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## Globalisation, Transnational Crime and Terrorism in Nigeria

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### **Abstract**

This research looks at the negative impact of globalisation on the spread of transnational crime and terrorism in Nigeria. With particular focus on the Boko Haram insurgency in Northern Nigeria, this paper identifies illegal firearms trafficking as the bane of human security challenges in Nigeria. This paper recommends that Nigeria's think-tanks can use the tools of globalisation in addressing its current security challenges.

**Keywords:** Globalisation, Terrorism, Illegal Firearms Trafficking, Boko Haram and Nigeria.

### **Introduction**

Undoubtedly, the "new Nigeria" that emerged after the bloody civil war (1967-1970) has turned out to be a blessing to the international community. Nigeria's iconic roles towards ending Apartheid in South Africa; decolonization of Angola and Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), peacekeeping operations and show of kindness to its West African neighbours are hallmarks of the country's achievements. In the one hundred years of Nigeria's existence, Nigeria has experienced several military coups; fought a bloody civil war, endured political transformation stemming from the celebrated June 12 1993 struggle among many other trying episodes. One of the fundamental responsibilities of the state is to ensure the security of the life and property of its citizens. Others include the protection of its territoriality and sovereignty, and the guarantee of its socio-economic and political stability. However, this protective function of the state has been threatened by local and international terrorism and terrorism-related activities, especially since the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This threat as exemplified 11 September 2001 attack on the World Trade Centre (WTC) in the United States by the al-Qaeda terrorist network, and other attacks in Spain and Britain (Nichor Odock, cited in Duru and Ogbonnaya, 2010).

In Somalia, the operations of religious fundamentalists and ethnic militia aided by international terrorist groups have crippled governmental operations and

state functions (UPI, 2012). At no point in Nigeria's history has the polity been thrown into confusion like what obtains now, no thanks to the Boko Haram insurgency. Illegal firearms trafficking into Nigeria is the major reason for wide scale terrorist attacks that has bedeviled the giant of Africa. In Nigeria, some of the most notable terrorist acts include the rampant bombings carried out by Boko Haram in some parts of the Northern states and those carried out by the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) including 1 October 2010 independence day bombing at the Eagle Square in Abuja and the 2011 New Year's Eve bombing, as well as several bombings during the April/May 2011 electoral period and the 29 May bombing during the inauguration of President Goodluck Jonathan. But terrorism and terrorism related violence associated with Boko Haram Islamic sect remains the most extreme dimension of insecurity, especially in northern part of Nigeria and its geographical spread across the West African sub-region has attendant security implications (Ogbonnaya, Ogujigba and Steigler, 2014). The effects of globalization, transnational crime and terrorism on 21<sup>st</sup> century Nigeria cannot be overemphasized. This paper looks at these three factors and analyses the importance of globalization to Nigeria's counter terrorism strategies.

### **Globalisation**

Globalisation is a multidimensional concept which is loaded with ideological connotations depending on which aspect of the North/South divide that one is viewing it from. This is evident in the profusion of meanings that have characterized it (Saliu and Aremu, 2013).

Cesare Poppi (cited in Alan Scott, 1997) notes that:

*The literature stemming from the debate on globalization has grown in the last decade beyond any individual's capability of extracting a workable definition of the concept. In a sense, the meaning of the concept is self-evident, in another, it is vague and obscure as its reaches are wide and constantly shifting. Perhaps, more than any other concept, globalization is the debate about it.*

Broadly speaking, the term globalization connotes the deepening of social, economic and cultural interactions among countries of the world (Saliu and Aremu, 2013). It is the integration of economies and societies through cross country flow of information, ideas, technologies, goods, services, capital, finance and people (Rangarajan, 2003). Technological breakthroughs such as mobile phones, computers, internet, satellite networks, among others are traceable to globalization. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has greatly

impacted publishing, health sector, financial institutions, entertainment, education, hospitality business and social interactions among Nigerians. It must be noted that ICT has also impacted negatively on the Nigerian society.

