

# Curbing Ethno-Religious Conflicts in Nigeria: An Appraisal of the Causes and Consequences of the Boko Haram Uprising

---

**Johnson, Alalibo Sinikiem**

*Department of Political Science,  
Faculty of Social Sciences, Niger Delta University,  
Wilberforce Island Amassoma, Bayelsa State, Nigeria*

---

**Article DOI:** 10.48028/iiprds/ijcsird.v8.i1.08

## Abstract

**E**thno-religious conflict has become a major security challenge confronting Nigeria and several African states. This paper examined the factors responsible for the Boko Haram insurgency and its consequences on Nigeria. The paper argued that ethno-religious conflicts can be resolved when the root causes and other socio-economic factors driving the conflict are analysed and addressed by the state and all the stakeholders. Data for the study were sourced from secondary sources, while analysis was done descriptively through the qualitative research method. The paper relied on the basic human need's theory as its theoretical framework. To ensure sustainable peace and progress in the north-east and Nigeria as a whole, the paper recommended for the restructuring of the Nigerian state in order to allow every ethnic group, state and geopolitical zone in the present-day Nigeria to develop and progress at its own pace while the powers of the federal government are limited to defence, foreign policy, currency and national security.

**Keywords:** *Ethno-religious, Conflicts, Boko Haram, Consequences and Nigeria*

*Corresponding Author:* Johnson, Alalibo Sinikiem

### **Background to the Study**

Recent events in Africa have shown that not all conflicts can be traced to natural resources as claimed by some scholars. It is therefore obvious that some conflicts are driven by ethno-religious factors. Thus, it will be recalled that what started as a mere gathering of aggrieved northern youths in 2002 has grown to become a major national and global security threat not just to Nigeria alone but to the countries sharing border with Lake Chad Basin. Boko Haram is currently rated as the third deadliest terrorist group. Historically, the Boko Haram Islamic sect started as a Sahaba group in 1995 with one Abubakar Lawan as its leader. The group's ideology is linked to Islamic teaching of the Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan hence, their school of thought considers anything Western as an aberration or completely un-Islamic. Members of the group therefore view western influence on Islamic society as the basis of the religion's weakness. Thus, their declaration that western education and indeed all Western institutions are infidel and as such must be avoided by all true Muslims. The group became divided along ideological lines when its pioneer leader, Abubaka Lawan travelled to Medina, Saudi Arabia for further studies.

Despite the interest shown by other contenders, the older clerics led by Sheikh Jafar Mahmud Adam conceded the leadership of the group to Mohammed Yusuf, who was young, dynamic and versatile. As soon as Mohammed Yusuf assumed leadership of the group, he abandoned the older clerics and came up with the name Boko Haram. The internal crisis arising from ideological differences reached its peak on the 13th of April 2007 when Sheikh Jafar Mahmud Adam was brutally murdered inside his Dorayi central mosque in Kano while he was leading morning prayers. However, in 2002 the 'Jama' atu Ahlis-Sunna Lidda' awati wal-Jihad (meaning people committed to the propagation of the prophet's teachings and Jihad) otherwise known as Boko Haram (meaning western education is evil/forbidden) emerged in Nigeria.

At its formative stage in Bauchi, Yobe and Borno states several young people, including university students, workers and highly placed public officials joined the sect. Some of the fundamental arguments and beliefs held by the group are that banking, taxation and jurisprudence in Nigeria are completely infidel. According to the group, today's banking system is shy locked and Islam forbids interest in financial transactions hence, it was in their bid to run away from the Nigerian state structure/system that members of the Boko Haram sect decided to cluster together in strategic locations in the outskirts of Bauchi, Yobe and Borno states respectively. It is pertinent and fundamental to state that Boko Haram has grown from being a peaceful Islamic movement in 2002 to a militant extremist group (Barna, 2014: p. 2) in 2009 when its leader, Mohammed Yusuf was killed in a controversial manner hence, the group has continued to launch military attacks against the Nigerian state in retaliation for the death of its leader and the furtherance of the group's ideology which seeks to overthrow the federal government and establish an Islamic state that will adhere to its own strict interpretation of Islamic (Sharia) law which forbids people from taking part in any political or social activity associated with Western society including voting in elections, secular education and mode of dressing (Chothia, 2014, 16).

