

## MULTI-NATIONAL JOINT TASK FORCE AND BOKO HARAM INSURGENCY IN NIGERIA

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**ABSTRACT**

*Boko Haram has perpetrated its terrorist acts within Nigeria and the Lake Chad basin since 2009 with devastating consequences. This arguably was due to inadequate mechanisms to investigate into the causes of their actions and make informed alternative decisions to effectively roll back Boko Haram activism. Paradoxically, the affected countries, either due to the pride of sovereignty or mutual suspicion, initially preferred to solve the Boko Haram equation in isolation within their national boundaries, but the persistent excesses of this group continued to threaten the security situation of the entire region. This necessitated concerted action and consequently led to the establishment of the Multinational Joint Task Force to roll back Boko Haram extremisms. The study utilized secondary data using content analysis and the state fragility theory to explain how the weakness of Nigerian state aided the emergence of Boko Haram and Nigeria's counter terrorism policies in mitigating the excesses of Boko Haram. The study reveals that multinational joint task force has been relatively effective in the fight against Boko Haram in Nigeria. The need to strengthen state institution was given as a suggestion on how to make the policies work effectively. The study also suggest that countries engaged in the fight against Boko Haram should stay mobilized given the persistence of the threat and the group's capacity to adapt, as well as its resilience.*

**Keyword:** *Multinational Joint Task Force, Boko Haram, Terrorism, Insurgency.*

**Introduction**

Throughout history, terrorism has been an instrument of inciting fear (Chalian and Blin, 2007). A glance at terrorism from historical standpoint sheds light on acts that have been tagged terrorism globally (David, 2013). Terrorism had taken a religious dimension for ages. According to Nuemann (2009) and Weinzierl (2004), the Jewish zealots provoked a revolt against Rome (60 to 70 A.D) while the assassins (Muslims), a radical *Shiite*, Islamic sect, waged a campaign in order to achieve purification of Islam (1090 to 1275 A.D). Nuemann (2009) gave a third group which is the Hindu group in India known as the Thugees who terrorized travelers and strangled the latter according to ritual and offered them to the goddess of destruction, *kali*. The group was active from the seventeenth century and only ceased to exist in the middle of the nineteenth century (Nuemann, 2009). These show that the nexus between religion and terrorism is not new (Hoffman, 2006). Isyaku (2013) opined that the French Revolution (1793 to 1794) was also remarkable in the inception of the modern era of terrorism. The government of France sponsored terrorism so as to keep to power and suppress opposition.

In the contemporary world, insurgency is not restricted to a country. Apart from the spillover effects it could have on other countries, it could also influence the behaviour of a state towards another state which may cause diplomatic row between them. For example, Kenyan government blamed Eritrea for supplying arms to Al-Shabaab, a Somali insurgent group that had claimed responsibility for several deadly attacks in the Kenyan territory over the Country's deployment of troops to fight the insurgents in Southern Somalia. That intensified diplomatic row between the two countries (Lee and Perl, 2002). Similarly, cross borders attacks by insurgent groups between Indian and Pakistan have also intensified diplomatic row between the two countries. India blamed Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM)-a group it claimed has closed ties to Pakistani intelligence of carrying out several attacks in Uri in India-administered Kashmir. Pakistan in turn accused India of colluding with insurgents and separatists to cause mayhem in the province of Balochistan, Pakistan (Kaplan, 2014).

Since the amalgamation of the northern and southern protectorate in 1914, Nigeria has been engulfed in different ethno-religious and political crisis resulting in substantial casualties (Aborisade and Mundt, 2002). Prior to the year 2000, several lives and properties were lost to ethno-religious crisis. The post-2000 era has witnessed other forms of violent confrontations; the most devastating has been terrorism,

perpetrated by the Boko Haram sect. Successive Nigerian administrations, since 2009, have had to deal with the menace of terrorism.

