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TRANS-BORDER GOVERNANCE AND *BOKO HARAM* INSURGENCY IN NORTH-EAST NIGERIA, 2009-2015

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Abstract

Border management in Nigeria is characterized by lack of clear-cut border management policy and proliferation of law enforcement agencies with conflicting functions. These breed chaos and intra-systemic conflicts which undermine effective border management. Against this backdrop, this study interrogates the link between trans-border governance and Boko Haram insurgency, with a focus on Nigeria's North-East borders between 2009 and 2015. Our analysis was anchored on the Marxian theory of post-colonial state. Documentary method based on logical deduction was utilized to generate the relevant secondary data. Anchored on basic propositions from the theory of post-colonial state, the study contends that the ineffective coordination of trans-border security networks in Nigeria's North-East borders led to the inability to contain the activities of Boko Haram in Nigeria. The study further argues that the vast nature of Nigeria's North-East borders, especially with Cameroun, is characterized by the existence of numerous unofficial routes which not only present serious challenge for border security agencies, but also provide opportunities for criminal elements like members of Boko Haram to operate. Thus, despite the multiplicity of security agencies saddled with the task of border management, the porous nature of Nigeria's North-East borders provides the interstices exploited by members of Boko Haram to engage in criminal activities. Essentially, the study sees poor inter-agency co-ordination, inadequate boundary delineation, absence of effective border control policy to impede the ability of border security agencies to checkmate trans-border movement of Boko Haram members, mercenaries and weapons. On account of this, the capacity of the Nigerian state to mitigate the rising incidence of insurgency orchestrated by Boko Haram is undermined. On the basis of this, the study recommends the need to strengthen the capacity of border security agencies in early warning mechanisms and inter-agency coordination.

Introduction

Nigeria's location on the Gulf of Guinea (see fig 1) and its offshore oil deposits primarily define its regional geostrategic situation. The country shares her land boundary with Cameroon and Chad, Niger, and Benin in the east, north and west respectively. Nigeria's encirclement by relatively weak francophone states with residual defense and economic ties to their former colonial power has produced a sense of isolation and threat to local security milieu in Nigeria. More fundamentally, conflicts throughout Africa and occasional eruptions of radicalism, as evidenced in North African states of Tunisia, Egypt and Libya are inimical to Nigeria's interest. Safeguarding the territorial integrity of the Nigerian state, particularly the international borders with neighbouring African states, has therefore remained the central plank of her national security policy. The imperative of safeguarding Nigeria's international borders via adequate border governance is underscored by the fact that international borders confer on the adjoining states certain economic, social and security advantages, when properly manned and regulated. When they are porous, however, they facilitate trans-national criminal activities such as smuggling, human trafficking and terrorism.

In line with the foregoing, Ifesinachi (2015) argued persuasively that the importance of effective border governance for both economic development and national security of any state is enormous. He specifically noted that:

> ...coordination, surveillance, reconnaissance, regulation and control of country's land, air and maritime borders by relevant government agencies and international cooperation frameworks. Border management entails the enhancement of citizens' welfare, livelihood, national security, peaceful coexistence and trans-border cooperation of people inhabiting border areas, promotion of cordial and harmonious international cooperation and regional integration (Ifesinachi, 2015:22).

Furthermore, international borders emerge due to: agreement by the countries on both sides; imposition by a particular country on one side; imposition by third parties, e.g. an international treaty; inheritance from a former state, colonial power or aristocratic territory; inheritance from a former internal border, such as within the former Soviet Union, among others

(Pavanello, 2010). Virtually all international borders in Africa are bequests of colonialism. To illustrate, contemporary borderlines of post-colonial African states were drawn at the Otto Von Bismark-led Berlin Conference of 1884/85. The Conference was guided by three cardinal doctrines – the hinterland doctrine, effective possession doctrine and effective occupation doctrine (Michalopoulos & Papaioannou, 2011). In line with this, Onuoha (2013) avers that the original objective of the colonial masters in the division of Africa was to create sphere of influence driven by political and economic motives. As a result, post-colonial African states are mere mosaics made up of incompatible nationalities and ethnic groups only defined in terms of latitudes, longitudes, geometric circles and straight lines brought about by colonial interests.

In view of the fact that Nigeria's borders were defined and partitioned by the colonial masters, the country has witnessed various forms of border conflicts with its neighbours. Nigeria is bounded on the West by the Republic of Benin (773 kilometres), on the North by the Republic of Niger (1,497 kilometres) and on the East by the Federal Republic of Cameroun (1,690 kilometres). On the North-East border is Lake Chad (87 kilometres) while also extends into the Republic of Niger and Chad and touches the Northernmost part of the Republic of Cameroun. In terms of topography, these borders are sandy and mountainous in the North, and swampy in Delta areas. In terms of demography, the border areas are characterized by the existence of contiguous ethnic groups with cultural similarities along the borders which creates room for foreign criminal elements to melt into such groups taking advantages of ethnic, linguistic and religious affinity to carryout crimes and banditry across Nigeria's borders.