It is, therefore, imperative to examine the socio-economic factors that gave rise to the group with a view to addressing the root causes instigating the conflict. In the light of the above background, the causes and consequences of the Boko Haram uprising will constitute the major thrust of this study.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Theoretical and conceptual analysis play a major role in any research hence, Lieber (1992), posited that behind any concept or analysis, there is a theory or viewpoint which makes it possible for the presentation and interpretation of facts. Clearly therefore, for there to be reliability in any investigation, there is also need to come out with models or the formulation of theories, for empirical theory seeks to create knowledge that is impersonal, retraceable and cumulative (Lieber, 1992, 12). However, in the study of international relations, theoretical framework is usually divided into two dominant categories: the orthodox (Liberal) and the radical (Marxist) perspectives. Each of these models attempts to provide theoretical lenses through which developments that have to do with state relations could be viewed and analysed. This study therefore relied on the basic human needs theory in order to explain the factors responsible for frequent conflicts especially ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria. Basic human needs scholars argued that human needs are core issues creating conflict and violence in the first place hence, ignoring such fundamental needs accounts for the high rate of conflict in most societies. Burton (1997), contended that the needs of all individuals and groups must be accommodated in any decision making process in order to ensure and guarantee a credible peace building process.

According to Sandole (2001), when people and groups are denied of basic needs of security, identity, and freedom: deterrence cannot deter and coercive methods will no longer be effective to modify behaviour when people and groups are compelled to act due to their desires and needs. Scholars who believe in this school of thought maintain that basic human needs are essential and fundamental to the maintenance of peace and security in any society hence, ignoring such needs will lead to disaffection and frustration which will eventually degenerate into conflict. This clearly explains the case in the Niger Delta and the north-east where Boko Haram, bandits and herdsmen are terrorizing, kidnapping and killing innocent Nigerians on a daily basis. Advocates of the basic human needs theory include: Burton (1997), Maslow (1943), Galtung (1990) etc.

### **Conceptual Analysis**

The rising rate of conflict and terrorist attacks across the world no doubt calls for concern hence; the best form of conflict resolution mechanism to adopt remains a major source of debate among scholars. Both Schelling and Snyder (1966), argued that the conflict threshold and the outcome will accord parties in the conflict more value and prestige. In fact, according to Schelling in his “Arms and Influence” diplomacy of ultimate survival “with enough military weapons and might, nations need not to negotiate or bargain”. In the same vein, Africa is equally faced with internal security challenges caused by a number of factors which include: mass poverty, uneven development, mounting external debts and periodic outbreak of violence and in some cases military coups and insurgency. This development has also

affected the economy of the continent adversely. At the regional and global levels, conflict of various dimensions also exists. Thus, with the attack of the United States on September 11, 2001, terrorism has been projected as the new international security challenge of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Understanding the conditions conducive for terrorism and insurgency could produce a more logical and consistent approach to combating terrorism.

The 1999 Algiers Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism clearly state the deep concern over the scope and seriousness of the phenomenon of terrorism and the danger it poses to the stability and security of states hence Article 4 (2) urged members of the African Union to adopt national legislations aimed at preventing and combating terrorist acts. It will be recalled that decades of environmental abuse and human degradation coupled with unfulfilled promises on the part of the Nigerian state and transnational oil companies led to violent agitations and armed struggle by the Niger Delta people against the Nigerian state. Actions such as kidnapping, destruction of oil flow stations etc. was intensified prompting the proclamation of amnesty to Niger Delta youths on certain terms. It is also a fact that ethno-religious conflict has been a common feature of Nigeria's political history since its independence in 1960 due to several factors including ethnicity, maladministration, corruption etc. thus, the north like many parts of the country, has been characterised with poor governance, corruption and worsening social-indicators with a long history of the political used and violent manifestations of ethnic and religious identities (Barna, 2014, 2). The factor of religion is therefore a defining feature and fault line of the Nigerian state and nearly every decade of its history are filled with violence and conflicts that have religious undertones (Olojo, 2013. 7). It will be recalled that the first major conflict that polarized Nigeria along religious lines was the Sharia debate in the Constituent Assembly that represented the struggle for and against the provision of a Sharia court in the proposed 1979 constitution because of its implications for the security of the Nigerian state. From that moment, the Muslim dominated region has been plagued with violent religious clashes between the Nigerian security services and several fundamentalist and extremist groups seeking the institutionalization of Islamic Sharia law in the country (Adesoji, 2011: p. 100). Within the context of this study, the causes and consequences of the Boko Haram uprising will be examined in view of the fact that Boko Haram has since grown to be a major threat to peace and security in Nigeria.

