

**Foreign Military Assistance in an
Interdependent World:
President Goodluck Jonathan's Prosecution of
Nigeria's
Anti-Terror War**

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Abstract

The current global regime of transnationalism and its associated complex web of relationships has given birth to new concerns in the national life of sovereign states. A major issue epitomizing these new concerns is the menace of terrorism. Nigeria currently has its own raw deal from the global expansion of terrorism through the activities of Boko Haram. While the existence of Boko Haram predated the administration of President Goodluck Jonathan, the intensity of the group's operation under his watch greatly surpassed the previous narratives of the

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problem. Considering the lack of capacity on the part of Nigeria's military to arrest the problem, the government of Jonathan relied heavily on foreign assistance. Using the analytical framework of "global interdependence," the paper examines the need for foreign support in the fight against terrorism, the variety of foreign assistance received by Nigeria under Jonathan, and the issues emanating from the country's dependence on foreign support in its anti-terror war. This study found that Nigeria benefitted tremendously from the military assistance offered by its international partners. These benefits include the sale of lethal weapons, the voluntary donation of military equipment, intelligence sharing, training of combatants, and humanitarian provisions for emergency needs. Again, three fundamental issues emerged from Nigeria's dependence on foreign military support in the fight against Boko Haram. First, it clearly reflected the depletion of Nigeria's military resources over time. Second, Nigeria suffered heartaches from its traditional allies in its attempt to procure modern military equipment, which somewhat affected the campaign against terror adversely. Third, Nigeria's over-reliance on coercive measures led to human rights abuses and this made it difficult for Nigeria to obtain much-needed foreign assistance in certain circumstances.

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Keywords: Terrorism; Boko Haram; Foreign Support; President Goodluck Jonathan; Nigeria

I. Introduction

The current global regime of transnationalism and its associated complex web of relationships has given birth to new concerns and trends in the national life of sovereign states. A major issue epitomizing these new concerns is the menace of terrorism. Regardless of their forms of internal governmental organization, states have recently become predisposed to the destructive and dehumanizing activities of terrorists. Even the most advanced and politically organized states have not been immune from such attacks. The United States, France, and Britain have all suffered fatal attacks from transnational terrorist groups in spite of their sophistication in political governance and powerful intelligence mechanisms for detecting early warning signals in relation to such attacks. With the activities of a group in Nigeria known as Boko Haram, the country has its own raw deal from the global expansion of terrorism. Although Nigeria has witnessed various forms of violent conflicts for several decades, “in recent times, the activities of Boko Haram in Northern Nigeria have become the major source of crisis and fear in the country.”¹ In the opinion of Nwozor,² the Boko Haram insurgency appears to be the most complicated issue in Nigeria, stretching Nigeria’s

¹ William Ehwarieme and Nathaniel Umukoro. “Civil society and terrorism in Nigeria: a study of the Boko Haram crisis,” *International Journal on World Peace*, 32, no.3 (2015): 45.

² Agaptus Nwozor. “A reconsideration of force theory in Nigeria’s security architecture,” *Conflict Trends*, iss. 1 (2013).

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security apparatus to the limit. Armed banditry has also emerged as a major problem.

While the existence of Boko Haram predated the administration of President Goodluck Jonathan, the intensity of the group's operation under his watch – defined by its spread and fatalities – greatly surpassed the previous narratives of the problem. As an Islamic fundamentalist organization with an aversion towards the secular nature of the Nigerian state and Western ideas, the primary goal of Boko Haram is to establish a state adhering to strict Islamic laws through the implementation of criminal sharia courts across the country and particularly in the Northeast.³ Under the government of Jonathan (2010 to 2015), Boko Haram's deadly attacks “targeted police stations, military facilities, churches, schools, cell phone towers, beer halls, newspaper offices, the United Nations building, politicians, Muslim critics, and Christians.”⁴

The Nigerian counterinsurgency mechanism under Jonathan was predominantly coercive, implying over-reliance on military instruments of war. However, the intense military surveillance by

³ “Video: Boko Haram Threatens to Bomb Abuja,” *Vanguard Newspaper*, May 13, (2017).

<http://www.vanguardngr.com/2017/05/video-boko-haram-threatens-bomb-abuja/>.

⁴ Daniel Egiegba Agbibo. “Boko Haram and the Global Jihad: Do not think Jihad is over. Rather Jihad has just begun,” *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 68, no. 4 (2014): 400.

the armed forces and other security agents in the hotspots failed to root out the dissidents. With the increasing use of explosives and bombs as well as other modern military equipment (thanks to training from other terrorist outfits), the Nigerian military forces found it increasingly difficult to subdue the combat capabilities of the insurgents. The nation's military establishment seemed not to be well equipped to respond effectively to asymmetric wars such as terrorism and this explains why the crisis overstretched the Nigerian military under President Jonathan. The failure of the Nigerian state to wipe out the activities of the group, coupled with the increase in fatalities, necessitated international intervention or foreign support. The objective of this paper is to examine the variety of foreign assistance against terrorism in the context of Nigeria under the government of President Jonathan. The article is divided into seven sections. While this section represents the introductory piece, the second section explains the emergence of Goodluck Jonathan as president and the expansion of terrorism under his watch. The third section explains the framework of global interdependence and section four focuses on the need for international intervention or foreign support against terrorism. Section five is devoted to the foreign military and humanitarian assistance that Jonathan received from Nigeria's international partners. The sixth section discusses the major issues emerging from Nigeria's reliance on foreign military assistance in the fight against Boko Haram and section seven is the conclusion.

