attacks in Nigeria,” *The Guardian*, last modified January 2, 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jan/02/boko-haram-says-it-carried-out-christmas-attacks-in-nigeria>.

<sup>478</sup> Ibid.

<sup>479</sup> Congressional Research Service, 1.

<sup>480</sup> Institute of Economics and Peace, *Global Terrorism Index of 2015*, 4.

<sup>481</sup> Institute of Economics and Peace, *Global Terrorism Index of 2016*, 4.

<sup>482</sup> Institute of Economics and Peace, *Global Terrorism Index of 2017: Measuring and Understanding the Impact of Terrorism*, Report no. 55, November 2017: 16.

<sup>483</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>484</sup> Ibid, 14.

significant reduction in the number of terrorism-related deaths in Cameroon, Chad, and Niger, which collectively recorded a 75% decrease in deaths.<sup>485</sup>

Despite these successes, there is disagreement over President Buhari's performance to-date. Internationally, President Buhari is perceived to be doing a great job. The following countries and organizations have publicly commented about the Buhari administration:

1. *African Union*: In 2018, the AU elected President Buhari as their first ever "Anti-Corruption Champion" because of his "administration's commitment and glowing success in the fight against corruption in Nigeria."<sup>486</sup>
2. *Equatorial Guinea*: In January of 2018, President Mbasago said that "he has been doing a great job and today we can tell because we all know it that he has almost eradicated the menace of Boko Haram apart from minor, minor scourge of insurgencies that are happening from time to time."<sup>487</sup>
3. *United States*: In February of 2017, President Trump thanked President Buhari for the "good work he is doing, and also commended him for the efforts being made in rescuing 24 of the Chibok girls and the strides being taken by the Nigerian military."<sup>488</sup>
4. *United States and United Kingdom*: In 2017, they "praised Nigeria for its efforts to fight terrorism after country's security forces foiled a planned Boko Haram attack"<sup>489</sup> on their embassies in Abuja.

Domestically, despite certain elites lauding the Buhari administration (i.e. the Shehu of Borno<sup>490</sup> and the leaders in the All Progressives Party<sup>491</sup>), there is widespread dissatisfaction with the

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<sup>485</sup> Ibid.

<sup>486</sup> Onyinye Nwachukwu, "AU to inaugurate Buhari as 2018 anti-corruption Champion," Business Day, last modified January 24, 2018, <https://www.businessdayonline.com/au-inaugurate-buhari-2018-anti-corruption-champion/>.

<sup>487</sup> "President Mbasago commends Buhari for fighting Boko Haram insurgency to standstill," *Vanguard*, last modified January 23, 2018, <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2018/01/president-mbasago-commends-buhari-fighting-boko-haram-insurgency-standstill/>.

<sup>488</sup> Levinus Nwabughioqu, "Trump invites Buhari to Washington, promises new military deal against Boko Haram," *Vanguard*, last modified February 13, 2017, <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2017/02/trump-speaks-buhari-promises-new-military-deal-boko-haram/>.

<sup>489</sup> Ludovica Iaccino, "U.S. and U.K. Praise Nigeria for Foiling Boko Haram Plot to Attack Embassies," Newsweek, last modified April 12, 2017, <http://www.newsweek.com/boko-haram-embassies-attack-abuja-583046>.

<sup>490</sup> Nan, "Shehu of Borno lauds Buhari's success against Boko Haram insurgency," *The Guardian*, last modified December 31, 2017, <https://guardian.ng/news/shehu-of-borno-lauds-buharis-success-against-boko-haram-insurgency/>.

President's performance. This is particularly evident in the approval rating of President Buhari. In 2015, his overall rating was 67%.<sup>492</sup> This number dropped to 44% in 2016,<sup>493</sup> as people became angry at the worsening economy and the President's secrecy surrounding his illness. However, when asked specifically about Boko Haram, public opinion had increased dramatically; 61% felt the government was doing enough to combat terrorism.<sup>494</sup> After a brief increase in April of 2017, to 55%,<sup>495</sup> President Buhari finished 2017 with an overall approval rating of 45%.<sup>496</sup> He was rated highest in the areas of food security and security, but the lowest in job creation and poverty.<sup>497</sup> Two reasons for this drop in approval are the unchecked youth unemployment epidemic and the increasingly deadly conflict between Fulani herdsmen and farmers.<sup>498</sup> Certain groups have been vocal about their dissatisfaction of job unemployment, particularly The National President of the Yorubas Youth Congress (YYC) and the Northern Youth Coalition. The YYC released a statement saying that the President was perpetuating youth unemployment by pushing youths to the backside and taking them for granted.<sup>499</sup> The Northern Youth Coalition has advised the President not to seek re-election stating "the victory record in the fight against Boko Haram was insufficient to campaign with as insecurity had worsened in

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<sup>491</sup> "I'll give my best to all Nigerians, Buhari tells South East APC leaders," *Premium Times*, last modified January 22, 2018, <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/256344-ill-give-best-nigerians-buhari-tells-south-east-apc-leaders.html>.

<sup>492</sup> "Nigerian President Buhari's Approval Drops in Second Year," Gallup News, last modified October 6, 2016, <http://news.gallup.com/poll/196136/nigerian-president-buhari-approval-drops-second-year.aspx>.

<sup>493</sup> Ibid.

<sup>494</sup> Ibid.

<sup>495</sup> "President Buhari's March 2017 Presidential Approval Rating stands at 55%," NOI Polls, last modified April 18, 2017, <http://www.noipolls.com/root/index.php?pid=431&parentid=13&ptid=1>.

<sup>496</sup> "NOIPolls Monthly Buhari Job Approval," NOI Polls, last modified December 2017, [http://www.noipolls.com/root/index.php?pid=16&ptid=10&cat\\_id=6&parentid=6&timeline\\_id=128](http://www.noipolls.com/root/index.php?pid=16&ptid=10&cat_id=6&parentid=6&timeline_id=128).

<sup>497</sup> Ibid.

<sup>498</sup> Institute of Economics and Peace, *Global Terrorism Index of 2017*: 24.

