The intersection of terrorism, foreign policy, and human rights in Nigeria

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Abstract

Addressing terrorism has become a cornerstone of national governments' foreign policies. The fight against this threat has increasingly garnered legitimacy and support from the international community, with many nations viewing it as their duty to contribute to global efforts to mitigate, if not eliminate, this menace. This paper explores the root causes of terrorism and its impact on Nigeria's foreign policy, arguing that the rising tide of terrorist activities, manifested in various forms, is closely linked to frustration from high youth unemployment. Additionally, the paper highlights how political elites use terrorism to challenge opponents and boost their standing in the political arena.

Keywords: Terrorism, foreign policy, human rights

Introduction

Since the conclusion of World War II in 1945 and the end of the Cold War with the fall of the Berlin Wall in the late 1980s, the international community has been confronted with a new and serious security threat—terrorism. This threat has led to widespread human rights abuses. During the Cold War, U.S. foreign policy focused primarily on containing communism, often at the expense of human rights and democracy. However, the end of the Cold War brought human rights to the forefront of national foreign policies and global politics. Despite this shift, terrorism remains a significant challenge, with a growing negative impact on foreign policies worldwide.

This criminal activity ranges from suicide bombings—such as those in Hiroshima and Nagasaki during World War II and the World Trade Center in the U.S. in 2001—to the kidnapping of individuals, a practice that has gained notoriety in Nigeria. Regardless of the underlying causes of terrorism, the primary challenge today is how to combat this heinous act. After the September 11, 2001 attacks, the global fight against terrorism gained widespread legitimacy and support, as many countries recognized their international responsibility to address this social menace. Confronting terrorism has thus become a key component of national governments' foreign policies. The U.S., as a major target of terrorism, has led efforts to eradicate terrorist activities by prioritizing democratization processes.

From the U.S. administration's perspective, preventing future attacks like those on September 11 can only be achieved through the liberalization and democratization of Middle Eastern countries. This rationale was central to the Bush administration's efforts to garner public support for wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. For example, the elimination of Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and the subsequent war in Iraq were justified by the need to deny terrorists access to weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). In addition to causing political instability, terrorism significantly impacts economic activity by reducing a country's human and physical capital, increasing counter-terrorism expenditures, and negatively affecting industries such as tourism. It also lowers expected investment returns, leading to ambiguous effects on global investment.

Terrorism can also lead to significant capital movements across open economies. Corporate investors view terrorism as a crucial factor in foreign investment decisions. For instance, foreign direct investment (FDI) in the U.S. dropped sharply after the September 11 attacks—from 15.8 percent of Gross Fixed Capital Formation in 2000 to just 1.5 percent in 2003. A similar situation has occurred in Nigeria, where the increase in kidnappings and pipeline bombings in the Niger Delta has deterred international investors and prompted some

foreign companies to relocate to neighboring countries like Ghana and South Africa, where they can expect greater peace, security, and reliable electricity supply.

This paper critically examines how terrorism in Nigeria has affected the country's foreign policy and human rights concerns. Specifically, it investigates how various forms of terrorism—including kidnapping, abduction, hostage-taking, and political assassinations—have impacted Nigeria's national interests, international relations, and the fundamental human rights of both Nigerian citizens and foreign residents

Conceptual underpinnings

Terrorism

Terrorism involves the use of violence and intimidation, especially against civilians, to pursue political, religious, or ideological goals. It is often described as both a tactic and a strategy, a crime, a justified reaction to perceived oppression, and an inexcusable atrocity (Harmon, 2000). Terrorism has ancient roots, with examples including Jewish zealots resisting Roman occupation and early Muslim sects engaging in violence during religious conflicts (Rapoport, 1984). The modern concept of terrorism began gaining prominence during the French Revolution and was utilized by leaders like Lenin and Stalin to maintain control through fear (Hoffman, 1998). The internationalization of terrorism, beginning in the 1960s, led to global alliances among terrorist groups (Padelford et al., 1976). There is a trend toward loosely organized, self-financed networks with religious or ideological motivations, such as radical Islamic fundamentalist groups (Lutz & Lutz, 2008). The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) among terrorist groups poses a significant global threat (Enders & Sandler, 2006). Terrorists aim to create societal fear, discredit governments, disrupt economies, and gain international attention. Targeting symbolic locations or events, such as the 1972 Munich Olympics, is common to maximize publicity and impact (Harmon, 2000).