### **History and Causes of the Boko Haram Uprising**

This section of the study examined the history, causes and consequences of ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria with particular reference to the Boko Haram insurgency in north-east Nigeria. Historically, the Boko Haram Islamic sect started as a Sahaba group in 1995 with one Abubakar Lawan as its leader. The group's ideology is linked to Islamic teaching of the Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan hence, their school of thought considers anything Western as an aberration or completely un-Islamic. Members of the group therefore view western influence on Islamic society as the basis of the religion's weakness. Thus, their declaration that western education and indeed all Western institutions are infidel and as such must be avoided by all true Muslims. The group became divided along ideological lines when its pioneer leader, Abubaka Lawan travelled to Medina, Saudi Arabia for further studies. Despite the interest shown by other contenders, the older clerics led by Sheikh Jafar Mahmud Adam conceded the

leadership of the group to Mohammed Yusuf, who was young, dynamic and versatile. As soon as Mohammed Yusuf assumed leadership of the group, he abandoned the older clerics and came up with the name Boko Haram. The internal crisis arising from ideological differences reached its peak on the 13th of April 2007 when Sheikh Jafar Mahmud Adam was brutally murdered inside his Dorayi central mosque in Kano while he was leading morning prayers. However, in 2002 the 'Jama' at Ahlis-Sunna Lidda' awati wal-Jihad (meaning people committed to the propagation of the prophet's teachings and Jihad) otherwise known as Boko Haram (meaning western education is evil/forbidden) emerged in Nigeria.

At its formative stage in Bauchi, Yobe and Borno states several young people, including university students, workers and highly placed public officials joined the sect. Some of the fundamental arguments and beliefs held by the group are that banking, taxation and jurisprudence in Nigeria are completely infidel. According to the group, today's banking system is shylocked and Islam forbids interest in financial transactions hence, it was in their bid to run away from the Nigerian state structure/system that members of the Boko Haram sect decided to cluster together in strategic locations in the outskirts of Bauchi, Yobe and Borno states respectively. It is pertinent and fundamental to state that Boko Haram has grown from being a peaceful Islamic movement in 2002 to a militant extremist group (Barna, 2014, 2) in 2009 when its leader, Mohammed Yusuf was killed in a controversial manner hence, the group has continued to launch military attacks against the Nigerian state in retaliation for the death of its leader and the furtherance of the group's ideology which seeks to overthrow the federal government and establish an Islamic state that will adhere to its own strict interpretation of Islamic (Sharia) law which forbids people from taking part in any political or social activity associated with Western society including voting in elections, secular education and mode of dressing (Chothia, 2014, 16).

