

**Full Length Research**

# **Nigeria At War With Herself -The Boko Haram Insurgency: Peace Restoration and Sustainable Development**

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Accepted 27 May 2015

Ordinarily, Nigerians will say that the civil war ended in 1970, but it simply marked the end of the three consecutive years of genocidal gun battle between Nigeria and the Biafra. Ever since that war stopped, Nigeria has constantly engaged herself in intra state war, appearing in different nomenclature. This has affected economic activities, political processes, administrative convenience, infrastructure development and social life of the citizens. With this being the situation Nigeria is facing, sustainable development is grossly hampered. The researcher, through extensive consultation with relevant literature, tried to identify reasons for the deterioration of peace in Nigeria and argued that the problem of Nigerians is not beyond what we can handle. It only requires Nigerians' concerted effort to meaningfully jaw-jaw so as to proffer long lasting solutions to the persistent chaotic atmosphere based on the general understanding that Nigeria is our own country which we depend on each other for individual and collective survival. The paper suggests that regionalism; ethnicity, religious dissimilarity and so many other ill interpreted concepts should not be allowed to play front role in our national discourse, so that landmark achievements can be actualized, sustained and expanded.

**Keywords:** peace, restoration, roadmap, sustainable development, war

**Cite This Article As:** Ukwuije CB (2015). Nigeria At War With Herself -The Boko Haram Insurgency: Peace Restoration and Sustainable Development. *Inter. J. Polit. Sci. Develop.* 3(5): 199-206

## **INTRODUCTION**

Nigeria at war with herself can be referred to as an intrastate war/conflict which is different from an interstate war/conflict or an extra-state conflict; though these terms are often used whenever a detailed and informed discussion about conflict and war is on. However, to some people, it is confusing but in this paper, the concentration is intrastate war or conflict. Intrastate violence or conflict is the most common and is ubiquitous in the Nigerian society. It is a kind of violence or conflict

that emanates from an armed group projecting from either government, non-governmental organization, interest group or a group of aggrieved individuals who took up arms against the state, state properties, the public or a single individual as a way of showcasing their ill feelings, or influencing government decisions. It takes place within the boundaries of a nation-state but make frantic effort to create awareness in the international system. It claims as many lives as a heightened civil war

and perpetuate damages that will cost a fortune to ameliorate.

This paper tried to explain the concepts of war, Boko Haram, peace restoration, and sustainable development. It tried to bring into focus, some of the violent attacks between Boko Haram, the Nigerian Army and the civilians as well as the prominent people killed by Boko Haram and unknown gunmen. A vivid presentation of the state of Nigeria as regards to conflict was made and tried to find out why war is becoming common and who is behind it. The effect of war was identified and the researcher concluded that all and sundry need to be up and doing in the fight against insurgency and all other forms of conflicts so that culture of peace can be enthroned and sustained

### Conceptual Clarifications

**War:** Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary (2010 8th edition), defined war as a situation in which two or more countries or groups of people fight against each other over a period of time, a fight or an effort over a long period of time to get rid of or stop something unpleasant.

Leadership of Inter-society Nigeria as quoted in Ukwuije & Nwachukwu (2013), stated on the 8th of April, 2013 that over 18,000 Nigerians died outside the law since 1999. On the 5th of August 2009, they estimated that over 30,000 unlawful death took place in Nigeria since the 1999, a period of ten years, and on the 17th March 2010, they reviewed it and concluded that the number might have increased to 34,000 as a result of the further rise in the killings. Their latest figures however, indicate that these figures may have been underestimated hence the latest figure is in the neighborhood of 54,000 illegal deaths...Going by this figure, one can rightly believe that Nigeria is at war with herself, her over 150 million population and her citizens as was said by the Intersociety Nigeria. This assertion will gain acceptance based on the definition of war by recognized war dictionary that "war is simply an inter-state or intra-state violent conflict that claimed over 999 lives (Pp136-137)

Some authorities are of the opinion that development goes hand in glove with violence but when it begins to take greater dimension, claim lives in thousands and destroy properties that will cost a fortune to ameliorate, then it can be termed war. The fight between Nigerian and the Boko Haram deserve to be called war long before now and this is why it has attracted wider international condemnation; yet the war do not seem to be getting over.

