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Boko Haram and Insecurity in Nigeria: The Quest for a Permanent Solution

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Abstract

Of late, Nigeria has been gripped with threats of terrorism and general insecurity, which many believed are direct consequences of bad leadership, poverty, unemployment, widespread illiteracy and extreme deprivation. These ills provided the impetus for the anger that breeds religious extremism and terrorism. The emergence of Boko Haram and its attendant security challenges are therefore, the direct product of state failure in its responsibility to be sensitive to the plight and predicaments of the citizenry. The paper examined Boko Haram insurgency and its debilitating consequences for socio-economic and political development of the Nigerian state. The paper recommended that to achieve a lasting solution to the security challenges thrown up by the nefarious activities of the Boko Haram sect, government must revitalize and consolidate the socio-economic and political structures of the Nigerian state and the north in particular. More fundamentally, government should make conscious efforts towards building a genuine integration of the various ethnic nationalities within the Nigerian nation through instituting the cultures of true democracy and good governance anchored on fairness, equity, accountability, and transparency in the polity.

Key words: Boko Haram, poverty, terrorism, extremism, democracy, governance, insurgency, integration, fairness, equity, accountability, transparency.

Introduction

Nigeria today faces the greatest security challenge ever since the end of the Nigerian civil war in 1970. The tide of the menace of kidnapping has kept rising; armed robbers have had an undisturbed reign on Nigerian highways; while Boko Haram's persistent murderous terrorist attacks have destroyed several lives and property. After its first uprising was put down in 2009, Boko Haram rearmed, re-strategized and launched a full blown insurgency such as Nigeria has never known. The rise of Boko Haram in Nigeria has been ascribed to bad leadership, mass poverty, unemployment, social inequalities and high level of illiteracy, which have combined to fuel religious based violence. The Nigerian society and economy are in tatters; the masses are chained down in dehumanizing and grinding poverty while the country continued to maintain few islands of false prosperity in a turbulent ocean of penury and squalor. This has created legitimate grievances of social inequality among the general population especially in the northern parts of the country.

Despite the impressive official growth figures being touted by the authorities, the national economy has not experienced any meaningful transformation. Thus, the underlying causes of the present security challenges remain joblessness, hunger and disease, illiteracy, social inequality, poor leadership, among others. The challenge before the Nigerian nation in the fight against Boko Haram insurgency therefore, is about removing the north's infrastructural deficits and ending its peoples' abject and dehumanizing poverty. Accordingly, government, at all levels, should aim to embark on programmes and projects, which have direct bearings on the people's welfare. This position is shared by the President, Goodluck Jonathan, quoted in Wakili (2013) thus: "I agree totally that until we create jobs; until Nigerians can wake up and find food to eat; until Nigerians sick can walk to the hospital and get treatment; the economic indices may not mean much to us". However, in contrast, the military believed that counter violence was the main, if not the only, solution to Boko Haram insurgency.

The co-ordinated attacks by the sect across the country have posed serious threat to lives and property of Nigerians and endanger the unity and corporate existence of the Nigerian state. Terrorism was until the escalation of Boko Haram's heinous activities very alien to Nigeria. According to President Jonathan cited in Wakili (2014):

These things were never part of our country before this time. These things are very alien to us or because these days they say the world is a global village so the bad habits travel faster than the good ones.

The Boko Haram sect appeared determined to establish control and authority over the northern parts of Nigeria and progressively overwhelm the rest of the country. Their activities are thus, no less an armed revolt against the sovereign state of Nigeria. President Jonathan in Wakili (2013) lamented the rebellious acts of the Boko Haram group thus: “In many places, they have destroyed the Nigerian flag and other symbols of state authority and in their place hoisted strange flags suggesting the exercise of alternative sovereignty.”

The sect pursues a fanatical agenda of mayhem, mass murder, division, and separatism, which conflict with government’s duty and obligation of ensuring the security and well-being of its citizens as well as protecting the territorial integrity of the Nigerian state. According to Odo (2014), while the security agencies are doing what they have to do, the solution to the security challenges in the country ultimately lies in the enthronement of good governance in which opportunities are created for everyone who wants to work to have a source of living and poverty is reduced to the barest minimum if not completely eradicated; where there is social justice and equity. This is underscored by the recent global perspective on security as a struggle to secure the most basic necessities of life such as food, health-care, shelter, education, among others. The absence of these basic human securities generates social unrests, which are often exploited by miscreant groups such as Boko Haram. Thus, the emergence of Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria is a direct consequence of government failure to provide the basic human needs of the citizenry. The indicators of this failure include the prevalence of abject and dehumanizing poverty; bad governance; high rate of unemployment; hunger and disease; rising tides of social unrest; etc, which have created the breeding ground for the rise and escalation of Boko Haram insurgency.