### **Issues Surrounding the Arrest and Death of Mohammed Yusuf**

The first open confrontation between members of the Boko Haram sect and security forces in Nigeria occurred in June 2009 when men of the Operation Flush in Maiduguri shot and killed seventeen (17) followers of Sheikh Mohammed Yusuf who were on their way to a cemetery in a procession to bury four of their members who died in a car accident. This incident led to several retaliatory attacks in Borno, Kastina and other northern states. In Kano for instance, the home and mosque of the sect leader in Wudil, Salihu Al-min Model school at Sabon-gari was demolished by the Kano state Police Command. Affirming the fact that the Islamization of Nigeria is a major objective of the group, a member of the group arrested in Kano state told the press that he was not disturbed by his present predicament. In his words: Allah be praised, we are simply passing a period of tribulation and I know that even if I die now, I would be hugely rewarded by Allah. They cannot stop us. We must propagate the message of Allah. Only Sharia we believe and western education is a taboo. These statements were made while the sect member was groaning in pain at a police detention facility in Kano in June 2009. However, the battle between Nigerian security forces and followers of Boko Haram reached its peak when the Boko Haram leader, Mohammed Yusuf, was arrested by soldiers and later killed in a controversial circumstance while in police custody on the 30th of July 2009. The authorities later claimed that Mohammed Yusuf whose followers had battled soldiers and



policemen for five days across the north was reportedly killed in a shootout with security forces. In a separate account, a BBC reporter in Maiduguri stated categorically that the leader of the Islamic sect (Boko Haram) was actually arrested and paraded before journalists with apparent signs of injuries hence, the inability of the federal government to investigate and prosecute all those involved in the controversial death of the young Boko Haram leader is no doubt responsible for the several attacks in the country from 2009-date.

### **Major Attacks Carried out by Boko Haram in Nigeria**

This section of the book examined major attacks carried out by Boko Haram in Nigeria hence, tables and relevant data were also presented for easy analysis and comprehension. In a newspaper report captioned “Boko Haram fire rages in Borno” published in the Guardians Newspaper of 16th July, 2011, it was reported that three suspected Boko Haram members attacked a police patrol vehicle stationed at the Bulukutu round-about in Maiduguri at about 7:15am on Friday 15th July 2011 and injured seven persons. While affirming the attack, the then spokesman of the Joint Task Force of Operation Restore Order (JTFORO), Col. Victor Ebhaleme stated thus: There was a blast targeted at the police patrol vehicle by the Boko Haram sect members. The bombers used a vehicle to attack policemen on patrol at Bulukutu round-about before soldiers came to protect the people in the affected area. In a related development, about eight persons who were feared dead and 44 others injured on Thursday 16th June 2011 when a powerful bomb ripped force headquarters in Abuja.

In a cover page newspaper report captioned “Boko Haram bomb Police Headquarters: IG escapes death, eight killed, 77 cars destroyed,” published in The Punch Newspaper of 17th June 2011, the police described the police headquarters bomb blast as a suicide attack targeted at the then Inspector General of police, Mr Hafiz Ringim. Similarly, 13 persons were killed in a twin bomb blast near the Eagle Square while three men also died after being seriously injured in an explosion at a local restaurant in Zuba, a suburb of the Federal Capital Territory Abuja on the 29th of May 2011. In a telephone interview with a Voice of America (VOA) correspondence in Abuja, a Boko Haram spokesman, Usman Alzawahiri, confirmed that the bomb blasts in Abuja and other northern states was the groups (Boko Haram) handiwork. In his words: We are behind it and we are going to attack the entire north and other parts of the country, including the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja...some Boko Haram members returned from Somalia five days ago and has been scattered around northern parts of the country. Attacks on public institutions and facilities continued on Sunday 26th June 2011 when three bombs exploded in Maiduguri, killing 25 persons and twelve others wounded.

The then spokesman of the Nigeria Police Force in Maiduguri, Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP), Lawal Abdulahi confirmed the explosions and added that two men riding on motorcycles threw bombs at Bear Gardens, a popular nightspot in the state. While reacting to the bomb blasts in the north, the former governor of Borno state, Kashim Shettima in a newspaper report captioned “Boko Haram kills two, injures four in Borno: Job creation will end rebellion, published in the Nation Newspaper of Monday, 27th June 2011, promised to provide at least 100,000 jobs to youths in the state. Kashim Shettima who made the promise in Abuja also urged the federal government to create more jobs and eradicate illiteracy hence; he attributed the high rate of violence and insecurity in the country to unemployment and

poverty. In his words: So far, leaders have not given the Nigerian people what they need in terms of provision of basic amenities. Nigerians do not need outsiders to help get things right (Shettima, cited in the Nation Newspaper, 27th June 2011).