**Boko Haram:** The term Boko Haram (Western Education is forbidden) is officially called **Jama 'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda 'Awati Wai Jihad** (People of Sunnah Committed to the Propagation of the Teachings of the Prophet and Jihad"). It is a group of Islamist terrorists and militants in

the northern part of Nigeria with extended activities in countries like Cameroon, Chad, and Niger. The group is a confirmation of the assertion that "though all Muslims may not be terrorists, but all terrorists are Muslims. The group is formally recognized as a terrorist organization by such countries like:

New Zealand	Aug. 20,2012,
United Nations	May 22,2014
Australia	Jun.26, 2014,
UAE	Nov 15, 2014
United Kingdom	Jul. 10, 2013,
USA	Nov. 14 2013
Canada	Dec. 24, 2013,

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has officially declared it an Al Qaeda affiliate and imposed the Al Qaeda sanctions regime on the group. Its membership strength has expanded to between 7,000 - 10,000 people from different works of life whose perceptual understanding of the term "Religion" differs from the generally accepted denotative meaning. As of January2015, the towns and villages in Bornu and Yobe States under the control of the Boko Haram is about 20,000sq miles, an area estimated to be equal or nearly equal to the size of Belgium.

Boko Haram is known by so many inscriptions, images and logos but the most prominent logos by which they are easily identified are:



In these logos three elements are very pronounced and common amongst them. They could be explained thus:

1. Two Kalashnikov AK-47 automatic assault rifles. This symbolizes an armed struggle and the willingness of the group members and their loyalists use violence to actualize their death-determined objectives.
2. An open Quran. The holy book of Islam. This symbolizes their deep rooted faith in Islam, which to them, is the only perfect and acceptable religion.
3. The Islamic declaration of faith, the Shahada. This declaration is written in Arabic – the official language of the Islamic religion. It is

read from right to left and it reads thus: "There is no God but Allah and Mohammed is the messenger of Allah

(Source: Adapted from en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boko\_Horam )

**Peace Restoration:** Actually, it is very difficult for one to say exactly where and when peace deterioration began. How it started is also confusing because it has now assumed a larger scale. Formally, there was some level of appreciable global peace until the 20th century when the war of terror appeared like a full moon in countries like USA, Nigeria, Cameroon, Somalia, Iraq, Iran, Liberia, Chad, Palestine, Israel etc. Recently, France is experiencing the effects of hit-and-run terrorists. The war emanating from terrorism, violence and conflict became deep rooted in Nigeria in the early years of the 21st century, starting with hostage taking, abduction, kidnapping and extended swiftly to outright killing of innocent citizens and destruction of valuable properties which afterwards resulted to the conceptualization of the Nigerian situation as "Nigeria at war with herself". In fact, peace has deteriorated at every spot of human existence in Nigeria.

Scriptures of literature provides that there are both theory and empirical evidences that provide support that there exist a correlation between a nation's level of development and the level of peace and security they enjoy. This is to say; in as much as a country continues to develop, violence, conflict and terroristic acts cannot be totally over ruled. But what we are advocating is the infinitesimal reduction of war-like situations so that we can boost of the existence of relative peace like the present Ghana, Switzerland, Canada etc. This style of hit-and-run can only yield one out of all the expected results - "**Cheap Popularity**" at the same time attracting wider condemnation. But if the cowardice perpetrators of this crime against humanity and human right can stand to defend the reason for their actions, I think this can give government through the competent negotiating body, the opportunity to negotiate terms and conditions that will bring lasting solution to the issue that brought the catastrophe.