The emergence of Boko Haram

Boko Haram, which colloquially means “western education is sin” calls itself “Jama’atu Ahlussuna Lidda’wati Waljihad”. The group is an extremist Islamic sect poised to create an Islamic state in Nigeria based on sharia law. The group came into being in the mid-1990s around Maiduguri in the north-eastern state of Borno under one Abubakar Lawan (Copeland, 2013) cited in Odo (2014). The sect lacked any coherent identity until it came under the leadership of a charismatic Islamic cleric known as Muhammad Yusuf. In 2003, Yusuf led the sect in a movement, which espoused a conservative theology that opposed the Nigerian secular state referring to it as corrupt and unislamic (Odo, 2014)

The sect later spread from the city of Maiduguri in Borno state into other states like Yobe, Adamawa, Bauchi and Niger. In the course of time, the group attracted more followers by addressing their basic physical needs such as food, shelter and other forms of welfare handouts, which the people were not able to receive from

the state. Nigerian unemployed youths and war refugees across the border from Chad, Mali, Sudan, Libya, etc formed the bulk of the group's membership.

The group had remained relatively docile and un-noticed by the larger Nigerian population and the international community until July, 2009, when it clashed with the security forces resulting in the death of its leader, Muhammad Yusuf. The deputy leader of the group, Abubakar Shekau, assumed the mantle of leadership of the group and organized deadly attacks on the civilian population, government establishments, military and police installations, schools, churches and mosques, offices, including United Nations Headquarters in Abuja. These operations expanded Boko Haram's theatre of activities from the north-eastern states to other parts of the north such as Kano, Kaduna, Niger, Sokoto, Zamfara, Katsina, Jigawa and Abuja.

The Boko Haram sect dreamt of a new society devoid of corruption and whose sole purpose was to remain close to Allah (God). According to the group, the main stream of Nigerian society had been polluted by western values, which in their opinion, was a deviation from the principles of sharia (Walker, 2012). In pursuance of their vision of creating an Islamic state of Nigeria, the group drew on the teachings of Taymiyyah, a 13th century Islamic cleric, which advocated that:

In the face of leadership by Muslims who did not behave in a benevolent way and used their leadership to oppress, it was accepted to Allah for individuals to withdraw from corrupt system and fight it with violence (Walker, 2012).

The purpose of the group was therefore, to withdraw from the Nigerian society, which in their view had become corrupt beyond redemption and wage war against it.

Boko Haram has been described as a movement of grassroots anger among northern masses at the continued deprivation and extreme poverty in the region. The vision of the sect bordered on creating a state anchored on sharia law, which would replace the secular state of Nigeria. In the states of Boko Haram stronghold, the sect provided state-like functions such as welfare services, job training and placement in mini-industries including moral police, similar to the Hisbah religious Police in Kano (Walker, 2012).

Boko Haram could not have in the actual sense rejected out of hand western education as implied in its literal interpretation; since it enjoyed a wide range of products of western education such as mobile phone, cameras, vehicles, chemical explosives, automatic weapons, communication gadgets, among others. However, Boko Haram has serious grudges against northern elites created by the British colonial policy of indirect rule whom, according to the sect have had their heads turned from Allah by easy money and corrupting western values (Walker, 2012). The group believed that the western educated northern elites were spiritually and morally

corrupt, lacking in religious piety, and guilty of criminal self-enrichment rather than dedicating themselves to the Muslim *uma* (community).

The socio-economic and political dimensions of the Boko Haram insurgency

It has been alleged in some quarters that northern political, traditional and religious leaders were behind Boko Haram insurgency in pursuance of an agenda for the promotion of northern domination and the supremacy of the Muslim religion in the affairs of the Nigerian state (Odo, 2014). According to this assertion, Boko Haram was meant to undermine the administration of President Goodluck Jonathan, a southern Christian. However, Haruna (2013) argued that Boko Haram was the creation of bitter politics, which predated President Jonathan's presidency dating back to about 2002. During most of that time, the group had remained docile but turned violent following the military's attack on its headquarters in July, 2009. The attack, which was ordered by late President Umaru Musa Yar'adua, was presumed to have wiped-out the sect until it returned about a year later with deadly attacks under Abubakar Shekau, who was until the death of Muhammad Yusuf, the deputy leader of the group.