In response to nefarious activities of criminal elements across the borders, there has been proliferation of border management agencies in Nigeria to contain the transborder crime. However, effective governance of these borders has remained a challenge to the country as various criminal groups have continued to exploit the porous borders to perpetrate all forms of crimes and banditry. In recent times, members of *Boko Haram* have taken advantage of the character of Nigeria's border, particularly in the northeast to coordinate and heighten its activities. The growing sophistication of the attacks suggests assistance from international networks, especially *al-Shabaab* and *al-Qaeda* in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).

Despite the attempt by the Nigerian government to decimate the sect, the group has continued to increase its violence in the country and has continued to move its fighters, mercenaries and weapons across Nigeria's borders. Its violent activities as evidenced by number of attacks and number of casualties have continued to escalate. For instance, between 2009 and 2012,

over 3,500 Nigerians were killed by the group through its violent activities. This figure significantly increased to over 8,000 in the period 2013 to 2014 (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2014; START, 2015). Although renewed effort by Nigerian army since the end of 2015 appears to have reduced the activities of the sect while some towns hitherto under control by the sect has been reclaimed, the sect has continued to orchestrate pockets of attacks in the northeast region of Nigeria. This study contributes by interrogating the link between border governance and the incidence of *Boko Haram* insurgency in Nigeria, with specific focus on Nigeria's North East borders between 2009 and 2015.

Theoretical Perspective

To facilitate an in-depth explication and understanding of the link between porous borders and the incidence of *Boko Haram* insurgency in Nigeria, we anchored our analysis on the assumptions derived from the theory of post-colonial state. Initially developed by Hamza Alavi (1972), other major proponents of the theory include Ekekwe (1985); Ake (1985; 1989; 2003); Mbembe (2001). The theory of post-colonial state emerged mainly from political and ideological resistance and intellectual critique of post-nineteenth century imperialism and colonialism, including the legacies of Western exploits in the global South and the contemporary power relations between the global South and the global North (Omeje, 2015). The theory is shaped by the works of leftist historical materialism (notably Marxist political economy and dependency theories of History and Political Science) such as Fanon (1965); Ake (1982); Rodney (1972), Ibeanu (1998) among others.

The proponents of the theory of post-colonial state articulated the historically entrenched and exploitative structures, institutions, networks and process that tend to reproduce and perpetuate imperialist interests in the various African states and economies and went further to propose ways of overcoming the constraints immanent on post-colonialism, redressing African underdevelopment and re-positioning the continent on the path to unfettered and robust development (Omeje, 2015).

In expressing the organic unity between pre-colonialism, colonialism and post-colonialism, Ekekwe (1985) observed that:

> The post-colonial state rests on the foundation of
> the colonial state which, in turn had incorporated
> some important elements of the pre-colonial
> rudimentary state structures. The colonial state was
> an instrument of imperialism. However, much as it
> was an imposition, it had a modicum of support and

acquiescence from some of the aristocratic and feudal elements who wielded economic and political authority in pre-colonial times. Gaining such support was imperative in order to minimize social dislocations (Ekekwe, 1985:56).

Omeje (2015) added that the post-colonial states "were in part conceived and constituted in the loins of pre-coloniality, mutated, incubated and produced in coloniality, and ultimately proliferated and aggravated through the incontinency of the post-coloniality". Drawing from the foregoing, the crises of the post-colonial state can be deduced from the organic unity between pre-colonialism, colonialism and post-colonialism expressed above. Such crises are the cross-cutting, embedded and enduring contradictions and conflicts in the postcolonial states which is related to colonial heritage (political and economic structures, practices, modes of accumulation, education and cultural patterns) as well as the nature and constraints of post-coloniality itself. Post-colonial theorists further attribute these crises of post-coloniality to the multifaceted legacies of colonialism, including the variegated, ambivalent and ambiguous experiences of decolonization and declaration of independence in the ex-colonial states (Omeje, 2015).

Explaining the transition from pre-colonialism to colonialism, and the implications of both epochs for the postcolonial state, the postcolonial theorists contend that in the absence of mutually-legitimated Westphalian-type states, the pre-colonial Africa was characterized by the propensity for rivalry and wars of aggression and domination of weak communities by more powerful ones (empires, principalities, chiefdoms etc). Some of these African institutions and characteristics survived the onslaught of colonialism, albeit with monumental metropolitan distortions and acculturation producing deleterious and disarticulating effects on the entire political, social, legal and economic structures. Thus, colonialism created enough crises to go round and reproduce itself in perpetuity as seen in the post-colonial state (Omeje, 2015).

Buttressing this point, Abubakar, (2015) contends that the emergence of the post-colonial state in Africa did not fundamentally alter the structures and hierarchies of ideological and political domination resulting from the insertion of the continent into the global economy through the complex and violent processes of the slave trade which was followed by the subjection of the people under colonial rule after the partition of boundaries, territories and redefinition of sovereignties. Thus, the rapid increase in violent insurgencies e not inherent diseases of the post-colonial state but the emerging

transformative phases of Africa's dual insertion and extraversion in the new global division of labour and subjection.