<sup>499</sup> Temitope Olanipekun, "2019: Why we won't support Buhari – South West youths," Daily Post Nigeria, last modified December 6, 2017, <http://dailypost.ng/2017/12/06/2019-wont-support-buhari-south-west-youths/>.

other areas with kidnapping and ethnic violence on the rise.”<sup>500</sup> The final explanation for the drop in approval involves former President Obasanjo, who released a scathing letter detailing the failures of the Buhari administration and the All Progressives Congress. However, in terms of security and corruption, President Obasanjo stated, “I thought President Buhari would fight corruption and insurgency and he must be given some credit for his achievement so far in these two areas although it is not yet uhuru!”<sup>501</sup> However, the former President believed that by solely focusing on Boko Haram, President Buhari neglected the crisis between the Fulani herdsmen and farmers.<sup>502</sup> In response, the Minister of Information and Culture, Alhaji Lai Mohammed,<sup>503</sup> issued a lengthy reply to each of the claims put forth in the former President’s letter. Part of the press release read:

“...we have no reason to believe that former President Obasanjo has any motive beyond the well-being of the nation in issuing his Special Press Statement. We have also taken his admonition in good faith, and we thank him most sincerely for taking time off his busy schedule to pen such a long statement.”<sup>504</sup>

By calmly acknowledging President Obasanjo’s claims, as opposed to unilaterally writing them all off as President Jonathan had done, President Buhari was able to avoid further conflict surrounding the issue.

### **International Response**

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<sup>500</sup> Muhammad Ahmad, “Forget 2019, Northern youth groups tell Buhari,” Premium Times, last modified January 7, 2018, <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/254718-forget-2019-northern-youth-groups-tell-buhari.html>.

<sup>501</sup> Jude Egbas, “12 things we learnt from ex president's letter to Buhari,” Pulse.ng, last modified January 24, 2018, <http://www.pulse.ng/news/politics/12-things-we-learnt-from-obasanjos-letter-to-buhari-id7884844.html>.

<sup>502</sup> Ibid.

<sup>503</sup> “Buhari govt replies Obasanjo; speaks on ex-President’s rebuke,” Premium Times, last modified January 24, 2018, <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/256583-buhari-govt-replies-obasanjo-speaks-on-ex-presidents-rebuke.html>.

<sup>504</sup> Ibid.

This section focuses on the international actors and organizations that have been the most active, as well as vocal, in the fight against Boko Haram. They have been organized alphabetically.

### **African Union (AU)**

The response, help, and coordination provided by the African Union to the Lake Chad Basin countries have been invaluable. Thus, out of all the international actors, the African Union has been the most critical, useful, and effective in its response to Boko Haram. Because of how integral the AU has been in this fight, and how influential it has been to the domestic response of Nigeria, this entity was referenced heavily in the domestic response section, as opposed to the international response section.

### **Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD)**

The Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD) is a regional economic community that works with “numerous regional and international organizations with the purpose of consolidating collective work in the political, cultural, economic, and social fields.”<sup>505</sup> The block has 24 members, including almost all of North and West Africa,<sup>506</sup> as well as some East African countries (i.e. Sudan, Somalia, Djibouti, and Eritrea),<sup>507</sup> and includes almost all of the countries heavily affected by Boko Haram.<sup>508</sup> As of 2016, the group had “disbursed \$1.5 million to three member states (Niger, Chad, and Benin) to enhance the welfare of their troops with respect to [the] regional counter-terrorism undertaking.”<sup>509</sup>

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<sup>505</sup> “CEN-SAD - The Community of Sahel-Saharan States” United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, accessed February 7, 2018, <https://www.uneca.org/oria/pages/cen-sad-community-sahel-saharan-states>.

<sup>506</sup> Ibid.

<sup>507</sup> Ibid.

<sup>508</sup> Cameroon is not a member of CEN-SAD (ibid).

<sup>509</sup> Babatunde F. Obamamoye, “Counter-terrorism, Multinational Joint Task Force and the missing components,” *African Identities* 15, no. 4 (May 2, 2017): 434.

### The European Union (EU)

In May of 2014, the EU designated Boko Haram as a terrorist organization.<sup>510</sup> Over two years later, in July of 2016, the group announced 58.2 million euros in humanitarian aid to countries that were affected by Boko Haram,<sup>511</sup> as well as 145 million euros to the Sahel Region,<sup>512</sup> totaling 203 million euros in aid.<sup>513</sup> The following year, on September 15<sup>th</sup>, the EU donated 50 million euros to the Multinational Joint Task Force.<sup>514</sup> However, this money did have stipulations and was not meant to cover the “procurement of weaponry or military equipment, but instead meant to meet its logistical and material needs and cover a part of its human resources.”<sup>515</sup> These resources and materials include air transport, secured communications, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, and more.<sup>516</sup>

### France

France has played more of an indirect role in the fight against Boko Haram and made it clear in 2015 that they did “not intend to take part in the fighting.”<sup>517</sup> Instead, the French government provided “intelligence and military support to the Nigerian Army”<sup>518</sup> and “sent 40

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<sup>510</sup> “EU declares Boko Haram a terrorist organization,” defenceWeb, last modified June 9, 2014, <https://goo.gl/qRJmqj>.

<sup>511</sup> “EU steps up humanitarian aid for victims of Boko Haram in Africa's Lake Chad region,” European Commission, [https://ec.europa.eu/echo/news/eu-steps-humanitarian-aid-victims-boko-haram-africas-lake-chad-region\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/echo/news/eu-steps-humanitarian-aid-victims-boko-haram-africas-lake-chad-region_en).

<sup>512</sup> “EU announces €145 million in humanitarian aid for seven countries in the Sahel,” European Commission: European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/news/eu-announces-145-million-humanitarian-aid-seven-countries-sahel\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/news/eu-announces-145-million-humanitarian-aid-seven-countries-sahel_en).

<sup>513</sup> “EU steps up humanitarian aid for victims of Boko Haram in Africa's Lake Chad region.”

<sup>514</sup> “EU Statement on Multi-National Joint Task Force against Boko Haram,” European Commission: International Cooperation and Development, last modified September 15, 2017, [https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/news-and-events/eu-statement-multi-national-joint-task-force-against-boko-haram\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/news-and-events/eu-statement-multi-national-joint-task-force-against-boko-haram_en).

<sup>515</sup> Assanvo, 9.

<sup>516</sup> Ibid.

<sup>517</sup> “France to increase West Africa troops to support Boko Haram fight,” Reuters, last modified March 11, 2015, <https://goo.gl/j1cktC>.

<sup>518</sup> Christopher Griffin, “Operation Barkhane and Boko Haram: French Counterterrorism and Military Cooperation in the Sahel,” *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 27, no. 5 (August 2016): 908.

military advisers to Niger's southern border with Nigeria to help coordinate [MNJTF] military action."<sup>519</sup> Two years later, the French gave 14.5 million euros in humanitarian aid to the Lake Chad Basin region to deal with food insecurity, IDP's, and refugees."<sup>520</sup> Since 2015, the French have donated over 30 million euros.<sup>521</sup>

### ***Israel***

After the Chibok kidnapping, Israel dispatched counterterrorism experts and aid to assist in finding the girls.<sup>522</sup> A year later, the United States blocked the sale of U.S. helicopters by Israel to Nigeria,<sup>523</sup> claiming that it was routine to make sure that these sales were in the U.S.'s interests.<sup>524</sup> While this is true, it is likely that the U.S. was not keen on selling military equipment to the Jonathan administration, which was shrouded in human rights violations. Months later, in April, Israel pledged to help Nigeria fight corruption and Boko Haram. The Prime Minister stated that, "the latest news regarding the Boko Haram-ISIS alliance underscores the need for like-minded countries to unite in the fight against such radical terrorist organizations."<sup>525</sup>

### ***Multiple countries***

After the Chibok schoolgirl kidnapping, "the UK, working with the US and France, provided a range of military and intelligence support to the Nigerian Government in their search

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<sup>519</sup> "France to increase West Africa troops to support Boko Haram fight."