The emphasis on the military option in tackling the Boko Haram insurgency by the Government of President Jonathan appears to suggest that the lesson of the return of the sect about a year after it was presumed extinct has not been learnt. According to Haruna (2013), the rejection of this lesson by the President Jonathan Administration, has led to suspicions by some northerners that: "The authorities do not want to end the insurgency because ending it would make it difficult, if not impossible, to rig the 2015 elections in a region widely regarded as hostile to his (Jonathan) stay in office."

Riding on the crest of such sentiment, Haruna (2013) further argued that it was absurd for anyone to think that a sect, whose creed was widely regarded as heretic by the mainstream religious and secular leaders in the north will be their choice for advancing their religious or political interest. It is also argued that from the attempts on the lives of some prominent traditional rulers in the north like the Shehu of Borno; the Emir of Kano and from the number of Muslims and their clerics killed or attacked by Boko Haram, that even if anyone in the north ever sponsored the sect, the purported sponsors have since lost control over it.

The perennial ethnic and sectarian disturbances in northern Nigeria, such as the Sokoto jihad; Tiv riot; Maintasine riot; Zango-kataff riot; Jos crisis; Juku-Taraba communal crisis; among others had created a fertile ground for Boko Haram. Also, bad leadership and corruption have provided a rallying cry for Boko Haram. According to Human Rights Watch Report (2012), which quoted an interview with Muhammed Yusuf, - Boko Haram's first leader:

Corruption became the catalyst for Boko Haram... would have found it difficult to gain a lot of these people if he was operating in a functional state. But his teaching was easily accepted because the environment, the frustrations, the corruption, and the injustice made it fertile for his ideology to grow fast, very fast, like wildfire.

The group had continued to emphasize corruption and injustice as the motivating factors for their desire to institutionalize Islamic government based on the principles of sharia, which they saw as anti-dote to corruption and lack of basic social services such as health-care, education, water, electricity, good housing, roads, amongst others for the ordinary citizens.

As the Human Rights Watch Report (2012) noted, while professing to oppose corruption, Boko Haram has at times openly exploited it to advance its cause. For example, the Report observed that Boko Haram claimed that it succeeded in carrying out a car bomb attack on the United Nations Office in Abuja, in August, 2011 by bribing government security personnel at check points along the 800kms route from Maiduguri to Abuja. According to Boko Haram's spokesman quoted in the Report, "luckily for us, security agents were not out to work diligently but to find money for themselves, and N20.00 or N50.00 that was politely given to them gave us a pass" (HRW Report, 2012).

Besides corruption, the prevalent abject poverty and deprivation was another condition Boko Haram fully exploited to its advantage. Nearly, 100 million Nigerians live on less than one US dollar a day. In January 2012, Nigeria's National Bureau of Statistics released a report showing that the percentage of Nigerians living in absolute poverty had increased nation-wide from 55 to 61% between 2004 and 2010 (NNBS Report, 2012). This phenomenal rise in the country's poverty profile was particularly notable given that in the preceding year (2011), Nigeria was the world's fourth largest exporter of oil (HRW, Report, 2012).

Poverty is unevenly distributed in Nigeria with the north being the worst off. The National Bureau of Statistics' Report (2012) showed that 70% of Nigerians in the north-eastern part of the country (Boko Haram's traditional stronghold) lived on less than one US dollar a day compared to 50 and 59% in the south-western and south-eastern Nigeria respectively. Also, government's demographic and health survey in 2008 cited in Human Right Watch Report (2012) revealed that less than 23% of women and 54% of men in the north-east Nigeria could read and write compared to more than 79% of women and 90% of men in the south. Furthermore, chronic malnutrition among children is also more prevalent in northern Nigeria than in the south. Infrastructural development also lags behind in the north. In the north-east, for instance, only 24% of households have access to electricity compared with 71% of households in the south-west (Wakili, 2013). Unemployment, lack of economic

opportunities, and wealth inequalities are sources of deep frustration across the country, especially in many parts of the north.