According to Charles Omekwu (2006), asserted that:

*The more dangerous dimensions of the digital revolution include pornography, money laundering, cultism, international terrorism, and child abuse, which all constitute a threat to African cultural heritage. It is extremely difficult for African countries with strong Islamic and Christian cultures to tolerate the level of pornographic activities that go on the internet. In traditional African culture, nudity is still not a virtue. In many African universities and urban centres, nudity has become and Africa's rich and elegant dress style are becoming outdated.*

The increases in arms proliferation, cyber-attacks, ethnic violence, global crime and during trafficking are occurred by globalization (Davis, 2003).

According to Williams (2008):

*Not only has globalization challenged individual's state capacity to manage economic affairs, it has provided facilitators and false multipliers for Violent Non State Actors (VNSAs). According to him, global flow of arms, for example is no longer under the exclusive control of nation-states. Illicit arm dealers have become transnational players and have contributed to a diffusion of military power that has provided VNSAs with weapon capabilities that allow them to challenge government forces.*

In a similar vein, globalization has allowed Violent Non-State Actors to develop transnational social capital and to create alliance and generate support outside their immediate area of operations. Globalization, along with the rise of illicit global economy has also provided funding opportunities for Violent Non-State Actors and other terrorist groups generally (Ogbonnaya and Ehigiamusoe, 2013). Establishing a relationship between international terrorism and globalization, Agbu (cited in Akinterinwa, 2004) states that; "Globalization, which has enabled the brand of international terrorism as at present, generally implies the integration of countries into the world economy through increased trade, investment, short-term capital flows and international migration of skilled and unskilled labour."

Also, Ampatuam (2003) submits that while globalization has brought unprecedented development and progress to people, it has also unleashed negative aspects such as "facilitating international terrorism and other forms of transnational crimes." According to him, transnational terrorism is a global phenomenon which is seen as one of the most destructive. The September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States of America illustrate the lethality of this threat.

### **Transnational Crime**

Transnational organized crime suggests in simple terms the movement of persons, goods and services across sovereign national jurisdiction in a manner devoid of acceptable norms and standards (NgorNgor, cited in Criminal Justice Processes, p.3). Globalisation is largely responsible for the increase in the rate of transnational crime. Transnational crime is a highly sophisticated and syndicated criminal activity which surpasses the primary concern of a particular single nation (ibid). Crimes that have transactional characteristics include illegal firearms trafficking; human trafficking, illegal drug trafficking, money laundering, advanced fee fraud, smuggling among others. This paper is however premised on illegal firearms trafficking.

### **Illegal Firearms Trafficking**

Proliferation of arms is a threat to Nigeria's territorial integrity. The ever increasing armed conflicts in many regions of the world account for huge trafficking in firearms. Similarly, constant political instability and internal power tussle amongst third world countries precipitate arms trafficking (Ibid). Illegal firearms trafficking thrive in Nigeria due to the country's porous borders. The porosity of Nigeria's borders owe as much to the way the colonialists carved up the African continent as to the nature of their management by post-colonial states (Onuoha, 2013). While Nigeria's border problem is related to this colonial history, its porosity has been exacerbated by the failure of succeeding governments to properly administer these borders (Ibid). In his view, Okumu (2010) asserted that "the high level of insecurity on African borders is largely due to the way they are administered and managed, and less to do with how colonialists drew them". Nigeria's Minister of Interior, Abba Moro disclosed that there are over 1,499 irregular (illegal) and 84 regular (legal) officially identified entry routes into Nigeria. In Adamawa State, there are about 25 illegal routes into Nigeria from neighbouring countries. Terrorists and smugglers take advantage of this leakage to smuggle small arms and light weapons (SALWs) into Nigeria. As a result, over 70 percent of about 8 million illegal weapons in West Africa were reported to be in Nigeria.

The proliferation of SALWs in Nigeria is indexed by the intermittent seizure of various types and calibre of arms by security and border control officers, the frequency of their deployment in conflict and crime scenes, and the level of human casualty and material damage recorded in the aftermath of their use in the country (Onuoha, 2011).

### **Evolution of Boko Haram Sect**

The origin of the Boko Haram Islamic sect, also known as Jama'at Ahl al-Sunnah al-Li-dā 'awāl -Jihad is traceable to 2002 when Mohammed Yusuf assumed the leadership of the sect. Since then, the sect has metamorphosed under various names like Muhajirun, Yusufiyah, Nigerian Taliban, Boko Haram and Jama'at Ahl al-Sunnah al-Li-dā 'awāl al-Jihad (Ogbonnaya, Ogujigba and Steigler, 2014).

