

# ANNEXES A LA DECLARATION

## **Document N°1 :**

### ***The Rise of Terrorism in West Africa: The Case of Boko Haram in Nigeria***

(Professor Olayemi Ankinwumi\*)

La communication ci –dessous a été faite par notre collègue le Professeur **Olayemi Ankinwumi de** l'Université de Nasarawa State du NIGERIA.

Elle est extraite de actes du colloque International des Armées de la République du Sénégal du 9 au 11 Novembre 2011, organisé par l'Etat Major Général des Armées en partenariat avec le CEDS de DAKAR la Communauté des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (CEDEAO)-Fondation Konrad Adenauer -Fondation Charles Léopold Mayer -Centre d'Etudes Stratégiques de l'Afrique (Washington DC) -Université Cheikh Anta Diop -Forces de Défense et de Sécurité de l'Afrique de l'Ouest.

Il éclaire sous un jour nouveau, avec des informations et une analyse particulièrement rigoureuse la connaissance et la compréhension que nous devons avoir de BOKO HARAM.

« La Matinale Géopolitique » du CEDS de Dakar met à votre disposition une source exclusive d'où vous pourrez puiser des informations authentiques sur BOKO HARAM.

## **The Rise of Terrorism in West Africa: The Case of Boko Haram in Nigeria**

### **INTRODUCTION**

In March 2004, the Deputy Head of US European Command, General Charles Waid, noticed a darkening cloud of terrorism moving across continental Africa and cutting across the sub-Saharan Africa. According to him, the continent was becoming a potential ground for terrorist organizations or individuals to operate with semi-impunity. This is because Africa has a large land area that is conducive to terrorist operations or sanctuary. Waid further observed that al-Qaeda was “being squeezed significantly by the international community out of Afghanistan and as a result, they are going to have to go to someplace else, somewhere they can operate and one of them obviously could be Africa”. Although most contemporary writings on terrorism focus on the international dimension or manifestation of terrorism, sub-regional and even state terror has been a long standing feature of Africa. In fact, by any objective standard, Africa is the continent most affected by terrorism- albeit not yet by international terrorism. Nigeria, just like other states in West Africa has had and still having its fair share of state terrorism.

Terrorism in West Africa

---

\* **Olayemi Akinwumi** is a prominent historian and Professor at the Nasarawa State University. He is presently the President of the Historical Society of Nigeria. He is a recipient of many national and international awards. Professor Akin wuni is an erudite scholar with over 50 publications. His major work is *Conflict and crises in Nigeria: A Political history since 1960*.

In a paper on Terrorism in West Africa by Cyril Obi, I agree that West Africa “given historical and cultural factors and the political instability, poverty, socio-economic and governance crises and conflicts that have ravaged the region, it could be potentially vulnerable to terrorism”. Secondly, the civil wars in West Africa, have provided the opportunities for the terrorist groups to penetrate into the region and participate in the blood diamond business. There are documentary evidence to show that the al Qaeda and Hezbollah have maintained an active presence in the region. Thirdly, because the region is home to more than 50 per cent Muslims, it has been possible for radical Islamic organizations to penetrate and operate.

### **Terrorism: Conceptual Discourse**

The conceptualization of Terrorism has arouse heated debate and critical discourse on its essential nature, character, meaning and definition over the years and across different shades and divides of opinion and intellectual thinking. While some looked at it, based on the effects it has on them and the larger society, others conceptualized it from the perspective of its ideological proclivity. The often repeated statement “one man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter” reflects the difficulties about what constitute “terrorism”. Therefore, the concept terrorism, is an ambiguous one rendering little room for definitional concession. The Council on Foreign Relations highlights four key elements of terrorism:(a) it is premeditated-planned in advanced, rather than an impulse act of rage (b) it is political (c) it is aimed at civilians (d) it is carried out by sub-national groups-not by the army. For the purpose of this presentation, I will consider one of the various definitions. The 1937 Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of terrorism defines it as “all criminal acts directed against the state and intended or calculated to create state of terror in the minds of particular persons or a group of persons or the general public” (Duffy 2006:17).

