THE BOKO HARAM INSURGENCY IN NIGERIA: A SECURITY 
OFFICERS PERSPECTIVE ON THE AMERICAN ANGLE.

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ABSTRACT
The undeclared war of attrition waged against Nigeria by the government of United State of America and its allies to conquer Africa’s economy has been a long term well masked US government policy of containment against Nigeria with the ultimate goal of eliminating the country as a potential strategic rival. The success of ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) spearheaded by Nigeria which became a threat to the US and its allies in their quest for ‘humanitarian’ programme for Africa and the growing influence and expansion of industrial China in Africa had to be countered with the introduction of Africa Crises Response Initiative (ACRI), and African Command (AFRICOM) which US is at the forefront of its leadership. For AFRICOM to gain ground and succeed in Africa especially in Nigeria there must be the introduction of insecurity, subservient and insurgent activities in the targeted country, making them vulnerable so as to make the country inevitably seek for intervention and protection from US and its allies as they have done in the past with Vietnam and Korea including Iraq and Libya using the NATO forces. The emergence of Boko Haram, a terrorist group and their link with the Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) make for a ready tool to destabilize and disintegrate Nigeria by funding and training the members of this group through the CIA covert operation. This paper looks at the intricacies of the Boko Haram menace viz-a-viz its use of technology and other subtle issues that has continued to fuel the insurgency.

Keywords: Boko Haram, Insurgency, Nigeria, Technology, Security, America & Al Qaeda

1. INTRODUCTION
The Islamic extremist insurgent and terrorist group which officially called themselves The Congregation of the People of Tradition for Proselytism and Jihad (Jama‘atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda‘awati Wal-Jihad), popularly known as Boko Haram which figuratively mean in Hausa language to be ‘Western education is sin (BBC News, July 2011) has been on rampage in recent times, killing hundreds of people and destroying and sacking some villages including the recent abduction of over two hundred and seventy secondary girls from Chibok town in Maiduguri , Northeast Nigeria. This group of Islamist insurgent known as Boko Haram has been declared a terrorist organization based in northeastern Nigeria (Cook, 2011) north Cameroon and Niger (Ibeh, 2013;Burstin, 2013)

This group which seeks to establish a “pure” Islamic state ruled by Sharia, and putting a stop to what it deems “Westernization” (Walker,2012; Olibgode, 2011) was originally known for attacking churches, schools, police stations, kidnaps of westerners including the assassination of some Islamic individuals and establishments who criticized their activities was founded by Mohammed Yusuf in 2002. Since the death of the founder in the hands of the Nigerian Police in 2009, it has taken a different turn as a full blown terrorist group, perpetrating violent acts. Since late 2010, the organization under the leadership of Abubakar Shekau has been responsible for brutal campaign of attacks, targeting public officials and institutions, ordinary men, women, and children, wreaking havoc across northern Nigeria. At least 550 people were killed in 115 separate attacks in 2011(Radin, 2012), between 2002 and 2013 an estimated 10,000 deaths have occurred due to the violence perpetrated by Boko Haram insurgent and according to President Gooluck Jonathan’s claim in May 2014, Boko Haram attacks have left at least 12,000 dead and 8,000 people crippled, a grisly toll that has been accelerating till date. These atrocities are being committed on regular basis irrespective of the “State of Emergency” declared in Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe states where the activities of the terrorists seem to have been on the increase.

2. BOKO HARAM LINKS WITH AL QAEDA
According to Radin (2012), in his analysis asserted that since the Boko Haram reemergence in 2010 and its association with al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Boko Haram has grown to present a threat not only to Nigeria, but also across Africa and globally. He further stated that “featuring prominently in Boko Haram’s renewal is the assistance the group has received from al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). AQIM claims that it has provided Boko Haram with weapons, training, and other support. Abu Musab Abdel Wadoud (also known as Abdelmalek Droukdel), the emir of al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), the head of al Qaeda’s North African franchise stated that his group would provide Boko Haram with weapons, training, and other support in order to expand its own reach into Sub-Saharan Africa not only to gain “strategic depth,” but also to “defend Muslims in Nigeria and stop the advance of a minority of Crusaders” (Radin, 2012).
This is evidenced in the adoption of the new tactics and strategies used by the terrorist group to wreak havoc on the populace and the security agencies are finding it difficult to curtail these insurgents. One of the tactics used which is something that was never experienced in Nigeria is the suicide attack where someone is brainwashed to die for the cause of fighting for Allah. The question one is tempted to ask is how have they been able to mount such a sophisticated operation without being detected? This means that they must have a well structured command and control system which keeps them undetected for long, except for the fact that the Nigeria’s security agencies have been compromised and sabotaged.