II. President Goodluck Jonathan's Administration and Terrorism Upsurge

Nigeria's political history has been a checkered one, oscillating between military autocracy and civilianization. However, Nigeria's democratic rebirth occurred on May 29, 1999, following the inauguration of the civilian government of President Olusegun Obasanjo. At the expiration of Obasanjo's tenure in 2007 (After winning the 1999 presidential election, he was re-elected in 2003 for another term of four years), Umaru Musa Yar'Adua emerged as the president at the end of the 2007 general elections. It was the 2011 presidential election that ushered in Goodluck Jonathan. Therefore, the presidential election that brought in Jonathan marked the fourth in the series of uninterrupted competitive elections held since democratic re-birth in 1999.

The 2011 transition process successfully – though in a tense atmosphere – produced a president from the politically marginalized Niger Delta region of Nigeria. This is a novel achievement given that, until President Jonathan's emergence, the minority Niger Delta region was yet to occupy the highest political office in Nigeria. President Jonathan hails from Bayelsa – one of the states in the minority Niger Delta region of Nigeria – where he was previously a deputy governor and later the governor. In 2007, he was Yar'Adua's running mate and thus became the vice-president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria after the general

elections. President Yar'Adua, unfortunately, died in office in 2010, and vice-president Goodluck Jonathan inherited the administration⁵ and subsequently won the 2011 presidential election.

A major defining attribute of President Jonathan's administration was the upscaling of the activities of Boko Haram (Nigeria's jihadist and terror group). Boko Haram was established in Maiduguri, the administrative capital of the Northeastern state of Borno, in 2002 by Muhammed Yusuf. During its formative years, the group was only widely known for its radical Islamic doctrines and condemnation of Western ideas and influences. However, the group's radicalism was perceived by the government as a negative representation of Islamic values. This perception and the group's predilection for violence led to an excessive military response from the government and the eventual killing of the founder in 2009.⁶ This happened under the watch of Umar Musa Yar'Adua as president and Goodluck Jonathan as

⁵ The "doctrine of necessity" was invoked on Tuesday, February 9, 2010, to resolve the political logjam in the country. The National Assembly – Nigeria's legislative chambers – passed a joint resolution to empower vice-president Goodluck Jonathan to serve as the acting president. Prior to this invocation, incumbent President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua failed to transmit a letter to the National Assembly and handover to his deputy on account of his ill-health, thereby breaching section 145 of the 1999 constitution (as amended). The doctrine however proved effective in resolving the political equation in the country as it led to the emergence of Goodluck Jonathan as acting president and later as substantive president after the death of Yar'Adua.

⁶ The Editors, "Boko Haram: Nigerian Islamic Group." Encyclopaedia Britannica, August 13, (2022). <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Boko-Haram>

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vice president. The highhandedness of the security forces infuriated the members of the jihadist group and thus expanded their violent attacks.⁷

In explaining why Boko Haram became more violent under Jonathan, the popular thinking, therefore, is that the coercive counter-terrorism measures – characterized by the excessive use of force – adopted by the government pushed Boko Haram into “targeting the military, the police, and other organizations affiliated with the states.”⁸ With Jonathan as President, Boko Haram (under the new leadership of Abubakar Shekau) introduced new tactics such as suicide bombing, hostage-taking, and decapitation, including attacks on police, military, and government officials.⁹ The ferocious attacks by the insurgents and their routine abduction of children and women gave the country a damning reportage internationally. In 2014, under the government of President Jonathan, the Nigerian-based terror group emerged as the world’s deadliest terrorist organization ahead of ISIS,

⁷ The Editors, “Boko Haram: Nigerian Islamic Group.”

⁸ Peculiar M. Awa. “The Prevalence and Nature of Terrorist Attacks in Nigeria during the Presidency of Goodluck Jonathan,” *International Journal of Law and Public Administration*, 3, no. 2 (2000).

⁹ *Vanguard Newspaper*, “Video: Boko Haram”; Ibanga Isine. “Boko Haram has Killed 13,000 Nigerians – Jonathan.” *Premium Times Newspaper*, September 25, (2014).

<https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/168686-boko-haram-has-killed-13000-nigerians-jonathan.html>; Awa, “The Prevalence and Nature of Terrorist Attacks,” 53.

Al-Shabaab, and Taliban.¹⁰ In 2015, the group became more internationalized when it metamorphosed into the Islamic State's West African Province (ISWAP).

By 2015, it is estimated that Boko Haram had killed several thousands of Nigerians, forced about two million people to flee their homes, exposed several millions to the risk of starvation,¹¹ and led to a monumental scale of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugee flow into neighboring countries. President Jonathan's best efforts at combating terror attacks notwithstanding, the existing data suggest that more than 11,000 were massacred under his watch. These fatalities were made up of civilians, security forces, and terrorists. The number of fatalities rose from 3,000 in 2013 to over 11,000 in 2015. There were over 1,000 incidents involving Boko Haram, leading to deaths, mass kidnapping, and attacks on public infrastructure. For this reason, his opponents and critics raised serious questions about his ability to govern and address the problem.¹²

¹⁰ Rose Troup Buchanan. "ISIS Overtaken by Boko Haram as World's Deadliest Terror Organisation," *Independent*, November 17, (2015). <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/boko-haram-overtakes-isis-as-worlds-deadliest-terror-organisation-a6737761.html>.