In 2004, the group moved to Kammamma in Yobe State, close to the border with Niger. It has since had a base there from which it organizes its assaults. According to Brinkel and Ait-Hida, in July 2009, the group under Mohammed Yusuf led a large-scale uprising in the states of Bauchi, Borno, Kano, Katsina and Yobe, which many left many dead, while others were wounded and displaced. Currently, the North-Eastern states of Nigeria (Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe) with a population 18,971, 965 inhabitants and other major northern cities such as Jos, Kaduna, Kano, Madalla (Niger State), have become the epicenter of Nigeria's terrorism related violence. Incidences of suicide bombings, killings and destruction have occurred in these areas since 2009. This has resulted in the loss of thousands of lives, extensive damage to property, and the socio-economic development prospects of the region have been set back (Ogbonnaya and Ehigiamusoe, 2013).

**Figure 1: Boko Haram Attacks in Nigeria from 2012-2014: Nation Newspaper July 24, 2014**

DATE	LOCATION	CASUALTIES
23-Jul-14	kaduna	Killed 39 people and injuring many others
14-Jul-14	Bornu	Killed 26 people and injuring many others
23-Jun-14	Kano	Killed 12 people and injuring many others
1-Jun-14	Mudi	Killed over 40 people and injuring many others
31-May-14	Kala Balge	Killed 40 people and injuring many others
27-May-14	Bornu	Killed 48 people and injuring several others
25-May-14	Yobe	Killed 54 people and injuring several others
21-May-14	Chikongudo	Killed 25 people and injuring several others
20-May-14	Jos	Killed 108 and injuring 56
18-May-14	Kano	Killed 4 people and injuring several others
5-May-14	Gamboru Ngala	several people dead and injured
1-May-14	Abuja	Killing 19 people and injuring several others
14-Apr-14	Abuja	Killing 88 people and injuring several others
10-Apr-14	Dikwa	Killing 8 people and injuring several others
10-Apr-14	Bala Balge	Killing 60 people and injuring several others
1-Mar-14	Mainokri	Killing 39 people and injuring several others
1-Mar-14	Maiduguri	Killing 51 people and injuring several others
25-Feb-14	Buni Yadi	Killing 59 people and injuring several others
19-Feb-14	Bama	Killing 60 people and injuring several others
16-Feb-14	Borno	Killing 90 people and injuring several others
12-Feb-14	Konduga	Killing 39 people and injuring several others
6-Jul-13	Yobe	Killing 42 people and injuring several others
7-May-13	Bama	Killing 55 and injuring several others
30-Jul-12	Zaria	Killing 5 and injuring several others
3-Jun-12	Bauchi	Killing 12 and injuring several others
30-Apr-12	Taraba	Killing 11 and injuring several others
29-Apr-12	Bayero Uni Kano	Killing 16 and injuring several others
26-Apr-12	Abuja	Killing 6 people and injuring several others
25-Apr-12	Maiduguri Police H	Killing 7 and injuring many
8-Apr-12	Kaduna	Killing 40 and injuring several others
8-Apr-12	Jos	Killing 20 and injuring several others
24-Mar-12	Kano	Killing 2 people and injuring unspecified number of people.
11-Mar-12	Jos	Killing 10 and injuring several others
3-Feb-12	Police Station in K	Killing 4 people
22-Jan-12	Bauchi	Killing 11 and injuring several others
17-Jan-12	Maiduguri	2 soldiers and 4 BH gunmen are killed at a military checkpoint
13-Jan-12	Yola/Gombe	Kills 4 and injured 2 others in two separate attacks
11-Jan-12	Potiskum	4 Christians killed
10-Jan-12	Damaturu	5 policemen and 3 others killed at a beer garden
9-Jan-12	Biu	A secret policeman and civilian friend were shot dead
7-Jan-12	Biu	3 Christian poker are killed 7 others injured
6-Jan-12	Yola	8 worshippers shot dead in a church
6-Jan-12	Mubi	17 Christian mourners are killed
5-Jan-12	Gombe city	6 worshippers and 10 others are wounded
3-Jan-12	Birniwa	1 teenage girl killed and 1 Policeman wounded
1-Jan-12	FCT	President Goodluck Jonathan imposes a state of emergency on 15 LGAs
		in Borno, Yobe and Plateau states. He orders closure of Nigerian borders in the north

