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**PERSISTENT VIOLENT AGITATIONS IN FRAGILE STATES: THE EXPERIENCE IN NIGERIA
(THE CASE OF BOKO HARAM INSURGENCY)**

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ABSTRACT

Persistent violent agitation is one of the key features of a fragile state. Indeed, states that have been classified as fragile like Afghanistan, Mali, South Sudan, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Libya, Burundi, Zimbabwe, Haiti, Somalia, Pakistan and others, all do experience varying forms and degrees of persistent violent agitations. Nigerian too, which is the focus of this study has been inundated with varying forms and degrees of violent agitations, riots and uprisings. One of the latest of such is the Boko Haram insurgency that started in 2002. Boko Haram is an islamic religious sect that seeks to forcefully establish a pure islamic state ruled by Sharia and to put an end to western education or civilization in Nigeria. In the past fourteen years, there have been various efforts by the government to control the violent activities of the sect with even a declaration of state of emergency in the three most effected states in the north eastern part of the country. Yet, the sect has proved to be very resilient as it continues to carry out major violent activities within the north eastern Nigeria and even beyond. It is in the context of the pervasive and persistent violent agitations in fragile states and their negative consequences for the nations and their citizens that this work is set out to generally discuss the issue of violent agitations in fragile states, examine the specific case of the persistent Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria and to highlight the imperative of addressing Nigerian state fragility as a solution to Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria. In doing this, the study relied mainly on secondary sources of information and consequently anchored its analysis, findings and conclusions on content analysis technique. In this case, data was obtained through literature survey of books, journals, newspapers, government publications and conference papers among others. The key findings are that Boko Haram insurgency and the difficulty in its control is a consequence of governance failure that is a cardinal feature of Nigerian state fragility. Consequently, it is recommended that an effective control of the Boko Haram insurgency requires that Nigerian state fragility in its various dimensions need to be addressed.

Keywords: Violent agitations, fragility, insurgence, mis-governance, Boko Haram, control.

INTRODUCTION

Every state or nation in the world, either fragile or stable, could at any given point in time experience crisis of the form of social uprising, religious riots, insurgency, ethnic or sectional militancy [1, 2, 3, 4]. These forms of crisis could come up as expressions of dissatisfaction or grievance over the style of governance and possibly as an attempt to influence or control the exercise of state powers, adjust or change sectional control of national government, promote good governance or democratic practice. However, what makes the difference is the regularity and pervasiveness of occurrence as well as the promptness of control of any such form of crisis as it may occur in fragile or stable state [6, 7, 8].

In fragile states, violent agitations or crisis are more regular and persistent. Evidence of this fact abound. In Syria, what started as a mere anti-government protest in 2011 has escalated to armed conflict and civil war between the forces loyal to president Bashar al - Assad and those opposed to his rule. Presently, the crisis has acquired sectarian over-tones, pitching the country's Sunni majority against the president's Shia Sect. The crisis has resulted in estimated eleven million Syrians becoming refugees or internally displaced. In South Sudan, there has been crisis since the nation's independence in 2011 largely as a result of group or ethnic grievances arising from lack of state legitimacy, poor public service and abuse of human rights. The crisis, which

has culminated into a full scale war since 2013, has resulted to an estimated eighteen percent of the population being displaced. In Yemen, there has been crisis since 2011 as a result of the revolution against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The crisis has escalated into brutal multisided civil war since 2015 and has resulted in an estimated three million people becoming internally displaced. In Somalia, there has been a civil war since 1991. The civil war was sparked off largely by the ousting of President Siad Barre in 1991. Indeed, since then Somalia has had no functioning nationwide government since then. In Afghanistan, there has been various forms and degrees of violence and uprising since 1978 when the Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) took power in a military coup. In Libya, there has been violence particularly since the death of Muammar Gaddafi in 2011 and the coming into being of the Arab spring. In Iraq, there has been, particularly from the death of Saddam Hussein in 2006, sectarian and ethnic violence mainly organized by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) [9].