Terrorism has become a fixture of international life. The phenomenon has been variously described as tactic and strategy; a crime, a justified reaction to oppression and an inexcusable abomination. It has become increasingly common among those pursuing extreme goals throughout the world today, not only has modern science and technology expanded the rein and zones of terror, but the human condition and individual aspirations, as well as the nature and levels of global interactions have contributed maximally. Hence, the concept is a criminal act that influences an audience beyond the immediate victim. The strategy of most terrorist is to commit acts of violence that draws the attention of the local populace, the government and the world to their cause. They plan their attack to obtain the greatest publicity, choosing targets that that symbolize what they oppose. For instance, in 1972, at the Munich Olympics, the Black September Organisation struck and killed II Israelis. Though they were the immediate victims, the main target was the estimated 1 billion people watching the televised event. This being the case, everyone and any nation is a potential target, be it a core or weak nation, it does not matter much to the actors. As an observer puts it, 'in the hands of the modern terrorists, evil is distilled into a potent, living weapon' The phrase 'one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter' is a view terrorists themselves would accept. They do not see their act as evil but fighting for what they believe in by whatever means possible. The terrorist attacks in great nations like the United States and the United Kingdom in 2001 and 2005 respectively brings to the fore a future in which our societies are among the battle fields and our people among the targets. The September 11th terrorist attacks on the United States were not only tragic and horrific, but were also followed by other major attacks such as, the tourist

facilities on Bali in 2002, the siege of a middle school in Breslain, Russia, Madrid in 2004, the London transit systems in 2005 (Lutz & Lutz 2008).

These attacks resulted in major casualties and have provided outgoing evidence that terrorism is a continuing problem and ravaging fire for many societies around the world. But in specific tern is terrorism? The term has a connotation of evil, indiscriminate violence or brutality. To label a group or action as terrorist is to seek to suggest that the actors or the violence is immoral, wrong or contrary to obvious basic ethical principles that any reasonable human being might hold. In some context, terrorism may be conceived as, freedom fighters, revolutionaries, rebels, resistance fighters, members of democratic opposition or national liberation soldiers (Enders and Sandler 2006: Lutz and Lutz 2006 b, 2008). Terrorism is the deliberate and systematic murder, maiming and menacing of the innocent to inspire fear for political ends. In the latter part of the 20th century, the phenomenon became popularised as one of the features of world politics and conflict. Hitherto, terrorism is used by individuals, single minded small groups, state agents and broad insurgent movements to seek some political and military results perhaps considered difficult or impossible to achieve in the usual political forum or on the battlefield against an army (Harmon, 2000).

As Walter (1972) argues, terrorism is not only confined to anomalous circumstances or exotic systems, it is also potential in ordinary institutions as well as in unusual situations. It has been variously described as both a tactic and strategy; a crime and a holy duty; a justified reaction to oppression and an inexcusable abomination. Reigns of terror are not properly understood if they are conceived exclusively as ephemeral states of crisis produced by adventurous events or as alien forms of control. Systems of terror usually defined as 'abnormal' by the conventions western social and political thought may be generated under certain conditions of stress by 'normal' political processes. Merari (1994) for instance, describes terrorism as the use of violence by sub-national groups or clandestine state agents for obtaining political (including social and religious) goals especially when the violence is intended to intimidate or otherwise affect the emotions, attitudes and behaviour of a target audience considerably larger than the actual victims.

Wilkinson (1974) holds that as a type of unconventional warfare, terrorism is designed to weaken or supplant existing political landscapes through capitulation, acquiescence or radicalization as opposed to subversion or direct military action. Significantly, terrorism is a compulsive strategy of the relatively disadvantaged, the weak who seeks reversal of authority, an efficacious use of force to achieve a desired policy, a theatrical warfare whose drama involves the actors who actually carry out the violent act, the group against whom the violent act is targeted and the authority due to be influenced or compelled to act. Often times, those who are accused of being terrorists rarely identify themselves as such, instead, they use terms that represent their ideological or ethnic struggle such as: separatists, freedom fighters, guerrillas, Jihadi, revolutionaries. Historically, the concept 'terrorism' dates back to the first organized human interactions. At minimum, it could be traced back to the period when Jewish zealots used terrorism to resist the Romans by killing many roman soldiers and destroying Roman property. It could also be traced to when Muslims used terrorism to fight each other (Shiites versus Sunni) and against the crusades. It was a period in the religious circle when dying in the service of God, dying while killing the assumed enemies of God (Allah) loomed large (Rapport 1984). The modern development of terrorism as a tool to achieve political and religious goals began during the French Revolution (1793-1794).

