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Review paper

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## **ANALYZING NIGERIAN ARMY – BOKO HARAM'S CONFLICT THROUGH THE PRISM OF MARX'S THEORY OF ECONOMIC DETERMINISM**

This work analyzes the protracted conflict between the Nigerian authority and Boko Haram from the perspectives of Karl Marx's theory of economic determinism. It explores the financial interests of corrupt officials as a plausible explanation for unsuccessful counter-terrorism. It also argues that the major factor responsible for the intractable nature of the conflict is the material benefit that the political elites derive from its prolongation. The authors use the theory of economic determinism to vividly show how the ruling oligarchs in Nigeria have thwarted every attempt to end the conflict. Using the qualitative research methodology, the work tends to illustrate how the desire for massive and unbridled wealth accumulation drove the political and military elites in Nigeria to hinder every effort made to resolve the conflict between Nigeria and Boko Haram. In other words, the work reveals the crucial links between wealth accumulation and the prolongation of the Boko Haram conflict in Nigeria.

**Keywords:** terrorism; economic determinism; oligarchs; blueprint; Nigeria

### **INTRODUCTION**

In Nigeria, terrorism and other forms of violent activities thrive against the background of exploitative governing systems, and corrupt defense sector. It is quite shocking to note that the northeastern part of Nigeria has known no peace for well

over a decade as the region remains perpetually engulfed in terrorist activities. Rather than defeating terrorism, the leadership of the defense sector and the corrupt elites have gradually utilized the state of insecurity as an avenue for self-aggrandizement (Eme & Umeokafor 2019). Defense and/or counter-terrorism have provided opportunities for Nigeria's unscrupulous kleptocrats to amass wealth to the detriment of their fellow citizens. According to report (Transparency International 2017), over 300 individuals and firms have been indicted for the defense sector procurement fraud. In the study, Anderson found that 55 persons, including past government ministers, military chiefs, state governors, and bankers, are said to have stolen approximately 1.34 trillion nairas (\$6.8 billion) over seven years through counter-terrorism arms procurement. These new and profitable ventures have increasingly jeopardized the fight against terrorism, on the one hand, and, in a way, strengthened Boko Haram's terrorist activities. Despite the huge financial and human resources invested in the northeast, Nigeria has not succeeded in creating a stable and viable political, economic, and social environment. The more the government announces its successes in the fight against terrorism, the more the marauding terrorists grow stronger and unleash terror within the region.

Even though the Nigerian Army has made some gains from their counter-terrorism stance, the emerging optimism about winning the war and the recorded victories are, in most cases, put in the background by the group's persistent attacks and/or destruction of lives and properties (Assanvo, Abatan & Sawadogo 2016). Several works on Boko Haram's insurgency have identified issues, such as religion, bad government, poverty, and underdevelopment as the underlining factors for the conflict. Little attention has been paid to the economic interests of the ruling oligarchic elites that, instead of defeating terrorism, abuse the entrusted power for personal gain. The perspective of self-aggrandizement of these corrupt leaders, who inadvertently support terrorism by trading off peace and security, is yet to be adequately perused and documented. Against this backdrop, this paper engages Karl Marx's theory of economic determinism in explaining Boko Haram's terrorist activities' protracted nature and counter-terrorism. It elucidates the extent to which the undertakings of disreputable elites encouraged terrorism in Nigeria. This paper concludes by proffering blueprints for peace and sustainable security.

## **CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION**

Certain fundamental concepts such as corruption, political corruption, and corrupt ruling elites will be explained in this section. This will provide a better understanding of the main arguments presented in the paper.

### **CORRUPTION**

According to Jonathan Rose (2017), corruption is a multidimensional concept that is very difficult to define. She further explained it as the act of an official or fiduciary person who illegally utilizes his or her position, power, or character to acquire some gains for him or herself or for someone else, contrary to duty, the right of others, and to the law of the community. Corruption entails all forms of behaviours or dispositions that deviate from ethics, morality, tradition, law, and civic virtues by any individual or group of persons, irrespective of their positions and/or statuses (Joda 2011). According to Tabi H. Joda, it is a form of dishonest or unethical demeanor by an official entrusted with a position of authority, often to procure personal benefit.