**Sustainable Development:** Development is a central focus of every society-developed, or developing. Though some countries are said to have obviously developed more than others but there is no limit to the height of development a given society can attain and say, they are no longer working towards a better society. This assertion can hang on the shoulder of the definition proffered by Njoku (2005) that:

*development is a multi-dimensional process involving major changes in social structure,*

*popular attitude and national institutions, as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality and eradication of poverty. Development, in its essence, must represent the gamut of change by which an entire social system turned to the diverse basic needs and desires of individuals and social groups within that system, moves away from a condition of life widely perceived as unsatisfactory towards a situation or condition of life regarded as materially and spiritually better (p13)*

World Bank (1987) gave a landmark definition of sustainable development as "Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own need". These needs-present and future might be conflicting considering the variety of human needs. Therefore, sustainable development suggests that meeting the needs of the future depends on how well we balance social, economic and environmental objectives or needs when making decision today. Some of the social, economic and environmental challenges that are part of the sustainable development issues are what people around the world strive to balance when making often difficult decisions about development. These three areas of need can be expanded thus (Table 1):

As a social process, sustainable development requires organizational and institutional arrangements to:

- i. support sustainable system of production and consumption, and
  - ii. support the development of sustainable communities that have the interest and capacity to defend local ecosystem integrity.
- Individuals acting alone cannot preserve bio-diversity, manage landscapes, or protect watersheds. It takes some form of community to conserve or protect resources (Ketilson, Gertler, Fulton, Dobson & Polsom 1998).

### Evidence of war in Nigeria

Below is a table showing some of the violent attacks between the Boko Haram, the Nigerian Army and the civilians in 2012 (Table 2 & 3)

### The Nigerian State

Nigeria's Terrorism Prevention Act of 2011 and the Amendment Bill of 2012 were passed by the Senate on October 17, 2012 and in the House of Representatives, it

**Table 1.** Socio-economic and environmental needs for sustainable development

ECONOMIC	SOCIAL	ENVIRONMENTAL
Services	Equity	Biodiversity
Household needs	Participation	Natural resources
Industrial growth	Empowerment	Carrying capacity
Agricultural growth	Social mobility	Ecosystem integrity
Efficient use of labour	Cultural preservation	Clean air and water

**Table 2.** Boko Haram: A diary of violence

2012	Place of Attack	Nature of the attack	No of death	Responsibility
5-6 Jan.	Yobe and Borno	Multiple attacks		Boko Haram
20 Jan.	Kano	Bombing		Boko Haram
28 Jan.	Boko Haram		11	Nigerian Army
8 Feb.	Army H/Q Kaduna	Suicide bombing		Boko Haram
16 Feb.	Central Nigeria	Prison Break, released 119 inmates	1	Boko haram
8 March	Boko Haram den	Hostage rescue	2 Foreigners	Boko Haram
31 May	Boko Haram den	JTF raid	5 sect memebtrs and a German hostage	?
3 June	Church in Bauchi	Bombing	Church goers and several other injured	Boko Haram
17 June	Churches in Kaduna	Suicide bombing	At least 50 people	Boko Haram
17 June	Plateau State	Attack	130 bodies found dead	Boko Haram
3 Oct.	Mubi	Massacre	25-46 people	Boko Haram

source: Adapted from "Source Magazine: January 21, 2013 Vol. 32 No.14 As compiled by Okoro, Marcel

**Table 3:** Prominent persons killed by Boko Hara and unknown gunmen in 2012

2012	Name	Origin	Occupation	Responsibility
20 Jan.	Enenche Godwin Akogwu	Kano	Channel Television Correspondent	Sect members
8. March	Franco Lamolinara	Italy	Engineer	Boko Haram
29 April	Jerome Ayodele		A professor and 14 other	Boko Haram
8 July	Gyang Dantong and 50 others	Plateau -state	Senator	Gunmen
15 Oct.	Mala Kaka	Maiduguri	Head of gwange	Gunmen
15 Oct.	Isaac Ananja, his wife and son	Maiduguri	Rtd Fire service official	Gunmen
18 Sept.	Ibrahim Jama Katagun	?	Ex Controller of Immigration	Gunmen
2 Nov	Gen. Muhammadu Shuwa	?	Rtd Civil War veteran	Gunmen
6 Nov	Alhaji Maiyara beheaded and 16 others shot dead	Zamfara State	Head of Kaboro Village	Gunmen
November	Babagana Kolo and mallam Yerima	Bornu	Lecturer, UNIMAID and Deputy Director State Ministry of Lands and Survey	Gunmen
November	Lawan Kangare	Kangare	District Head of Kangare	Gunmen
11 Dec	Kazalla Ali and his son	Bornu		Sect Members

source: Adapted from "Source Magazine: January 21, 2013 Vol. 32 No.14 As compiled by Okoro, Marcel

was adopted on October 11, 2012. New amendments to Section 17 of the Terrorism Prevention Act, gave a clear distinction between an act of terrorism and an act of conspiracy. For the latter, an imprisonment for a term of not less than 20 years is prescribed, then in a unanimous resolution, the senate held that there was no alternative to punishing terrorism offenders than death.