During this period, Maximilien Robespierre of France introduced government sponsored terrorism in order to maintain power and suppress opposition to the government

(Hoffman 1998). Similarly, during the Soviet Revolution in 1917, Lenin and Stalin, evolved government sponsored terrorism as a useful tool to maintain government control. These personalities systematically used the act of terrorism to intimidate and frighten the entire society. To them, both terror and fear were veritable instruments for governmental operations. In 1966, Cuba hosted the Tri-continental conference which was sponsored by the Soviet Union. The conference marked the beginning of the internationalization of terrorism. Terrorist and liberation groups from Europe, Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Latin America began to work together and built alliances. The trend continued like that. In Germany, the Red Army Faction (German group) allied itself with Black September (Palestinian group); in France, Action Direct (French group) allied with the Red Army Faction and Red Army Brigade (Italian group); in Japan, the Japanese Red Army allied with the popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (Padelford et al., 1976). Meanwhile, there is a wide spectrum of strategies of terrorist groups. No one type of group has a monopoly on any particular technique or strategy. Thus, different strategies can be employed by different, unrelated groups of terrorist. Strategy in this context is the considered application of means to advance one's ends objectives. This depends largely on the circumstances and the terrorists intentions.

Harmon (2000) identifies some of the terrorists strategies which include; strategy to create or further a sense of societal dislocation, fear and even anarchy; strategy to discredit, diminish, or destroy a particular government and replace it with another economic strategy which is intended to directly harm the property owners and perhaps to vitiate the economic policies and programmes of government particularly in the areas of sabotage of oil pipelines, bombings bank robberies and disrupting the export of manufactured goods and strategy for international effect. This finds explanation in some actions some governments embark upon to deter unnecessary foreign incursion or intervention in the business of the country. Essentially, the strategy of terrorists is to commit acts of violence that draws the attention of the local populace, the government, and the world to their cause. They plan their attack to obtain the greater publicity, choosing targets that symbolize what they oppose. For example, in 1972 at the Munich Olympics, the Black September organization killed 11 Israelis. The Israelis were the immediate victims, but the true target was the estimated 1 billion people watching the televised event. The organization used the high visibility of the Olympics to publicise its views on the plight of the Palestinian refugees. Similarly, in October 1983, Middle Eastern terrorists bombed the marine Battalion Landing Team Headquarters at Beirut International Airport. Their immediate victims were the 24 military personnel who were killed and over 100 others who were wounded. Their true target was the American people and its congress. A modern trend in terrorism is toward loosely organized, self-financed, international networks of terrorists. Another trend is toward terrorism that is religiously or ideologically-motivated. Radical Islamic fundamentalist groups, or groups using religion as a pretext, pose terrorist threats of varying kinds to many nations' interests. A third trend is the apparent growth of cross-national links among different terrorist organizations which may involve combinations of military training or funding, technology transfer or political advice.

In fact, looming over the entire issue of international terrorism is a trend toward proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Indeed, Iran, seen as the most active state sponsor of terrorism, has been aggressively seeking a nuclear arms capability. Iraq is thought to be stockpiling chemical and biological agents, and to be rebuilding its nuclear weapons program. North Korea recently admitted to having a clandestine program for uranium enrichment. Also, indications have surfaced that the Al Qaeda organization attempted to acquire chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear weapons. Given all this, stakes in the war against international terrorism are increasing and attempts to prevent terrorist attacks are diminishing correspondingly. It is pertinent to also examine some of the various dimensions of

terrorism. Prominent among these include, state-bound; non-state terrorism and terrorism across national boundaries. By state-bound terrorism, is meant one being orchestrated and aided by states. This can be in various forms: intimidation, selective political assassination, abduction and kidnapping. Some striking illustration includes, the genocidal activities the Nazi regime carried out against the Jewish population between 1939 and 1945, and the stallinest purge of the peasant class of Kulaks in Ukraine that caused the death of millions of civilians. The non-state terrorism is often carried out by individuals or groups who feel it is no longer worth it to accomplish political objectives within the law, a law which to them represents the power of an immoral and/or illegitimate regime or government. These individuals are contemptuous of the society's political institutions and practices (Slann, 1998).