In Nigeria, that is the focus of this study, regular and persistent crisis have come to be a recurring issue since the nation's independence fifty six years ago. The table below shows the major crisis in Nigeria since her independence in 1960.

MAJOR VIOLENT CRISIS IN NIGERIA FROM 1960-2016

S/N	Crisis	Period
1	1963 post general election crisis (consequent upon perceived wide spread electoral malpractice)	1963-1966
2	Nigerian-Biafra civil war (consequent upon crisis of leadership succession between 1963-1967)	1967-1970
3	Nationwide students riot in 1978 induced by the introduction of tuition fees in tertiary institutions	1978
4	Fuel price hike related crisis (usually consequent upon government's removal of fuel subsidy as in 1990, 1993, 1998, 2000, 2005, 2012, 2016).	Recurrent since 1980 to date
5	Moslem-Christian crisis in the northern states of Nigeria notably Kano, Kaduna and Borno states	Recurrent since 1980 to date
6	1993 General election annulment related crisis championed mainly by civil society organizations.	1993 to 1998
7	Nation-wide anti Structural Adjustment Programme riot (championed by Nigerian labour Congress and National Association of Nigerian students (NAN))	1988
8	Niger Delta militancy in South-South Nigeria (consequent upon perceived neglect of development needs in the Niger Delta region).	Recurrent since 1998 to date
9	Ethnic-religious crisis in Plateau Nassarawa and Benue states in the north central Nigeria.	Recurrent since 1980 to date
10	Post 2011 general election crisis in northern Nigeria particularly in Kano and Kaduna	2011
11	Book Haram insurgency in the north eastern Nigeria	2002 to date
12	Agitation against the environmental degradation of Ogoni land being championed by the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP)	Since 1980s to date
13	Agitation for the actualization of the sovereign state of Biafra being championed by the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASOP)	Since 2000 to date
14	Fulani herds men violence in the Southern part of Nigeria	Since 2000 to date

Source: compiled by the authors

Some of the most persistent and violent among the above listed crisis include the Niger Delta agitation for resource control that started in 1998 and the Boko Haram agitation for the

introduction of islamic state, sharia law and for abolition of western civilization and education that started in 2002 [10, 11, 12].

The Boko Haram insurgency, which is the focus of the study, has manifested through several murderous attacks, bombings, kidnappings; destruction of towns, villages and public infrastructures [12]. Notable cases of the Boko Haram violent activities include, among others, the kidnapping of 270 school girls of government college Chibok on April 14th, 2014, the Nyanya and Eagle Square bomb blasts in 2013 and 2014 respectively; the bombing of the United Nations Building in Abuja on August 16th 2011 and the bombing of the Nigerian Police Head Quarters in Abuja on June 17th 2012 [13]. Indeed, from 2009 precisely, the activities of Boko Haram has become akin to full scale war that appear to target the stability and integrity of the Nigerian state. By 2014, Boko Haram has taken over some areas in Borno and Adamawa states and declared such areas as islamic state and introduced sharia law in them [14].

The intensity and pervasiveness of the Boko Haram insurgency has become such serious that states like Britain, United States of America, France, China and neighbouring nations to Nigeria like Chad, Niger and Cameroun have all, in one way or the other, been involved in the effort to control it [15]. The Nigerian Government was even on the 1st of January, 2014 compelled to declare a state of emergency in three north eastern states of Nigeria namely, Borno, Adamawa and Yobe [16]. Yet even with all these efforts, the Boko Haram sect has continued with its violent activities.

The consequence of the Boko Haram insurgency has been enormous and critical. Basically, it has been taking government's time and attention and also taking much of the country's finance following extra-spendings on security. Nigeria's budget, on

security, for instance, rose from 16 percent in 2010 to 20 percent of the national budget in 2012 [17]. Thus, leaving less money for the much needed infrastructural development. Also, the Boko Haram insurgency is worsening, particularly the economy of the three most affected states in the north eastern Nigeria which are Borno, Adamawa and Yobe [18]. Boko Haram insurgency as well, has resulted to some forms and degrees of violation of the basic political, social, economic and religions rights and liberties of the Nigerian people. Politically, the insurgency is tending towards the breakdown of the fledging democratic governance in Nigeria [19]. The insurgency has also resulted to thousands of people being displaced from their homes and who live as refugees far away from their homes. The insurgency also has some serious negative implications for national integration as it has the potential to make peaceful coexistence, harmony and corporation among the various ethnic and religious groups and geographical parts of Nigeria difficult [20]. Indeed, Boko Haram insurgency has become a serious problem to peace, security of lives and property in Nigeria.