<sup>520</sup> "Briefing on Lake Chad Basin region - Security Council - Intervention by Mrs. Anne Gueguen, Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations - 13 September 2017," Permanent mission of France to the United Nations in New York, last modified September 2017, <https://onu.delegfrance.org/Lake-Chad-Basin-region-a-real-priority>.

<sup>521</sup> Ibid.

<sup>522</sup> "Israeli Forces Reportedly on the Ground in Nigeria," Israel Today, last modified May 13, 2014, <http://www.israeltoday.co.il/NewsItem/tabid/178/nid/24606/Default.aspx>.

<sup>523</sup> Emeka Mamah, "Boko Haram: US halts Israeli aid to Nigeria," *Vanguard*, last modified January 27, 2015, <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2015/01/boko-haram-us-halts-israeli-aid-nigeria/>.

<sup>524</sup> Ibid.

<sup>525</sup> "Israel pledges to support Nigeria fight Boko Haram, corruption," *Vanguard*, last modified April 7, 2015, <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2015/04/israel-pledges-to-support-nigeria-fight-boko-haram-corruption/>.

for the missing girls and their efforts to address the longer term challenge of terrorism.”<sup>526</sup> These countries, as well as many more, also took part in the notorious #BringBackOurGirls twitter hashtag, which began trending on social media shortly after the Chibok kidnapping. This campaign helped bring international notoriety to Boko Haram and was used by famous individuals around the globe, including First Lady Michelle Obama.<sup>527</sup>

### ***The United Kingdom (UK)***

Since the Chibok kidnapping, the UK has “significantly increased [their] military, intelligence and development support to Nigeria, including training and advice on counter-insurgency.”<sup>528</sup> In 2015, the UK upped British Forces from 125 to 300 to provide training and act in an advisory role.<sup>529</sup> The following year, they provided an estimated five million pounds for the MNJTF, as well as humanitarian support (i.e. “water, sanitation, emergency healthcare”).<sup>530</sup> They also worked with Nigeria’s Safe Schools Initiative to provide school materials for displaced children.<sup>531</sup> More recently, in August of 2017, they provided \$259 million dollars in a five-year emergency assistance package,<sup>532</sup> while also encouraging Nigeria to “step up and do

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<sup>526</sup> Department for International Development, Foreign & Commonwealth Office, James Duddridge, and The Rt Hon Nick Hurd MP, “UK’s continued support to Nigeria in the fight against Boko Haram,” Gov.UK, last modified April 14, 2016, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uks-continued-support-to-nigeria-in-the-fight-against-boko-haram>.

<sup>527</sup> Tracy McVeigh, “Michelle Obama raises pressure over kidnapped schoolgirls,” *The Guardian*, last modified May 10, 2014, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/may/10/michelle-obama-nigeria-presidential-address>.

<sup>528</sup> Department for International Development.

<sup>529</sup> Ewen Macaskill, “UK to send more armed forces to Nigeria to advise on Boko Haram,” *The Guardian*, last modified December 21, 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/dec/21/uk-deploy-armed-forces-nigeria-advise-boko-haram>.

<sup>530</sup> Department for International Development.

<sup>531</sup> Ibid.

<sup>532</sup> Nic Robertson, “UK government doubles Nigerian aid package to help fight Boko Haram,” *CNN*, last modified August 31, 2017, <https://www.cnn.com/2017/08/30/africa/uk-foreign-secretary-boris-johnson-nigeria-visit-boko-haram/index.html>.

more” against Boko Haram.<sup>533</sup> By the end of 2017, the UK had “provided military training to 28,000 Nigerian troops [...and deployed] over 40 UK military personnel [long-term].<sup>534</sup>

### ***The United Nations (UN)***

Shortly after the Chibok kidnapping in 2014, the UN added Boko Haram to the “list of Al-Qaida associates subject to financial sanctions and an arms embargo.”<sup>535</sup> The following year, the UN commended Lake Chad Basin member states, and Benin, for their operationalization of the Multinational Joint Task force.<sup>536</sup> In the beginning of 2017, the UN was dealing with four countries around the globe that were at risk or in famine (South Sudan, Northeast Nigeria, Somalia, and Yemen).<sup>537</sup> To end these crises, the UN called on member states to donate \$1.5 billion dollars in humanitarian aid.<sup>538</sup> This effort was incredibly successful and in August of 2017, South Sudan’s famine had ended and Northeast Nigeria, Somalia, and Yemen had all averted famine.<sup>539</sup>

However, the biggest step taken by the UN to-date occurred on March 31, 2017. On this day, the UN adopted its first resolution addressing Boko Haram.<sup>540</sup> This resolution, Resolution 2349, condemned Boko Haram and Daesh’s presence and “encouraged Governments to enhance

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<sup>533</sup> Sophie Jamieson, “Britain halves foreign aid money to Nigeria and urges country to 'step up' action against Boko Haram,” *The Telegraph*, last modified August 31, 2017, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/08/31/britain-halves-foreign-aid-money-nigeria/>.

<sup>534</sup> Nic Robertson.

<sup>535</sup> “Boko Haram, Nigerian group that kidnapped schoolgirls, put on UN terror sanctions list,” UN News Centre, <https://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=47874#.Wnt7CyPMYb9>.

<sup>536</sup> United Nations Security Council, “Statement by the President of the Security Council,” News release, July 28, 2015, <https://goo.gl/fB6jtY>.

<sup>537</sup> “UN aid chief urges global action as starvation, famine loom for 20 million across four countries,” UN News Centre, <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=56339#.Wnt9GSPMyb8>.

<sup>538</sup> Ibid.

<sup>539</sup> “Fighting famine: 'Unprecedented crisis' putting 20 million people at risk, warns UN agency,” UN News Centre, last modified August 14, 2017, <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=57353#.Wnt-JCPMyb9>.