Goodluck Jonathan in an address on the Democracy Day - May 29, 2012 admitted that "terrorism, a new menace, totally alien to our way of life and culture, has reared its head and is posing serious challenge" ...the address read in part thus: "As a President, it is my solemn duty to defend the constitution of this country. That includes the obligation to protect life and property. we are doing everything possible to check the menace of terrorism. In this regard, we are determined to review some of the existing laws, to further strengthen the national counter-terrorism strategy. Coordinated joint action among our security agencies has now assumed greater importance. We have developed a new security architecture to strengthen the security environment.

Today, progress has been made. The country's credit rating is positive in contrast with many nations being downgraded. In 2011, our economy grew by 7.45%. As at mid May 2012, our foreign exchange reserve has risen in 21 months. We have stabilized and moved our fiscal regime. We brought the fiscal deficit down to 2.85% of GDP from 2.9% in 2011. We reduced recurrent expenditure from 7.4% to 7.1% and reduced domestic borrowing from ₦852 billion in 2011 to ₦744 billion in 2012. We cut out over ₦100 billion of non-essential expenditure and increased internally generated revenue from 200 to 467 billion.

For the first time in over a decade, we now have a daft Trade Policy which provides a multi dimensional framework to boost our trade regime and facilitate the inflow of investment. We have generated over ₦6.6 trillion worth of investment. commitment. The total value of our trade is also much higher than the value estimated the previous year due to deliberate government policies. To facilitate the base of doing business in Nigeria, we have a policy in place to make visa procurement easier, for foreign investors, with safeguards to prevent abuse.

**Why War?**

The question, "why war" is for everybody in Nigeria both the leaders and the led. The clergy and the laity, even the traditionalists. it is for those who are causing the war, those who are fighting the war and those who are suppose to control the war. This question has provoked so many answers with theoretical support. To expand this further , we need to look into the theories that explain the cause of war in Nigeria. This theories are very broadly divided into two: Micro and Macro Theories and going by

their definitions, it is accepted that they apply in Nigeria as a Nation-State. According to Roskin, Cord, Medeiros & Jones (2010), these theories explain that:

<p><b>Micro Theories</b> are rooted in biology and psychology. The might explain war as the result of genetic human aggressiveness that makes people fighters. In this, humans are no different from other animals</p>	<p><b>Macro Theories</b> are rooted in history and political science and concentrated on the power and ambition of state, not individuals, as the key actors, argue Macro Theorist. Political leaders have an almost automatic feel for national interest and power and more to enhance them.</p>
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The assumptions of the micro theories provoked such arguments which the afore-mentioned writer deduced thus:

*... the biological and psychological theories offer some insight and fall far short of explaining war. If humans are naturally aggressive, why aren't all nations constantly at war?.. under what circumstances do humans become aggressive? One the other hand, one questions still calls for answers, perhaps from the macro theories. Does the pursuit of power lead to war or peace? (Pp. 340-341)*

Another major factor causing war is what Roskin et al (2010) called misconception. To them some thinkers focused on "image" or "perception" as the key to war. It is not the real situation (which is hard to know) but what leaders perceive that makes them decide for war or peace...In misconception or image theory, the psychological and real world bounce against each other in the minds of political leaders. They think they are acting defensively but their picture of the situation may be distorted. In our time it is interesting to note, no country calls its action anything but defensive.

More so, Dahrendorf cited in Appelbaum (1970), wrote that for Max, society is not primarily a smooth functioning order of the form of a social organism, a social system or a static social fabric. its dominant characteristics is rather, the continuous change of not only its elements, but it's very structural form. This change in turn bears witness to the presence of conflict as an essential feature of every society. Conflicts are not random; they are a systematic product of the structure of society itself. According to this image, there is no order except in the regularity of change.