Some of the factors responsible for the non-state terrorism are tied to relative deprivation: asymmetrical allocation or distribution of public resources, poverty, political frustration. It could also be due to religious intolerance or fanaticism (Adeniran 1996). Terrorism across national boundaries is one that has external connection. The act is mostly drawn on external factors. Whereas at the national (territorial) level the source of the violent act could be traced and some solutions sought (such as in cases of kidnapping, abduction), extra-territorial terrorism does not subject itself to such scrutiny and resolution. Hence, it is often difficult to identify the actual source of some terror across national boundaries, and some times, if identified, it becomes pretty cumbersome to cope with it without the collaboration of other actors within the international system.

Foreign Policy

Foreign policy refers to a government's strategy and actions in dealing with other nations. It encompasses the decisions and measures that a country takes to achieve its national interests and goals in the international arena. These can include maintaining national security, promoting economic prosperity, protecting human rights, and projecting cultural values abroad. Foreign policy is driven by what a country considers to be its core national interests, such as security, economic well-being, and ideological goals. These interests shape how a country interacts with others.

Foreign policy expresses self-interest strategies chosen by the state to safeguard its national interests and to achieve its goals within international relations milieu. Thus, the approaches are strategically employed in order to interact with other countries. In international politics, nations are particularly interested in achieving two basic things – national interest and foreign policy. The former begets the latter. National interest emphasizes taking action on issues that would improve the political situation, the economic and social well-being, the health and culture of the people as well as their political survival. In other words, national interest is people-oriented policies that have the capacity to improve the lot of the people and make them stand among other nations. It must be policies that would promote the greatest happiness of the greatest number of the citizens. For instance, a policy that leads to the creation of full employment in the country and at the same time advance the nation's march towards economic and political emancipation vis-à-vis other members of the international system (Ojo and Sesay 1988).

A country's foreign policy, also called the 'international relations policy' is a set of political and economic goals that seeks to outline how a country will interact with other counties of the world. Thus, foreign policies generally are designed to help protect a country's national interests, national security, ideological goals and economic prosperity. It consists of decisions and actions which involve to some appreciable extent, relations between one state

and others. It is a set of explicit objectives with regard to world beyond the borders of a given social unit and a set of strategies and tactics designed to achieve those objectives. This implies the perception of a need to influence the behaviour of other states or international organization. The aim is to ensure that such states or international organization maintain the existing pattern of behaviour especially if the influencing state perceives such as contributing to the achievement of its own objectives, or to change the present pattern by initiating a new set of policies, or by altering or halting the implementation of existing ones (Frankel 1967; Legg and Morrison 1971).

Snyder (1969) conceives foreign policy as the processes of state interaction at the government level, while Reynold (1980) views it as the external actions taken by decision-makers with the intention of achieving long-range goals and short-term objectives. To Modelski (1962) foreign policy is the system of activities evolved by communities for changing the behaviour of other states and for adjusting their own activities to the international environment. In essence, foreign policy suggests a stated set of attitudes towards the international environment, an implicit or explicit plan about a country's relationship with the outside world, a conscious image of what is or ought to be the country's place in the world, or some general guiding principles or attitudes determining or influencing decisions on specific issues. This, however, buttresses Adeniran's (1983) assertion that foreign policy consists of three elements: One is the overall orientation and policy intentions of a particular country toward another. The second is the objective that a country seeks to achieve in her relations or dealings with other countries and the third is the means for achieving that particular goal or objectives.

These elements find expression in the interaction of nation-states within the international system. It suffices to say, therefore, that the foreign policy of any state must be seen to reflect some identifiable goals and can only be adjudged a success or failure depending on the extent to which the set goals have been achieved or not achieved. For instance, one can say that Nigeria's foreign policy in Chad between 1979 and 1982 was a failure because it failed to achieve what it set out to do in Chad; to restore peace and order between the warring factions. It is in the interest of Nigeria to restore peace in the territory for the purposes of security, political stability and even economic well-being. The basic element underlying the foreign policy of all countries is the quest for security, which, depending on the strength and leadership of a given country, may range from the pursuit of status quo policies to blatant imperialism. In the word of Hartmann (1983) because a foreign policy consists of selected national interests presumably formulated into a logically consistent whole that is then implemented, any foreign policy can be viewed analytically in three phases: conception, content and implementation. Conception involves the strategic appraisal of what goals are desirable and feasible given the presumed nature of the international system. Content is the result and reflection of that appraisal. Implementation looks at both the coordinating mechanisms within a state and the means by which it conveys its views and wishes to other states. Though inefficiencies and failure can be very costly in any of these three phases, it is obvious that the most critical phase is conception (Winker and Bellows 1992).