Ikelegbe and Okumu (2010) cited in (Akinola and Uzodike, 2013) attributed this endemic occurrence of violence to the poor conflict resolution mechanism of the Nigerian state. The government ignored the socio-political demands of several groups hitherto made in a peaceful way. According to Abiye (cited in Patrick and Felix, 2013), these groups took advantage of the government's inefficiency and inactions in dealing with the fundamental elements of nationhood such as internal security, resource control, injustice, corruption, ethnicism, overlordship and marginalisation. Some of these groups later became organised and militarised under different militias like the Oodua People's Congress in the west, Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) in the south east; and the Ohaneze Ndigbo group, also in the south east; the Niger Delta Volunteer Force in the south south; the Arewa People's Congress in the north; Egbesu Boys; Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) in the south south; Ijaw National Congress all in the south and for over a decade now, Boko Haram in the north east (Omitola, 2012). These groups consistently protested against marginalization, environmental degradation, poverty, political freedom, demand for federalism, autonomy and political leadership (Olowoselu, Bello and Onuselogu, 2014).

For instance, MOSOP and other groups in the Niger Delta demand for resource control, fiscal federalism and agitating against environmental degradation caused by oil exploration. MASSOB demands for political freedom while Boko Haram's demand is an Islamic state (Brinkel and Ait-Hida, 2012; Olowoselu, 2014; Omitola, 2012). The means for the achievement of these objectives include bombings, killings, kidnapping, vandalism among others (Akinola and Tella, 2013). However, what distinguishes the Northern originated Boko Haram's group from among others are the motives behind its vices which seem political, social and/or religious in nature (Akinola and Tella, 2013).

The Boko Haram crisis is a collective security threat to Nigeria and surrounding nations such as Chad, Cameroon, Niger and even Benin Republic. This led to the coming together of Nations who have common border with Nigeria most especially the North Eastern part of Nigeria. The countries of Lake Chad Basin (LCB) region necessitating the need for the countries in the region, including Benin Republic, Chad, Niger and Cameroon, committed themselves into a security community known as the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) to manage the situation. The countries in the Lake Chad Basin (LCB) led by Nigeria established the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) as an external force to compact the Boko Haram insurgency in April 2012 and upgraded it in 2015 for managing the ongoing Boko Haram crisis that started in Nigeria in 2002. The decision followed the realization that the problem is not necessarily Nigerian, as initially perceived, but a regional question. This security management formation is with a counter-terrorism mandate (Albert, 2017). It is against this background that this paper seeks to achieve the following objectives:

1. To examine the measures taken by Nigerian government against Boko Haram insurgency.
2. To examine role of multinational joint task forces in fight against Boko Haram in Nigeria.

#### **Statement of the Problem**

**This paper seeks to examine Multi-National Joint Task Force and Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria.** The insurgents eventually extended their activities to the neighbouring states of Nigeria, Niger, Chad, and Cameroon. The capability of Boko Haram to attack the neighbouring states of Nigeria in the Lake Chad region became serious concern to the West and Central African Sub-regions and Africa in general. Overtime, the focusing of scholarly counter-terrorism narratives around particular nations alone, without looking at the connection with which this terrorists in the home state link up and receive help from clandestine networks in other neighboring states to carryout acts of terrorism in the lake Chad basin. Although, the unending challenge of Boko Haram terrorism appears to impacts on the Nigerian side than the other neighboring countries. The spread of Boko Haram into Chad, Cameroon and Niger would therefore create further national and regional insecurity due to the proximity that will raise the chances of cross border terrorism (Pérouse de Montclous, 2014).

Boko Haram insurgency is no longer a threat to Nigeria alone, it has since pitted neighboring states against neighbors, cost more than 20,000 lives, displaced several hundreds of thousands, destroyed hundreds of schools and government buildings and devastated an already ravaged economy in the North East, one of Nigeria's poorest regions. At its peak, just before the 2015 general elections, it overstretched federal security services in Nigeria, with no end in sight; it also spilled over across national boundaries to Chad, Niger and Cameroon (Jacob and Akpan, 2015).

The terrorist activities within the neighborhood of the Lake Chad region, beginning from Nigeria to Chad, Cameroon and Niger Republic have continually left Nigeria and her neighbors in great fear. Many have abandoned their businesses, farms and ancestral homes, seeking refuge in either across the borders or migrating elsewhere within the home state. The situation has largely contributed to the reduction in the economic life, social cohesion, integrative power and also reduction in the needed foreign investment in the affected states and in Africa as a whole. It has also affected the international cooperation of these neighboring states as they continue their mutual suspicious of one another for not doing enough to curb the menace of insurgency before it began spreading abroad. Particular concern also, is the fact that the lack of cooperation in dealing with the activities of the Boko Haram sects cutting across national boundaries has opened up a strategic weakness on the part of the nation state, and enabled the sects to be able to fester and attack on state and then withdraw quietly unnoticed to safe sanctuaries existing close by in a neighboring state, thereby enhancing the sect's operational efficiency without a reasonable challenge from government forces.