On the contrary, Max (1959), gave a some worth supportive argument to conflict. He said "without conflicts no progress: This is the law which civilization has

followed to the present day. Precisely, the history of all society up the present is the history of class struggle".

### Who is Behind This War?

Ndege (2012) stated that after nearly 3 years of violence and fighting by Nigerian extremist group - Boko Haram, in which more than a thousand people have been killed, the country's security services have released a list of Boko Haram's most wanted men. All the men on the list are being pursued in connection with terrorist activities in parts of the Northern Nigeria over the last couple of years which has included the bombing of churches, schools, civilian murders, assassination of religious leaders, businessmen and politicians and attacks on the media. First on the most wanted list is Abubakar Shekau, the self styled leader of the group, and the man seen on a string of You-Tube videos in the internet...The Nigerian government is offering \$300, 000 dollars in reward money for Shekau's capture. The other 18 men on the Boko Haram's most wanted list who have bounties ranging from \$155, 000 down to a more meagre \$60, 000 irrespective of the fact that their heads, names and faces are hardly known to the public or the media. This may make their capture much more difficult but undoubtedly, there will be those out there who know some of the men.

Udech (2013) posited that "it is no longer hidden that the average Nigerian feels terribly unsafe in his own country. What is happening now was prophesized years ago by men of God and scholars, some of whom are no more. Several of them were brutally killed or severely punished to silence them because some of the solutions they proffered were unacceptable to those benefiting from the problem". To him, there is no doubt that some top ranking Nigerians are involved in the terrorist acts. "A lot of people know them but are afraid to speak out. Sycophancy is the order of the day. Fear is crippling our courageous men and women because no one wants to die or be battered like animal" He further stated that "it is time for stock-taking, time for Nigerians to think about the future...this is the time our leaders should wake up and flush out those people that are supporting the so-called Boko Haram because most of them are in the present administration, not in the past". This submission is in line with the imaginations of the people, particularly those that have taken time to analyze the operations of the Boko Hara.

But the writer lost sight in one area that is so vital- sponsorship! Some of Nigerian soldiers are not very familiar with the kind of weapons this people are using; meaning that automatically, these weapons are very exorbitant. So, how do they raise money to purchase these weapons? They source fund from people in the present administration and people who have served Nigeria in one way or the other before, who are probably

thinking they deserve a better position than they are occupying now or aspiring for something greater than what they have now. The success stories of their attacks show clearly that they have received some form of well organized formal training. This therefore suggest that membership of Boko Haram is not only composed of miscreants and hoodlums but some others who must have received training sponsored with the tax payers money and money generated from the sale of our God given resources. The training of such I suppose, was for the good of the entire country - for purpose of protecting the lives and proprieties and the territorial boundaries of this nation and to protect us against external aggression but it is unfortunate they later turned it against the country

### Effects of Nigeria at war with herself on National progress

In as much as we continue to pronounce our self as "one Nigeria", the programmes and actions of this Muslim extremists does not really depict that we are one. They are not behaving like enlightened human beings and are not seeing others who are not Muslims as worthy to live. They are heart less, wicked and have no regard for whatever the law say/constitution says about human right. Yet, each time the government moves to punish them according to the constitutional provisions, their elite, elders and supporters will run to the National Assembly; saying, "they are defending their religion". Is it done by killing innocent and defenseless people and destroying their properties? Their actions is seriously bequeathing danger on posterity and the economy.

Igbatayo, (2014), says ... No sooner than the problem in the Niger Delta subsided, then the Boko Haram insurgency emerged in the North Eastern axis of Nigeria. An insurgence of religious extremists who vowed to establish an Islamic entity in Northern Nigeria. The Boko Haram Jihadist have demonstrated extreme viciousness in the method and scope of their attacks against defenseless civilians, religious bodies and the nation's security forces. The unrelenting attacks in the Northern States of Bornu, Yobe, and Adamawa States have virtually grounded economic activities in the region.