Boko Haram has thus, exploited Nigeria's history of ethnic and sectarian strife along with conditions of extreme poverty and deprivation, pervasive corruption at all levels of government, unemployment and social injustice as justification for its violent campaign. The Boko Haram sect believed that the infiltration of America and European cultures into Nigeria has a corrupting influence on the country's governance, hence their anti-west and America. All these have informed the desire of the group to establish an Islamic state of Nigeria based on sharia. In fact, the emergence of Boko Haram reflects the long festering extremist impulses that reign deep in the social reality of northern Nigeria.

Despite per capital income of more than \$2,700 and annual GDP growth of 7%, Nigeria has one of the world's poorest populations (Johnson, 2011). Economic disparities between the north and the rest of the country are particularly stark. In the north, 72% of the people live in poverty compared to 27% in the south (Johnson, 2012). Indeed, most of the apparent ethnic and religious crises in the north, and the youth restiveness and criminality in the south can be linked to increasing economic inequality. According to Nasir Ahmed El-Rufai in Johnson (2012), "An analysis of public investments in infrastructure and human capital in the north eastern Nigerian would explain why the region is not only home to flawed elections and economic hopelessness but Boko Haram insurgency as well."

Given the level of underdevelopment in the north, the generality of northerners fear that their political influence in the country was fast waning. Also, many northern Muslims, especially, in the opposition parties viewed the presidency of Goodluck Jonathan, a Christian, as illegitimate, arguing that he ignored an informal power-rotation agreement that should have kept a Muslim-northerner as President this time around. The northern Muslims' anxiety over southern Christians' control of the economy as well as the political power with the election of President Goodluck Jonathan (Christian) fueled the post-2011 election crisis and the rise of Muslim fundamentalism (Odo, 2013). These developments, which further alienated the Muslim north, played a significant role in the spread of Boko Haram sect in the region.

Boko Haram induced insecurity

The continued wanton destruction of lives and property by Boko Haram insurgency has been worrisome and cannot be a way of life. The insecurity induced by the activities of the group has degenerated to an intolerable level exposing everybody to danger. The dangerous trend in insecurity associated with the Boko Haram sect is worsened by the alleged complicity among high-ranking security

personnel and public officials. Lamenting the situation, President Good luck Jonathan quoted by HRW Report (2012) said:

Some of them are in the executive arm of government; some of them are in the parliamentary/legislative arm of government, while some of them are even in the judiciary. Some are in the armed forces, the police and other security agencies. Some continue to dip their hands and eat with you and you won't even know the person who will point a gun at you or plant a bomb behind your house.

The infiltration of the group into government showed the seriousness of the challenge posed by the Boko Haram sect to national security and the survival of Nigeria as a corporate entity. It is a truism that without security hardly is anything possible. The insecurity situation in the country consequent upon the Boko Haram violence has led many to wonder if Nigeria has not returned to that historical epoch known as "state of nature" where according to Thomas Hobbes in Appadorai (1974), life was solitary, nasty, brutish and short. The severe security threats to life and property posed by Boko Haram across the country send wrong signals to the international community that Nigeria was not safe for investment. This is because insecurity is a risk factor, which investors dreads and makes them to move elsewhere.

One of the most dreadful fallouts of Boko Haram bombings and killings was the fear that the hatred it has so far generated may ultimately endanger the continued existence of Nigeria as one nation. For instance, millions of non-indigenes in the traditional flash points of Boko Haram activities, especially the Igbos were desperate to return to their home states before they are killed. According to Philip (2012), soon after the Boko Haram's attack on Kano in January, 2012, the Kano chapter of Ohanaeze Ndigbo issued a press statement thus:

The Igbos resident in Kano is living with naked fear and apprehension. Though there are few of us who like to stay and defend ourselves, the majority of us, particularly women and children numbering over three million are jostling to leave the north because unfolding events indicate that the north is no longer safe for easterners. Ohanaeze Ndigbo, Kano, hereby calls on the governors of the eastern states and the south-south to provide means of transportation with adequate security to evacuate our brethren who would want to leave because human life is precious and should be protected as such.