Scholars have often viewed Nigeria as a watershed in the history of terrorism in the region but failed to consider the fact that there exist other external but equally dangerous elements acting from neighboring states in cooperation, thereby flowing in and out of the country promoting acts of terrorism through financing, arming and training the Boko Haram sect to be more dreaded than it already is. This has often led researchers to blame the terrorist in the North east alone without seeing how they connect to others outside the Nigerian borders.

Despite efforts by the Nigerian government to combat the Boko Haram insurgency, the group continues to pose a threat and challenge to the government of Nigeria in collaboration with other insurgent groups like Al-Qaeda, ISIS and Al-shabab. The security situation in the region has deteriorated, and the territorial integrity of Nigeria is being undermined. However, despite the efforts made at putting an institution as MNJTF (multinational joint task forces) which was signed amongst member states, success has not been recorded as initially expected, there is a gap in the current approach by the MNJTF to deal with the insurgency. Also lacking, is the use of more pacifying methods of bring peace within the region.

Argument of authors like Kuptchan (2001) on the idea of security community like multinational joint task force presuppose a zone within which states have stable expectations of peaceful participation of members in the zone because of the enormity of the security risk and the consequences of failing to participate. Arguing in the same manner Deutsch *et al* (1989) cited in Ifabiyi (2013) considered that having a security community like the multinational joint task force is a real assurance that members of the community will not fight each other physically. But the problem with the position of these writers is the strong idealist base of their argument.

This study unlike the previous studies attempts to examine the measures taken by Nigerian government against Boko Haram insurgency as well as the collaborative fight by Nigeria together with neighboring states against Boko Haram terrorism that has grown overtime to become a source of concern in the West Africa sub-region under the aegis of multinational joint task forces (MNJTF). This is the problem that provoked the study.

### Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on **State fragility** theory, propounded by Helman & Ratner (1993). State fragility theory offers explanation on how the dismal dispositions of the state cause terrorism and also affects the institutions of the state in implementing counter-terrorism policies. The status of a state is achieved when a political unit has a population, a clearly defined territory, a government and competence to relate with other states (John, 2008).

Okorie and Adebajo (2014) cited in Jacob and Akpan (2015) argued that the Nigerian state has not failed but fragile, as the characterization given for its failure only reinforces its fragility; characteristics such as poverty, corruption, low economic growth, unstable and divided population, legitimacy crisis, weak and ineffective and unstable political institutions and bad governance. All these are product of the crisis of governance in the context of state-fragility.

As regards the relevance of the state fragility theory to the study, it explains the weakness of the Nigerian state in making and implementing potent policies. The parameter used in measuring the weakness of the Nigerian state is the Fund for Peace failed state index. This index is premised on social, economic, political and military indicators. The Nigerian state is not a failed state in the example of Somalia and others, it is a fragile state that is not capable of enhancing development. Thus given rise to the various anti-state violence especially the Boko Haram violence which is the core of this research. Boko Haram is associated with violence. Most countries of the world do have a history of violence but the ability of a

state to mitigate such on time determines if such violence will expose the fragility of such states, as argued by John (2008). State fragility theory seems to bear relevance to check weakness or otherwise of institutions saddled with the implementation of counter-terrorism policies. Hence, the justification for its adoption for this study

#### **Multinational Joint Task Force and the fight against Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria**

The MNJTF is an offensive and stabilisation mechanism with the objective of combating Boko Haram and other groups labelled as terrorists operating around the Lake Chad Basin. Its establishment under its current structure was determined by the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) heads of state and government during the Extraordinary Summit of the LCBC member states and Benin in Niamey, Niger on 7<sup>th</sup> October, 2014 (Information Nigeria, 2015).