This position is in line with the views expressed by Gurr (1994), and Kalama (2012), who asserted that neglect and alienation of citizens especially, the less privilege (minorities) from the affairs of the state would breed frustration and aggression which will in turn lead to violence and confrontation which if not checked and managed could also lead to the collapse of the state and its structures.

Again, a fierce gun battle between members of Boko Haram Sect and the Joint Task Force (JTF) left at least 41 persons dead in Maiduguri. While confirming the attack, the then JTF Commander, Major General Jack Nwaogbo, in a press statement captioned “Boko Haram, JTF clash kills 45 in Borno”, published in The Vanguard Newspaper of Monday, 11th July 2011, and stated that the explosion and gunshots by Boko Haram members were successfully repelled by the JTF which led to the killing of 11 suspects. He added that within the same period, two separate bombs planted at the All Christian Fellowship Mission and Faith Mission Church along church road in Suleja town, Niger state, exploded leaving four persons dead and several others wounded. Nigerians especially, security, and conflict scholars have continued to ask why Nigerian soldiers and security forces have become a reactionary force rather than being proactive and confrontational in its counterterrorism approach. In a swift reaction, Boko Haram Sect justified its attacks in the north and promised the nation more of such attacks unless their demands are met.

In a letter written in Hausa and sent to the Federal Government signed by one Usman Alzawahiri, the group threatened that peace will continue to elude the country (Nigeria) unless their demands are met by the federal government. In their letter titled “Conditions for dialogue with president Goodluck Jonathan and Governor Kashim Shettima”, published in The Punch Newspaper of Friday 17th June, 2011, the Sect reiterated its call for the strict implementation and enforcement of Sharia legal system in the Muslim-dominated states of the north and immediate release of all members of the sect detained in Borno and other northern states. Other demands listed in the letter include: the prosecution of some politicians, traditional rulers and security chiefs. According to the Boko Haram sect, the following persons must be prosecuted according to Islamic law for conspiracy which resulted in the killing of late Sheikh Mohammed Yusuf after he was arrested alive by soldiers who handed him over to the police at the 21 Armoured Brigade popularly known as Giwa military Barracks in Maiduguri. They include: former Governor of Borno state, Ali Modu Sheriff, the Shehu of Borno, Alhaji Abubakar Ibn Garbai El-kanemi, one time minister of police affairs, Ibrahim Lame, former Borno state commissioner of police and director of state security service, who were in charge of security during the sectarian mayhem in 2009. Others that must be prosecuted in accordance with Sharia Islamic law according to the group include: the security operatives particularly those attached to the Operation Flush Joint Task Force for causing the first crisis along the custom area in Maiduguri metropolis when they shot and wounded 20 of our members and killed two more others. In their words: They also shot dead seven of our brothers and wounded 10 others during the inauguration of a Mosque in Monguno local government.

Thus, as part of their demands, the group stated thus:

We also demand for the immediate arrest and prosecution of those behind the killing of Baba Fugu Mohammed, the father-in-law of our late leader and Alhaji Biju Foyi. The All Nigeria Peoples Party-led government in Borno state must resign because its leaders were responsible for the attack on the Ibn Thaimiyya Islamic Centre and the house of our leader in Maiduguri. We also request for an immediate investigation into the killing of our brothers through food poisoning which was perpetrated by prison warders with the connivance of former governor Ali Modu Sheriff. We want the federal government to release the report of the commission of inquiry set up by late President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua which was headed by former National Security Adviser, Abdulahi Makhtar, on the extra-judicial killings of our brothers during the 2009 unrest.

The group therefore concluded that it would not participate in any dialogue with the federal government if the above conditions are not met. The table below further shows the attacks carried out by the Boko Haram Islamic sect and its impact.