<sup>540</sup> “Security Council Strongly Condemns Terrorist Attacks, Other Violations in Lake Chad Basin Region, Unanimously Adopting Resolution 2349 (2017),” News release, March 31, 2017, <https://www.un.org/press/en/2017/sc12773.doc.htm>.

regional military cooperation, and to move ‘vigorously and decisively’ to cut funding flows.”<sup>541</sup>

It also encouraged governments to implement consistent policies aimed at de-radicalization and reintegration, which offered “no impunity for those responsible for terrorist attacks.”<sup>542</sup>

Furthermore it advocated for increased protection for humanitarian organizations that deliver aid.

The passing of this resolution was seen as a “‘step change’ in mobilizing support for countries to combat Boko Haram”<sup>543</sup> and has been lauded as being “the first of its kind”<sup>544</sup> in recognizing the efforts of the MNJTF.

Yet, despite the United Nations aforementioned successes, millions of Northeast Nigerians are still at risk of famine<sup>545</sup> and 8.5 million are dependent on humanitarian assistance.<sup>546</sup> More humanitarian aid is necessary to remedy this situation, however the delivery of such is incredibly difficult, due to Boko Haram’s strategic position in the Northeast.

### ***The United States (U.S.)***

The United States became involved in fighting Boko Haram after the Chibok kidnapping of 2014 and began sending military supplies after President Goodluck Jonathan left office. After, the U.S. pledged \$5 million in support<sup>547</sup> and announced that it would be sending an “estimated 300 troops, along with surveillance drones, to Cameroon to assist in regional counter-Boko Haram effort.”<sup>548</sup> In January of 2016, the U.S. donated more military equipment to the Nigerian Army. Specifically, they gave Nigeria 24 used mine-resistant armored vehicles (worth \$11

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<sup>541</sup> Ibid.

<sup>542</sup> Ibid.

<sup>543</sup> Ibid.

<sup>544</sup> Ibid.

<sup>545</sup> “Nigeria: Famine averted but millions still at risk, stresses top UN relief official,” UN News Centre, last modified September 13, 2017, <https://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=57509#.WnuCfyPMYb9>.

<sup>546</sup> Ibid.

<sup>547</sup> “Obama pledges support for Nigeria's fight against militants,” *BBC News*, last modified July 20, 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-33600681>.

<sup>548</sup> Congressional Research Service.

million)<sup>549</sup> and announced that eight more were on the way (worth \$7.4 million).<sup>550</sup> Later that year, the administration pledged \$40 million in humanitarian assistance to the sub region.<sup>551</sup> The following year, President Trump finalized a deal created by the Obama administration to sell Nigeria 12 Tucano fighter jets.<sup>552</sup> However, in January of 2018, Nigeria rejected this sale due to its conditions, which forbid the planes from being sold before 2020 and stated that “Nigerian technicians [would] not be trained by U.S. staff, or be part of the maintenance crews.”<sup>553</sup>

### **Conclusion**

As previously stated, the purpose of this chapter was to detail domestic and international responses to Boko Haram. After analyzing these responses, some common trends emerge.

Domestically, there has been a decades-long failure to adequately address the systemic causes of the Boko Haram insurgency. By prioritizing a military-heavy response, the federal government has ignored the root causes of the insurgency. No matter how strong a military response may be or how effective it is, if problems such as youth unemployment, food insecurity, and the North/South disparity, continue to loom large, than the problem of Boko Haram will never truly go away. Furthermore, the Nigerian Government continuously underestimated the persistence of Boko Haram, which further motivated the group.

Internationally, the countries listed above became concerned with Boko Haram after the Chibok kidnapping of 2014. This heinous crime compelled them to act, first with military

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<sup>549</sup> Seun Opejobi, "US donates 24 used mine-resistant armored vehicles to Nigerian Army," Daily Post, last modified January 7, 2016, <http://dailypost.ng/2016/01/07/us-donates-24-used-mine-resistant-armored-vehicles-to-nigerian-army-photos/>.

<sup>550</sup> Ibid.

<sup>551</sup> “US Ambassador to UN Pledges \$40 Million to Aid Lake Chad Region,” *VOA News*, last modified April 20, 2016, <https://www.voanews.com/a/us-ambassador-to-un-pledges-40-million-to-aid-lake-chad-region/3293481.html>.

<sup>552</sup> “Nigerian Govt Rejects U.S. Conditions On Sale of War Planes,” AllAfrica.com, last modified January 26, 2018, <http://allafrica.com/view/group/main/main/id/00058454.html>.

<sup>553</sup> Ibid.

personnel and technology and then through financial aid. This shift in assistance can be attributed to the international community's realization that the Nigerian Government was going to have to take the lead in fighting the insurgency. This scaling back of response was characterized by unfulfilled promises of funding and other forms of assistance. In the coming years, it will be interesting to see if the promised aid does in fact come through to Nigeria.

The findings and common trends detailed above will be utilized to put forth sustainable and effective policy solutions aimed at countering Boko Haram. These recommendations are detailed in the following chapter and will be directed towards Nigeria and the international community.

## **Chapter 4: Recommendations and Conclusions**

Based on the findings of prior chapters, recommendations have been crafted for the Nigerian Government and the international community on how to improve their response to Boko Haram. These findings ultimately aim to quell Boko Haram and promote peaceful reconciliation in Nigeria. The recommendations below have taken into consideration Boko Haram's roots (i.e. Nigeria's weak state capacity, due to colonialism and poor-post-colonial governance, the politicization of religion, and its relationship with other terrorist organizations), strategies, (i.e. suicide bombings and the kidnapping of school-aged girls), and funding mechanisms (i.e. other terrorist organizations and political allies). This chapter will conclude with final thoughts about the entirety of this thesis, the longevity of Boko Haram, as well as future research questions that should be considered.

### **Domestic Recommendations**

#### **1. Keep Operation Safe Corridor, but address its shortcomings.**

To reiterate, the purpose of Operation Safe Corridor (OSC) is to “undertake deradicalisation, rehabilitation, and reintegration [DRR] of repentant Boko Haram members.”<sup>554</sup> In order for this program to be truly effective, the federal government needs to alter its approach to the program in three overarching ways.

First, the reintegration aspect of the DRR must be structured to ensure success for rehabilitated ex-combatants. This aspect is not only the “most important and complex aspect of the DRR Programme,”<sup>555</sup> but is “the most challenging aspect of dealing with the aftermath of the Boko Haram insurgency.”<sup>556</sup> Because successful reintegration diminishes

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<sup>554</sup> Idayat Hassan, “What is justice? Exploring the need for accountability in the Boko Haram insurgency,” *Harvard Human Rights Journal* 29, Spring 2016, <http://harvardhrj.com/what-is-justice-exploring-the-need-for-accountability-in-the-boko-haram-insurgency/>.