¹¹ *Vanguard Newspaper*, "Video: Boko Haram"; Isine, "Boko Haram has Killed 13,000 Nigerians"; Awa, "The Prevalence and Nature of Terrorist Attacks," 53.

¹² Aryn Baker. "Nigerian Army Takes Boko Haram Capital and Boosts Goodluck Jonathan's Election Chances." *Time Magazine*, March 27, (2015); John Campbell and Asch Harwood. "Boko Haram's Deadly Impact," Council on Foreign Relations, August 20, (2018).

III. The Framework of Global Interdependence

This work is predicated on the analytical framework of global interdependence. Interdependence is a major defining attribute of the international system. As the world has become increasingly more globalized, many components of the international system – nations, groups/organizations, and individuals – have become more interconnected and interdependent.¹³ Interdependence could be described as a relationship in which the different components of the international system are closely linked together. It is a system of action that produces reciprocal effects among countries and other actors; and links the interests of states such that a change in the action/position of an actor could shape the action/position of others.¹⁴

In the context of global interdependence, linkages occur through many channels, such as “flows and influences of capital and goods, information and ideas, and people and forces, as well as environmentally and biologically relevant substances.”¹⁵ Interdependence could be strategic or structural. While the former

¹³ Roger A. Coate, Jeffrey A. Griffin, and Steven Elliott-Gower. “Interdependence in International Organization and Global Governance.” Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies, November 20, (2017); Jon C. Pevehouse. “Interdependence Theory and the Measurement of International Conflict,” *The Journal of Politics*, 66, no. 1 (2004).

¹⁴ Coate et al., “Interdependence.”

¹⁵ Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, Jr. “Globalization: What’s New? What’s Not? (And so What?),” *Foreign Policy* 118 (2000).

explains that the ability of an actor to attain a goal depends on the choices and calculations of other actors involved, the latter explains the nature of an interdependent relationship itself. The framework of global interdependence could therefore serve as a fundamental template for explaining relationships, actions, and calculations at the global level.¹⁶

In our increasingly interdependent world, a country's foreign policy choices could produce a telling outcome among other actors involved in a pattern of relationship. This implies that in the context of interdependence, local actions could produce global effects. Interdependencies may be positive or negative.¹⁷ The positive potentials of global interdependence include promoting peace and democracy, deepening international economic relationships, and fostering international stability. Interdependence could therefore facilitate positive change in the international system. As valuable as global interdependence is to states and actors, it could also produce some negative effects on the system. For instance, global issues such as transnational human and drug trafficking, terrorism and extremism, cybercrime,

¹⁶ Coate et al., "Interdependence."

¹⁷ Hassan El Menyawi. "Toward Global Democracy: Thoughts in Response to the Rising Tide of Nation-to-Nation Interdependencies," *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies*, 11, no. 2 (2004); Elaine Kelley. "Harnessing the Positive Potential of Global Interdependence," *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*, 12, no. 1 (2011).

and nuclear proliferation could all be aided by global interdependence.¹⁸

IV. Interdependence, Terrorism, and the Need for International Intervention/Foreign Support

Why does a nation require foreign support in the war against terror? The need for international intervention in the anti-terror war is built on several compelling grounds. First, terrorism produces grievous human security concerns. The increasing activities of terrorists are expanding global humanitarian concerns, which belie the ideals of major international organizations, particularly the United Nations (UN). These humanitarian concerns include the destruction of lives and productive activities upon which livelihood depends, refugee flows across borders and internally displaced persons, emergency health and survival challenges, among others. While the number of international agencies, organizations, and countries involved in humanitarian campaigns and programs has increased lately, emergency needs have regrettably continued to dwarf emergency provisions.

The Nigerian Boko Haram group is notable for its brutal and barbarous crimes against civilian populations such as children and women. When carrying out their heinous attacks, these terrorists often fail to make distinctions between combatants and non-combatants/civilians. The group fully exploits “the

¹⁸ Kelley, “Harnessing the Positive Potential.”

propaganda value of violence. Its murder methods are grisly, featuring throat-slitting and beheadings, which it sometimes captures on video for propaganda purposes.”¹⁹ More so, the activities of the sect also extend to foreign personnel as several foreigners or expatriates have been abducted. The interests and symbols of representation of other countries in Nigeria are also endangered. For instance, the interests of notable Western countries have consistently been threatened by the activities of this deadly sect. The need to stem the tide of these concerns makes international response/assistance a necessity. In this context, the international response does not only benefit Nigeria security-wise, but it also ensures that the interests and symbols of representation of other nations in Nigeria are well protected.

Furthermore, we are in the age of “global interdependence.” The 21st century is a century of global interdependence and solidarity. The framework of “interdependence” promotes the conscious interchange of ideas, intelligence, or technical skills, as well as goods and services between nations in the international system. Contemporary international relations and foreign policy pursuits of nations are built on this practice.²⁰ Global interdependence will enable states to converge at different levels to complement one another and leverage on the diverse resources

¹⁹ John Campbell, *US policy to counter Nigeria's Boko Haram. Council Special Report*, No. 70, November. New York: Council on Foreign Relations, (2014), 10.

²⁰ Johnson A. Akinbade. *Dictionary of Nigerian government and politics*. Lagos, Nigeria: Macak Books Ltd, (2004): 90.