### **POLITICAL CORRUPTION**

According to Navot (2014), political corruption is the utilization of powers by political or government officials for unlawful personal and/or private gain. An illegal action by public or political office holders constitutes political corruption only if the action is directly related to their official duties, is carried out under the colour of law, or involves trading in influence. A state of unrestrained political corruption is known as kleptocracy, literally meaning 'rule of thieves' (Navot 2014). Corrupt leaders or leadership pursue their selfish interests first above group or state interests, micro-manage subordinates, behave in a mean-spirited manner, display poor decision-making, divert organizational or state financial resources to private or family account, and deliberately refuse to listen to their people or subordinates (Winters & Weitz-Shapiro 2013).

### **CORRUPT RULING ELITES**

The political landscape in Nigeria is dominated by a distinct continuity of personalities from military administrations, especially from the Abacha government through

Obasanjo to Yar'Adua, Jonathan, and into the current Buhari administration (Amundsen 2012). Thus, this group of people, which became the ruling elites, comprises influential civilians, politicians, military officers, and retired personnel, who directly or indirectly determine the affairs of the Nigerian state. Amundsen (2012) notes that the formation of Nigeria's ruling class takes place through the fusion of elites, with the military dominating political and economic power, and expressing self-aggrandizement through various mechanisms of economic extraction. Under this formation pattern, traditional and religious leaders, modern nationalists, and members of the upper strata of the state bureaucracy and the military, amalgamate into a new ruling elite. In the Nigerian context, the merged elites are dominated by the military and/or ex-military officers due to coups, military rule, and the Biafran war (Campbell 2011). In addition, the elite formation can also take the form of consolidation through numerous instruments of power diversification (Amundsen 2006). Consequently, political power is transformed into economic power through the means of economic benefits enabled by one's political position.

This trend explains why military officers, legislators, governors, and other high-profile public office holders wield significant influence on contracts and subsidies, as well as the reasons for their involvement in political corruption. Political corruption among the ruling class is well-captured under the principal-agent theory (Greoenendijk 1997). This model posits that the agents – political leaders, military personnel, and public officials, serve to safeguard the personal interests of the principal – government, power brokers within the military circle, legislators, and ministers. Besides, in some cases, the agents engage in corrupt transactions to secure their personal interests to the detriment of the principal (Greoenendijk 1997). This model is quite significant to this study because it explains the formation of ruling elites and the realpolitik of corruption. It also provides fundamental mechanisms for curbing corrupt practices among the criminally-minded group and aims to foster peace and security. In short, the model helps explain the politico-economic power trajectory of corrupt ruling elites in Nigeria.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

For a better understanding of the essence of this paper, Karl Marx's theory of economic determinism has been adopted to illustrate how expressive economic interests, benefits, or gains of corrupt political elites affect the aim of counter-terrorism. This theory expounds on how corrupt elites, in their quest for personal profits, contribute

to the prolongation of Boko Haram terrorism and bolster the latter's gruesome activities in the northeastern part of Nigeria.

## **MARX'S ECONOMIC DETERMINISM**

Economic determinism is a socio-economic theory that uses economic power as a basis for the explanation of societal and political activities in society. It posits that economic relationships such as ownership of means of production or capitalist, or being a worker or proletarian, control, shape, underpin, and define political, social, cultural, intellectual, and technological aspects of human existence (Coleman 1960). Karl Marx (1818-1883), a German philosopher, sociologist, and economist, is the most prominent theorist of economic determinism (Coleman 1960). In his opinion, human society is embedded with a perpetual struggle among divided groups whose relative political power is determined by the nature of the economic system. Specifically, Karl Marx stresses the deplorable condition of the proletariats who are trapped in a class struggle with the exploitative capitalist class. In the ensuing struggle, the subjugated workers are abused, exploited, and used as tools to achieve the capitalist's goals.

Having being used by the capitalists, the proletariats become poor, impoverished, and vulnerable to harsh socio-economic realities. According to this model, a proletariat's poverty is not natural or exquisitely designed but rather a direct corollary of capitalism and the dominance of the means of production by a few corrupt elites (Fleischer 1973). The capitalist strives to accumulate material wealth at the expense of the proletariats who are, by obligation, trapped in the service of the former.

This theory is relevant to this paper because it emphasizes the selfish interests of a few corrupt ruling elites, who choose to demean and exploit their workers, destabilizing society through malpractices. Within the Nigerian context, the emerging works (Fasan 2016; Ogala 2018) reveal that the procurement of military equipment is one of the newest forms of exploitation of the Nigerian people by corrupt ruling elites. In addition, it creates a vicious circle of terrorism and counter-terrorism in the country. The theory further demonstrates that, while the Nigerian infantry fighting Boko Haram insurgents are ill-equipped, malnourished, and denied certain intelligent information, corrupt political leaders promote insurgency by enriching themselves and their families through the military budget or counter-terrorism finances.