The Marxian theory of post-colonial state demonstrates that the post-colony being an organic composition of pre-colonialism, colonialism and post-colonialism remains a theatre of war resulting from its internal contradiction and external influence. The theory, thus, illuminates the postcolonial character of the Nigeria state and how this impinges on her capacity to contain *Boko Haram* insurgency. Specifically, the vast and poorly delineated Nigerian borders which were created by the colonial state remain porous owing to the inability of the government to effectively manage these borders. Consequently, members of *Boko Haram* leverage on the existence these porous borders to perpetrate terrorist activities. It is in this light that this study explains the linkage between poor border governance and the incidence of *Boko Haram* insurgency in north east Nigeria.

Borders of Post-Colonial African States as Products of European Partition

Boundaries of post-colonial African states are creation of imperial powers that cornered and partitioned Africa among themselves to suit their exploitative interests. The systematic exploration of West Africa by the Europeans beginning from the 1860s resulted in signing of various treaties which assigned spheres of influence in West Africa to the Europeans. Essentially, the treaties resulted in the partitioning of West Africa into protectorates, free-trade areas, and colonies. The Berlin Conference organized by Otto von Bismark from 1884 to 1885 laid down the following three principles for the division of Africa among the European powers:

- The first principle was the hinterland doctrine which specified that a power claiming the coast had also a right to its interior.
- The second principle was the 'effective possession doctrine' which required that Europeans had to base their claim on treaties with local tribal leaders.
- The third was the 'effective occupation doctrine' which required that European powers exert significant control of the territory they were claiming (Michalopoulos & Papaioannou, 2011).

Meanwhile, the overarching objective for dividing Africa was not to create states in accordance with the 1648 Westphalian conception and structure of states, but amongst other things to:

- create territorial spheres influence for European powers in Africa;

- facilitate seamless exploitation of natural and human resources in Africa;
- prevent conflict among the European powers operating in Africa (Michalopoulos & Papaioannou, 2011).

The British Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury aptly captured this arbitrary creation of borders by the Europeans when he stated that:

> We have been engaged in drawing lines upon maps where no white man's feet have ever trod; we have been giving away mountains and rivers and lakes to each other, only hindered by the small impediment that we never knew exactly where the mountains and rivers and lakes were (Lord Salisbury cited in Michalopoulos & Papaioannou, 2011).

This culminated in the emergence of arbitrary and poorly demarcated borders and the splitting of ethnic groups and families into different states in Africa. For example, in East Africa the Maasai are partitioned between Kenya and Tanzania, the Bararetta Somali clans split between Kenya and Somalia. In West Africa, the Anyi are split between Ghana and Ivory Coast; the Hausa between Nigeria and Niger. In Southern Africa, the Chewa are found in Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe; the Ababda are split between Egypt and Sudan (Michalopoulos & Papaioannou, 2011).

Porous Character of Nigeria's North-East Borders

The territorial borders of the area today known as Nigeria resulted from the partition by the Europeans and various other treaties, one of which is the Anglo-German Treaty of 1913 which delineated Nigeria's border with Cameroon. Nigeria's land border covers an area of 4,047 km with Benin Republic in the West, Niger Republic, Chad Republic in the North East and the Republic of Cameroon from the North East to the South-South. Nigeria's North East border is notorious for its porosity. As noted by Nigeria's Minister of Interior, Abba Moro, there are over 1,499 irregular and 84 regular officially identified entry routes into Nigeria. In Adamawa State, there are about 25 illegal routes into Nigeria from neighbouring countries. As Figure 1 indicates, the North East border has boundary with Cameroon (1.690 kilometres) in the east, Niger (1,497 kilometres) in the north, Benin (773 kilometres) in the west, and Chad (87 kilometres) in the northeast. The Coastline border from the South-South to the South West measures 853km. Of all these borders, Nigeria-

Cameroon borders are the longest, ill-defined and most complicated of all the borders (Omede, 2006).

Figure 1: Nigeria's Map Showing Northeast Border with Cameroon
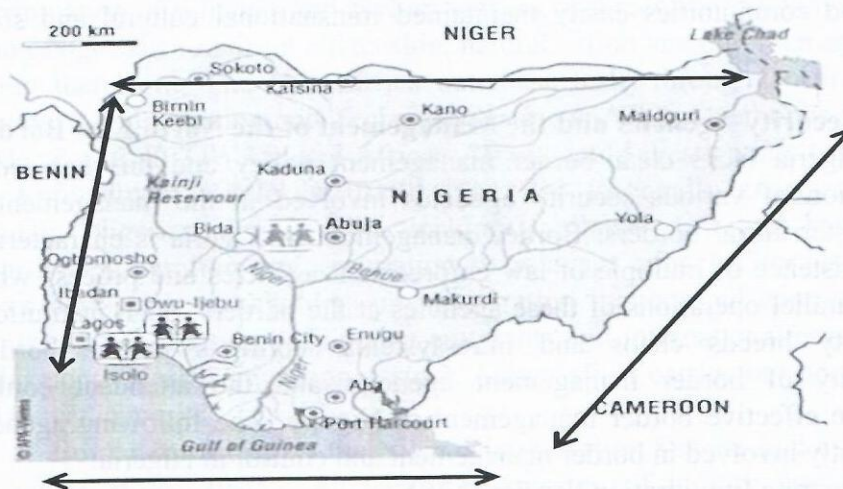
Source: Ifesinachi, K. (2015). Early warning system and conflict management in Nigeria. Paper presented at the Nigeria-Cameroun Trans-border Cooperation Workshop, Organized by the National Boundary Commission: the Presidency, 15th – 16th January, 2015 Uyo, Akwa-Ibom.