The affiliation of Boko Haram with the al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb which have the same goal and ambition of Islamizing Africa, make it possible for the expansion policy of the al Qaeda operations in Africa and globally. This is seen in the declaration of the Boko Haram head and leader Abubakar bin Muhammad Shekau, that the jihad being fought by Boko Haram is a global jihad.

3. TECHNOLOGY AND TERRORISM

The introduction and widespread use of broadband capability to Africa also remains a cause for great concern. It is estimated that Africa is home to approximately 80 million virus or malware-infected computers. With increasing potential for cyber fraud and cyber extremist vices emanating from these part of the world, Africa remains a potent danger point that must be closely watched. The Boko Haram group now employ cyber systems to perpetrate and perpetuate their messages. It will not be too suggestive to opine that given this trend, cyber attacks may come up among the list of possible avenues through which this group will vent their anger on a global scale. Cyber attacks originating from terrorist groups, including al Qaeda branches, are always a concern; while there is not yet much evidence to suggest they have been developing these capabilities, there are already a few terrorism sympathizers who have declared themselves cyber jihadists or created cyber jihadist groups (they use such charming handles as Osama Bin Laden’s Hacking Crew, Ansar AL-Jihad Hackers Team and The Designer-Islamic Hackers (Kara, 2010).

There is an urgent need to understand the psycho-social and institutional factors that also motivates cyber terrorism. Despite the body of research devoted to cyber attacks, identifying and analyzing the motivation for cyber criminals activities as well as governments and organizational responses that facilitates or hinder these attacks remain a difficult challenge (Cox et al, 2010). Technocrats and theorists are at odds as to the best way to comprehend the actions of terrorist groups viz-a-viz cyber criminals and the symbiotic relationships they have with various players. There are reasons to believe that institutional processes can influence and explain causation, depth and patterns of cyber attacks. Institutional activities can fuel cyber espionage attacks from different pedestals. The platform could be local, national and global. It is also possible to create opportunities for cyber attacks through social engineering networks, professional organization network, inter-organizational and intra-organizational infrastructures (Strang and Sine 2002; Longe et al, 2010). In fact, there have been skirmishes of cyber attacks where port scan logs revealed that the intrusion came from port scans originating outside the US. Incidentally, attackers can easily acquire valid IP addresses and completely bypass system scan.

Unfortunately, a previous research (Kshetri 2005) linked institutional legitimacy with cyber conflict and investigated cost-benefit associated cyber criminal activities as well as strategic asymmetry faced by nations. Kelly (2010) also opined that the development of the internet in the early 60s provided protests groups an access mode that is relatively inexpensive, global and a tool now being used by these groups for the downfall of the US Federal Government who initially developed the internet for communicatio. There is however very little exposition on the exact nature of institutional mechanisms involved in cyber infrastructure and cyber terrorism. It is imperative that the solution paradigm against the Boko Haram insurgency include options that will examine the possibility of vulnerabilities that can be explored within the National and global information and cyber systems framework.

4. THE AMERICAN ANGLE

There seem to be a long term well-camouflaged US government policy of containment against Nigeria which has an ultimate goal of eliminating Nigeria as a potential strategic rival to the US in their quest to “conquer Africa’s economy”. This is more of an undeclared war of attrition waged against Nigeria by the Government of United State of America and its allies. This was first brought to bare during the Liberia crises when ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) spearheaded by Nigeria was succeeding in containing the Liberian crisis without any considerable role or concern in form of intervention from the United State or any of the major western powers. These success by the Nigeria led ECOMOG soldiers led to the fear and conclusion “that should ECOMOG be allowed to go the whole hog, the major beneficiary will be Nigeria and that might form the basis for a pax Nigeria in the West African sub-region eclipsing the influence of former colonial powers France and Britain” (Nairaland, December 2012). Based on this fear by the United States, a secret report and recommendation according to Nairaland, 2012 was prepared separately by the Africa-America Institute and the Brookings Institute commissioned by the Central Intelligence Agency, the American Government’s Directorate that is responsible for organizing foreign subversive activities, on the Liberian civil war especially the intervention of ECOMOG, gave rise to Africa Crises Response Initiative (ACRI), a parallel organization set up by the United State During the Bush Administration to offset the Nigeria led ECOMOG in the Liberia crises. This was vigorously pursued with the strategy to reduce the eagerness of participation of some key African countries.
The resultant effect is the “stalemate in ECOMOG operations with some of the participating countries foot dragging in their commitment to the force and operations. On the diplomatic front, the US along with its allies namely Britain and France using the engineered stalemate as cover, proceeded to sell the idea that the ECOMOG initiative needed to be reviewed and given a new direction” (Nairaland, 2012). This was successful achieved as it was packaged under the backing of the United Nations with some participant from selected Asian and Latin America countries. It was also on this platform of American intervention that US African Command (AFRICOM) was formed on October 1, 2008,(Wikipedia,2013). Even though AFRICOM is presenting itself as a humanitarian programme for Africa, critics according to Mzolo (2014) says, it is designed to mask Washington’s military agenda to infiltrate and re-infiltrate Africa and maintain subservience. It is said also that AFRICOM was built to counter China’s rising economic ties with Africa while re-cementing the West’s.