Beyond this, the setting in which foreign policy is made is pivotal. Unlike domestic policies, the targets of foreign policy decisions are not domestic but entities external to the state. In other words, the process of foreign policy decision making is influenced by factors that are not only internal to the state initiating a particular policies, but also by pressures from sources that are external to it. Hence, two environments of foreign policy can be identified: the domestic influences on foreign policy include a country's geography, economy, demography, political structures, military, political parties, lobbies and interest groups and public opinion.

To be clear, a country's location, topography, its terrain, climate, size, population and distribution of natural resources will not only affect the socio-economic development within the country, but will also determine the country's needs in relation to other states. One of the main critical determinants of Japan's foreign policy is its natural resources poverty. The country depends highly on external sources for its supply of energy and other strategic raw materials. Its topography does not even allow it to grow adequate food to feed its large population (Curtis et al., 2006).

The external environment expresses the interests of other actors in the system which can come in varying dimensions such as multinational corporations and political terrorists. The idea behind the pressure is either to impact positively on the country's socio-economic and political project or to negatively affect such a country. It is not uncommon to find participants in the process of foreign policy decision-making having different perceptions of the objectives of policy as well as if the realities of the environment. Differences in beliefs, values and wants of people create in their minds certain expectations and desires about information concerning their environment.

Human Rights

States often promote human rights as a cornerstone of their foreign policy, using diplomatic pressure, sanctions, and international forums to address human rights abuses (Enders & Sandler, 2006). Human rights are fundamental rights and freedoms that belong to every person, regardless of nationality, sex, ethnicity, religion, language, or any other status. These rights are inherent to all human beings and are considered universal, inalienable, and indivisible. They are meant to protect the dignity, freedom, and equality of individuals. Human rights apply to all people everywhere, without exception. They are recognized globally and are not contingent on any specific culture, legal system, or government. Human rights cannot be taken away or given up. Even if they are violated, the rights themselves still exist. All human rights are interconnected and equally important. The realization of one right often depends on the realization of others. All individuals are entitled to their human rights without discrimination. Everyone has the right to be treated equally, regardless of their status or identity

It is argued that human rights are as old as the human species. This is perhaps because they are viewed as God-given, inalienable and fundamental. But the conception of human rights and respect for them is still novel to many countries. Despite the Enlightenment, modern capitalism's emphasis on individual property, rights and western democracy's emphasis on individual political rights, many sovereign states still abuse what the concept truly stand for. As Barash and Webel (2002) note: Nearly one half the world's people are denied democratic freedoms and participations; about one-third face severe restrictions on their rights to own property; jails are filled with political prisoners, many of them held without trail and victimised by torture; women are often deprived of their economic social and political rights that men take for granted. Today, fundamental human rights represent the modernized version of the traditional natural rights which include, the right to happiness, the right to peace, the right to self-determination and self expression. Human rights have been regarded as not only basic to the development of human personality, but also as an indispensable condition of the peaceful progress of the world and vitally essential for a stable international society. They act as great safeguards against the tyranny of the majority and a considerable protection of the minorities (Ray 2004).

As a liberal democratic concept, fundamental human rights are peculiarly the symbol of fulfilment of the long, hard struggle against the forces of absolutism and authoritarianism which characterized the pre-democratic era in Europe in particular. For example, in the ancient

Greek society of citizens and slaves, the modern conception of inalienable fundamental human freedoms for all persons living within the confines of society was unthinkable. Though the advent of Christianity improved matters considerably from the stand point of human life, it was not until the late 17th and the 18th centuries that the necessity for a set of written guarantees of human freedoms was seriously felt as the symbol of a new philosophy and new way of life that was unthinkable in the feudal, monarchical and absolutist society preceding it. The entire development from natural rights to human freedoms is epitomized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) of 1948. The Declaration not only marked the internationalization of human rights, but initiated the process of recognizing the self-developing rights which comprise the freedom of creation and innovation, and which call for social security, for education. The United nations charter, adopted in 1945 made human rights a central purpose of that new organization. Here, governments pledged to take joint and separate actions to encourage a more just, humane world. A year later, the UN created its own commission on Human Rights and the commission drafted a body of human rights principles – the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1948 (Posner 1994).