<sup>555</sup> “DRR Programme: Military clears 95 surrendered Boko Haram fighters,” *Vanguard*, last modified January 18, 2018, <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2018/01/drr-programme-military-clears-95-surrendered-boko-haram-fighters/>.

<sup>556</sup> Idayat Hassan.

the likelihood of recidivism, the federal government must work closely with states to figure out the logistical aspects of reintegration post-OSC, such as where ex-combatants will live. One way to deal with these crucial aspects is to create a loose framework that details the potential challenges that states will likely face as OSC increases its reintegration efforts. This would make it easier on states, especially those who are likely to have larger populations of ex-combatants. This framework could be created through a statewide conference with political representatives from all 36 states.

Second, the federal government must not ignore the concerns that survivors and communities have about reintegration. If these concerns are not adequately addressed, then this will remain a barrier to successful reintegration. This is because without community acceptance, or tolerance, former combatants may re-radicalize. Furthermore, in order to counteract the stigmatization that many citizens feel towards ex-combatants, the issue of accountability (justice)<sup>557</sup> must be addressed. It is imperative to discuss accountability, since there is a lack of consensus as to what justice looks like with regards to Boko Haram. Some differing perceptions of this concept are displayed below.<sup>558</sup>

*Table 8: Perspectives of Accountability (Justice)*

Accountability	Rationale
Through prosecution of Boko Haram members	If members aren't prosecuted, they are being given the easy way out.
Of the military	The military and the Civilian Joint Task Force must be held accountable to human rights violations that they have committed.
Of Boko Haram members and the military	All parties should be held accountable.
Through reparations and monetary compensation	Victims should receive compensation, regardless of the perpetrator (i.e. Boko Haram, the military, or the government).

<sup>557</sup> Ibid.

<sup>558</sup> Ibid.

Through truth	Want the disclosing of “what actually happened, who Boko Haram is, who their sponsors are, why the state allowed the crises to fester until now, and other questions.” <sup>559</sup>
According to survivors	“A balance must be struck between the rights of survivors and those of perpetrators.” <sup>560</sup>

Adapted from the United States Institute of Peace Special Report: Engaging Religion and Religious Actors in Countering Violent Extremism

To address these concerns, the federal government could perhaps bring in an entity like Fambul Tok International. Fambul Tok is an INGO based out of Sierra Leone that was created as a space “for effective community led and owned reconciliation processes leading to development and sustainable peace in post-conflict countries.”<sup>561</sup>

Third, the federal government must be more open about OSC with citizens. The program “is itself challenged on the basis that there is no clear communication to the public as to whether it is an amnesty program or under what legislation the Nigerian Government established it.”<sup>562</sup> This lack of information can lead to civilian frustration, especially if they are expected to openly accept former combatants back into society, without any true knowledge of what the government has done to rehabilitate them.

In terms of overall benefits, if the OSC Program is successful, former Boko Haram militants could be matriculated and contribute to society. These people would not only further stimulate the economy, but could also serve as staunch advocates against extremism. By heeding the above suggestions, the federal government would be taking a holistic approach towards reintegration, which would diminish the likelihood for further conflict. Notable difficulties to this approach would be three-fold: 1) there is no way of knowing whether OSC is going to be successful, 2) it would be near impossible to track each individual graduate of OSC to make sure that they do not recidivate, and 3) OSC does not encompass former Boko Haram abductees. These victims, usually young girls, may be stigmatized upon their return from captivity, similar to the way ex-combatants

<sup>559</sup> Ibid.

<sup>560</sup> Ibid.

<sup>561</sup> Fambul Tok International, “Home,” <http://www.fambultok.org/>.

<sup>562</sup> Idayat Hassan.

are. Thus, the federal government should create a new program that helps these victims and aids them in their return to normalcy. This program should have a community-centered approach that aims to educate civilians about the experiences of abductees, while facilitating reunification and providing an avenue for survivors to continue their disrupted education. Due to the difficult nature of this program, the government may seek to partner with NGO's to ensure the program's success.

## **2. Make the MNJTF permanent.**

Due to the massive success of the MNJTF in reducing Boko Haram attacks in Nigeria, as well as neighboring Cameroon, Niger, Benin, and Chad, the regional force should be made permanent. The most efficient way for this to happen is by making the group part of The Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG)<sup>563</sup> within the next two years. By institutionalizing the force, it would prevent a power vacuum from being created with the sudden pullout of troops and would create a sub-regional force within ECOMOG that could deal with immediate security concerns in a stronger and more timely way. Furthermore, this would bring Boko Haram closer to a military defeat, while assisting in the liberation of local communities held captive by the group. Once this occurs, the involved countries could ease into post-conflict reconstruction. However, it must be noted that this approach would require a prolonged monetary and personnel commitment from the countries involved, particularly Nigeria, who provides the most support to the MNJTF in terms of funding and troops.

## **3. Rebuild trust between security forces and civilians.**

To give the military credit, "it has had to adapt to a new type of war and learn on the job."<sup>564</sup> However, this does not justify violations of human rights. Thus, the federal government would need to unilaterally condemn and prosecute past human rights violations by Nigerian Security Forces and make it clear that the penalties for committing such crimes are severe. This would mean taking seriously the accusations against the

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<sup>563</sup> ECOMOG is the military component of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

<sup>564</sup> Max Siollun, "How Boko Haram can be defeated," *New African Magazine*, January 19, 2015, <http://newafricanmagazine.com/boko-haram-can-defeated>.

Civilian Joint Task Force, who have been accused of raping women and girls<sup>565</sup> and recruiting young children,<sup>566</sup> and prosecuting those who extrajudicially killed Muhammad Yusuf in 2009.<sup>567</sup> This process should be modeled after South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission.<sup>568</sup>

Another way to further trust between the two would be to train the Nigerian Military on the local customs of the area that they are deployed to, since citizens may perceive them as foreigners who are occupying their territory. Without an understanding of local culture, it will be incredibly difficult for Nigerian Security Forces to gain “the cooperation or trust of locals.”<sup>569</sup> This trust is imperative because trust in security forces is an extension of civilian trust in government. Without this trust, security forces may end up actually serving as further incentives for radicalization.

By rebuilding trust, the federal government could create an atmosphere where citizens feel comfortable sharing intelligence. This could “prevent youth from following the lure of extremism,”<sup>570</sup> thwart future Boko Haram attacks, and prevent members from hiding in localities. It would also undermine Boko Haram's influence on citizens by showing civilians that the federal government is not against them. However, if the federal government did make this a priority and started calling out shortcomings in the security forces, then it is possible that some people could defect and become radicalized. Furthermore, governments are not keen on recognizing their own shortcomings, so some may see this as unrealistic.