“We’re seeing a brand new re-colonization of Africa via AFRICOM and maneuvers of that sort,” asserted this commentator while also noting that not only did Nigeria play a major role in liberating Southern Africa, in defiance of the interests of the US but it led the African intervention force in Liberia without the support of the West-controlled United Nations (Mzolo, 2014). In order to counter the growing influence and expansion of industrial china in Africa, the establishment of AFRICOM will block China’s access to vital energy and mineral resources for its expanding economy by weakening internally the targeted African of strategic importance and make them vulnerable so that they would have to inevitably seek for the protection or intervention of US and its allies. This is corroborated by Guzman assertion. “However, the real threat to “US national security interests” in Africa is not AQIM, Boko Haram or al-Shabaab, it is China’s demand for natural resources for their growing economy, The US and France plan to counter the threat along with Africa’s puppet government’s that will pose a challenge to China’s economic and diplomatic influence in the region. The US and French governments want to assure themselves that the new Chinese leadership will not continue its beneficial relationships with resource-rich African nations that have been a success in the past. Therefore, the ‘War on Terror’ will create instability and will disrupt China’s economic growth. AFRICOM mission is to create war in the name of fighting terrorism and that is what “US national security interests” in Africa is really about” (Guzman, 2014)

5. IS BOKO HARAM A CIA COVERT OPERATION TO DISINTEGRATE NIGERIA?

The question one finds difficult to give answer to is how did Boko Haram members who are half literate and ‘uneducated’ persons base on their believe that Western education is sin transform literally overnight to become sophisticated and suddenly can to design, manufacture and deploy bombs in buildings and in vehicles that are so expensive and carry out attacks in numerous locations around the country? The US has been known to be at the center of important breakups in the past. Countries like Vietnam and Korea had the US play a major twisted role, and when these Nations divided into North and South, the US stationed its troops at the border to defend usually the Southern territory where it has economic advantage. They also did it in Iraq, Libya by using the NATO forces and are currently doing it in Sudan.

6. THE CYBER CRIME ANGLE

According to Wikileaks on June 29, 2009 a United States cable showed that the CIA public predicted the onslaught of deadly terrorist attack by Boko Haram two months before they started terrorist actions. Wikileaks also revealed that US armed Saudi Arabia who in turned armed Libyan rebels that in turn armed Malian rebels and Boko Haram, a chain tactically predicted by the CIA. In December 2011, more revelation stated that an Algerian based CIA wing gave out 40 million Naira as a planned long term partnership with Boko Haram with a promise to do more. Furthermore, Spy files a wikileaks document indicates that SSS a surveillance company in the US was producing viruses(Trojans) that hijack individual computer and phones (iPhone, blackberry, android etc), take over the device, record its every use, movement, GPS info and even sights and sounds in the room it is in. This software was however bought and used as tools by the CIA in its eavesdropping games on Nigerian politicians, thus detecting corrupt practices. As good as that may sound, but whichever politician refused to hijack policies in favour of the US was made to face financial espionage or “corruption charges”. It is however remarkably outstanding or rather coincidental how Nigerian SSS agents personal information, including address, bank information, mobile numbers, etc were leaked and published on the web when the sss where jointly working with the CIA to gather intelligence boko haram thus compromising the identity/security of the agents as well as that of their family. it is also important to note the “miraculous escape of kabiru Sokoto” from a secret top security facility whose location was known to the CIA.

7. CONCLUDING REMARKS

This paper has looked at the Boko Haram insurgency with a view of shedding lights on subtle issues that has continued to fuel the flame of the insurgency. Future works will consolidate on the thoughts presented in this paper.
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