Human rights advocates such as Amnesty International and hundreds of national rights advocacy groups around the world rely on international human rights standards that set minimum requirements for governments. The core legal principles guiding these groups include, commitments not to torture their own people or foreigners, or subject them to slavery or political murder. Hitherto, there exists a worldwide movement aimed at exposing and combating official misconduct and alleviating people's suffering. The reason is that by exposing violations and challenging the violators, lives are being saved (Rourke 1996).

Understandably, the United States is one of the countries that champion the cause of promoting Human rights in many countries particularly developing countries. Other nations involved in the business of promoting of human rights include, Canada, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Sweden, Australia. These countries include human rights as a component in their own foreign policies. But they often prefer to pursue these concerns on a multilateral rather a bilateral basis (Brilmayer 1994; Kennan 1995; Mead 1995; Falk 1995). In the Bill Clinton's address to the US in November 1995, he urged Americans to support the deployment of US troops to Bosnia on the grounds that it is in US interests to do so and because it is the right thing to do. He argued that it was in US national interest to intervene because problems that start beyond the US borders could quickly become problems within them. The humanitarian concern, Clinton further argued, was the quarter of a million men, women and children who have been shelled, shot and tortured to death (Rourke 1996).

Buttressing this view, Jimmy Carter declared during a speech to mark the 30th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 thus: Americans should be proud that our nation stands for more than military might or political might, that our pursuit of human rights is part of a broad effort to use our great power and tremendous influence in the service of creating a better world in which human beings can live. Human rights is the soul of our foreign policy. In the same light, Cyrus Vance, U.S. Secretary of State (1977-1980) remarked that it is a dangerous illusion to believe that pursuing values such as human rights is incompatible with pursuing U.S. national interests because U.S. can never be secure in a world where freedom is threatened everywhere else (Rourke 1996). In all, the basic question is, is there any system of government that is averse to human rights, if democratic system of government approbates human rights, does the same apply to friendly non-democratic system such as Republic of China, Cuba, Libya which run a communist system of government or Saudi Arabia which is ruled by a feudal monarchy? What should a country do when the dictates of real politics devoid of moral principles point in one direction and human right concerns point

in another? How can two friendly countries that share bilateral relations address the issue of human rights beyond and above socio-economic and political matters?

Exploring Terrorism in Nigeria

It is undeniable that terrorism and terrorist activities have increasingly become a widespread form of criminal violence, with different countries adopting their own distinct methods of carrying out such acts. Some nations resort to bombings and airline hijackings, others employ air missiles, while in Nigeria, tactics like hostage-taking, abduction, kidnapping, and the bombing of multinational oil pipelines are common. Among these, kidnapping stands out as the most destructive in Nigeria. The spate of kidnapping in the country in recent times has become a disturbing phenomenon. The menace which started largely as a means of drawing government's attention to the neglect of the communities in the oil-rich Niger Delta region has blossomed to a booming lucrative trade. Though the act began in the states that comprised the Niger Delta region, it has gradually crept into neighbouring states in the South-East geopolitical zones. Initially, only expatriates or foreigners working in oil firms and multinational companies in the country were the main targets, but presently, Nigerians, including children, toddlers, adults and the aged, and relations of influential individuals in the society become targets of the nefarious and nebulous act.

Kidnapping simply means to seize and detain unlawfully, by force or fraud and to remove a person from his own comfortable place to an undisclosed discomforting location against his will and wishes and usually for use as a hostage or to extraction ransom. Prior to the prevailing situation, kidnapping in Nigeria was rare and hardly in the same realm. It become rife in the latter part of 2005 and early 2006 when the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), the so-called proponents of the resource-based restiveness in the Niger Delta region turned to kidnapping of foreign oil workers to draw attention to their political cause. That ploy subsequently lost its political coloration as it translated to a ransom and moneymaking criminal scheme. Between 1991 and 2000, Nigeria was ranked ninth behind nations like Columbia, Mexico, Russia, Philippines and Venezuela in the number of annual kidnappings. In 2008, the rate of kidnapping in Nigeria was 353 and in 2009, it has risen to 512.