#### **4. Address the underlying systemic causes of the insurgency.**

As mentioned in previous chapters, if there is to be any hope in remedying the Boko Haram insurgency, the systemic causes of the group must be addressed. In other words,

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<sup>565</sup> Ibid.

<sup>566</sup> UNICEF, “Civilian Joint Task Force in Northeast Nigeria Signs Action Plan to End Recruitment of Children,” News release, September 15, 2017, [https://www.unicef.org/media/media\\_100837.html](https://www.unicef.org/media/media_100837.html).

<sup>567</sup> Alexander Thurston, *The disease is unbelief: Boko Haram's religious and political worldview*, January 2016: 25.

<sup>568</sup> The Commission was established at the end of Apartheid (South African Department of Justice & Constitutional Development, "Welcome to the official Truth and Reconciliation Commission Website," Truth and Reconciliation Commission, <http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/>).

<sup>569</sup> Siollun 2015.

<sup>570</sup> Nancy Lindborg and David Rothkopf, “Four Lessons for Fighting Extremists — Without Guns,” Foreign Policy, last modified September 29, 2015, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/09/29/four-lessons-for-fighting-extremists-without-guns-obama-united-nations-summit/>.

the insurgency “is a political issue; it is a social issue; it is an economic issue; and until these issues are addressed, the military can never give you a solution.”<sup>571</sup> The issues that the federal government should prioritize addressing are poverty, marginalization, unemployment, and the disparities between the North and the South.

Northern Nigeria, which occupies around 70% of landmass in the country,<sup>572</sup> has the highest poverty, illiteracy, inequality, and food insecurity rates in all of Nigeria.<sup>573</sup> Since civilian frustration with the federal government is utilized by Boko Haram to recruit, it must be curbed. Related to poverty is the notion of corruption, which President Buhari has fought against during his time as president. President Buhari, as well as the winner of the 2019 election, must continue to fight against institutional corruption, which also serves as a source of radicalization.

Regarding marginalization, the Nigerian Government, whether by choice or by accident, has neglected and ostracized certain groups in the country. The worst affected are Northerners, women, local leaders, and youth.<sup>574</sup> This discrepancy is best explained in terms of women’s political representation in the National Assembly, where only 9 out of 109 Senators and 27 out of 360 Representatives are women.<sup>575</sup> This must change, since it is widely agreed that the political representation of women is “fundamental to democracy and essential to the achievement of sustainable development and peace.”<sup>576</sup> It also tends to lead to better policies, which foster inclusivity and the responsible allocation of resources.<sup>577</sup> In this scenario, Nigeria should look to countries like Senegal, who not only

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<sup>571</sup> Siollun 2015.

<sup>572</sup> Samuel Ogundipe, “How to end poverty, illiteracy, other crisis in Northern Nigeria — Sultan, Onaiyekan, Jega, others,” *Premium Times*, last modified August 2, 2017, <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/238923-end-poverty-illiteracy-crisis-northern-nigeria-sultan-onaiyekan-jega-others.html>.

<sup>573</sup> Ibid.

<sup>574</sup> Lindborg and Rothkopf.

<sup>575</sup> “UK pledges support for Nigerian women's participation in politics,” *Vanguard*, last modified January 25, 2018, <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2018/01/uk-pledges-support-nigerian-womens-participation-politics/>.

<sup>576</sup> UN Women Executive Director Michelle Bachelet, “Women’s Political Participation,” News release, October 11, 2011, <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2011/10/women-s-political-participation>.

<sup>577</sup> Gwen K. Young, “Why we need more women leaders,” *CNN*, last modified July 23, 2016, <https://www.cnn.com/2016/07/29/opinions/women-rising-benefits-society-young/index.html>.

have high female political participation and representation,<sup>578</sup> but also have large Muslim populations.<sup>579</sup> Doing so would allow the Nigerian Government to dispel Boko Haram's claims that female political participation and education are against Islam.<sup>580</sup> Therefore, in order to counteract this marginalization, the state must push for increased participation and representation of the aforementioned groups in all levels of government, particularly at the federal level. Furthermore, in order to actually counteract marginalization, the government would need to actually listen, respond, and work with disgruntled Nigerians to address their concerns and grievances.

In terms of unemployment, youth unemployment must be a particular focus of the federal government. This is because, as of 2010, the country had a "youth population of 80 million, representing 60% of the total population of the country."<sup>581</sup> Of those 80 million, 64 million were unemployed, while 1.6 million were under-employed.<sup>582</sup> This statistic is incredibly troubling, particularly because unemployed youth are Boko Haram's biggest base for recruitment. Thus, to counteract the lack of opportunities that exist for northern youth, it is critical that jobs be created. People must be able to support themselves, whether it be through sustainable agriculture job initiatives or microfinance initiatives designed to stimulate economic growth. The government must invest in these opportunities in the North and not just focus on oil exporting jobs that are concentrated in the Southern portion of the country. The private sector, both domestic and international, has a role to play in this struggle as well and must invest more in the North. However, in order for private companies to be attracted to this area of Nigeria, the government must eradicate corruption and kleptocracy so that investors desire to work there. Lastly, in terms of secondary education, students must be better trained with employable skills that

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<sup>578</sup> "Following elections, proportion of Senegal's female parliamentarians almost doubles," UN Women, last modified July 12, 2012, <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2012/7/following-elections-proportion-of-senegal-s-female-parliamentarians-almost-doubles>.

<sup>579</sup> Dionne Searcey, "Senegal, a Peaceful Islamic Democracy, Is Jarred by Fears of Militancy," *The New York Times*, December 12, 2015, <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/13/world/africa/senegal-islam-extremism-boko-haram.html>.

<sup>580</sup> Landry Signé, "Boko Haram's campaign against education and enlightenment," Brookings, last modified February 26, 2018, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2018/02/26/boko-harams-campaign-against-education-and-enlightenment/>.

<sup>581</sup> Emeka Okafor, "Youth Unemployment and Implications for Stability and Democracy," *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa* 13, no. 1 (2011): 362.

<sup>582</sup> Ibid.

can be utilized across a multitude of sectors. This would ensure that students are not dependent on one job for their well-being.

Finally, the Nigerian Government must address and eliminate the disparities between the North and the South. The disparities that must be focused on include water access, infrastructure, and electricity. These are basic necessities and can be improved with domestic partnerships (i.e. NGO's and state and local governments), as well as international partnerships (i.e. INGO's and the international community). Nigeria can also reach out to its continental allies and see how they have, or currently are, addressing similar problems in their own countries.