This is an indication that Boko Haram insurgency has not only threatened the polity but also the very existence of the Nigerian nation. The northerners resident in the eastern states were also threatened in the wake of the wanton killings and destruction of property in many parts of the north and fled the areas with their families (Okpaga,

etal, 2012). Similarly, many National Youth Service Corp (NYSC) members of southern origin have been rejecting their postings to the north while those already serving there besieged the Commission's headquarters in Abuja daily seeking re-deployment from states in the north.

Boko Haram offensives have targeted churches to exacerbate sectarian differences between the Christian south and Muslim north; and also government security and financial institutions to undermine the Goodluck Jonathan administration. The insurgency has increased insecurity across the country leading President Goodluck Jonathan to declare a state of emergency in December, 2011 covering 15 local government areas across the north. Also, in May, 2013, another state of emergency was declared in three states of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa in the north eastern Nigeria. This followed the increased tempo of Boko Haram hostilities in the affected states. Nigeria has witnessed unprecedented level of insecurity from Boko Haram insurgency.

Nigerians cannot continue to live under the siege of permanent fear and insecurity. It is therefore, expected that government should intensify efforts to address the threat of Boko Haram insurgency through a co-ordinate multi-dimensional approach that would bring about a permanent solution to the crisis. The Federal Government of Nigeria spends a huge chunk of its annual budget on security without providing security to Nigerians. This is because of the mono-sectoral approach of the government, which places undue emphasis on military solution without addressing the underlying causes of the security challenges such as poverty, joblessness, illiteracy, hunger and disease, amongst others.

The quest for permanent solution

The Nigerian nation has passed through challenging periods in its history but the situation bedeviling the country today is quite different from other challenges of the past. The government, after two failed attempts to dialogue with Boko Haram through former President Obasanjo, and Alhaji – Datti respectively, inaugurated another Presidential Committee on Dialogue and Peaceful Resolution of the Security Challenges in the north under the Chairmanship of Kabiru Turaki, Special Duties Minister in April, 2013 (Imam, 2013). This was in recognition of the fact that conscious and persistent work towards peace is the only way to defeat BokoHaram insurgency. This is because brute force could create a deadly cycle of mistrust, which might harm the very citizens the government owes the duty to protect.

There is no doubt that Boko Haram insurgency has to be dealt with militarily, but it is important that this does not become a focus on a military solution. According to the Senate President, David Mark, in Hassan (2013):

Our response to terrorism cannot depend on might and military force alone. The bigger challenge is to win the hearts and minds of the locals from whom the fanatics recruit their foot soldiers. To win hearts and reshape attitudes, we must identify and address the root causes of this extremism and sectarian hate.

The government should therefore, not be distracted from the search for a sustainable political solution as military solution cannot end Boko Haram in the long run. Political resolution remains the long term solution to the crisis.

The government must have the political will to hunt-down and fish-out sponsors of Boko Haram. The jinx of impunity enjoyed by high profile Nigerians alleged to be sponsors and collaborators with Boko Haram must be broken. The government at the moment lacked the will to bring such individuals to book. In an apparent reference to the culture of impunity around some high profile Nigerians and the escalation of Boko Haram violence across the northern states, former President Obasanjo quoted in Copeland (2013) said that “when you have a sore and fail to attend to it quickly, it festers and grows to become something else.”

The socio-economic development of northern Nigeria must be addressed as a critical aspect of the permanent solution to the challenges of Boko Haram insurgency in the country. Northern Nigeria has very deep development problems. The level of poverty and deprivation is higher in the north than the rest of the country (Ahmed, 2011). The government should therefore, take seriously the socio-economic deprivation and severe wealth inequality among the general population of northern Nigeria as a strategy to remove the threat of the Boko Haram insurgency in the long run. There is thus, an urgent need for aggressive programme of developing the north to improve the lives and living conditions of the people. This is because security is tied more, to the satisfaction of human needs than merely amassing weapons. The contemporary thinking about security is therefore, more encompassing. According to Ogunbawo quoted in Nwolise (2006):

Security is more than military security or security from external attacks. For many of the four billion inhabitants in the developing countries, security is conceived as the basic level of the struggle for survival. Therefore, in order to provide an integrated African security assessment, the non-military dimensions of security should be added. Henceforth, African security as a concept should be applied in its broadest sense to include economic security, food security, the equality of life security and technology security.