It is in the context of the pervasiveness and persistence of violent agitations and crisis in fragile states generally and in Nigeria specifically and their consequences that this paper is necessitated.

Generally, the structure of the paper is such that the paper started with introduction that is followed by clarification of the concepts of Boko Haram and fragility as the conceptual framework of analysis; discussion of the explanations for the emergence of Boko Haram insurgency, the challenges of its control in Nigeria as a fragile state and recommendations of appropriate paradigm for its effective and sustainable control.

CLARIFICATION OF THE MAJOR TERMS

- **BOKO HARAM:** The term, Boko Haram is coined from two Hausa words. One, Boko, meaning western education. Two, Haram, meaning sin. Boko Haram, therefore, literarily means western education or non-islamic education is bad or prohibited. Broadly, Boko Haram is seen as islamic militant group that is agitating for the imposition of sharia law in the entire northern states of Nigeria and for the abandonment of western education and civilization in those state. The sect calls itself “Jama atal Alhul Sunnah Lidda’ Wati Jihad” which means in english language “people committed to the propagation of prophets teaching and jihad”.
 - Boko Haram was founded in 2002 in Maiduguri, Borno state in the north eastern part of Nigeria by a radical moslem cleric called Mohammed Yusuf who incidentally was killed in 2009 by the Nigerian military forces. Following the death of Mohammed Yusuf in 2008, Abubakar Shekarau took over the leadership of the sect. Since 2009 that Shekarau took over the leadership of Boko Haram, its violent activities has increased in frequency, intensity and scope spreading from Maiduguri in the north eastern Nigeria to other parts of Nigeria [21, 22].
- **Insurgency:** This is an organized armed struggle which goals may be diverse like seizure of government power, break away from state control, establishment of autonomous state within traditional ethnic or religious bounds or effecting political, economic or social reforms. Insurgencies tend to arise when authorities are unwilling or unable to address the demands of significant social groups through less violent means [23].

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF ANALYSIS

The conceptual framework of analysis for the study is state fragility or simply fragility as it may be subsequently called. There is no one internationally accepted definition of the term fragility as it is conceptualized in different ways by scholars and organizations. OECD (2007) [24], for instance, maintains that a state is fragile when it lacks the ability or political will to perform basic functions needed for poverty reduction, development and for the safe guard of property and lives of its population. OECD (2013) [24] again described a fragile state as one having weak capacity to carry out basic governance functions and lacks the ability to develop mutually constructive relation with the citizens. From these foregoing definitions, one can infer that fragility entails, principally, a fundamental failure of the state to perform functions necessary to meet the basic needs and expectations of the citizens. Specifically, fragile states are incapable of ensuring security, maintaining rule of law and justice or providing basic services and economic opportunities for their citizens. In fact, a state labeled fragile carries the stigma of incapacity, lack of progress and poor governance. The strongest concentration of fragile states is in Africa and Nigeria is classified as one [24]. Indeed, by July, 2014 Nigeria was ranked the 17 most fragile state in the world [25].

There is a great diversity of fragile situations with varying characteristics or features. Indeed, fragility among states varies along a continuum of performance as well as across areas of state functions and capacity. However, there are some common basic underlying assumptions about states of fragility or basic features of fragile states. These basic features have been indentified in the institutional works of World Bank (2005) [26] and OECD (2013) [24] as well as in the scholarly works of [27, 28, 29, 30]. An articulation of the features as identified respectively by them yields the following as key features of fragile states:

- 1 Persistent war, crisis or violent conflicts or agitations
- 2 Inability of government to deliver the most basic services and meet vital development needs
- 3 Inability of government to maintain a monopoly of the possession and use of instruments of violence
- 4 A persistent condition of extreme poverty and underdevelopment
- 5 Insecurity of lives and property
- 6 High political instability
- 7 Pervasive electoral fraud
- 8 Low political will and administrative capacity to improve the workings of the state
- 9 Legitimacy failure and limited support from the people
- 10 Undemocratic governance
- 11 Low human development
- 12 Wide inequality in income
- 13 Pervasive corruption
- 14 Growth of criminal violence
- 15 Disharmony between communities
- 16 Loss of control over regions
- 17 Rise of private militias or guerillas
- 18 High poverty rate for some ethnic groups
- 19 Human right violations
- 20 Declining per capital income and cross National product

The above characteristic features are seen as both symptoms and causes of fragility. This is because some of the features have the tendency to further weaken the ability of the state to work and thereby fostering state disfunction and ineffectiveness. Specifically, for instance, inability to provide basic services and infrastructures is a feature of fragility. Non-provision of basic services can result to violent agitations. Such violent agitations, on becoming persistent and pervasive, could lead to break down of authority, law and order which could reinforce state fragility. Indeed, protracted and pervasive violent agitations could lead to further impoverishment, deprivation and

decay of infrastructure and to the further weakening of the ability of the state to function effectively. Also in a situation of poor governance, arising particularly from political and bureaucratic corruption, could significantly ignite cynicism in the masses and consequently dampen their patriotic spirit and willingness to give support to effective implementation of development policies and programmes. It could even out rightly lead to decline generally in the extent to which the ordinary citizens obey laws and abide by the constitution of the state. Such attitudes and predisposition as induced by poor governance could either singly or collectively further weaken governance and thereby reinforcing state fragility.

In applying the theoretical framework to the study, effort will be made to show how the characterization of Nigeria as a fragile state explains the persistent violent agitations in the country and with particular reference to the Boko Haram insurgency.

Boko Haram Insurgency and Nigerian State Fragility-The Nexus

Some studies or works on Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria have raised pertinent questions in respect of the reasons for the Boko Haram insurgency. Key among them are:

- To what extent does ethnic agenda, religious inspiration or political interest explain the Boko Haram insurgency?
- Is insurgency the only way for the Boko Haram sect to express its grievance and make demands?

As well, some pertinent questions have been raised in respect of the difficulty in controlling the Boko Haram insurgency and they include the following:

- Is the Nigerian government adequately equipped in terms of weapons, the will power and other logistics to effectively fight and control Boko Haram insurgency?
- Is the Nigeria armed forces adequately trained and motivated for the war against Boko Haram insurgency?
- Is the military actions or force the best option for the control of Boko Haram insurgency?

The above plethora of questions has created the basis for the competing political, economic, ethnic or religious perspectives of the real causes or motives of Boko Haram insurgency and the difficulty of its control. In this paper, however, the Boko Haram insurgency will be examined against the background of Nigerian state fragility generally. This is basically because none of the various perspectives respectively on its own adequately explains the emergence and persistence of the Boko Haram insurgency. From the political perspective, for instance, the explanation for the Boko Haram is that it is a northern organized movement targeted at bringing down the government of President Goodluck Jonathan from the southern Nigeria. This perspective was very popular between 2011 and 2015 when Dr. Goodluck Jonathan from the southern part of the country was the president. No doubt, comments and reactions to the build up of 2011 presidential elections showed that some northern political elites believed that Goodluck Jonathan need not have contested in that election and even with some of them openly threatening to make Nigeria ungovernable for Goodluck Jonathan in the event of his wining the presidential election. Indeed, the fierce riots and uprisings in the northern part of Nigeria after the electoral victory of Goodluck Jonathan in 2011 was seen as practical evidence of that dissent or opposition. However, it is worthy to note that Boko Haram insurgency actually started in 2002 when Olusegun Obasanjo was the president and even got intensified from 2008 when Musa

Yaradua from the northern part of Nigeria was the president and has continued under president Mohammed Buhari who is also from the northern part of the country. Given this, it is difficult to adequately explain the emergence and activities of Boko Haram as a northern political agenda.