Overall, this approach could quell resentment towards the federal government, prevent people from joining and aiding Boko Haram, and lead to defections from the group. By addressing the systemic issues of the uprising, Boko Haram's legitimacy will be tarnished and they will not be able to use the government's lack of care as a propaganda mechanism. In addition, the likelihood of other groups arising in the future with the same ideology would be dramatically reduced. However, due to the nature of the problems detailed above, this is by far the most comprehensive and difficult solution to the Boko Haram insurgency. It would involve addressing nearly all of the federal government's shortcomings and would require immense research and intricate policy initiatives, which would involve an enormous amount of time and money.

5. **Increase the role of religious leaders and actors in countering extremism.**

Religious leaders are important in any society due to their "unique positions of authority, the credibility that they often hold within their respective communities, their ties to their community members, and their access to and knowledge of institutional resources."<sup>583</sup> The Nigerian Government should reach out to religious leaders and "listen more than it speaks."<sup>584</sup> By hearing what these individuals have to say, it "would serve the dual purpose of changing the image of the state as corrupt and unresponsive, and simultaneously creating channels of information that might help prevent the emergence

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<sup>583</sup> United States Institute of Peace, *Engaging Religion and Religious Actors in Countering Violent Extremism*, by Peter Mandaville and Melissa Nozell, August 2017: 6.

<sup>584</sup> Thurston 2016, 25.

of further Boko Haram-like movements.”<sup>585</sup> However, they must keep three things in mind when reaching out to religious actors: don’t just speak to people that agree with their policies,<sup>586</sup> don’t just speak to leaders with “credentials,”<sup>587</sup> and don’t call on religious leaders to “neutralize” religion or political mobilization.<sup>588</sup>

If the government wants to keep its credibility throughout this process, it must fight against the common interpretation of credibility, which encompasses “religious figures who articulate views that are aligned with official government policy, or who refrain from directly criticizing political leaders.”<sup>589</sup> A religious actor with true credibility is likely to be someone “who combines an erudite critique of a violent extremist group’s religious justification with another of injustices arising from the policies of governments targeted by those groups.”<sup>590</sup> Related to credibility are the credentials of religious leaders. Contrary to popular belief, educational and theological credentials are not always indicative of someone with communal respect and knowledge. In actuality, “religious leaders at the local and provincial level are likely to be more trusted and to have a more granular understanding of the specific issue facing their communities.”<sup>591</sup> Additionally, religious actors should not be encouraged to neutralize religion, but instead channel a person’s desire for change into something positive and societally beneficial.

Other recommendations for the Nigerian Government include increasing inclusivity when reaching out to religious actors, resorting to religious leaders preemptively, not just reactively, and increasing trust and communication with religious actors. In terms of inclusivity, the government must involve religious representatives in the process of developing “and implementing new strategies and guidelines [to counter violent extremism]”<sup>592</sup> For the most effective results, it is imperative that “traditional and nontraditional religious actors, [especially] women and youth,” be involved, so policies can take “into account the multiple identities and roles of different religious actors.”<sup>593</sup>

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<sup>585</sup> Ibid.

<sup>586</sup> United States Institute of Peace, 9.

<sup>587</sup> Ibid.

<sup>588</sup> Ibid, 6.

<sup>589</sup> Ibid, 9.

<sup>590</sup> Ibid.

<sup>591</sup> Ibid, 10.

<sup>592</sup> Ibid, 8.

<sup>593</sup> Ibid.

By acknowledging that religious actors should “be involved at all levels in efforts to counter violent extremism,”<sup>594</sup> more comprehensive policies could be created. Thus, “policymakers should first consult with religious actors and other grassroots access and insight to hear about and understand their needs before new policies are even created.”<sup>595</sup> By drawing on the roles of religious actors as “mediators and counselors”<sup>596</sup> in their communities, more sustainable policies could be created that cater to the specific region, area, and religion that the policy will affect. Finally, increasing communication and trust between the government and religious actors would “mitigate risk[s] and improve effectiveness around issues such as returnee reintegration and rehabilitation or addressing the psychosocial needs of a community.”<sup>597</sup>

The benefits of this approach would be the de-legitimation of the politicization of religion by extremist groups, which would lessen the power of religion as a mobilizing force. This solution is also sustainable, unlike a primarily military approach, and would be able to fight against future extremism. The downsides are logistical and security related. The way that the federal government would decide who to engage would be time consuming and require an innovative approach to counter violent extremism. Furthermore, there are security risks for the religious leaders and actors that do become involved, as they could become targets of extremists.

## **6. Learn from past mistakes.**

For decades, the Nigerian Government’s “approach has been of saying the right things but at the wrong time, or of doing the right things but in the wrong way.”<sup>598</sup> For example, like President Jonathan did in 2014, President Buhari initially denied the recent attack in Dapchi, where it is believed that one of the Boko Haram factions kidnapped over 100 schoolgirls.<sup>599</sup> Another mistake was the sudden pull out of troops from Dapchi,

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<sup>594</sup> Ibid.

<sup>595</sup> Ibid, 6.

<sup>596</sup> Ibid, 7.

<sup>597</sup> Ibid.

<sup>598</sup> Siollun 2015.

<sup>599</sup> “Nigerian president apologises for Boko Haram schoolgirl kidnap,” *BBC News*, last modified February 23, 2018, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-43177237>.

a week prior to the kidnapping.<sup>600</sup> The Governor of Dapchi heavily criticized this move, citing an instance in 2013, which had a similar result.<sup>601</sup>

In order to avoid these mistakes in the future, the government must learn how to better listen to civilians and continue treating Boko Haram as a holistic problem. In terms of listening to civilians, they need to pay more attention to the specific programs that civilians are calling for, as well as how they are responding to already enacted programs and initiatives. From these accounts, the government could then create new programs or modify existing ones. In terms of a holistic approach, just as the Buhari administration has tried to do, the winner of the 2019 election must not focus its attention on a solely military defeat of Boko Haram. A holistic, multilateral approach to countering violent extremism should be enshrined in Nigeria's security policy towards all current and future insurgent groups.

By focusing on past mistakes, the federal government could better prevent future terrorist incidents and learn about their own faults, which they may not be aware of. However, because of this introspection, the federal government may not look at this solution very favorably.

Although there is merit to each of the above recommendations, the most critical involve addressing the systemic causes of the insurgency, rebuilding trust between security forces and civilians, bringing in religious leaders to fight counter-extremism, and rehabilitating former militants and survivors. If these four recommendations are not implemented, and are not done within the next 3-5 years, the likelihood of Boko Haram, or an ideologically similar group, regaining followers and power will tremendously increase. Thus, in the worst case, the power struggle between Boko Haram and the federal government could become permanent.

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<sup>600</sup> Soni Daniel, "Withdrawal of troops caused Dapchi girls abduction – Governor," *Vanguard*, last modified February 25, 2018, <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2018/02/withdrawal-troops-caused-dapchi-girls-abduction-governor/>.