Nigeria's borders are massive with hundreds of footpaths crisscrossing to neighbouring countries of Cameroon, Chad and Niger with links to Mali, Libya and Sudan. From conservative estimate by locals, there are well over 250 footpaths from Damaturu/Maiduguri axis that link or lead direct to Cameroon, Chad or Niger (Musa, 2013). These paths, which are mostly unknown to security agencies, are unmanned, unprotected and have continued to serve as conveyor belts for arms and ammunition trafficking into Nigeria (Ibid). Illegal arms dealers use camels, donkeys and cows to move in ammunition into Nigeria. Boko Haram members are known to connive with merchants involved in cross-border trade to help stuff their arms and weapons in goods that are transported via heavy trucks, trailers and Lorries. Given the huge size of the goods loaded on these vehicles, very little or no scrutiny is conducted on them by security and border officials (Musa, 2013).

The ECOWAS Protocol on free movement of persons, goods and services, has thus created a space that criminals exploit to facilitate cross-border trafficking. These traffickers exploit loopholes in state capacity in monitoring cross-border trade in the region and relaxation of national borders intended to enhance regional integration, to penetrate their nefarious activities. It must be noted that cross-border arms trafficking is sometimes facilitated by security agents. In May 2013, for instance, a senior Customs personnel was arrested for allegedly assisting Boko Haram insurgents to smuggle several trucks loaded with large cache of arms and ammunition into Nigeria (Kwaru, 2013). In May 2013, security agencies in Nigeria discovered an arms warehouse at the residence of a Lebanese national in Kano State. The cache of weapons was located in an underground bunker beneath the master bedroom and investigations point towards the existence of a Hezbollah terrorist cell in Nigeria with links to Boko Haram (Sahara Reporters, 2013). Some of the weapons confiscated included rocket propelled guns and anti-personnel mines, which were clearly beyond the range of weapons normally stolen by Boko Haram from local police stations (Olojo, 2013).

It is believed that Boko Haram has strong ties with other well established terrorist organizations such as al Shabaab and al Qaeda. Onuoha posited that Boko Haram members have received and continue to receive training from al Qaeda in Afghanistan, Mauritania and Sudan, while its operations and activities are co-ordinated from Mali with funding from a number of sources, including a United Kingdom based Al-Muntada Trust Fund. Boko Haram's membership has

spread to other West African countries such as Niger, Mauritania, north Cameroon and Chad, which also provide sanctuary for the group members.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

This paper has attempted to discover the impact of globalization on the rise of terrorism and transnational crime in Nigeria. Nigeria's biggest threat, Boko Haram has benefited from the porous borders in Northern Nigeria. Boko Haram sect is also closely associated with other terrorist groups like the al Qaeda and al Shabaab. It is on this note that the paper recommends the following measures that will help put an end to Boko Haram's insurgency in Nigeria. First, Nigeria must invest heavily in new technology cross border control. Some radars can be used as primary detection sensor for long range remote surveillance platforms. Mobile Surveillance System and Blighter Radar which are cost effective should be introduced to survey both land and air zone simultaneously (Musa, 2013).

Secondly, Nigerian government should become proactive in the implementation of regional security among ECOWAS member states. Agreements must be reached among ECOWAS member states and their governments for co-operation and collaboration in the areas of security joint- border patrol, strengthening of common or integrated immigration services in order to curtail transnational crimes and terrorism and reduce security threats. This has become a global practice, especially among member states of the European Union (Casale, 2008).

Thirdly, it is important for Nigeria to invest in E-Government. This will ensure effective data gathering and intelligence monitoring among Nigeria's security agencies. It will also bolster Nigeria's security networking with other nations.

A well-developed E-Government platform will increase the knowledge base of Nigerian citizens with a view towards assisting security operatives in ending the Boko Haram debacle.

Lastly, Nigerian leaders must have the political will to address the Boko Haram insurgency. Over the years, Nigerian leaders have been exemplary in confronting problems such as Apartheid in South Africa, colonial rule in Africa and recently the current President, Goodluck Jonathan lived up to the billings by ensuring Nigeria is free from the deadly Ebola scourge.



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