The following section will focus on the relationship between economic determinism and the intractability of Boko Haram terrorism.

## **THE INTRACTABILITY OF BOKO HARAM TERRORISM: AN ECONOMIC DETERMINISM PERSPECTIVE**

There is no violent group in the northeastern part of Nigeria, which has created more socio-economic disruptions than the Boko Haram terrorist organization. Since July 2009, following the events of the violent clash between the Nigerian Police and the group, and the subsequent capture and extra-judicial killing of its leader Yusuf Mohammed, the region has known no peace (Crisis Group 2014; Yakubu 2016). To date, the insurgents have unleashed systematic campaigns of bombings, kidnappings, and drive-by shootings. In 2015, according to the Global Terrorism Index (2016), Boko Haram was the deadliest terrorist group before the position was overtaken by the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL). In fact, within ten years of violent activities, the jihadi group destroyed thousands of human lives and properties and displaced more than two million persons (Assanvo, Abatan & Sawadogo 2016). A study carried out by Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Foundation (2018) showed that over 1,639 violent attacks had been perpetrated by the Boko Haram group, resulting in 14,436 fatalities, 6,051 injured victims, and 2,063 hostages across the northeast region of the country.

In terms of killings, kidnappings, and the elusiveness of peace and security, the described problematic situation of the Nigerian state drew significant foreign attention. In 2012, in the wake of the trans-nationalization of Boko Haram terrorism, the scope of the Multinational Joint Task Force that comprises Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, and Niger, was broadened to include combating terrorist activities of the group (Falode 2016; Dze-Ngwa 2018). In addition to the West African counter-terrorism initiatives, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, France, China, and Colombia have, at different times, assisted the Nigerian army in efforts to fight terrorism. In 2014, after the abduction of Chibok schoolgirls, the USA supplied the Nigerian army with trucks and equipment for the rescue mission (Embassy 2014). Freeing the Chibok girls was difficult due to the lack of cooperation, mutual distrust, and the Boko Haram infiltration. While it is glaring that there was poor synchronization of ideas and information between the USA and the Nigerian army, both parties maintained an extensive security relationship. On 20 September 2015, America announced a military utility package of up to \$45 million for training and other support for the states within the Sahel (Cameroon, Niger, Nigeria, and Chad), which were involved in the fight against Boko Haram (Reuters 2015).

Apart from the USA, France and the United Kingdom had a similar disposition in assisting the war against the insurgents. They both sent trainers and material assistance

to support the cause of counter-terrorism in Nigeria. France deployed 3,000 troops in the region for combating terrorism (Haaretz 2014), while the United Kingdom provided a five-year emergency assistance package of \$259 million (Robertson 2017). Besides the technical and emergency (financial) packages from the international community, in order to wage successful counter-terrorism, the Nigerian military budget has spiked exponentially. For example, defence budget was \$1.99 billion in 2010, \$2.38 billion in 2011, \$2.32 billion in 2012, \$2.42 billion in 2013, and \$2.36 billion in 2014 (Central Bank of Nigeria, n. a.). In 2015 and 2016, the allocations dropped to \$2.07 billion and \$1.72 billion, respectively. In 2017, the budget was \$1.62 billion, rising to \$2.04 in 2018, then \$2.15 billion in 2019. Finally, in 2020 it was about \$2.20 billion (Blueprint 2019).

In spite of these vast funds available for marshaling counter-terrorism in Nigeria, the war continues to protract or appears to be an unending debacle. Although the military has enough weapons, ammunition, and financial capability, studies have shown that the Nigerian soldiers are poorly equipped compared to Boko Haram terrorists, who are said to be parading more sophisticated weaponry (Franklin 2019). Public opinion in Nigeria, Africa, and beyond seems to focus on “deliberate acts of corrupt elites” as the underlining factor for the intractability of Boko Haram terrorism. Apart from factors such as religion, ethnicity, and poor governing, this study expresses interest in corruption among Nigerian military officials as the dire situation’s unexplored factor.

## **ARMS PROCUREMENT AND CORRUPT PRACTICES**

As shown above, the international community’s different initiatives, financial packages, and a massive military budget have not translated to the defeat of the insurgency. Over a decade, the Nigerian military has not been able to win the war against terrorism. A plausible reason for such a situation is the exploitative capitalist structure sustained by corrupt elites. Rather than pursuing national interests of peace and security, the former is said to be using entrusted power for their own benefit. This trend could be traced back to the several years of military rule in Nigeria, which created the foundation for this anti-development phenomenon (Crisis Group 2016). The emerged coup leaders exploited their position and instituted a culture of plunder. According to Said (2011), they set in motion the concept of ruling as generating personal wealth, abusing fundamental human rights, and suppressing dissent as a means of alienating the public (Said 2001).