Nigeria's neighboring countries have worked through regional organizations including the African Union (AU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC). The LCBC created the multinational Joint Task Force (MNTF) in 1998 and its mandate was since expanded to include terrorism as an area (Ifabiyi, 2013). The Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) fighting Boko Haram in the North East and by extension the Lake Chad Basin (LCB) was formed in April 2012. However, this was not the first MNJTF to be formed between the countries. The first was formed in 1994 by the administration of Gen. Sani Abacha to police the north-east region against armed bandits from the Chadian war. At this initial stage, the Force was a solely Nigerian affair. The initial responsibility of the Force was to clear the border regions of the activities of the bandits and promote the free movement of persons and goods across the borders (Aghemelo and Ibhasebhor 2006).

In 1998, the Force became truly multinational by incorporating military units from Chad, Niger and Nigeria and the mandate was to deal with common cross-border security problems in the Lake Chad region. Its headquarters were located at Baga in Kukawa Local Government area of Borno State with a Nigerian serving as the Commander (Kundnani, 2015).

By 2012, the system was upgraded to deal solely with the Boko Haram crisis and was given a counter-terrorism mandate. It is composed of elements of the Chad, Niger and Nigerian Armed Forces with a Nigerian Brigadier General as the commander. It operates side by side with the Nigerian Joint Task Force (JTF) Operation Restore Order that has been in charge of the entire Borno State since June 2011. But unlike the latter, the MNJTF in Baga was in charge of the Lake Chad region and administratively and operationally independent of JTF Operation Restore Order in Maiduguri. However there has been synergy and collaboration between the two JTFs (Musa, 2013). The MNJTF has also been tasked to undertake specific actions in the areas of intelligence; human rights, information and the media. Recognising the complexity of its mission, three components - military, police and civilian - were to be established. However, the ambitious scope of the MNJTF's mandate and scale of operations, as well as of its key tasks, may raise some scepticism about its ability to take concrete and efficient action (Asanvo, 2016) cited in (Albert, 2017).

Among the changes that resulted from the reinvigoration of the MNJTF in 2015 included the redefinition of the mandate of the force to be more focused on preventing Boko Haram from having free access to the borders of member states of LCB; increasing the number of troops; transferring the management of the force to the Lake Chad Basin Commission; the movement of the headquarters of the force from Baga in Nigeria to N'Djaména in Chad; and giving the position of the Force's commander to Nigeria. Hence, General Buratai was appointed the Commander of the Force in May, 2015, but he was appointed Nigeria's Chief of Army Staff in July 2015 and had to transfer the mandate to another Nigerian, Major General Illiya Abbah (Information Nigeria, 2015).

In practice, the MNJTF does not fight all the battles that have to be fought against Boko Haram. Its mandate is limited to securing the borders among LCB countries. It ensues that Boko Haram does not have access to the use of the borders for launching its attacks. With the borders secured, each of the countries are expected to flush out Boko Haram from their respective countries. For example, the force dealing with Boko Haram in Nigeria is known as 'operation lafiya dole' (Albert, 2017).

This is the force fighting the insurgents in various parts of north-eastern Nigeria, most especially the Sambisa forest. As these internal forces carry out their operations, the insurgents would run towards the borders to escape into neighbouring states and they are expected to be cut down by the MNJTF. This security regimen is not without problems but it has contributed significantly to the degrading of the capacity of Boko Haram. In Nigeria, for example, the operations of the MNJTF have limited the activities of Boko Haram to the vast Sambisa forest. Their supply lines from neighbouring countries have been totally cut off to the extent that some of them are now beginning to negotiate their surrender. Their

capacity to launch suicide attacks on Nigerian cities has been drastically curtailed (peace by force) (Isaac, 2017).

Nigeria did a lot in the direction of bringing peace to the West African sub-region, as evidenced by its leadership role in the peacekeeping operations in Liberia and Sierra Leone (Gambari, 2006). However, the country was reluctant to allow foreign intervention on its territory; it aimed to retain ownership and exert its leadership in any attempt to combat Boko Haram (Thérout-Bénoni 2015). It would rather prefer collaboration with the other countries affected by the crisis to secure their borders against the terrorists. It is also doubtful whether the Economic Community of West African State (ECOWAS) has the kind of financial resources for intervening in a big country such as Nigeria. The responsibility for dealing with the problem therefore fell on the Lake Chad Basin Commission to coordinate Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger in finding solutions to their mutual problem (Umar, 2013).