**Table 1: Boko Haram's Attacks and Its Impact from 2009-2012**

S/N	Date	Incident	Impact
1.	18th June 2009	Shooting of 17 mourning followers of Sheikh Mohammed Yusuf by men of the Operation Flush in Maiduguri.	17 persons were killed and several others wounded
2.	26th July 2009	Clash between Boko Haram and the police at the Dutse township police station in Bauchi	The police opened fire and thirty-nine members of Boko Haram sect died instantly, including 2 policemen and 1 soldier. After the clash, houses belonging to sect members were destroyed by the police.
3.	27th July 2009	Police-Boko Haram clash during an invasion of Potiskum divisional police headquarters	The attack led to the death of three police men and one fire service officer.
4.	29th July 2009	Confrontation between the sect, the army and the police in Maiduguri which lasted for five days	The attack led to the arrest and eventual death of the sect's leader, Sheikh Mohammed Yusuf and fifty others, including the destruction of houses, properties and cash worth about one hundred and sixty million naira.
5.	7th Sept. 2010	Boko Haram sect freed over 700 inmates from a prison facility in Bauchi	Parts of the Bauchi prison was destroyed while six prison warders lost their lives in the process
6.	24th Dec. 2010	The sect carried out a bomb attack in Jos	Eight persons died in the process.
7.	31st Dec. 2010	Boko Haram sect attacked Mammy market and Army Mogadishu Barrack, Abuja.	Eleven persons died in the attack.
8.	28th Jan. 2011	ANPP governorship candidate, his brother and four police officers were attacked at Lawan Bukar Ward, Maiduguri	Seven persons including Alhaji Modu Faunami Gubio, ANPP Governorship candidate died in the attack.
9.	1st April 2011	Suspected Boko Haram members attacked a police station in Bauchi	No death was recorded but five policemen were seriously injured
10.	9th April 2011	A polling centre in Maiduguri was bombed	No death was recorded but several persons were injured.
11.	15th April 2011	The Maiduguri office of the Independence National Electoral Commission (INEC) was bombed	Several persons were shot and wounded in the attack.
12.	20th April 2011	Boko Haram sect ambushed a Muslim cleric and several policemen in Maiduguri	A popular Muslim cleric lost his life while several policemen were wounded.
13.	22nd April 2011	Boko Haram sect attacked Yola prison in Adamawa state	The sect freed several of its members in the jail break in Yola and injured several prison warders.
14.	9th May 2011	Boko Haram sect rejected an offer for amnesty made by the then governor-elect of Borno state, Kashim Shettima	The sect members intensified its bombings and released conditions for dialogue with the federal government.
15.	29th May 2011	Boko Haram sect carried out a spate of bomb attacks in Bauchi and Maiduguri	The attacks left about fifteen persons dead.
16.	1st June 2011	Boko Haram sect attacked the Shehu of Borno's brother, Abba El-kanemi	Alhaji Abba El-kanemi died in the attack.
17.	16th June 2011	Boko Haram sect carried out a massive explosion at the police headquarters in Abuja	The attack left eight persons dead and seventy-seven cars including properties worth millions of naira destroyed.
18.	26th August 2011	Boko Haram sect claimed responsibility for the bombing of the United Nations headquarters in Abuja, Nigeria	The attack left about twenty three persons dead, ten others in critical condition, including several others injured.
19.	25th Dec. 2011	Bombing of St. Theresa Catholic Church Madallah, Niger state.	The attack caused the death of over 45 persons and several others wounded.
20.	19th Dec. 2011	Boko Haram bombed factory used for manufacturing improvised explosive devices (IEDs) which exploded in Kaduna. state	No death was recorded but several Boko Haram sect members were seriously injured.
21.	20th Jan. 2012	Multiple explosions rocked police stations, the passport office, state security service headquarters and the immigration office all in Kano state.	The attack killed about 200 persons and left several others wounded.

**Source:** The Punch Newspaper Vol. 17, No. 20905, 17th June 2011; Vanguard Newspaper 8th July, 2011; The Punch Newspaper Vol. 7086, No. 1576, 27th August 2011.

It is obvious that Boko Haram insurgency has caused the death of several innocent lives in Nigeria especially in the north-east. Public building and infrastructure have also been destroyed by the insurgents. Item six (6) on the data clearly shows that several cars were destroyed when the insurgents attacked the Nigeria police headquarters in Abuja. In the same vein, the data also revealed that several communities including the Nigeria police mobile training school at Guoza were overrun and destroyed by members of the Boko Haram sect hence, indicating that public and private infrastructure were destroyed while several persons were equally displaced from their original communities/states of origin leading to over 3000 persons now living in internally displaced persons IDP camps across the north.