Counter-terrorism has become a business venture or a money-making machine for a few corrupt individuals. The arms industry and/or procurement section under the Ministry of Defense are fields that are prone to corruption (Rider 1997). Corruption in these sectors cuts across both developed and developing states of the world. Since arms trade, like any other form of exchange of goods, is a matter of demand and supply, both the seller and the buyer are embedded in corruption. Most of the arms are being produced in western nations involved in bribery for increased patronage from buyers in developing states. The latter purchase inadequate and inferior equipment during procurement processes to earn personal gain at the expense of peace and security. Thus arms trade and/or procurement of arms become businesses fraught with conspiracy, which in some cases have government support (Henriksson 2007). In 2002, Donald Rumsfeld, America's Secretary of Defence, gave a noteworthy example of corruption and self-aggrandizement of officials in charge of arms, saying that "according to some estimates we cannot track \$2.3 trillion in transactions, ... \$2.3 trillion – that is \$8,000 for every man, woman and child in America" (CBS News 2002).

In Africa, the arms sector is rife with corruption. Bribery, inflation of invoices, and procurement of below-standard commodities occur on a daily basis, involving both the low-ranking and high-ranking officials (Transparency International 2002). According to Statistics of the US Department of Commerce, approximately 50 percent of all bribes worldwide is found in the defense sector (Transparency International 2002). An estimated 10 % of the value of arms procurement of deals is said to be bribery, which sometimes makes up as much as 30-50 percent worth of the arms deals (Transparency International 2002). According to Emma Henriksson (2007), had corruption been evident in most African arms transactions, the financial value of bribery for the period 1998-2005 would have added up to \$1.375 million. The financial worth of bribes involved in arms procurement cannot just achieve the goal of counter-terrorism but also lift millions of Africans out of poverty (Henriksson 2007).

In Nigeria, arms procurement and security votes fuel corruption, as they provide corrupt officials with an easy-to-use and an entirely hidden slush fund (*Vanguard* 2018). Unethical practices in the Ministry of Defense have shown that economic determinism plays a major role in the never-ending war against insurgency. Since the sector is vital and must be well-funded to attain peace and security in the nation, corrupt officials and other criminally-minded elites see it as a conduit circuit to accumulate wealth and establish their supremacy in the country's political terrain. According to Transparency International, a network of corrupt elites consisting of

politicians, military chiefs, and contractors cooperated in the embezzlement of more than 3.1 billion nairas through arms procurement contracts between 2008 and 2017.

The Ministry of Defence witnessed extra-budgetary spending on counter-terrorism between 2014 and 2015, fueling the scope of corruption within the sector. It can be concluded that corruption has penetrated the Nigerian army and compromised the integrity of the country's Navy (*Vanguard* 2015). The Nigerian war economy is highly corrupt as it incentivizes high-ranking officials and security personnel who perpetuate conflict for personal gain. These corrupt leaders have kleptocratically captured the defence sector by controlling the budgets and income, defence spending and procurement, and senior military positions (Okeke 2016). Powerful senior figures or godfathers facilitate kleptocratic captures. They select and appoint their choice officers to the defence sector positions for operationalized systemic control over security finances (Eyisi 2019). For example, former President Jonathan appointed Aliyu Mohammed – a long-time loyalist of Ibrahim Babangida, ex-Army Chief, and National Security Adviser to two presidents, as minister. According to a Nigerian Army officer, this selection is done politically, based on personal connections, and carried out to protect the financial gains and/or interests of the “godfather” (Transparency International 2016). In the Nigerian situation, kleptocracy has shown that the military's *esprit de corps* and its sense of purpose and focus on its fundamental missions have eroded. Corrupt officers and soldiers prioritize their wellbeing or subsistence over the needs of society.