However it is easier to form this kind of security community than to make it work. The fact remains that the MNJTF would have performed better if some of the factors working against the group were not there. These problems can be broken into two categories: the internal and external. The internal problems are the factors making it difficult for the member states of the MNJTF to work together peacefully. This includes economic imbalance among member states. The external factors are the problems coming from outside the immediate environment of the security operation, but which the MNJTF cannot underrate (Aghedo & Osumah, 2014).

An internal factor is that of trust between Nigeria and Cameroon as well as between Nigeria and Chad. The relationship between Nigeria and Cameroon was anything but cordial over the 'Bakassi crisis'. The Bakassi peninsula was part of Nigeria but Cameroon contested its ownership with Nigeria, leading to some military encounters between the two countries, as a result of which several lives were lost. In 1994, Cameroon approached the International Court of Justice (ICJ) with the plea of taking over the ownership of the oil-rich peninsula and some islands in Lake Chad. The country got a favorable judgment (Aghemelo and Ibhasebhor 2006; Tarlebba and Baroni 2010) but the two countries are still struggling to enforce the decision of the court. The matter was slightly compounded by the resolution of the Nigerian Senate on 22 November 2007 rejecting the ceding of the territory to Cameroon. The decision of the ICJ was said by the Senate to be contrary to Section 12(1) of the 1999 Constitution

In Nigeria today, Non-Governmental organizations have become an irresistible force. The non-governmental organizations sector is growing in relation to an increasing demand of their services and what many people have seen at the end result of assisting the victims of emergencies. According to Inamdar (1987) cited in Lee and Perl (2002), during ancient and medieval times, volunteerism operated freely and exclusively in the field of education, cultural promotion and even acted as service providers in term of crises like attacks, war, security and the roles plays by NGOs in fighting the dreaded Boko-Haram Terrorists in Nigeria is attestation to that.

However, as the MNJTF is making efforts to curtail the threats against peace and tranquility in the region, the operation has been characterized by distrust and weak coordination. The problem of funding is yet to be resolved as United Nations (UN) is expected to set up fund for the operations. In other words, neither AU nor LCBC was prepared for this challenge as there was no reserved or clear source of funding for this course (Zamfir, 2017).

Nigeria has contributed over US\$30 million to the MNJTF, other member states have not really invested meaningfully. Aside the troops in the combat operation, Chad and Niger were said to have not redeemed their various financial pledges for the smooth operation of the force. Again, the counter fire and uncoordinated destructive reprisals from the troop have instilled fear in the local residents who therefore, instead of cooperating by giving them vital information, appears sealed lips or hiding the insurgents among them. Thus, without cooperation for adequate intelligent gathering within the communities, winning the war against terror would be difficult (Nwachukwu, et al. 2019).

Also, multinational team like that of Multinational Joint Task Force (MNTF) in Lake Chad, deal with language issues every day. How they do so, however, remains largely absent from the literature. This striking observation by Maclean (2006) in (Zamfir, 2017) rang true until very recently. Despite the importance of language for the efficient functioning of multinational collaborations, language effects have long been underestimated by international actors and researchers.

From the foregoing analysis, scholars agreed that there exist roles tasked to be performed by the multinational joint task force. However, their area of disagreement is on the effectiveness of these roles. Factors such as lack of trust, language barrier, failed financial pledges and pride of sovereignty have been identified as the challenges bedeviling the multinational joint task force.

### Boko Haram Terrorism and Nigeria's Government Responses

The Boko Haram menace has prompted the enactment of policies by the Nigerian government, as well as the emergence of bilateral and multilateral ties. These include the declaration of state of emergency, imposition of curfew, establishment of the 7th Division of the Nigerian Army in Maiduguri, the integration of the local vigilante groups into the mainstream security system in order to check the menace of terrorism, establishment of *Almajiri* schools, relocation of military command centre to Maiduguri, banning and restoration of Global System for Mobile Communication (GSMC) services, establishment of the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) and setting up of administrative panel to negotiate with Boko Haram. Others are setting up a committee on the proliferation of small and light weapons, Countering Violence Extremism (CVE) Programme, rolling out of National Counter Terrorism Strategy (NACTEST), as well as legal frameworks like Money Laundry Punishment Act (MLPA) 2011, Money Laundry Prohibition Act (MLPA) 2012, Terrorism Protection Act (TPA) 2011 and TPA 2013 (Amy, 2014).