<sup>601</sup> Ibid.

## International Recommendations

### 1. Continue to support the MNJTF.

The international community must continue to support the MNJTF through funding, words, and actions (i.e. selling military equipment). In terms of funding, the Community of Sahel-Saharan States, the African Union, the United States, the United Nations, the United Kingdom, the European Union, and France must continue their support for the Lake Chad Basin countries, since, per the above domestic recommendations, Nigeria will be diverting some funds towards internal improvements to counter Boko Haram. China should also step up in this fight, due to its strong diplomatic ties to the continent, and provide funding to the MNJTF. Regarding words, countries that do not supply funding should continue their unilateral condemnation of Boko Haram, especially when large-scale attacks occur. Lastly, countries should continue giving Nigeria and the MNJTF military supplies, so long as they are carrying through with, and focusing on, holistic solutions to the crisis. This will provide pressure on the Lake Chad Basin countries to holistically address Boko Haram, which should diminish its overall longevity.

### 2. Continue to comment on human rights violations.

Just as they have done in the past, the international community must be sure that human rights are not being violated in the countries plagued by Boko Haram, whether on purpose or by accident. NGO's and INGO's can also help in this monitoring, specifically Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, who have spoken out on such violations in the past. By doing so, the chance of security force violations occurring, such as extrajudicial killings, are less likely. The Lake Chad Basin countries should welcome this accountability, as it could disincentive radicalization.

### 3. Pay attention to what has and hasn't worked in the fight against Boko Haram.

The countries specified above, as well as those plagued by terrorism, should be paying attention to what approaches have and have not been successful against Boko Haram, so they can make modifications to their own counterterrorism strategies. By doing so, other terrorist groups, like Daesh, may be defeated quicker and groups that have not yet risen to power may be thwarted before becoming full-blown insurgencies.

#### 4. **Monitor communications between Boko Haram and its affiliate groups.**

The international community, particularly those with strong intelligence networks like the United States, should work together with the Lake Chad Basin countries to be sure that Boko Haram does not regain its strength through interactions with other terrorist organizations. This monitoring would include watching weapon and money transfers.

The most critical recommendations for the international community involve supporting the MNJTF and monitoring communications between Boko Haram and other insurgent groups. In terms of support, financial assistance should continue until the defeat of Boko Haram. If the MNJTF were to become institutionalized into ECOMOG, as proposed in the above solution, then the international community would have to figure out the most effective way to continue supporting the group. This could be done through regional organizations, such as the European Union, world organizations, such as the United Nations, or through individual countries. Regarding monitoring, this should continue long after Boko Haram's defeat to ensure that other insurgent groups don't spring up in its absence.

#### **Final Thoughts**

The above recommendations were crafted based on the findings of this thesis and other scholarly research. If implemented, these recommendations would be a tremendous asset in the fight against Boko Haram. While some solutions are more long-term than short-term, the pay-off would be seen for decades to come, which is why it is this author's hope that they will be taken seriously.

To reiterate the findings of this thesis, the Boko Haram insurgency, which arose in 2002 and turned militant in 2009 after the death of its leader, can be attributed to three factors. These three factors are Nigeria's weak state capacity, due to colonialism and poor post-colonial

governance, the politicization of religion, and Boko Haram's relationship with other terrorist organizations, specifically Al-Shabab, Al-Qaeda, and Daesh. Due to the deadly nature of the group and the massive suffering that they have inflicted on the Nigerian people, as well as those in Cameroon, Chad, and Niger, Boko Haram warrants studying. The response of the Nigerian Government has been plagued by inefficiency and the continued failure to address the systemic causes of the insurgency. Instead, prior to the Buhari administration, emphasis was placed on a military solution, which cannot fully eradicate Boko Haram. For true change to occur, the underlying causes of the insurgency, including youth unemployment, food insecurity, poverty, and the disparities between Northern and Southern Nigeria, must be addressed. Internationally, countries have provided aid and weapons to the Multinational Joint Task Force and should continue to do so, as long as they are not violating human rights of civilians and militants.

While tremendous success has been achieved so far against Boko Haram, it is this author's belief that Boko Haram's longevity is dependent on three factors: the 2019 election, whether or not the systemic causes of the group are addressed, and Nigeria's long-term commitment to the group. Regarding the 2019 election, it is clear that Boko Haram will be a main issue. While it is currently unknown as to whether President Buhari will seek a second term, it is imperative for the winner of the election to continue viewing Boko Haram as a priority to the national security and peace of Nigeria. If the next president views the problem as secondary and decides to focus on other internal matters, even though they may be pressing, this would be disastrous. Giving Boko Haram time to regroup and reassert itself as a dominant power would be the worst thing that the Nigerian Government could possibly do. Furthermore, whoever decides to campaign for the presidency must be cautious not to lead people towards radicalization. In other words, candidates must caution themselves against politicizing religion,

which, as noted earlier, is one of the drivers of violent extremism. Moving on to the systemic causes of the insurgency, if Nigeria hopes to put an end to Boko Haram and other extremist groups, then they must prioritize institutional and societal change. There is simply no way to end Boko Haram without addressing these crucial issues. Thus, they should become major issues in the 2019 election and President Buhari should work harder to try and tackle some of these issues (even with minor improvements) before exiting office. Finally, the disparities between the North and the South must be remedied in order to thwart future terrorist organizations from rising in the future and to improve Nigerian unity. The modern divisions that exist within Nigeria lead to violence and the blaming of entire ethnic groups and regions. This is detrimental to the effectiveness of the federal government's efforts to fight Boko Haram and should not be overlooked. If these issues are not addressed, then it is this author's fear that Boko Haram will regain strength and continue to exist for decades to come.

While this thesis aimed to answer many of the questions surrounding the Boko Haram insurgency, many remain unanswered and should be undertaken in future research. One such question involves the internal structure of Boko Haram. Specifically, more information is needed regarding the fracturing of the group, its leadership, and the communication of the different factions, particularly in terms of other terrorist organizations. Another question that arises surrounds the relationship between Nigerian political elites and Boko Haram. Since the role of political elites in the group's rise is unclear, this topic must be studied. Finally, the effectiveness of Operation Safe Corridor should be studied, and policy changes should be made accordingly. If there is notable success, the federal government may want to make the program the priority for captured fighters. Furthermore, if positive results are being seen, then other international actors

may want to draw on Nigeria's reintegration and reconciliation framework to address current extremist groups and thwart future ones from rising.

With partnerships, perseverance, and massive changes, Boko Haram can and will be defeated. Until then, Nigeria and its partners must keep fighting against this evil for the sake of their citizens. Only then, will the evil of Boko Haram be eradicated and sustainable peace be truly achieved.

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