It is equally difficult to establish the ethnic or religious basis of the Boko Haram insurgency given its indiscriminate targets of attacks. This is because its modus operandi is such that the insurgents attack both christians, muslims, northerners, southerners, the poor, the rich, women, men, children, public property, private property, farmers, school children, market women and government security agents. Also, the activities of Boko Haram are at variance with the widely accepted muslim teachings and tenets. Islam, for instance forbids the killing of innocent victims, suicide attacks and destruction of religion houses of worship, and attack on women and children.

It is, in the context of the inadequacies of the above various perspectives in explaining Boko Haram insurgency that the paper has chosen to explain the Boko Haram insurgence within the broader framework of Nigerian state fragility.

Generally, insurgency is associated with state failure in its various dimensions. Boko Haram insurgency, is as such, largely traceable to the Nigeria state failure. Eizenstat (2005) [11] notes specifically that insurgency grows out of critical capacity gaps in state governance. Such gaps may include lack of basic services and infrastructure like power, security, public health and education. Absence of these basic necessities, according to him, can lead to the loss of public confidence in government and its institutions and subsequently induce violent agitations that may be cloaked in political, religious or ethnic sentiment or demand

In Nigeria there is a widespread poverty occasioned by poor governance [31, 32, 33]. Coincidentally, the northern part of the

country suffers the worst indices of poverty with the north eastern part having 72.2 percent poverty level and closely followed by the north west and north central with 71.1 and 67.1 percent respectively. Mercy, (2016) [34], attests to this in her finding that generally six in ten Nigerians live in absolute poverty or less than one dollar a day, a figure which rises to three quarter of the population in the north eastern part of Nigeria. Bornan (2012) [6] and Onuoha (2010) [13] affirm the positive relationship between the Boko Haram insurgency and poverty in Nigeria as they found out in their respective studies that the recruitment and operational base of Boko Haram is usually located in the poorest part of northern Nigeria where people have been denied the opportunity to go to school as well as the opportunity to have meaningful economic source of livelihood. These deprivations create a pool of frustrated and idle youths and from where recruitment into the Boko Haram sect is highly possible. Indeed, the studies as mentioned above also found out that virtually, all the people that have been caught or implicated in the Boko Haram activities have not been identified to have meaningful, gainful or sustainable employment or source of living.

[35], clearly brings out the relationship between the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria and poverty in his observation that:

the sect led by Mohammed Yusuf took advantage of the poor quality of our educational system, the incessant strikes, cult activities, widespread malpractices and prostitution that is made worse with no offer of jobs after graduation to convince many youths to abandon school and embrace Yusuf's new and emerging state that promised to offer them better alternatives.

The Nation (2011) [36] argues too that when a man is poor, illiterate and unemployed, and possibly hopeless, he becomes a clean slate for any kind of brainwashing. Indeed, if the supporters and leaders of the Boko Haram sect are significantly educated, they would be able to question the general morality under pinning the violent activities of Boko the reasonableness in attempting to make islam the state religion in a secular state, the appropriateness of demanding for the prohibition of western education and civilization and the congruence of Boko Haram violent activities with the tenets of islam.

The relationship between poverty and Boko Haram insurgence is clearly captured by the Sun (2014) [36] and Eze (2012) [17] in their finding that the major source of foot soldiers for the Boko Haram sect are the illiterates, the unemployed youths of poor households and the layabouts who are easily lured into the sect with money and promises of good life if they could carryout bombings and killings and even suicide attacks.

Almed (2014) [4], links up the issue of Boko Haram with the crisis of leadership and governance in Nigeria as he notes that the late Yusuf, founder of the Boko Haram sect, took advantage of the irresponsible leadership at all levels of government in Nigeria and which has resulted to unemployment, poverty, corruption and insecurity becoming the order of the day. Brownan (2012) [6], further attests to the foregoing in his observation that Yusuf, the founder of Boko Haram, gained the support of the youths and made them to embrace the cause and philosophy of Boko Haram by providing meals and economic schemes including youth empowerment programs, supports for entrepreneurial training and arrangements for cheap marriages for the sect members. In Mercy's (2016) [34], study of the of Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria, she found out that Boko Haram lures young entrepreneur in north eastern Nigeria to join the Boko Haram group by providing capital and loan to boast their

business and consequently enable them escape poverty and get ahead in an environment of massive inequality. In essence, Boko Haram, in such a role of filling a critical gap in economic and financial services, gets support and loyalty from the youths.