A case in point is senior military officers who withheld ammunition and fuel from front-line soldiers, leaving the latter with only an escape option when attacked. For example, in November 2014, soldiers fled as Boko Haram ambushed the town of Malha in northern Adamawa state. According to an eyewitness interviewed by a BBC journalist, “the fleeing soldiers asked us to give them our clothes so that they can disguise and escape from the area safely as some of them discarded their weapons in the bush” (BBC World Service 2015). Also, according to a BBC interview, an anonymous soldier narrated how his superiors refused to supply front-line troops, leaving soldiers to face heavily armed Boko Haram fighters with only AK-47s and dilapidated armoured vehicles (Premium Times 2016). Several reports in 2013 and 2014 indicate that front-line operations were hampered by inadequate or inferior equipment, supplies, and pay shortages (Amnesty International 2015). In 2016, the suspected death of 83 soldiers in the Boko Haram ambush was blamed on equipment shortages and low morale resulting from an uptick in corruption in the defence sector (Premium

Times 2016). In December 2015, sixty-six court-marshaled soldiers had their death sentences overturned after the court realized that the soldiers had pleaded to be given weapons and equipment to combat insurgency, but the funds had been stolen (Daily Post 2015).

A more worrisome problem is the fact that corruption-fuelled under-resourcing of front-line troops has, in a way, benefitted and strengthened Boko Haram in their operations against the Nigerian government. Available photographs and video footage revealed that insurgents had not only captured army vehicles and arms abandoned by disintegrating soldiers but have utilized this equipment against the Nigerian troops (Premium Times 2014). More so, there are reports of military sympathizers who, on different occasions, left the doors of armouries unlocked. For example, in September 2016, the Nigerian army court-martialed several officers for selling weapons to the Boko Haram group (Voice of America 2016).

What is more, the culture of impunity within the security forces has indirectly enabled the terrorist group to recruit and radicalize a generation of young northeastern Nigerian males and females (Ekpe & Yakubu 2016). Several men and women have been impacted by the military's indiscriminate arrest, interrogation and detention practices. The mistreatment of the detainees by the military has thus proven to be a significant source of propaganda for the Boko Haram leadership to demand the release of detained men and women wrongfully arrested as Boko Haram insurgents (Associated Press 2016). In addition, the report mentions that people in charge of these *de facto* death camps, in most cases, demanded bribery in exchange for the release of prisoners. For instance, a former prisoner at Giwa reported spending four months in detention until his relatives secured his release by paying a bribe (Amnesty International 2015). These abuses within the military played out to favour Boko Haram, which sought to open prisons for escape and subsequent recruitment of prisoners into the Boko Haram group (Amnesty International 2015).

## **CASES OF CONTRACT SCANDALS IN NIGERIA**

Inflated procurement, phantom contracts, and the deliberate act of procuring inferior or inadequate equipment for counter-insurgency have been primary ways corrupt elites steal from the Nigerian defense budget. This trend has significantly hampered the fight against Boko Haram terrorism. Several examples of contract scandals on arms procurement and Nigerian military generals facing trials for corruption abound in the Nigerian Defense Ministry. These instances are discussed as follows:

- i. In 2014, Sambo Dasuki, former National Security Adviser (NSA), awarded a US \$500 million contract for refurbished helicopters to Triax Company Limited, whose Chief Executive Officer (CEO) at that time was Arthur Eze, a principal financier of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and a close associate of former President Goodluck Jonathan. The helicopter had limited to no combat utility and was not deployed. According to a report from the Nigerian Air Force, the purchase was a "pure waste", and that "for the price of each helicopter provided by this contract, the Air Force could have procured seven top-grade, brand new military helicopters" (Transparency 2017).
- ii. One major strategy utilized by corrupt military actors and their cohorts is the collaboration with 'briefcase companies', particularly shell companies that exist only on paper. In 2011, the Ministry of Defense sought six brand new Mi-17SH military helicopters to support operations against Boko Haram. The tender for this purchase was never advertised, and instead, eight companies were purposively invited for the multi-billion-dollar supply contract. No information on the companies, their owners, employees, and the kind of goods and services they render to the defense sector, was given. The report shows that the invited companies did not have the contractual capacity. In addition, these companies are of generic names such as Asset Management Corp Limited and GNY Management and Consulting. None of them operated a website, which points to the fact that they are briefcase companies. Moreover, two of the bidding companies were chaired by Tunde Ayeni, the former chairman of Skye Bank and President Jonathan's close friend. (*Premium Times* 2016)
- iii. *Progress Limited "Gift" Scandal*: Between 25 April 2005 to 19 October 2010, the Ministry of Defence awarded two purchase contracts to Progress Limited. The company supplied 42 units of BTR-3U Armoured Carriers and spare parts to the Nigerian army. This transaction had no agreement between the firm and the military and was not documented by the ministry. The two parties did not have any form of negotiation. Surprisingly, two years later, 26 used APCs were supplied. These "tokunbo" or fairly used APCs had fault almost immediately after being deployed for a peace-keeping operation in Sudan (THISDAY 2016).
- iv. *The Amit Sade Contracts*: On 6 October 2008, an Israeli contractor, a non-arms dealer, was awarded supply contracts to the tune of 5.2 billion nairas for the Nigerian military. (Eme & Umeokafor 2019). First, the company was to supply "assorted ammunition", costing 2.1 billion nairas, while the second

