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# TERRORISM IN NIGERIA

The word terrorism comes from the reign of terror instigated by Maxmilien Robespierre in 1793 following the French revolution. This implies that terrorism is not a child of modernity; it is as old as the existence of man. The history is as old as human’s willingness to use violence to effect politics (About.com,

The word terrorism comes from the reign of terror instigated by Maxmilien Robespierre in 1793 following the French revolution. This implies that terrorism is not a child of modernity; it is as old as the existence of man. The history is as old as human’s willingness to use violence to effect politics. The term terrorism is better understood from the point of view of the person being represented. This is because to the victims of terrorism the perpetrators are terrorists while to the perpetrators, terrorism is an act targeted at reforming or enforcing change. terrorism is the use of violent action in order to achieve political aims or force a government to act. The people or individuals that carry out acts of terrorisms are known as terrorists. Characteristically, terrorism involves the following:

• Use of unlawful violence believing that violence will usher in a better system

• Use of unlawful and assorted dangerous weapons

• Motivated by goals that might be political, religious or ideological

• Secretive in membership recruitment and locations of residence

• Fewer in number comparable to the larger society they attack

• Have strong will and could die for the course they uphold

• Most times, operate as syndicates

• Derive financial and military supports from national and international loyalists

• They are militant, they use coercion, intimidation and instil fears in people

Their tactics involve:

• Suicide bombing, car bombing, rocket propelled grenades, assassinations, abductions and kidnapping,

disguising and hijacking.

Their targets are extermination of human lives and destruction of properties. These are achieved by attacking:

• Public squares, government buildings and installations, churches and mosques, schools, bridges, police stations, military barracks and installations as well as market squares and prisons to free inmates particularly their members incarcerated.

The history of terrorism in Nigeria is traceable to the emergence of a group of Islamic militants called “Boko Haram” in 2002. “Boko Haram” is translated to mean “western education is evil”. The progressive destructive activities of “Boko Haram” made the US department of states to designate them as terrorist organization in November, 2013. Since the emergence of this sect in 2002, human lives had been lost to their attacks in thousands. The Vanguard newspaper put the death toll at more than 12,000 with more than 8000 injured or maimed and thousands of other innocent Nigerians displaced (Vanguard, 18th May, 2014). he killings have continued unabated until recently that they are being gradually overcome. Their escalated activities created widespread insecurity among Nigerians, increase tensions between various ethnic communities, interrupt development activities, frighten off investors and generate concern among Nigeria’s northern neighbors (Eme and Ibietam, 2012). According to Okpaga, Chijioke and Innocent (2012), between July 27th 2009 and February 17th 2012, “Boko Haram” had carried out 53 deadly attacks. Wikipedia reported 57 attacks between September 2010 and 11th August, 2014.

After its founding in 2002, Boko Haram's increasing radicalisation led to the suppression operation by the Nigerian military forces and the summary execution of its leader Mohammed Yusuf in July 2009. Its unexpected resurgence, following a mass prison break in September 2010 in Bauchi, was accompanied by increasingly sophisticated attacks, initially against soft targets, but progressing in 2011 to include suicide bombings of police buildings and the United Nations office in Abuja. The government's establishment of a state of emergency at the beginning of 2012, extended in the following year to cover the entire northeast of Nigeria, led to an increase in both security force abuses and militant attacks.

Of the 2.3 million people displaced by the conflict since May 2013, at least 250,000 have left Nigeria and fled into Cameroon, Chad or Niger. Boko Haram killed over 6,600 in 2014. The group have carried out mass abductions including the kidnapping of 276 schoolgirls from Chibok in April 2014. Corruption in the security services and human rights abuses committed by them have hampered efforts to counter the unrest.

In mid-2014, the militants gained control of swathes of territory in and around their home state of Borno, estimated at 50,000 square kilometres (20,000sq mi) in January 2015, but did not capture the state capital, Maiduguri, where the group was originally based. On 7 March 2015, Boko Haram's leader Abubakar Shekau pledged allegiance to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, rebranding as Islamic State in West Africa. In September 2015, the Director of Information at the Defence Headquarters of Nigeria announced that all Boko Haram camps had been destroyed but attacks from the group continue. In 2019, president of Nigeria, Muhammadu Buhari claimed that Boko Haram is 'technically defeated'. However, attacks by Boko Haram have escalated and it still poses a major threat as of 2020.