In terms of topography, the borders are sandy and mountainous in the North, and swampy in Delta areas. There is also the existence of contiguous ethnic groups with cultural similarities along the borders which creates room for foreign criminal elements to melt into such groups taking advantages of ethnic, linguistic and religious affinity to remain in Nigeria indefinitely. For instance, the Borno Kingdom originated from the Kanem in the present-day Chad Republic. Pre-colonial Nigerian leaders that formed the First and Second Kanuri Empires known as Kanem-Bornu shared heritages of both countries. Currently, the king of Mao, a capital of one of the prefactorates of Chad is married to the daughter of the Shehu of Borno and there exists a cordial relationship between the two palaces. The cultural and religious affinities of the neighbouring population often present problems of identification in Nigeria (Olalekan, 2009). This is coupled with Nigeria's location between the French West and French Central Africa, the Gulf of Guinea in the south, and Sahara desert in the north behind Niger which puts some migration pressures on the nation because its four neighbours, that is, Benin, Niger, Chad and

Cameroon are small and not economically buoyant like Nigeria. On the North-East border is Lake Chad which extends into the Republic of Niger and Chad and touches the Northern part of the Republic of Cameroun. In sum, the Nigerian borders, particularly in the North East, are porous and this has aided the physical movement of migrants. On account of this, people living in borderland communities easily maintained transnational cultural and social networks.

Border Security Agencies and the Management of the North East Borders

Nigeria lacks clear border management policy and this has led to proliferation of various security agencies involved in the management of Nigeria's territorial borders. Border management in Nigeria is characterized by the existence of multiple of law enforcement agencies and process which lead to parallel operations of these agencies at the borders. Such institutional multiplicity breeds chaos and intra-systemic conflicts at the borders. Multiplicity of border management agencies and the attendant conflict undermine effective border management in Nigeria. The following agencies are currently involved in border management and control in Nigeria:

- Nigerian Immigration Service (NIS)
- Nigerian Custom Service (NCS)
- Nigerian Police (Ministry of Police Affairs)
- National Drugs Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA)
- National Boundary Commission (NBC)
- State security Service (SSS)
- Port Health Service and Nigerian Agricultural Quarantine Service (NAQS)
- National Agency for Food, Drug Administration and Control
- The Nigerian Army (Ifesinachi, 2015:24)

The Nigeria Immigration Service was carved out of the Nigeria Police Force in 1958 and has been under the control and supervision of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. As a security organization, the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) is statutorily charged with the responsibility of controlling entry, exit and monitoring of the activities of non-Nigerians. Its objectives, functions and power are derived from the following legal instruments: Immigration Act CAP 11 Laws of the Federation 2004 (IMM Act 1963), The 1999 Constitution, Passport Miscellaneous Act No. 15 of 1985 etc. Its functions include: control of all persons entering or leaving Nigeria and monitoring non-Nigerians in the country, implementation of Nigeria's extant visa regime in respect of deserving foreigners, execution of Deportation and

Repatriation orders in respect of undesirable foreigners, manning of land, sea and air border posts, issuance and control of travel documents, implementation of various treaties (bilateral and multilateral) entered into by Nigeria with other countries. Other functions include anti-human trafficking activities, determination of refugees and asylum seekers, and recommendation in respect of non-Nigerians requiring citizenship, naturalization and enforcement of laws arising therefrom. The NIS carries out these tasks through 3 Directorates: Finance, Administration and Technical Service (FATS); Operations, Passport, Border Patrol, ECOWAS; and African Affairs, and Investigation, Inspectorate and Enforcement (Olalekan, 2009). The NIS is equally expected to help maintain Nigerian demography, making available data and statistics of Nigerian immigration and emigration to relevant agencies for use. It also liaises with other stakeholders on immigration matters and cooperates with countries of destination of Nigerian emigrants and international organizations to develop Nigerian migration system. Above all, it carries out border patrol and surveillance.

Border patrolling by the Nigeria Immigration Service had its origin in the report of the Justice Aniagolu Commission of inquiry into the Kano disturbances in the early 80's otherwise known as Maitatsine crisis. In line with the Commission's terms of reference, it was discovered that the sect leader Muhammadu Marwa was a Cameroonian who settled in Kano with so many of his followers (Shuaibu, nd). Since then, border patrol function in NIS has grown into a full-fledged Directorate comprising:

- Land Border Division;
- Air Border Division; and
- Marine Border Division.

The Air Border Division performs the following functions:

- Coordinate activities of Air Border patrol formations nationwide;
- Research into Air Border patrol technique;
- Attending to matters of airspace and safety in aeronautic space administration; and
- Formulation and coordination of air patrol policies.