was to deliver 20 units of K-38 twin-hull boats, costing 3.1 billion nairas. For the “assorted ammunition”, Amit Sade, the dealer, was paid 95 percent but he only brought a 63 percent worth, while for the K-38 twin-hull boats, Amit Sade received cash of 80 percent upfront but supplied only 40 percent. Within the last decade, Amit Sade had received about six heavyweight military contracts worth 6.721 billion nairas. Shockingly, the contractor did not make delivery on any of these contracts. And there is no evidence of the refund of cash whatsoever (Eme & Umeokafor 2019).

- v. *The Shaldag Contracts Scandal of 2010*: Although the aforementioned scandals revealed the criminal actions of the Nigerian Army in the fight against terrorism, the Shaldag scandal gave rise to a regime of kleptocracy in the Nigerian Defence sector and the emergence of a criminal gang grown to be more powerful than the elected regimes. In 2010, an Israeli shipbuilder, Israeli Shipyards, won a \$25 million contract to deliver two fast assault boats to the Nigerian Navy. The actual market value of each boat was approximately \$5 million, implying that two boats cost \$10 million. Unfortunately, Nigeria lost a vast sum of \$15 million to a gang. According to the Israeli Police, Amit Sade, the middleman, got a share of \$1.47 million as a brokerage fee, while three persons faced trial in Israel over the fraudulent transaction (Ogala 2018).
- vi: *Dasukigate Scandal of 2013*: Sambo Dasuki, the National Security Adviser to President Goodluck Jonathan, was the lynchpin in the phantom arms scandal, involving the theft of USD 2.1 billion to procure arms equipment for operation Boyona. The operation aimed at dislodging terrorists’ camps along the borders with Cameroon, Chad, and Niger (Okeke 2016). The fund created for purchasing 12 helicopters, four fighter jets, and ammunition disappeared. Like other arms deals, Dasuki controlled the procurement with no supervision and virtually no input from the Defence Headquarters. Report from the investigation carried out by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) shows that the two companies, with no record of corporate history, in charge of the delivery, never supplied any weapon. The EFCC report shows that beneficiaries of the arms scandal included a large number of senior military officers, politicians, government officials, business people, and their families. (Okeke 2016)
- vii. *South African Arms Procurement Scandal*: On 5 September 2014, a considerable sum of \$9.3 million belonging to the Nigerian government was seized by the South African border authorities from two Nigerians and an Israeli

- who arrived in a private jet of one of the wealthiest Nigerian pastors, Ayo Oritsjafor (Yagboyaju 2017). The Nigerian government did not distance itself from the deal but admitted that the fund was for the acquisition of black-market arms for the Nigerian military. The question that naturally arises is if the government was using Oritsjafor's private jet for commercial purposes or the pastor was an agent working for the government. The event shows the secrecy of the arms deal and the nature of operation of the syndicate involved in arms procurement in Nigeria. (Yagboyaju 2017)
- viii. *Cash in Bullion Vans for Special Services*: Between November 2014 and February 2015, President Goodluck Jonathan authorized the withdrawal of 67.2 billion nairas in cash from the Central Bank of Nigeria for "special services" in connection to defence and security operations. According to the investigation conducted by EFCC under the Buhari administration in 2016, the funds could not be accounted for. (Ogala 2018)
- ix. *Missing N7 billion Boko Haram Fund*: In January 2015, Nurudeen Mohammed, then-Minister of State Foreign Affairs, requested N7 billion to support counter-terrorism. The fund was needed to urgently promote the operations of the Multinational Joint Task Force in the Lake Chad Basin. The money was allegedly transferred to the National Security Adviser; however, it remains unclear how it was used. In fact, most of the funds were traced to companies that had no business with the task force. After the withdrawal of N1.5 billion in cash, the remaining N5.5 billion, according to the report, simply disappeared and was only tagged missing. (Eyisi 2019)
- x. *Santa NIMASA Scandal*: This arms procurement scandal took place between 3 September 2014 and 30 April 2015. During this period, the leadership of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) and some other individuals were involved in the theft of N8.3 billion. NIMASA paid out the sum of N8.3 billion to the Joint Task Force Operation Pulo Shield – the military unit combating insurgency in the Niger Delta. While over 70 percent of the funds (N6 billion) were converted to US dollars and handed over to an unknown "private citizen", the remaining sum, around N2.3 billion, could not be accounted for. (Transparency International 2018)
- xi. *Ikoyi Scandal*: On 12 April 2017, \$43.4 million was discovered in the Defence Chief's wife's apartment in Ikoyi, Lagos. The defence chief claimed the cash was meant for undisclosed special security and defence projects. Provided that the cash was actually for special security matters, the motive for stashing