The bilateral and multilateral moves include Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF) put in place by the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC), training of 650 Nigerian soldiers in combat operations by the United States Department Of Defense (US DOD), listing of Boko Haram as a proscribed terrorist organization by the United Kingdom in 2013, labelling of Boko Haram as a Foreign Terrorism Organization (FTO) by the US in 2014, designating Boko Haram as a terrorist organization by the United Nations and the European Union in 2014. Assistance has also taken the forms of provision of aid by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and proscription of Boko Haram leaders with placement of \$7 million bounty on Abubakar Shekau, the group's leader by the US and Nigeria's recent entry into the Saudi-led Coalition of Muslim Countries against Terrorism (Amy, 2014).

The response of the Nigerian government to terrorism has been characterised by *ad-hoc* approaches in resolving issues that any terrorist act generates at any point. The Nigerian government's response to terrorism has been characterised by reactions to the symptoms of terrorism alone rather than been proactive. This is supported by the argument of Musa (2013) that, they fight the symptoms without addressing the root cause. This is because, a scan through the counter-terrorism policies further attested to the fact and revealed that all these policies came as a result of the Boko Haram menace. The initial methods of reaction to terrorism by the Nigerian government had its backing in Section 11 of the 1999 Constitution (Amy, 2014). This section of the constitution, states that the National Assembly shall make laws for public safety and public order for the federation (FGN, 1999). Hence, most steps taken against terrorism drew inspiration from the constitution. Therefore, no law addressed terrorism directly.

The need to address terrorism from its root causes and develop the capability to react to its symptoms necessitated the making of laws and a strategy on counter-terrorism. The laws are the Terrorism (Prevention) Act 2011, (TPA 2011); Money Laundering (Prohibition) Act 2011, (MLPA 2011); Money Laundering (Prohibition) (Amendment) Act 2012, (MLPA 2012) and Terrorism (Prevention) (Amendment) Act 2013, (TPA 2013) while the strategy is the NACTEST. Therefore, NACTEST will be utilized as a framework to assess Nigeria's efforts in addressing the Boko Haram menace. However, reference will continuously be made to TPA 2011, MLPA 2011, MLPA 2012 and TPA 2013, because all of these documents cannot be evaluated in isolation but together. Put differently, the NACTEST forms the core of the assessment but other parts of the Acts that relate to NACTEST will also be assessed

#### The Establishment of NACTEST and other Associated Acts

The government promulgated the TPA 2011, TPA 2013, MLPA 2011 and MLPA 2012. These Acts were assented to in order to provide a legal framework to the government's counter-terrorism measures. TPA 2011 was revised in 2012 leading to the enactment of TPA 2013 in February 2013 (United States Department of State, 2015a).

The TPA 2011 and the TPA 2013 stipulate how terror suspects can be arrested and prosecuted, checkmating terrorism financing, and taking measures to check international terrorists influence on terrorism in Nigeria (FGN, 2011a; FGN, 2013). That is, the Acts cover terrorist funding, terrorists' properties, prosecution and international co-operation to extradite suspected terrorists (Umar, 2013).

The Money Laundering Acts of 2011 and 2012 are against terrorism financing, either from local or international sources, as well as how offenders are arrested and prosecuted through the regulatory institutions and the judiciary (FGN, 2011b; FGN, 2012). These laws are interpreted through the Federal High courts and implemented by agencies of government like the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA), Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), EFCC, Nigerian Customs Service (NCS), Nigerian Fraud Intelligence Unit (NFIU), Prisons Service, and the Inspector General of Police, amongst others (FGN, 2011a; FGN, 2011b; FGN, 2012; FGN, 2013).