The Marine Border Division performs the following functions:

- Overseeing activities of the various marine units patrolling Nigeria's coastal frontiers, creeks, rivers and the lake to checkmate irregular Immigrants; and
- Attending to matters of National territorial waterways navigation administration (Shuaibu, nd).

Based on the above functions and structure of the NIS, it is expected to collaborate with other security agencies for effective border management. For example, the Ministry of Labour is to work with NIS on expatriate quota, return and readmission matters, and also in the draft of labour migration policies. The NIS is expected to refer arrested smugglers to the Customs, it is also expected to refer deportees with criminal records to the SSS who also should forward such case to the police for further investigation. The police officers are expected to assist the NIS in the arrest, detention and prosecution of immigration-related offences. The SSS is to assist as detectives in the surveillance and reporting to the NIS and Police, activities that violates the integrity of the country's territorial borders.

Unfortunately, there are obvious deficiencies in the area of coordination and information sharing between these agencies. More fundamentally, there is an allegation that constant disagreements among security agencies are caused by the Police. This might be because most of these agencies are offshoots of the Police at one time or the other. This often is the source of disagreements or overlapping of oversight functions and uncooperative attitudes to intelligence and information sharing. There is also misplacement of the statutory functions by the various agencies which is a source of mutual disagreement. For instance, Part II, section 4 (111) of the Immigration Act empowers the NIS to issue visas to foreigners within and outside Nigeria. The issuance of Nigerian visa, however, is done by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs instead of the NIS.

This inter-agency conflict and lack of coordination undermines the capacity of the security agencies to effectively manage the national borders. This exacerbates the porosity of these borders thereby making it possible for non-nationals, including criminals and terrorists, particularly members of *Boko Haram* to move in and out the country undocumented and unmonitored. This has grave implication for Nigeria's security.

Nigeria's North East Borders and *Boko Haram* Insurgency

Boko Haram is the name commonly used to refer to the organisation *Ahlisunnah Lidda'awati wa'l-Jihad*, or the 'People Committed for the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad'. *Boko Haram* is a Hausa phrase meaning 'Western education is forbidden' or 'Western education is sinful' (Barna, 2014). This name was given to the movement in the early 2000s by the local population in Maiduguri, the capital of the northern Nigerian state of Borno where the movement originated. Although now widely used and popularized by the media, the name does not necessarily capture the full objective of the movement, which is to overthrow the Nigerian

government, which is perceived as corrupt, get rid of western influences such as universities and establish an Islamic state with Sharia law. The movement rejects western civilization at large, including scientific theories of evolution or the big bang theory, and preaches the superiority of Muslim civilization. In its earlier forms, *Boko Haram* was also known as the Nigerian Taliban or Yusufiyya (Barna, 2014).

The actual origin of the sect is a topic of serious debate among writers. While some writers such as Onuoha (2014); Institute for Economics and Peace (2014); Achebe (2012) trace the origin of the sect to 2002, when Mohammed Yusuf became its leader. Others such as Sani (2011) posit that *Boko Haram* started as *Sahaba* group in 1995 and that the main leader of the group then was one Abubakar Lawan who later left for the University of Medina to study. When he left, the older clerics conceded the leadership to Yusuf, who was young and versatile (Sani, 2011). Immediately Mohammed Yusuf, a *Malam* (Islamic scholar) who led a wing of radical youth scholars in the 1990s in Maiduguri took over, the doctrine of the sect changed and he abandoned the older cleric and came up with *Boko Haram*. At the initial stage of their growth, the sect was entrenched in Borno, Yobe, Kaduna, Bauchi, Gombe and Kano States (Sani, 2011).   *Boko Haram* came to the limelight in 2002, when Yusuf and his followers, in protest against the corruption of Nigerian society, left Maiduguri for the neighbouring Yobe state. The movement tried to establish a 'state within a state' – its own community where true Muslim values could be pursued. Following a conflict with the local community in 2003, the remaining followers of the movement regrouped in Maiduguri in 2004. While a radical dissident faction led by Abubakar Shekau launched several attacks around Borno and Yobe states in 2003-04, *Boko Haram* did not switch from proselytization to combat until 2009.

The group, though without clear structure or known chain of command, has carried over 800 attacks which resulted in the death of over 8000 people and displacement of over six million people, and over ☐3.5 trillion has been spent by the Nigeria government since 2009 fighting the sect (START, 2014). In 2011, *Boko Haram* caught the attention of the international community following the attacks of the United Nations building at Abuja. The group has equally targeted state institutions such as police stations, barracks, schools, places of worship and civilian populations killing thousands of people, displacing millions and destroying unquantifiable properties.

Boko Haram has unleashed violence on people through guerrilla warfare, suicide bombings, assassinations and kidnapping. The sect is known to sustain its operations through diverse sources of funding which include: membership dues, donation from some politicians, financial assistance from

foreign terrorist groups, raiding of banks and ransom from kidnapping, extortion of money from local residents of areas it had controlled as well as from wealthy persons who they intimidate into paying 'protection fee' to avoid being attacked by them (Onuoha, 2014). Furthermore, *Boko Haram* has a well coordinated international network camps that meets its training, recruitment and ammunition needs. Such camps are scattered across Nigeria's neighbours in West Africa such as Niger Republic, Cameroon, Chad and Mali.