### **Conclusion**

Ethno-religious conflicts anywhere in the world are difficult to resolve hence, this study examined the causes and consequences of the Boko Haram uprising with a view to addressing the immediate and remote causes of the conflict. The study observed that successive governments in Nigeria have failed to address the fundamental problems fuelling the conflict hence, it has remained unabated. Data for the study were culled from secondary sources while the analysis was based on the descriptive qualitative method. In order to explain why conflict especially ethno-religious conflict persist in Nigeria, the study relied on the basic human needs theory which argued that individual and groups can go to any length just to pursue their basic needs. According to Burton (1997), deterrence cannot deter and coercive methods are not effective to modify behaviour when people and groups are denied their basic needs of security, identity, shelter etc. Based on the gaps identified in the study recommendations aimed at curbing ethno-religious conflicts in the country were made.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations will no doubt help to curb ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria:

1. On-going multilateral joint military action in the Lake Chad Basin involving troops from Nigeria, Niger Republic, Cameroon and Chad should be sustained and intensified.
2. The federal government should intensify efforts to track the sponsors and financiers of violence and terrorism in Nigeria. This is important because only recently, three Nigerians were arrested and convicted in Dubai for transferring huge sums of money to terrorist agents and their collaborators in Africa.
3. Hence forth, heads of security agencies in Nigeria otherwise known as service chiefs should not be allowed to over stay in office as required by public service rules. It will be recalled that President Muhammadu Buhari extended the tenure of service chiefs in Nigeria by one (1) year even when the constitution stipulates that the mandatory age of retirement for public servants is 60 years. Such unconstitutional action amounts to dictatorship.
4. The federal government should review its operation safe corridor policy which grants amnesty to Boko Haram fighters so that arrested members of the group can face trial for the offences committed. This will serve as deterrence to others who intend to engage in armed struggle against the state.

5. Basic needs such as employment, good health and education facilities should be provided to enable all citizens have access to good and quality life at all levels. This is necessary because Gurr (1994) and Burton (1997) have argued that exclusion and absence of basic needs are the silent drivers of conflict in most societies.
6. Religious clerics and leaders of mosque and churches should be advised not to promote hate speeches and religious intolerance. This is important because some religious leaders in the country often threaten people who are opposed to their religious believes and ideology. It will be recalled that Bishop Hassan Matthew Kukah was recently threatened by a Muslim group over the Christmas day message he issued.
7. There is also need to investigate and audit military/defence funds and budgets in Nigeria to ensure accountability and transparency in the procurement and management of defence weapons and expenditures. This is necessary because it is alleged that the Boko Haram insurgency has remained due to large scale corruption by officers and officials of the federal ministry of defence.
8. It is on record that Boko Haram fighters have always ambushed and killed Nigerian soldiers hence, there is need for the directorate of military intelligence to probe and investigate such cases in the military with a view to punishing such erring officers who sabotage the state in accordance with the law and military code of practice (ethics).

## References

- Aaron, R. (1966). *Peace and war: A theory of international relations*, New York: Double day.
- Adams, J. A. (2012). *Political processes and public policy in Bassey O.C. & Ozumba, O. G. eds (2012). Political Science: An introductory reader*, 151-167, Lagos: Concept Publications Limited.
- Aghedo, I. & Osumah, O. (2014). *Insurgency in Nigeria: A comparative study of Niger Delta and Boko Haram uprisings in Journal of Asian and African Studies 1 -15 March*, SAGE.
- Akokpari, J. (2007). *The political economy of human insecurity in sub-Saharan Africa in Institute of Development Economics V.R.F Series*, No. 431.
- Anah, I. C. (2014). *Governance and security in Africa in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: A political economy perspective in the Journal of Alternative Perspectives in the Social Science 5, (4)*, 783-807.
- Arlinghaus, B. (1984). *African security issues*, Boulder: Westview.
- Bassey, C. & Oshita, O. (2007). *Conflict resolution, identity crisis and development in Africa*, Lagos: Malthouse Press.
- Bassey, C. (2005). *Contemporary strategy and the African condition*, Lagos: Macmillan publishers.
- Bassey, C. O. (2011). *The challenges of military state craft in Nigeria in Bassey, O. C. & Quarker, D. C. eds (2011). Defence policy of Nigeria: Capability and context, A reader USA: Author House.*