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available in the international system. In other words, the linkages in the international system, such as military cooperation, intelligence, knowledge sharing, and economic cooperation, among others, are all products of the current regime of global interdependence.²¹ In the spirit of global interdependence, militarily and technologically advanced countries are under obligation to assist other nations – particularly weak nations – going through internal convulsions.

In line with the above reality in international relations and in the context of the war against terror, cooperation between nations includes the sale of lethal weapons to confront the insurgents, donation of military equipment, intelligence sharing, training of combatants involved in the fight against terror, contribution of troops, and humanitarian provisions for emergency needs, among others. Nigeria's international partners in the war against insurgency have provided support covering the above categories of intervention. Supporting the foregoing narrative is the fact that terrorism is a problem that no country can address unassisted. That is, no nation can single-handedly win the war against terrorism without the support of other members of the international system. The changing nature of the terror threat, characterized by the proliferation of groups, shifting alliances,

²¹ Roseline Oshewolo and Segun Oshewolo. "Debt Crisis, Structural Reforms and Debt Relief," in *Nigerian Politics*, eds. Rotimi Ajayi and Joseph Yinka Fashagba. Springer: Cham, (2021).

and improvement in terror capabilities, demonstrates that no country can single-handedly deal with the problem.²²

Again, terrorism has become a transnational phenomenon. Transnational terrorism normally transcends national boundaries through the identities of the insurgents/terrorists, the victims and/or locations of attacks, and the architecture of counterinsurgency.²³ As explained by Shukla,²⁴ transnational terrorism has affected international relations in two significant ways. First, it has blurred or made unclear the differentiation between the state and the individual. Second, it has terminated the distinction between external security and internal security. As a transnational phenomenon, “the operation of the Boko Haram has moved from the sphere of domestic or internal politics to international domain.”²⁵ Nigeria’s security forces have maintained that Boko Haram has an affiliation with Al-Qaeda and ISIS.²⁶ Boko Haram’s links with other transnational terrorist groups have increased its strength and capability and the number

²² Uyo Salifu. “Terrorism: How Prepared is Africa?” *Africa Policy Review*, August 18, (2016).

<http://africapolicyreview.com/analysis/terrorism-prepared-africa/>.

²³ Walter Enders and Todd Sandler. “Trans-Nationalism in the Post-Cold War Era,” *International Studies Quarterly*, 43, no. 1 (1999).

²⁴ Shashi Shukla. “Emerging New Trends of Terrorism: Challenges before the United Nations,” *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 67, no. 1 (2006): 168.

²⁵ Bangbose J. Adele. “The Boko Haram Crisis and Nigeria’s External Relations,” *British Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, 11, no. II (2013): 127.

²⁶ Will Ross. “Nigeria’s Boko Haram Crisis Reaches Deadliest Phase.” *BBC News*, June 12, (2014). <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-27823386>.

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of devastating attacks. As a result of these ties, terrorist organizations across international boundaries are likely to share funds, training, explosive materials, and a common aspiration to expand their focus.²⁷ The quest for expansion on the part of terrorist groups, no doubt, constitutes a threat to international peace and security and therefore necessitates an international response.

Finally, given its transnational attribute, terrorism in a country implies that the neighboring or adjoining states are not immune from its debilitating and destructive effects. Plumper and Neumayer²⁸ thus argue that “countries that are more likely to become the target of terrorist attacks” need to invest in counterinsurgency. Boko Haram is operating in countries adjoining North-eastern Nigeria. In 2014, the group doubled its attacks and expanded into Chad and Cameroon.²⁹ The fluidity of the sect in the region is explained by the porosity of the borders of these countries, the significance of their history, and their ethnic ties with the Adamawa people in Cameroon or the Kanem-Borno in Niger. The Boko Haram crisis has given birth to a multilateral framework for addressing it. Within this framework, adjoining

²⁷ Lynn. L. Taylor. “Boko Haram Terrorism: Reaching across International Boundaries to Aid Nigeria in the Humanitarian Crisis,” *ILSA Journal of International and Comparative Law*, 21, no. 1 (2014): 5.

²⁸ Thomas Plumper and Eric Neumayer. “Terrorism and Counterterrorism: An Integrated Approach and Future Research Agenda,” *International Interactions*, 40, iss. 4 (2014): 579.

²⁹ Buchanan, “ISIS Overtaken by Boko Haram.”

states such as Chad, Niger, and Cameroon have provided support in the fight against jihadist terrorism in Nigeria.

V. Foreign Support and Assistance to the Nigerian State under President Goodluck Jonathan

The scourge of Boko Haram “has captured the attention of policymakers in Nigeria and around the world with its potent blend of religious fanaticism, social media savvy and cold-blooded violence.”³⁰ Although President Goodluck Jonathan acknowledged that Boko Haram was a major challenge in the global war on terror and one that demanded a total military response, the Nigerian counterinsurgency under his watch was “undermined by accusations of incompetence.”³¹ His administration recognized the fact that Nigeria’s fight against terrorism required international involvement. In 2012, Nigeria’s Minister of Defense, Bello Haliru Mohammed, stated that Nigeria had signed military agreements with 17 countries to assist the government’s campaign against terrorism. The thinking is that foreign assistance could allow Nigeria to benefit from the lessons learned abroad.³² The countries that demonstrated the willingness to assist the government of President Jonathan were those that

³⁰ Campbell, *US Policy*, 10.