it in the Ikoyi apartment remains unclear and indicative of government theft (Transparency International 2018). Against the backdrop of the above scandals, several arrests of individuals such as Lieutenant General Azubuike Ihejirika, Lieutenant General Kenneth Minimah, Air Vice Marshal Alex Badeh, Major General Atewe Emmanuel, and many other politicians and business people directly or indirectly involved in the matter have been carried out by the Buhari's administration. Although his government has also been vilified for similar scandals, Buhari has, through his anti-corruption campaign, investigated the theft and other transgressions within the Ministry of Defence. He also demonstrated that self-aggrandizement and personal interests had, over the years, affected counter-terrorism and made peace and security elusive (Egobueze & Ojirika 2018). In addition, in 2016, President Muhammadu Buhari set up an investigating panel. The panel found out that, between 2007 and 2015, of the 513 contracts awarded at the total sum of USD 8,356,525,184,32 (2,189,265,724,404,55 nairas) and EUR 54,000,00, fifty-three (53) were failed contracts (contracts with no goods or services delivered) which amounted to a loss of USD 2,378,939,066,27 and 13,729,342,329, 87 nairas, respectively. (Fasan 2016)

It could be deduced from the above that military officers in charge of arms procurement signed several contracts and allocated funds without detailing tenders, agreements, proper accounting, or any actual acquisitions to show for the contracts. The prevailing culture has been that of free flow of funds without the formality of contracts and the disbursement of such funds between the lynchpins and other officers, politicians, heads of real or fake companies to whom contracts were awarded. Such actions are thought to be a key factor for the Nigerian Army's failures in combating terrorism. Though senior military officers initially denied that Boko Haram insurgents outgunned federal troops that were severely underequipped, they later admitted that the Nigerian forces lacked basic equipment. For example, in his statement to a question from journalists, Sambo Dasuki said, "we bought equipment, but alas, it is still on the high seas" (Jimoh 2016).

## **IMPLICATIONS OF EXPLOITATIVE DISPOSITIONS OF CORRUPT ELITES**

Selfish interests and the ensued corrupt practices within the ruling elites have inestimably undermined the desired peace, stability, and security in the northeastern part of Nigeria. The capitalist structure and exploitative tendencies of the ruling cabal will continue to affect the peace efforts. As fear and uncertainty engulf the region, socio-economic activities continue to dwindle, as both local and international investments find it a dangerous terrain for successful undertakings. In addition, this group of people, through mindless exploitation of financial resources, has impaired the region's development process. Not only is the area being underdeveloped and stricken with poverty and despair, but also highly dreaded and being avoided for its volatility. That being said, the nefarious activities of some corrupt officers have colossal consequences on Nigeria's budding democracy. Their inanities infringe on democratic principles of fundamental human rights, accountability, responsiveness, and good governance.

## **BLUEPRINTS FOR PEACE AND SUSTAINABLE SECURITY**

For successful counter-terrorism that will enable a peaceful and secure society and stimulate growth and development of the northeastern part, Nigeria must embark on massive socio-economic and infrastructural development. Unemployment, a 'secularized' religious environment, and an austere economic terrain have been major drivers of the conflict. In fact, Social Identity Model for Collective Action (SIMCA), which in its more recent iteration encompasses both politicized identity and violated moral beliefs, cogently captures the group's impact on Nigeria (Zomeren, Kutlaca & Turner-Zwinkels 2018). By using the notion of normative fit to bridge the two concepts, one could see that the group's desire to create an exclusively Islamic state and the perceived moral turpitude of the Nigerian elites and masses have been at the core of the conflict (Zomeren, Potsmes & Spears 2012). Boko Haram has leveraged on high unemployment rate to delegitimize the government by providing an alternative source of livelihood to the people in the region. It has even been discovered that Boko Haram offers small-scale loans to families of its members and the surrounding communities where it was established before the 2016 displacement. Other measures that the country must introduce into its counter-insurgency programme include:

- i. *Integrity*: Integrity has to do with the observance of ethical standards and moral values of uprightness, professionalism, and justice being the cornerstones of

- successful counter-terrorism and development. The veracity of people in charge of arms procurement may significantly ameliorate selfish interests and/or corrupt practices. There is a need to apply national integrity standards for all public officials through by-law or a generic code of conduct outlining the standards and expectations for the proper conduct of civil servants (OECD 2013). The national government should be involved in developing, updating, and diffusing the code of conduct and providing tailored advice, supervision, concrete models of supporting the execution of the code, and monitoring outcomes.
- ii. *Transparency*: Transparency is needed for a level playing field business and any other form of transaction. It stimulates accountability and guarantees access to data. Government should ensure that adequate and timely information about upcoming contracts and agreement notices and information about the status of ongoing procurement process are made known to the public. Information such as average procurement duration, justification of exceptions, and specific overview records by type of request procedure should be made available for scrutiny by external bodies. (OECD 2015)
  - iii. *Stakeholder Participation*: To significantly fix corruption in the Ministry of Defence, the government should adopt an open system of participation in the procurement process. An extensive range of concerned institutions or shareholders such as anti-corruption agencies, the private sector, the media, civil society, and the general public should be involved in procurement procedures. In addition, there is the need for an open and regular dialogue with suppliers and business associations to reinforce mutual understanding of factors shaping public markets. (OECD 2015)
  - iv. *Digitalized Procurement*: To reduce the theft of funds and, at the same time, promote transparency and accountability, the government should deploy Information and Communication Technology during the arms procurement process. E-procurement can lessen the direct interface between procurement executives and firms and enable easy detection of anomalies and fraud. This approach will strengthen the internal anti-corruption control system, detect integrity breaches and provide audit services trials that may facilitate an investigation process. (OECD 2015)
  - v. *Control and Monitoring*: Apart from supporting accountability and promoting integrity, control and monitoring activities provide access to valuable evidence on the performance and efficiency of the procurement cycle. Government should monitor and control the procurement cycle so as to have insights into

new and emerging risks or red flags. In addition to this, administering certain sanctions following the discovery of illicit behavior may become an effective deterrent.

## CONCLUSION

The paper suggests that the intractability of Boko Haram terrorism is largely due to economic and other forms of expressive selfish interests of corrupt ruling elites. It also points out that peace and security in the northeastern part of the country are elusive because of the economic forces. They manifest themselves in the form of rampant corrupt practices including but not limited to the kleptocratic capture of the defence sector, excessive secrecy within the Ministry of Defence, military exceptionalism, inflated and/or inadequate procurement of equipment/weapons, sabotage/espionage activities within the rank and file of the Nigerian Army, and the embezzlement of funds meant for the implementation of war. These nefarious activities are increasingly hampering counter-terrorism operations and also, in some ways, empowering Boko Haram terrorism across the northeastern region. Therefore, defeating Boko Haram insurgents and restoring peace, security, and a stable environment for development projects in the region requires an overhaul of the defense ministry's procurement department. There is the need to reconsider the current leadership stance on issues such as integrity, information management, transparency, proactive stance, accountability and openness of procurement dealings, digitalization of arms procurement, and oversight and control.

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## **ANALIZA SUKOBANIGERIJSKA ARMIIA – BOKO HARAM KROZ PRIZMU MARXOVE TEORIJE EKONOMSKOG DETERMINIZMA**

### **Rezime:**

Ovaj rad analizira dugotrajni sukob između nigerijske vlasti i Boko Harama iz perspektive teorije ekonomskog determinizma Karla Marxa. U njemu se istražuju finansijski interesi korumpiranih zvaničnika kao moguće objašnjenje neuspješnog protuterorizma. Također se tvrdi da je glavni faktor odgovoran za nerazrješivu prirodu sukoba materijalna korist koju političke elite izvlače iz njegovog produženja. Autori koriste teoriju ekonomskog determinizma da jasno pokažu kako su vladajući oligarsi u Nigeriji osujetili svaki pokušaj okončanja sukoba. Koristeći kvalitativnu istraživačku metodologiju, rad nastoji ilustrirati kako je želja za masovnim i neobuzdanim gomilanjem bogatstva nagnala političke i vojne elite u Nigeriji da spriječe sve napore uložene u rješavanje sukoba između Nigerije i Boko Harama. Drugim riječima, rad otkriva ključne veze između gomilanja bogatstva i produženja sukoba u Nigeriji.

**Ključne riječi:** terorizam; ekonomski determinizam; oligarsi; nacr; Nigerija

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