The porous nature of Nigeria's North East borders has provided the interstice exploited by *Boko Haram* to move their personnel, mercenaries and weapons into Nigeria unchecked with a view to sustaining its terrorist activities. *Boko Haram* has, therefore, smuggled arms into Nigeria using various methods such as specially crafted skink or thatched bags attached to camels, donkeys and cows where arms are concealed and moved across the borders with the aid of nomadic pastoralists or herders. Its members often connive with merchants involved in cross-border trade who stuff arms and weapons in goods they transport through heavy trucks, trailers and other forms of vehicles (Onuoha, 2013). Considering the ineffective border management mechanisms in Nigeria, very little scrutiny is often conducted by security and border officials to detect these arms. They are then smuggled into Nigeria and moved from one location to another using similar strategies of stocking arms in goods, loading in specially-adapted vehicles, hiding under cloths of couriers, and tunneling for arms smuggling. For example, on 12 July 2013, soldiers in Kebbi State impounded a petrol tanker loaded with three AK 47 Rifles, one rocket propelled grenade (RPG)-2, nine AK 47 magazines, two bombs, three RPG chargers and 790 rounds of 7.62mm of special ammunitions in the fuel compartment of a tanker suspected to be destined for *Boko Haram* insurgents operating in the region (Onuoha, 2013).

Boko Haram also uses tunneling to traffic arms, drugs and other substances into and within Nigeria. Some of these tunnels and bunkers have the capacity to accommodate over 100 persons, thereby enabling the sect to transport fighters and move weapons across borders and within their areas of operation. For example, in July, 2013, security forces discovered a vast network of underground tunnels connecting houses and many bunkers used by *Boko Haram* for trafficking weapons in Bulabulin, a town in Maiduguri, North East Nigeria (Onuoha, 2013). Table 1 below shows example of some notable incidence of weapon seizures by Nigeria's security forces in the North East Nigeria.

Table 1: Various Weapons seized from Suspected Boko Haram Groups by Security Agencies

Date	Location	Description of Incident
4th August	Bama, Bama LGA of Borno State	Men of the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF) seized four Toyota Hilux vans, 10 AK-47 rifles and magazines, two G3 rifles and 10x4 40mm bombs, three RPG tubes, and 85 rounds of special ammunition
31 July 2012	Daban Masara, a border town between Nigeria and Chad in Monguno LGA of Borno State	The MNJTF intercepted a Hilux van loaded with assorted high profile weapon, including eight (RPGs, 10 rocket bombs, 10 rocket chargers, two AK 47 riffles, and 13 magazines with six rounds of 4.6mm special ammunition concealed inside desert palm tree leaves
16 July 2012	Bulabulin area in Maiduguri of Borno State	Men of the JTF recovered eight AK47 assault rifles, one of G-3 rifle, nine AK-47 magazines, one RPG charger, five RPG, three FMC magazine, one G3 magazine, 14 IEDs and several rounds of ammunition

Source: Onuoha, F. C. (2013). *Porous borders and Boko Haram's arms smuggling operations in Nigeria.* Al Jazeera   Center for Studies

This ability of *Boko Haram* to move weapons and personnel into Nigeria via the North East borders has made the region a haven to members of *Boko Haram* and their mercenaries. It has equally led to weapon proliferation in the region.

Boko Haram Violence in Nigeria, 2009– 2015

Following the inability of the Nigerian government to contain the cross border movement of members of *Boko Haram*, the sect has continued to carry out violent activities in the country, especially in the North East. The increasing level of violence perpetrated by *Boko Haram* has made it gain notoriety as third most deadly terrorist organization in the world. Similarly, Nigeria currently ranks as the 4th country worse hit by terrorism in the world due to the activities of *Boko Haram* (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2014).

Available evidence indicates that between 2009 and 2012, no fewer than 3,500 Nigerians were variously killed by the sect. This figure increased significantly in the period 2013 to 2014 with over 8,000 deaths occurring in the period attributed to *Boko Haram* violence. In addition to the deaths and injuries caused by *Boko Haram*, millions of Nigerians have been internally displaced in the country. In a 2011 Country Reports on terrorism by the U.S. Department of State, Africa experienced 978 attacks of over 10,000 attacks worldwide. Of these 978 attacks, *Boko Haram* alone was alleged to have

conducted 136 attacks as against a record of 31 attacks conducted in 2010 or even a less than 10 attacks conducted from 2002 to 2009 (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2014; START, 2015). Table 2 presents reported incidence of *Boko Haram* attacks and corresponding number of deaths and injuries between 2009 and 2014.

Table 2: Boko Haram Attacks between 2009 and 2014

Year	Number of Attacks	Number Killed	Number Wounded
2009	10	304	NA
2010	17	72	130
2011	125	327	453
2012	423	1251	827
2013	233	1728	380
2014	493	7112	1785
TOTAL	**1301**	**10794**	**3575**

Source: Calculated based on Data from National Consortium for The Study of
Terrorism & Responses to Terrorism (2015). *Global Terrorism Database
(GTD)* Available online at *www.start.umd.edu/gtd* (accessed 15-10-2015).