The Nation (2011) [36] specifically argues that the Boko Haram insurgency is a result of decades of failed government and elite corruption. Indeed, governance in Nigeria has been observed by various scholars like [37, 38, 39, 40] to be deeply characterized by corruption. On this issue of corruption, as an explanatory factor of Boko Haram insurgency, Ovaga (2013) [40] observes that the Boko Haram sect believes that northern political leaders are corrupt and are impoverishing them through the instrumentality of the Nigerian state. Hence, their struggle to establish islamic state and implement sharia law with the hope that the introduction of sharia would lead to a social and moral revival. Adesoji's (2010) [2] observation supports the above finding as he remarks that the Boko Haram sect believes that governance in Nigeria that is based on western values has resulted in ostensible corruption and for which the sects is consequently attempting to have an islamic state where Nigerian modern state formation will be replaced with traditional islamic state.

Globally, defeating insurgent groups by force of arms is always a daunting task [41, 42, 43]. This is because in a fragile state, government is usually unable to maintain the monopoly of the possession and use of instrument of violence. In the specific case of Nigeria, its borders have been observed to be porous thereby making it easy for infiltration of arms and mercenaries into the country [2, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50]. This explains, according to Adesoji (2011) [2], the high caliber of arms and ammunition in possession of the Boko Haram and which has made it difficult for the Nigerian government to effectively fight the sect and control its insurgent activities. North (2008) argues

in this direction that weak government control of instruments of violence is usually a condition for insurgents to emerge, survive and operate.

The difficulty in controlling the Boko Haram insurgency by the Nigerian government as observed by the Nation (2014) is equally a reflection of the poor workings of the state. The Sun (2014) notes specifically in this respect that there may not be something seriously wrong with the Nigeria military command structure or their competence to fight effectively and control Boko Haram. Rather, it may have more to do with absence of motivation underlined by the show of indiscipline and sabotage in their formation. The high level of corruption at the leadership of the military formation in Nigeria is possibly a source of disenchantment for the soldiers and their unwillingness to decisively fight Boko Haram.

Deduction: From the foregoing, it could be deduced that Boko Haram insurgency is largely traceable to the fragility of the Nigerian state and the associated misgovernance in its various dimensions. Specifically, the inefficiency of the Nigerian state has created dangerous forms of poverty, deprivations, alienation and discontent that easily predispose the youths of the north eastern Nigeria to be willing tools for the Boko Haram insurgency.

Further, with the exponential escalation of the Boko Haram insurgency, there is a growing sense of insecurity among the citizens. This sense of insecurity is severely undermining peoples' confidence in government and its institutions. This has some implications for the citizens' loyalty to the government. One, when the citizens' loyalty is in doubt, the national stability and cohesion is threatened. Two, in the environment of insecurity, as created through the Boko Haram insurgency, meaningful and sustainable economic and social activities cannot

be initiated and conducted. In the northern states of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa, for instance, no meaningful business is taking place as the environment has come to be characterized by anarchy, fear and insecurity. Beyond the effect of the insurgency on domestic or local economic activities, the insurgency has created fears also in the minds of foreign investors. Further, the insurgency has the potential to disorganize the nations fledging democratic process and consolidation. The declaration of state of emergency in the three states of Yobe, Borno and Adamawa in the north eastern Nigeria as a result of the Boko - Haram insurgency already constitutes an aberration to proper democratic practice and a threat to its consolidation in Nigeria.