To be sure, in June 2005, six foreign workers linked to the Anglo-Dutch oil company (Shell) were kidnapped in the Niger Delta area; in February 2006, some foreign oil workers were abducted in the same zone; in March 2007, two Chinese workers were abducted at Nnewi, a commercial town in Anambra state; in May, 2007, some gunmen kidnapped four American oil workers from a barge off the Nigerian coast; in August 2007 in Port Harcourt, some gunmen kidnapped an American oil industry worker; in the same August 2007, six Russian workers from an aluminum plant were kidnapped .

The criminal act goes beyond concentrating on the expatriates as Nigerian citizens are also victims. For instance, on 10 July 2003, Dr. Chris Ngige,, the then governor of Anambra State was abducted (TELL, July 21, 2003). Since then, a lot of Nigerians have either been abducted or kidnapped across the nation. Recently, the Ambassador of the Rebranding Nigerian project and popular Nollywood actor, Chief Pete Edochie was kidnapped in Onitsha on his way to his home town – Nteje. Woje Yayok – Secretary to the state government Kaduna was also abducted on 23 September, 2009. On November 17, 2008, an Anambra state legislator, Joseph Dimobi was kidnapped by a gang that asked for a ransom of N30 million. On 1, December, Dr. Francis Edemobi, a brother to Professor Dora Akunyili was abducted from his office in Enugu.

In Benin, Edo state, the former Chairman of the Nigerian Bar Association in the state, Solomon Odiase and the parents of the Chairman of the Ovia North Local government area of Edo State were kidnapped in September 2009 (The Punch, August 19, 2009; The Nation, August 17, 2009; The Nation, September 26, 2009). In July 2010, 13 containers carrying illegal arms were intercepted at the Apapa Wharf in Lagos. The shipping company claimed that it was an Iranian trader that owned the goods and that the company was informed that the containers were mere building materials as stipulated in the ships manifest. Beyond this, some Nigerians were of the view that the arms might have been imported by desperate politicians to molest and intimidate the electorate and their perceived political opponents during the 2011 elections (Ezeoke 2010). Again, on October 1st, 2010, there were bomb attacks around the Eagles Square. This occurred when a cream of Nigerian people and foreign dignitaries had gathered to mark the 50 years of the country's independence. Investigation showed that about 15 people died while several others were seriously injured in the incident. This happened in spite of the signal and warning by the United States and the United Kingdom intelligence of the impending bomb attacks. On the 25 December, 2009, a Nigerian boy, but studying abroad, Umar Farak Abdul Mutallab attempted to blow up a Detroit Michigan-bound aeroplane with 289 people on board.

How terrorism shapes Nigeria's foreign policy

Since independence in 1960, Nigeria has had extensive diplomatic contacts with its fellow African countries and western nations and had worked through these both to safeguard its national interest and to achieve other international political interests. Based on its economic and demographic strength, Nigeria has always considered itself as one of the leading countries in Africa and its foreign policy has been geared to reflect this. Apart from belonging to many international organisations: United Nations and several of its special and related agencies such as, Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), States (ECOWAS), African Union (AU), it also has taken the lead in articulating the views of developing nations on the need for modification of the existing international economic order. At independence non-alignment was emphasised as one of the basic tenets of Nigeria's foreign policy. The rationale behind that position was basically to preserve Nigeria's choice and freedom of action as a sovereign state. It also utilized that opportunity to advance the goals of pan-Africanism, concern for black people, decolonisation (Ogwu, 2006).

However the emergence of the terrorist acts that are hitherto burgeoning and becoming a recurrent decimal, has made the nation to lose all these respect and its relevance in the international community. Of course, no country will be disposed to establish a bilateral relation with a country that is widely acclaimed to be a terrorist nation. Instead of witnessing multinational corporations coming into Nigeria to boost the nation's economy, the country rather experiences the exodus of many companies and industries from the country to other countries as a result of insufficient security and uncontrollable terrorist and criminal acts. The continued violence against innocent citizens in Jos, Bauchi, and Maiduguri and other parts of the country, carried out with impunity on a daily basis is enough to scare foreigners from coming into the country to invest. The prevailing trend is also capable of stopping foreign election monitors from coming to observe the 2011 election.