Figure 2: Chart showing Boko Haram Attacks Between 2009 and 2014
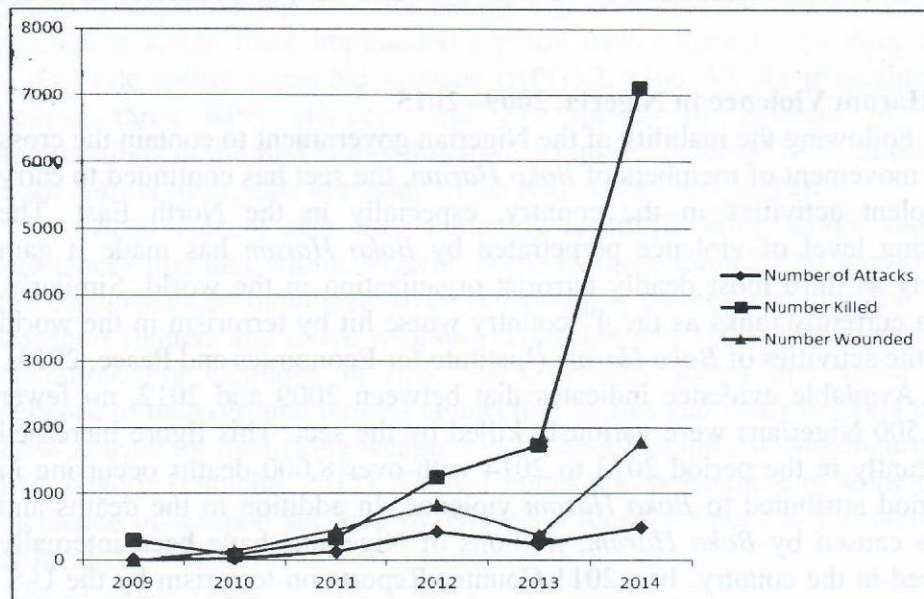
Source: Plotted by Authors from data in table 2

Evidently, the North East Nigeria has been worst hit by the activities of *Boko Haram* as most of the attacks were carried out in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states due to their propinquity to Nigeria's North East border with Cameroon. Figure 3 further provides details of the distribution of *Boko Haram* attacks according to regions in the country.

Figure 3: Map Showing Number of Boko Haram Related Deaths According to Regions
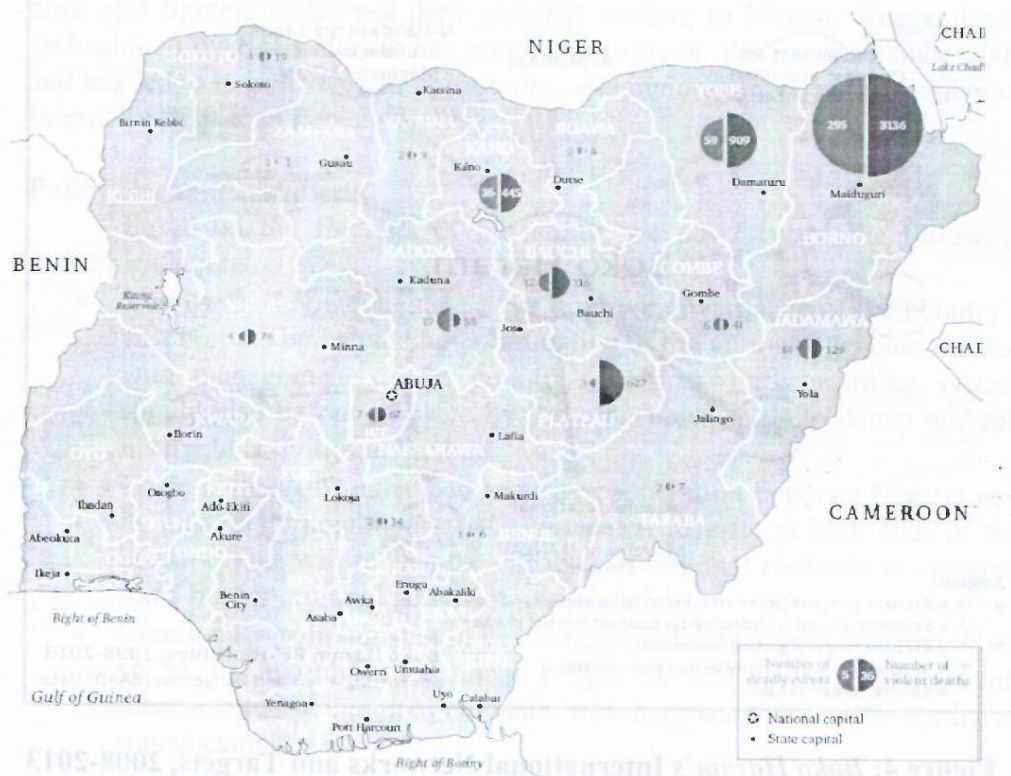
Source: De Montclos, M.P. (2014). *Nigeria's interminable insurgency? Addressing the Boko Haram crisis*. London. Chatham House, the Royal Institute of International Affairs. 2.