### Discussion of Findings

- i. In line with the first objective, Nigeria government have been actively involved in policy formulation strategies to checkmate terrorism in Nigeria. The findings show that there exit internal legislation by the National Assembly to curtail terrorism. These laws are; Terrorism (Prevention) Act 2011, (TPA 2011); Money Laundering (Prohibition) Act 2011, (MLPA 2011); Money Laundering (Prohibition) (Amendment) Act 2012, (MLPA 2012) and Terrorism (Prevention) (Amendment) Act 2013, (TPA 2013) while the strategy is the NACTEST. Other strategies include the declaration of state of emergency, imposition of curfew, establishment of the 7th Division of the Nigerian Army in Maiduguri, the integration of the local vigilante groups into the mainstream security system in order to check the menace of terrorism, establishment of *Almajiri* schools, relocation of military command centre to Maiduguri, banning and restoration of Global System for Mobile Communication (GSMC) services, establishment of the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) and setting up of administrative panel to negotiate with Boko. Others are setting up a committee on the proliferation of small and light weapons.
- ii. Equally critical is the role played by the MNJTF. Findings shows that it has been relatively effective as it has helped in some regard in degrading of the capacity of Boko Haram, the group is losing energy as most of its supply lines have been cut off since the force was put under the LCB commission supervision. But the commitments of the forces were more to their national armies than to the multinational institution. This situation opens up the tendencies for many disagreements to ensue amongst the various regiments making up the multinational force, such disagreements tends to have reduced the seeming effectiveness of the force.

### Conclusion

The study is a presentation of Multi-National Joint Task Force and the fight against Boko Haram in Nigeria. The activities of Boko Haram grew and became a danger not only to Nigeria alone but to the entire lake Chad Basin Community, it became obvious that although the sect is getting local support and sympathy within Nigeria, it was also benefitting from external terrorist networks. Soon, what use to be referred to as a ragtag army of insurgents began to attack organizes military formations following a modus of global terrorist cells like ISIS, AQIM and al-Shabab. The Economy of North Eastern Nigeria that use to be strengthened by the beehive of business activities of people coming as far as Central Africa was reduced to nothing as settlements and farming communities were deserted due to insecurity orchestrated by Boko Haram attacks.

The Lake Chad basin Community saw the need to create an external force such as the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), on behalf of its countries to combat cross border banditry, ensure free and save movements around the border and also deny the Boko Haram insurgents the needed space to attack and withdraw unchallenged. The Force has all along been embattled with structural, political and logistic challenges most times resulting in deep rooted disagreement that have not really enable it perform optimally and deliver on its rejuvenated mandate of ensuring to rid the borders of every last vestige of insurgency by the Boko Haram Sect. The situation with the Force got so bad in 2014 that even the former headquarters in Baga, Nigeria got overrun by terrorist and instead of getting reinforcements, states like Niger and Chad pulled off their troops as Nigerian troops reportedly took to their hills in fear of the superior fire power of the terrorist.

The increasing threat by the Boko Haram was no longer a danger to Nigeria alone as attacks crossed into all the neighboring Nigeria states. Many observers were beginning to fear the end of the MNJTF force was imminent. It took a thorough soul searching through the 2015 summit by the affected countries. This led to the new lease of life that came through the reinvigoration and restructuring of the force, making agreements on gray areas of who commands the force, breaking up the force into sectors, delineating their spheres of operation and eventually moving the headquarters to N'Djamena.

This restructuring began to pay-off as the different sectors of command began operationalizing and carrying out effective missions after their disagreements were sufficiently cut to size. However, the MNJTF still struggles to demonstrate its effectiveness since the Observers still continue to question to what extent it is even operational that cross border attacks still occurs. Yet despite the numerous political, logistical, technical and financial challenges the force has been facing, the MNJTF is gradually gaining ground.

It is worth noting that MNJTF has recorded so far successes on ground in dislodging the terrorist group and reducing considerably the military capabilities of the terrorists. Boko Haram terrorist group is no longer in a position to hold territories or to wage large-scale attacks as they used to do in the sub-region. However, the remnants that launch attacks on isolated areas are still capable of carrying out surprise attacks and the terrorist group is still a real menace to the countries of the region as it now resorts to perpetrating suicide attacks and laying improvised explosive devices in LCBC member countries.

### Recommendation

1. The Nigerian state has always underperformed in the area of governance. This has by extension affected its counter-terrorism policy implementation. This is as a result of corruption, decades of military rule which has alienated Nigerian citizens from the political process, bureaucratic inefficiency and ethno-religious tensions. There is a need to strengthen state institution on how to make the policies work effectively.
2. Countries engaged in the fight against Boko Haram should stay mobilized given the persistence of the threat and the group's capacity to adapt, as well as its resilience.
3. The MNJTF must become fully operational and play its role. To do this, the troop contributing countries should take full ownership and participate in making it functional.

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