- Dike, P. (2011). Nigerian Airforce: Challenges and response in Bassey, O.C. & Quarker, D.C. eds (2011). *Defence policy of Nigeria: Capability and context*, A reader USA: Author House.
- Ekanem, O. (2001). The dialectics of underdevelopment and instability in Africa, Calabar: *Journal of Politics and Administration*, 1(1).
- Ewa, O. I. (2018). *Nigeria's insurgency and counterinsurgency: Implications, issues, and lessons for national security in Review of Historical and Political Science*, 6(1), 33-42 June, American Research Institute for Policy Development.
- Green, A. (1941). *The frustration aggression hypothesis in psychological Review* 4 (8).
- Gurr, T. R. (1970). *Why men rebel*. USA: Princeton University Press.
- Gurr, T. R. (1994). *Minorities at risk: A global view of ethno-political conflicts*. Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace Press.
- Held, D. & MaGrow, A. (1998). *The end of the old order in Review of International Studies*, 24, 219-243.
- Imobighe, T. A. & Eguavoen, A. N. T. (2006). *Terrorism and counterterrorism: An African perspective*, Ibadan: Heineman Educational Books.
- Imobighe, T. A. (1990). *Doctrine for and threats to internal security in Vogt, A. Et al eds*, Nigerian defence policy: Issues and problems.
- Imobighe, T. A. (2004). Conflict in Niger Delta: A unique case or a model for future conflicts in other oil producing countries in Traubmern, R. & Yates, D. eds *oil policy in the Gulf of Guinea: Security and conflict, economic growth, social development*. Bann Friedrich Elbert Shifting.
- Imobighe, T. A. (2012). *Addressing sectarian violence in Nigeria in Imobighe, T. A. & Ebohon, S. I. (eds) Themes and issues in Nigerian governance and politics*, Kuru: National Institute Press, pp. 317-340.
- Jackson, R. & Sorenson, G. (2003). *Introduction to international relations: Theories and approaches*, USA: Oxford University Press.
- Kalama T. J. & Obiani, L. A. (2018). *Advancing the course of democracy in Africa: The Mandela – Jonathan experience in Mukoro, A. Et al eds* (2018). *Democracy & leadership in Africa: Nigeria & South Africa in focus*. Nigeria: International Institute for Policy Review and Development Strategies.

- Lieber, R. (1993). *Deconstructing morphology: Word formation in synthetic theory*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Nachmias, C. & Nachmias, D. (1981). *Research methods in the social sciences*, Australia: Edward Arnold Ply.
- Obasi, I. L. (1999). *Research methodology in political science*, Enugu: Academic publishing company.
- Olanrewaju, O. F. Et al. (2017). *Insurgency and national security challenges in Nigeria: An introductory analysis in Ante Portas-Studia nad Bezpieczen Stwem*. 2(9).
- Paul, C. Et al. (2013). *Paths to victory: Detailed insurgency case studies*, Washington, DC: United States National Defence Research Institute.
- Penap, I. D. (2011). *Nigerian military capacity for global and regional peace support operations in Bassey, O.C. & Quarker, D.C. eds (2011). Defence policy of Nigeria: Capability and context*, A reader USA: Author House.
- Romm, J. J. (1993). *Defining national security: The non-military aspect*, New York: Macmillan press.
- Rosenau, J. N. (1965). *International politics and foreign policy: A reader in research and theory*, New York: Free Press of Glencoe Inc.
- Zabadi, S. (2005). *Understanding security and security sector dynamics*, Baltimore: John Hopskings University Press.