³¹ Campbell, *US policy*, 10

³² Heather Murdock. “Nigeria gets Foreign Aids to Fight Boko Haram.” *Voice of America*, May 30, (2012).
http://www.voanews.com/a/nigeria_receives_foreign_aid_fight_boko_haram/145279.html.

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possessed the required experience and expertise in dealing with such crimes (see Table 1 below).³³

Table 1: Foreign Assistance in the Fight against Boko Haram

Provides	Military cum Intelligence	Sanctions	Humanitarian Support
United Kingdom	Military training & advice on Counterinsurgency – almost 1000 Nigerian officers benefited in 2015: £5 million for regional Military efforts against Boko Haram	Supported UN sanction against BH in 2014	Food, water, emergency health-care for millions of victims; safe schools initiative for over 90,000 displaced children; provision of learning materials and teachers’ training on psychosocial support

³³ “Foreign Assistance against Terrorism good for Nigeria – ACF.” *Newspot Nigeria*, May 10, (2014).
<http://www.newspotng.com/foreign-assistance-on-fight-against-terrorism-good-for-nigeria-acf/>.

United States	<p>Capacity building on counter-Insurgency that protects civilian populations and respects human rights; deployment of military personnel, law enforcement advisors and investigators as experts in hostage negotiations, civilian security and intelligence. The US donated 24 armored vehicles to the Nigerian military in 2016 to aid the fight against Boko Haram</p>	<p>State Department designated Boko Haram top commanders as terrorists in 2012; \$7 million offered for information leading to the capture of Abubakar Shekau. The US worked closely with Nigeria to pursue terrorist designation for Boko Haram at the UNSC</p>	<p>Trauma counselling to survivors and their families through USAID-sponsored social workers and healthcare providers</p>
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France	<p>France hosted a Regional Summit against terrorism in 2014; military cooperation and intelligence sharing; in 2015, French planes carried out reconnaissance missions on the Nigerian border.</p>	Supported	
Israel	<p>Training and knowledge sharing: Israel trained 6,000 police officers in different counterterrorism roles</p>	Supported	
Germany	The country	Supported	The country

	donated military equipment and the sum of €3 million to fight Boko Haram	the EU sanction against Boko Haram	provided €47.6 million to resettle Boko Haram victims.
Russia	Sale of modern military equipment to Nigeria to fight BH; Nigerian security personnel from the army, police, DSS received training from Russia as special forces to combat Boko Haram		In 2015, an IL-76 cargo plane delivered humanitarian aid shipments to Cameroon to ease the situation of Boko Haram induced refugee flow into the country
Canada	Training and knowledge sharing on Counterterrorism measures involving military		Canada provided \$8 million humanitarian funds for the Northeast through UNHCR,

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	and para-military forces	UNICEF, among other agencies in charge of refugees and IDPs.
United Nations	Terrorist designation for Boko Haram by the UNSC that essentially proscribed arms sale to the organization, among other sanctions	\$13 million humanitarian fund for the Northeast from the central emergency fund
European Union	Abubakar Shekau placed under restrictive measures	€50 million humanitarian fund for the resettlement of Boko Haram victims

Source: Compiled by the authors.

The United States (US) played an important role in designating Boko Haram as a terror group. In close concert with Nigeria, the US successfully convinced the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to designate Boko Haram as a terrorist organization. This came into effect on May 22, 2014. This designation proscribed arms sales to the group, supported assets freeze, restricted the movement of the members of the organization, and encouraged regional cooperation in the fight against the group. In its own unilateral effort, the US, in June 2013, added the leader of Boko Haram, Abubakar Shekau, to the country's Rewards for Justice Program by offering up to \$7 million for vital information leading to his arrest.³⁴ The US also came up with the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership with Nigeria as a strategic partner. This was part of the US efforts to raise and strengthen the security sector's capacity in the fight against violent extremism.³⁵ More so, Special Forces from the United Kingdom (UK) joined the Nigerian Department of State Services (DSS) "in the hostage rescue operation against the Ansaru in Sokoto in March 2002."³⁶ Canada funded a few trainings for Nigeria's military and Para-military forces on

³⁴ The White House Office of the Press Secretary. "Fact Sheet: US Efforts to Assist the Nigerian Government in its Fight against Boko Haram." Office of the Press Secretary, the White House, October 14, (2014). <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2014/10/14/fact-sheet-us-efforts-assist-nigerian-government-its-fight-against-boko->

³⁵ The White House, "Fact Sheet."

³⁶ Samuel Oyewole, "Boko Haram: Insurgency and the War against Terrorism in the Lake Chad Region," *Strategic Analysis*, 39, no. 4 (2015): 430.

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different counterterrorism measures. The country also sponsored trainings involving the Nigerian police focusing on how to investigate and arrest suspected terrorists. The Canadian intervention also involved the provision of humanitarian funds for Boko Haram victims.³⁷

French intervention came a little late and the country's involvement was somewhat indirect. It was not until late 2014 and 2015 that France began to show signs of military involvement in Nigeria's counterinsurgency efforts. On February 4, 2015, French planes embarked on reconnaissance missions on the Nigerian border on behalf of Chad, Niger, and Cameroon. The country also ruled out any direct military engagements or over-flights of Nigerian territory.³⁸ Furthermore, as explained by the then-French Ambassador to Nigeria, Denys Gauer, President Goodluck Jonathan reached out to French President Francois Hollande in order to win the full cooperation and support of the Nigerian francophone neighbors in the fight against Boko Haram. It was this rapprochement between Nigeria and France that led to the first regional security meeting in Paris, France, in May 2014. The Nigerian President and the Presidents of neighboring

³⁷ "Canada's Contributions to Fight against B'Haram, Others – Envoy." *This Day Newspaper*, August 8, (2016).
<https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2016/08/08/canadas-contributions-to-fight-against-bharam-others-envoy/>.