It suffices to note that since the escalation of abduction, kidnapping and bombing in Nigeria, the country has lost its 6th position in the league of oil exporting countries. The position has been taken over by Angola that now top the chart as Africa's largest exporter of crude oil. Prior to the precarious situation, Nigeria used to produce a total output of 2.4 million barrels per day. Industry sources now put the average total oil production output at 1.4 million barrels while Angola produces 1.9 million barrels daily. The terrorist acts in the country have

succeeded in killing the hen that lays the golden eggs as the most affected oil companies were, Shell production development company, Chevron, the Nigerian Agip Oil and the state-owned Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC).

To buttress this, Shell's production has dipped by 85 percent from 1.150 million barrels per day in 2005 to the current production figure of about 145,000 barrels due to a series of attacks in its platforms both in the eastern operations in Rivers State and Western operations covering Bayelsa, Delta and Edo states. The same applies to Chevron whose production and loading facilities in the region especially in the coastal Delta state have been blown up resulting in production shut down (Sunday Punch, August 9, 2009). Prior to this, oil companies operating in the Niger Delta have lost about $200,760,000 in 1993 as a result of protests and blockages. Shell in particular had lost N9.9 million in Ogoniland in 1993 when it was forced to stop operations by angry villagers (Obi 1992a). in fact, given the currency at which these activities (kidnapping, abduction and blowing up of pipelines) are going on in the country, Nigeria's chances of meeting its 6000 megawatts target of electricity production on which about $2.6 billion had been committed will be slim.

The essence of striving to generate at least 6000 megawatts of electricity by December 2009 was to attract more foreign investments to Nigeria which is part of foreign policy. This set of goals can only be achieved if the lives of the foreigners who are working with the power sector will not be threatened by the kidnappers and if the pipelines that supply gas for the use of electricity are not blown up. Suffice it to say, that the more the country lacks the capacity to guarantee steady flow of crude oil in the international market, the more critical stakeholders will become impatient with Nigeria and perhaps begins to look for an alternative oil nation that is with an enabling environment.

Conclusion

The intersection of terrorism, foreign policy, and human rights in Nigeria presents a complex and multifaceted challenge that requires a nuanced approach. Terrorism in Nigeria, characterized by acts such as kidnapping, abduction, and bombings, has profoundly influenced the nation's foreign policy, driving it to seek greater international cooperation, enhance security measures, and align more closely with global counterterrorism efforts. This shift in foreign policy, while crucial for national security, often comes at a cost to human rights. The response to terrorism has led to increased security measures that sometimes infringe upon civil liberties and human rights, creating a delicate balance between protecting citizens and upholding fundamental freedoms. Nigeria's engagement with the international community reflects a commitment to addressing these issues, but it also highlights the ongoing struggle to ensure that counterterrorism measures do not undermine human rights. As Nigeria continues to navigate these intertwined issues, it must strive to craft policies that effectively combat terrorism while respecting and promoting human rights. The path forward involves not only enhancing security and international collaboration but also ensuring that human rights remain a core component of both domestic and foreign policy. This balanced approach is essential for fostering long-term stability, peace, and justice in Nigeria, ultimately benefiting both its citizens and the broader international community.

Recommendations

To effectively address the intersection of terrorism, foreign policy, and human rights in Nigeria, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Enhance collaboration with neighboring countries and international organizations to improve intelligence sharing, joint operations, and coordinated counterterrorism

strategies. This will help in effectively addressing cross-border terrorist activities and fostering regional stability.

2. Implement and enforce policies that ensure counterterrorism measures respect human rights. Establish clear guidelines to prevent abuse and protect civil liberties, while also addressing the root causes of terrorism through social and economic development.

3. Provide comprehensive training for security forces on human rights standards and the rule of law. This will help ensure that counterterrorism operations are conducted in a manner that upholds legal and ethical norms.

4. Foster dialogue and partnerships with local communities to build trust and cooperation. Engage community leaders in counterterrorism efforts and address local grievances that may fuel radicalization.

5. Develop and implement robust legal frameworks to address terrorism while safeguarding human rights. Ensure that laws and regulations are transparent, accountable, and subject to judicial oversight.

By implementing these recommendations, Nigeria can work towards a more effective and balanced approach to combating terrorism, advancing its foreign policy objectives, and upholding human rights. This will contribute to a more stable and just society, benefiting both Nigeria and the international community.

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