The Nigerian state in the context of Boko Haram insurgency is experiencing instability which is preventing people from undertaking normal social, economic and political activities and as well, preventing the state from development administration. In other words, Boko Haram insurgency is further undermining governance and development. This, in turn, is creating mass poverty and re-enforcing Nigerian state weakness which provide fertile ground for further agitation and crisis. The situation, is indeed, gloomy for Nigeria as with continued failure of governance, it is apparent that ever increasing number of ethnic militia, separatist groups, religious movements, political protests, social uprisings and riots would continue to be mobilized both for self-defense and for pressing ideological and practical goals or needs.

Imperative Measures for Controlling Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria

Basically, an effective control of the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria requires an integration of the various Nigerian government efforts to control Boko Haram insurgency into a comprehensive political, economic and social development

strategy that would bring about improvement in the lives of the northern population and thus reduce the appeal of Boko Haram to the youths in the region or kill the motivation in them for joining the sect.

There is, equally the need for the use of systematic propaganda and education to discredit the Boko Haram and its ideology and influence the perception of potential supporters of the sect. In essence, there is the need to effect perspectives and belief system in the northern region in ways that will create significant difficulties for the Boko Haram ideology to find local support and resources.

There is, as well, the need to control political corruption in order to enhance development administration and consequently the level of poverty, illiteracy, alienation and discontent among Nigerian citizens. Specifically, government needs to roll out mass education projects and program all over the northern region in order to reduce the number of uneducated children. Government need to also accelerate modernization of agriculture and agro processing in the northern region in order to create employment opportunities and spread income earning opportunities for the mass jobless northern youths.

Beyond the above recommendations, there is the need for improvement in the technical and professional capacities of the Nigerian armed forces to enable them competently and effectively combat the Boko Haran insurgents. This requires functional training particularly in counter insurgency practices. As well, such training should be complemented with equipping the soldiers with the state of the art military weapons and logistics.

There is also the need for effective border management and control. This is necessary to reduce the easiness with which the Boko Haram sect traffic weapons and war mercenaries into the

country through the neighbouring borders of Niger, Cameroon and Chad. Indeed, for the effective control of the Nigerian borders, there is the need for synergy and international cooperation particularly between Nigeria and her immediate neighbours in the areas of establishing mechanisms for information exchange on trafficking of weapons through the borders. In essence, there is the need for effective border surveillance.

Finally, effective exit from the fragility syndrome which nourishes the various forms of violent agitations in Nigeria requires international attention and assistance. In this direction, the critical task before the international community, particularly the United Nations, is to assist Nigeria to institute structure and reforms that will strengthen governance mechanism, induce development orientated public administration and stimulate the involvement and sustainability of good leadership. Government also needs to develop the will to promptly and decisively deal with any agitation that have the potential to threaten national security. This is necessary to keep the confidence of Nigerians in the ability of the government to ensure their security and to dissuade any group or sect from attempting to engage in any violent agitation against the state. Indeed, such decisive and prompt actions against violent agitations will induce people to adopt less violent means in making demands and expressing dissatisfaction about governance and socio-economic situations or happenings in the country.

Conclusion

The Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria is a consequence of the Nigerian state's weakness to effectively govern. This governance weakness is showcased in the deep rooted deprivations and underdevelopment in their various forms particularly in the north eastern Nigeria. The persistence or difficulty in the control of the Boko Haram insurgency is further a consequence of the

Nigerian state political leaderships' in ability to deal effectively and promptly with violent agitations. In essence, Boko Haram has exploited the state institutional weakness to emerge and it is exploiting same too to persist. Generally, therefore, as long as the Nigerian economy remains stagnated with mass deprivations, poverty, illiteracy unemployment and inequality persisting and the legitimacy of the state in constant question, the nation would continue to witness violence expressed under the cloak of political, ethnic or religious sentiments or demands. Given this, the only credible solution to Boko Haram insurgency is to strengthen the institutions of the state for effective governance and development administration. Doing this ultimately, requires the evolvment of purposeful, service driven and selfless political leadership at both the federal, state or local government levels. Getting this kind of leadership depends on the extent to which democratic institutions could be strengthened and democratic attitudes and values developed among the citizens to allow for the election of transformation leaders for good governance and effective social mobilization for sustainable development.

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