³⁸ Christopher Griffin, *Operation Barkhane and Boko Haram: French Counterterrorism and Military Cooperation in the Sahel*. Abu Dhabi, UAE: Trends Research and Advocacy, (2015).

countries – Niger, Chad, Cameroon, and Benin – were in attendance. It was after this Summit that the Multinational Joint Task Force (MJTF) against Boko Haram was established (Premium Times Newspaper, September 15, 2015). Nigeria and France also signed an agreement on closer military cooperation, including intelligence sharing, in 2016.³⁹ French detachments “were also joined by American, British, Canadian, and Israeli security forces to enhance the capacity of Chad, Cameroon, and Niger in combating Boko Haram.”⁴⁰

As a follow-up to the Paris Summit, a strong multinational task force of 8,500 was drawn up to confront the Boko Haram terrorists.⁴¹ During this period, “Chad contributed the most soldiers to the international force.”⁴² As designed, the multinational task force would have access to intelligence generated by French and US drones and fighter planes, though communications, transport, and logistics hardware were in short supply.⁴³ A major blight on French intervention was the indirect nature of its involvement. Rather than aid Nigeria directly, France preferred to intervene through the francophone Nigerian neighbors. France’s intelligence sharing and supply of military hardware also benefitted the Nigerian French-speaking neighbors

³⁹ *Vanguard Newspaper*, “With assistance.”

⁴⁰ Samuel Oyewole, “Boko Haram and the Challenges of Nigeria’s War on Terror,” *Defense and Security Analysis*, 29, no. 3 (2013): 430.

⁴¹ *Vanguard Newspaper*, “With assistance.”

⁴² Griffin, *Operation Barkhane*, 5.

⁴³ *Vanguard Newspaper*, “With assistance.”

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more.⁴⁴ This explains why the government of President Muhammadu Buhari – President Jonathan’s successor – called for a more spirited response from France against the Boko Haram scourge after its inauguration in 2015.

As part of the 2012-2016 Memorandum of Understanding between Germany and Nigeria, the government of the former donated military equipment and the sum of €3 million in 2016 to support the war against insurgency in Nigeria. The military equipment donated included Vallon Metal Detector, Ground Surveillance Radar System, Counter Improvised Explosive Device, and Explosive Ordinance Disposal Equipment. However, the agreement between the two countries did not extend to the sale of sophisticated military weapons.⁴⁵ In order to sustain the tempo of counterinsurgency in Northeast Nigeria and improve the combat effectiveness of the armed forces, the successor government of President Muhammad Buhari has procured modern military equipment from the federation of Russia. Some of this military equipment include Mine-Resistance Ambush Patrol Vehicles, Patrol Boats for the outpost at Lake Chad Basin, and Helicopters for the Nigeria air force. Twenty unmanned aerial

⁴⁴ Abdur Rahman Alfa Shaban. “France Gives Cameroon Equipment Worth \$700,000 to Combat Boko Haram.” *Africa News*, November 30, (2016). <http://www.africanews.com/2016/11/30/france-gives-cameroon-700000-worth-equipments-to-combat-boko-haram/>.

⁴⁵ Olaleye Aluko. “Insurgency: Germany Donates €3m, Equipment to Nigeria,” *The Punch (Online)*, December 19, (2016). <http://punchng.com/insurgency-germany-donates-e3m-equipment-nigeria/>.

vehicles have also been procured from the United Arab Emirates.⁴⁶ China has also emerged as a major country supplying arms to Nigeria. Like the United Nations, the European Union (EU) also placed sanctions on Boko Haram leaders. Abubakar Shekau was placed under restrictive measures under Council Regulation (EC) No 881/2002 on July 5, 2014.

VI. Nigeria's Dependence on Foreign Support and the Emerging Issues

Nigeria's dependence on foreign military assistance in the war against terror under President Goodluck Jonathan gave birth to several disturbing issues. The modest effort here is to explicate these issues and what they portend for Nigeria's security architecture. First, the failure of the Nigerian military to subdue the challenge posed by Boko Haram and the over-reliance on foreign military assistance pointed to the depletion of Nigerian military resources over time.⁴⁷ In prosecuting the war, the Nigerian military establishment demonstrated poor intelligence-gathering capability. This military intelligence gap necessitated our reliance on foreign intelligence. Even the negotiation for the release of the first (21) and second (82)

⁴⁶ Isiaka Wakili. "Nigeria Buys Helicopters, Vehicles from Russia, UAE to Fight Boko Haram," *Daily Trust (Online)*, March 1, (2017). <https://www.dailytrust.com.ng/news/general/nigeria-buys-helicopters-vehicles-from-russia-uae-to-fight-boko-haram/187451.html>.

⁴⁷ Hassan Ajisafe Saliu and Segun Oshewolo. "Nigeria in African Affairs: Hegemonic and Altruistic Considerations," *The Round Table*, 107, no. 3 (2018).