However, rather than being displaced, *Boko Haram*'s activities have become more concentrated in the Kanuri-speaking northeast, especially Borno State and the well garrisoned city of Maiduguri. The extent of this 'battlefield' is about 75,000 km², the size of Ireland or Scotland. According to the National

Emergency Management Agency, a quarter-million people have been displaced from this area so far in 2014 and half the North-East's 12 people are directly affected by violence (as cited in Barna, 2014). The nature of attacks attributed to *Boko Haram* suggests that the group has grown rapidly in relationships, confidence, capability and coordination. The growing sophistication of the attacks also suggests assistance from international networks, especially *al-Shabaab* and *al-Qaeda* in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).
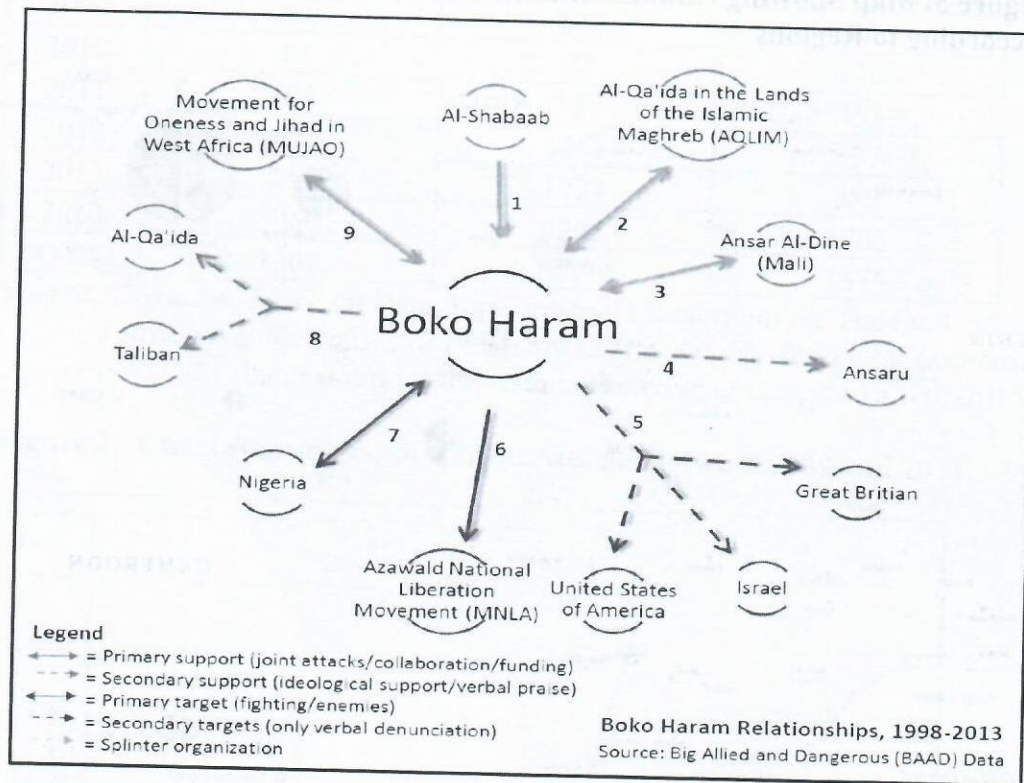

Figure 4: *Boko Haram's* International Networks and Targets, 2008-2013
Source: Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) (2014). *Boko Haram* recent attacks. Background Report, 5.

Based on its growing sophistication, confidence, capability and coordination, *Boko Haram,* between 2009 and 2013 was responsible for 2.34 percent of more than 34,000 terrorist attacks that took place worldwide. Additionally, *Boko Haram* was responsible for 5.9 percent of fatalities from terrorist attacks during this same period (Reeve, 2014).

Conclusion

Effective border governance is critical for economic development and national security. This study assessed the linkage between poor border governance and *Boko Haram* insurgency in Nigeria, focusing on the Northeast border with Cameroon. Our study shows that, just like other post-colonial African states, Nigeria's borders are creatures of colonialism and are not only poorly delineated but difficult to govern. Hence, Nigeria's North East borders with Cameroon remain notoriously porous and have become an interstice exploited by members of *Boko Haram* to facilitate cross border movement of arms and fighters which aid their guerrilla warfare in Nigeria. The violence orchestrated by *Boko Haram* has continued to be on the increase since 2009 and has led to loss of lives and properties, and rapid increase in the number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).

Policy Recommendations

Based on the findings of our study, we put forward the following recommendations:

- Managers of Nigerian state must improve governance of the country's vast borders by enhancing coordination of the various agencies saddled with management of the country's borders. Early warning system should also be put in place by these agencies so as to detect and nib insurgent activities at the bud.
- There is need for enhanced security cooperation between Nigeria and its immediate neighbours so as to tighten security at both ends of the borders. This will reduce the capacity of criminal elements to carryout trans-border criminal activities undetected.
- Community policing should be strengthened at the border communities so as to involving the local people in information sharing and identification of criminal elements who may want to use the border as transit camps.

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