### **The Emergence of Boko Haram Sect in Nigeria**

Boko Haram, which figuratively means “western education is a sin or forbidden” is a Nigerian Islamist group that seeks the imposition of shariah law throughout the whole Nigeria. “Boko” is an Hausa word meaning “animist, western or otherwise non-Islamic education” and “Haram,” an Arabic word meaning “sin” or literally “forbidden”. People gave it the name, Boko Haram, because of its strong opposition to western education. It sees it as corrupting Muslims. The official name is “Jama’atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda’ awati wal-Jihad,” which in arabic means “People committed to the propagation of the Prophet’s teaching and jihad”.

The group was formed in 2002 but became known internationally after the sectarian violence in 2009 The group has strong holds in four states in the country. The states are Yobe, Kano, Bauchi and Borno. The sect is gradually extending to other states in the northern section. Maiduguri remains the core base of the sect. The group presently has an undefined structure and chain of command. The group has succeeded in recruiting members because of the serious unemployment problem in Nigeria.

### **Origin**

Mohammed Yusuf, a radical Islamist cleric, created Boko Haram sect in 2002 in Maiduguri, the capital of the northeastern state of Borno. The sect aims to establish a fully Islamic state in Nigeria, including the implementation of criminal sharia courts across the country. Paul Lubeck, a university of California professor studying muslim societies in Africa, says Yusuf was a trained salafist (a school of thought often associated with jihad) and

was strongly influenced by Ibn Taymiyyah, a fourteenth century legal scholar who preached Islamic fundamentalism and is considered a major theorist for radical groups in the Middle East.

Many Nigerians believe Yusuf rejected all things western, but Lubeck argues that Yusuf, who embraced technology, believed that western education should be mediated through Islamic scholarship, such as rejecting the theory of evolution and western style banking. Against the backdrop of his belief that western education should be mediated through Islamic scholarship, Yusuf established a religious complex that included a mosque and a school. Many families from across Nigeria and from neighbouring countries enrolled their children in the school, which also served as a recruiting centre for jihadists to fight the Nigerian state. In 2004, the group moved to Kanamma, Yobe state, where it set up a base called "Afghanistan," where police outposts are attacked and police officers killed. It is also here that the leader promised that "this war that is yet to start would continue for long".

### **Ideology and Mode of Operation**

Boko Haram opposes not only western education, but western culture and modern science as well. The group also forbids the wearing of shirts and pants and the act of voting in elections. In their view, the Nigerian state is governed by a non-believer. The leader criticised northern Muslims for participating in an illegitimate, non-Islamic state and preached a doctrine of withdrawal. Crisis between the government and the sect began in July 2009 as a refusal of the sect to follow a motor bike helmet law, leading to heavy handed police tactics that set off an armed uprising in the northern state of Bauchi and spread into states of Borno, Yobe and Kano. The incident was suppressed by the army and left more than eight hundred dead. Among those killed were Yusuf, the leader of the sect and his father-in-law.

It is important to note that the Human Rights considered the death of Yusuf to be extra-judicial. With the death of the leader in the Police custody, security agencies thought the sect has been destroyed, but the group re-emerged under another leader and began a campaign of assassinations by motor cycle riding gunmen carrying kalashnikov rifles under traditional robes. The group has split into three factions today. There is the moderate group. The group is ready to end the violence in the region. The second group supports peaceful settlement and calls for rewards from the government while the uncompromising group refuses any end to violence. The group insists on implementing strict shariah law across the country. The uncompromising faction, under Abubakar Shekau, has urged his followers to carry out more assassinations and bombings. The faction was responsible to the bombing of the Police Force headquarters in Abuja and the United Nations building in Abuja. The group's violent campaigns have left more than 240 people died this year.

### **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

The attempt being made in this paper is to examine the incidence of terrorism and terrorist activities in the West African sub-region with particular focus on the emergence and the activities of the Boko Haram sect in Nigeria. The paper argues that Africa has some fertile conditions for terrorism to thrive on the continent and its emergence in one region often has spill-over or multiplier effects on the other regions. The paper dissolves from a continental overview or a macro-terrorism assessment to focus on a sub-state terrorism in Nigeria epitomised in the Boko Haram and opines that based on its ideology and mode of operations, Boko Haram is by all standard a terrorist group operating in Nigeria since 2002, leaving tales of sorrow, tears and losses in the wake of its operation and anti-government activities.