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batches of abducted Chibok girls was championed by the government of Switzerland and ICRC. Again, the deployment of some of the externally sourced military equipment produced some level of fatality among the Nigerian combatants or forces. This situation pointed to the difficulty in handling some of the military hardware and raised doubts about the training capability of officers involved in Nigeria's anti-terror war. For instance, there were crashes of fighter jets and some human casualties as a result. This situation is very disheartening because the Nigerian military forces that failed in the war on domestic terror had previously been described internationally as a bastion of hope for the African continent. This was due to the country's successes in peacekeeping operations under the auspices of the United Nations, the African Union, and the Economic Community of West African States.⁴⁸

The Nigerian military became grossly ill-equipped as a result of corruption and politicization.⁴⁹ Although Nigeria passed the anti-terrorism legislation to effectively coordinate the

⁴⁸ Segun Oshewolo. "Nigeria's Peace Interventions in Sao Tome and Principe and the Republic of Togo under President Olusegun Obasanjo," *African Identities*, 16, no. 4 (2018).; Segun Oshewolo. "Bringing Back the Issues: Nigeria's Afrocentric Policy under President Olusegun Obasanjo," *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics*, 57, no. 3 (2019).; Segun Oshewolo. "Unpacking Nigeria's Peace Efforts during the Second Cycle of the Liberian Conflict," *Austral: Brazilian Journal of Strategy and International Relations*, 8, no. 15 (2019).

⁴⁹ Surulola James Eke. "Why this Charity begins Abroad: Comparing Nigeria's Peacekeeping Undertakings and Domestic Counter-Insurgency Operations," *The Round Table*, 104, no. 3 (2015).

government's counter-insurgency programs, corruption and mismanagement both in government and among the security forces hampered the government's effective response.⁵⁰ As a result, Nigerian troops lacked adequate resources – financial, logistics, and material – to defend against the activities of the sect.⁵¹ There were reported cases of protests against misappropriation and failure to provide modern military equipment to officers fighting the insurgents. Despite huge defense budgets every year, Boko Haram regularly overpowered the security forces. Therefore, the argument in many circles is that the depletion of Nigerian military resources in the face of destructive insurgency required that the counter-insurgency be internationalized.⁵²

Second, Nigeria's over-reliance on foreign military assistance, particularly the procurement of modern, sophisticated weapons to combat Boko Haram, subjected the country to heartbreaks and disappointments from its traditional allies. As documented, the cold disposition of the West, particularly the US, towards the sale of modern military equipment frustrated Nigeria's Anti-Boko Haram war.⁵³ While Nigeria had enjoyed

⁵⁰ Taylor, "Boko Haram Terrorism," 5.

⁵¹ Taylor, "Boko Haram Terrorism."

⁵² Oyewole, "Boko Haram and the Challenges."

⁵³ Emma Ujah. "How America, West Frustrated Jonathan's Anti-Boko Haram War." *Vanguard Newspaper (Online)*, September 6, (2015).

<http://www.vanguardngr.com/2015/09/how-america-west-frustrated-jonathans-anti-boko-haram-war/>.

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tremendous support from its traditional allies, such as the US and the UK, the unwillingness on the part of these countries to sell modern military equipment to Nigeria to aid the war against terror produced fatal consequences, particularly under President Jonathan. While the Boko Haram elements were recording massive military advances by gaining control over villages and towns in the Northeast and overrunning military barracks and posts, the country could not procure sophisticated military weapons to subdue the combat power of the insurgents.⁵⁴ Under the leadership of President Jonathan, Nigeria wrote several letters to the US and other Western Nations for the purpose of procuring state-of-the-art weapons to deal decisively with the insurgents. These requests were, however, spurned. The atrocious thing was that Nigeria wanted to buy and was not requesting that the military equipment be offered as gifts.⁵⁵

The frustration in procuring the needed arms led the Nigerian Ambassador to the US, late Professor Adebowale Adefuye, to declare openly when he addressed the American Council on Foreign Relations that the US had failed to give Nigeria the needed support in the area of acquiring lethal military equipment.⁵⁶ The US government turned down President

⁵⁴ Ben Agande. "Boko Haram: Federal Government Turns to Russia, China as USA, UK Fail Nigeria." *Vanguard Newspaper* (Online), September 20, (2014). <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2014/09/boko-haram-fg-turns-russia-china-usa-uk-fail-nigeria/>.

⁵⁵ Ujah, "How America."

⁵⁶ Ujah, "How America."

Jonathan's request for the sale of US-made Cobra fighter helicopters to Nigeria. Again, Nigeria approached Israel for the purchase of the helicopters, but the deal failed. The transaction required the clearance of the US, which the country declined to approve.⁵⁷ In protest, "Nigeria abrogated the counterterrorism training of one of its battalions by the US and reviewed other foreign assistance from the latter."⁵⁸ Apart from Israel, the attempts by foreign contractors engaged by the country's highest security authorities to acquire weapons from South Africa were stopped, and over \$24 million of Nigeria's foreign exchange was seized by South African authorities in two separate instances, though the funds were later released.⁵⁹ These disappointments left Nigeria with no other option but to turn to Russia and China for the procurement of the much-needed weapons.⁶⁰

Third, human rights groups accused Nigeria's army of killing hundreds of civilians in crackdowns following Boko Haram attacks.⁶¹ The alleged failure of the Nigerian armed forces to pay close attention to obvious humanitarian concerns as they relate to the civilians and the treatment of suspected Boko Haram elements hampered foreign military assistance in the war against

⁵⁷ Laolu Akande. "U.S Invests \$35 million in Fight against Boko-Haram." *Sahara Reporters (Online)*, May 1, (2015). <http://saharareporters.com/2015/05/01/us-invests-35-million-fight-against-boko-haram>.