The devastating effect of this war is seriously affecting the psyche of the Nigerian citizens as per the trust and confidence they repose on the Nigerian Police and the Military. If these security operatives including the international negotiators and military intelligence from foreign countries could not stop this war up to this time; it simply means that they have failed. The loyalty of the citizens to the government is now in doubt.

Abidde (1012), says: either way one looks at the group, it s activities have been very damaging both physically and psychologically. Its real leadership and financiers are largely unknown. An because its theatre of operation is

very wide, no one can predict where it is going to strike next, or at whom. What's more, the group seems not to pay much attention to occasional setbacks and threats. It operates at will and at its own choosing. And it seems to have this aura of invincibility. These factors give the group a clear advantage over the government and the people. And finally, the group's activities have both domestic and a global implication...Boko Haram's success is making the security agencies look inept. As a result, there is growing perception, whether true or not, will most likely have a negative impact on the trust and confidence level of those who see the police as their defenders.

Further to this, Abidde up-cited maintained that if Boko Haram were to bomb Lagos, such an act would most likely provoke equivalent retaliation and mass exodus of Nigerians of northern extraction from Lagos and adjacent citizens/states. And if the bombing and the counter-bombing are prolonged, the country may witness pre-1967 conditions. A pre-1967 conditions will give rise to national political instability. We already know that unstable political space are characterized by uncertainty, unpredictability, and suffocating apprehension, and ultimately to economic deficits.

I have painful memories that lie buried most of the time. It is never easy when they surface, and yet there is a part of me that remains nostalgic for war's simplicity and height. The enduring attraction of war is this: Even with its destruction and carnage, it gives us what we all long for in life. It gives us purpose, meaning, a reason for living. Only when we are in the midst of conflict does the shallowness and validity of our lives become apparent. Trivia dominates our conversations and increasingly our news. And war is an enticing elixir. It gives us resolve, a cause. It allows us to be noble. And those that have the least meaning in their lives-the impoverished refugees in Gaza, the disfranchised North African Immigrants in France, even the lost legions of youth that live in the splendid indolence and safety of the Industrialized world-are all susceptible to war's appeal.

## CONCLUSION

The Holy Father, Pope Francis XVI in a weekly Angelus held in St. Peter's Square on September 8, 2013 posed the question as to the wars occurring all over the world are truly "over real problem or is it a commercial war to sell illegal weapons", He added that the only true fight is for peace and the common good. Conflict no matter the nature is not good let alone when it could be termed war. Whenever there is a war-like situation in a society, it is very likely that that society will be in disarray. It will affect not only the government, but the citizens as well. This is why all and sundry need to be up and doing in the fight against insurgency, terrorism, kidnapping, electoral violence, ethno-religious conflict and any form of chaotic

atmosphere that is capable of disrupting the acceptable social order. So that the part to sustainable development which we are on, can be maintained.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Amadi, Nye & Amadi (2013). suggested that "if the world order is to move away from its present chaotic and violent conditions especially Nigeria, where indiscriminate bombing and burning of religious houses (sic) is the order of the day, building "culture of peace" is the remedy. The creative management of differences is at the core of peace culture. This suggestion is ideal, timely and in-tune with the Transformation Agenda of the Goodluck Jonathan's Administration; and could be achieved if at the individual level, it is given a rational and concerted approach then, at the state level, it is given an all-inclusive approach.

2. No recommendation can be more proper except it is pointing towards building the culture of peace. United Nation through the General Assembly in 1999 defined culture of peace as the values, attitudes and behaviours that reflect and inspire social interactions and sharing based on the principles of freedom, justice, and democracy, all human rights, tolerance and solidarity, that rejects violence and endeavour to prevent conflict by tackling root causes to solve problems to participate fully in the development process of the society. So that we all shall work together to achieve peace by adhering strictly to the programme of action of the UN which described culture of peace as actions to:

- Foster a culture of peace through education
- Promote sustainable economic and social development
- Promote respect for human right
- Ensure equality between women and men
- Advance understanding, tolerance and solidarity
- Support participatory communication and the free flow of information and knowledge
- Promote international peace and security.

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