For a nation to be truly secured it must have a strong military force; strong and buoyant economy; a contented and happy people; and a good government run by a patriotic and democratic leadership. Security has thus, been drawn beyond the military

realm to incorporate non-military factors like development. For example, as Robbert McNamara cited in Orwa (1984) asserted:

Any society that seeks to achieve adequate military security against the background of acute food shortage, population explosion, low level of production and per capital income, low technological development, inadequate and inefficient public utilities, and chronic problems of unemployment, has a false sense of security.

Indeed, the era of state-centered security in which significant percentage of national resources is used for procurement of military hardwares at the expense of the quality of lives of citizens has gone. According to Audu Ogbe cited in Joseph (2012):

The best security is not in huge budgetary allocation; it is in the contentment of the people. A budgetary allocation of N81.41 billion for agriculture and rural development was too small, where security alone is getting N668.45 billion. Real security lies in the contentment of the people; as long as there is poverty and hunger, insecurity will continue to threaten the nation.

There is thus, no doubt that the Boko Haram insurgency thrives on poverty and capitalizes on the popular frustration with the nation's political leadership; poor governance; in-effective services delivery; and dismal living conditions of the populace.

The issue of tackling Boko Haram insurgency is far above and beyond the narrow militaristic thinking, which the political leadership in Nigeria has reduced it. The consequence of this attitude is the uncontrollable rising wave of Boko Haram's violent attacks on civilian populations; senseless massacre and abduction of school children; bombing of military and police installations; churches and Mosques in the northern parts of the country in the face of unprecedented increased budgetary allocations to security. These attacks are horrendous, criminal, callous and devoid of any shred of humanity.

The position taken in this paper and as canvassed elsewhere (Odo, 2012), is that the permanent solution to the Boko Haram insurgency must be based on good governance whereby the issues of social injustice, economic inequality, political marginalization and alienation among the population, corruption, and abject poverty, mass illiteracy, unemployment, etc would be squarely addressed. This would require strengthening democratic institutions and structures in the country and ensuring the judicious use of national resources towards improving the living conditions of the people. This is the surest way of diffusing the insecurity storm. Nigeria should put measures in place to support employment generation industrialization; so as to absorb the huge population of the unemployed youths. Similarly, a significant percentage of

the country's resources should be channeled into massive investment in agriculture. Agriculture must become commercialized in order to achieve food security and provide employment; and to address the deepening poverty and despair. Until and unless Nigeria addresses these challenges, it will literally be chasing shadows in the war against Boko Haram insurgency.

The contemporary conception of security is all-embracing of military, economic, social, cultural and technological variables; and is based on people, development, and justice rather than weapons. Thus, Nigeria needs a new approach to the war against Boko Haram insurgency, which will in addition to military strategies accommodate and promote the socio-economic development and well-being of the people; in such a way and manner that no segment of the society is marginalized or oppressed. The loyalty of the people to the Nigerian state would thus, be assured. This in turn, will guarantee national security through a collective action against Boko Haram insurgency and similar other threats to the Nigerian state.

Conclusion

The paper has argued that the actions of Boko Haram insurgents are barbaric and extremely wicked. The attack and abduction of innocent school children for whatever, kind of grief or emotional dysfunction is inhuman and unacceptable to any right thinking person. Killing children is akin to cutting down the future of a people. The paper concluded that the military approach to tackling the Boko Haram insurgency in the country has failed not for lack of professional competence and capability on the part of the Nigerian security forces per se but because it was a wrong prescription, which addresses the symptoms of the problem rather than the root causes.

The paper therefore, recommended that the permanent solution to the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria lies in the domestication of true democracy and good governance, which will address the socio-economic and political roots on which extremist ideologies thrive such as absolute and dehumanizing poverty; high corruption; bad leadership; electoral fraud; social injustice; inequality, etc. As Governor Shettima of Borno State cited in Krishi (2014) asserted: "The major cause is extreme poverty. Our youths are there without anything doing; once you create jobs; once you improve on the quality of governance; believe me, this madness will evaporate."

Also, fundamentally, government must down play, political, religious and ethnic differences among the people and work towards the unity of Nigeria in order to arouse the collective anger of Nigerians against Boko Haram. The convocation of the National Conference or Dialogue for instance, provides a unique opportunity to search for a new and creative ways of eliminating tendencies that drive people to extremism as has been amply demonstrated by the Boko Haram insurgency.

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