⁵⁸ Oyewole, "Boko Haram and the Challenges," 431.

⁵⁹ Ujah, "How America."

⁶⁰ Agande, "Boko Haram."

⁶¹ Ross, "Nigeria's Boko Haram Crisis."

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insurgency. The US cited human rights violations by the Nigerian troops in the Northeast as the sore thumb in the US arms dealing with Nigeria.⁶² The US is bound by certain legal constraints, principally the pro-human rights Leahy law.⁶³ Given that terrorism is the “use of violence by non-state actors against non-combatants for the purpose of causing fear,”⁶⁴ Boko Haram activities, therefore, violated the fundamental rights of the victims of attacks (such as rights to life, liberty, and education, freedom from torture and inhumane treatment, freedom from slavery and servitude, freedom of worship and peaceful assembly, among others). In response to the heinous nature of terrorism, governments could think they have moral responsibilities to act in self-defense, in the protection of the common good and in the protection of *tranquilitas ordinis*, the safety and civil peace which allows citizens to go about their lives.⁶⁵ Responsible governments must endeavor to strike a delicate balance between counterterrorism and human rights.

⁶² Austin Ajayi. “Why Nigerian Military has Difficulty Getting Arms from America – US Government,” *Premium Times (Online)*, October 9, (2014). <http://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/169264-why-nigerian-military-has-difficulty-getting-arms-from-america-u-s-govt.html>.

⁶³ May Agbamuche-Mbu. “Nigeria: War on Terror – is US Aid Limited by the Leahy Law?” *This Day Newspaper (Online)*, September 29, (2015). <http://allafrica.com/stories/201509291066.html>.

⁶⁴ Maryann C. Love. “Globalisation, Ethics, and the War on Terrorism,” *Notre Dame Journal of Law, Ethics and Public Policy*, 16 (2002): 66.

⁶⁵ Love, “Globalisation,” 69-70.

However, the military response from the Nigerian state generated international concerns about human rights abuses. Many countries, therefore, denied assistance to Nigerian security forces on account of “harsh counter-terrorism policies and the military’s severe treatment of Boko Haram prisoners.”⁶⁶ Both President Obama of the US and his Secretary of State, John Kerry, raised the issue of human rights abuses in 2013, but the government of President Jonathan consistently debunked those allegations.⁶⁷ The majority of Nigeria’s counterterrorism efforts were overwhelmingly military in nature against the known regime of criminal justice and other soft measures.⁶⁸ As explained by Salifu,

“These militaristic responses have led to human rights violations, terrorist profiling, indiscriminate use of force, mass arrests and prolonged detention. This approach is also problematic because it plays into the hands of terrorists by providing fodder for them to use when discrediting governments with their extremist narratives. Thus, it further radicalizes parts of the population who then become recruited into terrorist groups. It is important to note here that the military’s role need not be

⁶⁶ Taylor, “Boko Haram Terrorism,” 5.

⁶⁷ Campbell, *US Policy*.

⁶⁸ Oyewole, “Boko Haram”

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*removed altogether, but must be part of a criminal justice approach, led by intelligence and in line with human rights provisions.*⁶⁹

VII. Concluding Reflections

In the context of global interdependence, foreign military and humanitarian assistance were built into Nigeria's counterterrorism architecture under the government of President Goodluck Jonathan. To address the dangers posed by the activities of Boko Haram, Nigeria benefitted tremendously from the military assistance offered by its international partners. These benefits included the sale of lethal weapons, the voluntary donation of military equipment, intelligence sharing, training of combatants, the contribution of troops, and humanitarian provisions for emergency needs. Three fundamental issues emerged from Nigeria's dependence on foreign military support to defeat Boko Haram. First, it clearly reflected the depletion of Nigeria's military resources over time. Second, Nigeria suffered heartaches from its traditional allies in its attempt to procure modern military equipment, which somewhat affected the campaign against terror adversely. Third, Nigeria's over-reliance on coercive measures allegedly led to human rights abuses. This made it difficult for Nigeria to obtain much-needed foreign assistance in certain circumstances. While cooperation with other

⁶⁹ Salifu, "Terrorism."

states is inevitable in this age of global interdependence, many are disappointed that the military setup of Nigeria – arguably the most important country in Africa – failed to live up to expectations in the fight against terror.

Post-Jonathan Nigeria will need to redesign its internal military architecture, improve its military technology and intelligence-gathering techniques through training and retraining, and consciously combat the scourge of corruption that is largely responsible for the depletion of the country's military resources over the years. It is also imperative to utilize the administration of criminal justice and other soft counterinsurgency measures side by side with coercive military instruments. Unfortunately, Nigeria's security environment in the post-Jonathan era has changed remarkably. The number of terror incidents and fatalities directly linked to Boko Haram has reduced significantly. While some gains have been made, new sources of security threats have emerged. These include armed banditry, farmers' and herders' conflict, and kidnapping for ransom. Thus, under the post-Jonathan security environment, the geography of conflicts has become broader, the fatalities have increased considerably, and the security forces have become more overwhelmed than ever.

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