**IRD 214: INSURGENCY AND COUNTER-INSURGENCY**

**WEEK 6: Militancy and its Rise**

1. **INTRODUCTION**

The activities of Insurgent groups has been a significant issue in the international community, especially in the 21st century, and it shows no sign of retracting. The rise and spread of Insurgency are by no chance limited to a particular country, as most regions of the world have experienced one form of Insurgency at various junctions in their history. In the lexicon of armed struggles against a **ruling authority**, one finds the use of the word **Militancy**. **Militancy** as a concept has a close link with I**nsurgency**; this is because the concept of Militancy derives its original element from Insurgency, yet it remains distinctly different.

**6.1. WHAT IS MILITANCY**

Militancy can be said to be the activities of **armed** or **antagonistic groups** who seek to make use of **violence** or **aggression** as a means to achieve their **limited political objectives**. The concept originated from the Latin verb **“Militare”** which means to “**serve as a soldier**”. The term was used to refer to **earlier soldiers** in the **ancient Roman era** and then entered the **medieval lexicon**. In the **Medieval Era,** it referred to the **civilian units** organized in response to the **defence** or **war need of society**. Within the **modern context**, the concept of **Militancy** has morphed to acquire a new meaning. Such new meaning is employed to label groups that utilize **aggression** of **various nature** to achieve their **limited** **political objective**s. Likewise, the use of the term **Militancy** is employed by governments as well as the mass media to **downplay** or **reduce** the effect of the threat posed by **militant groups**. They apply this tactic to the point that, such **militant groups** lack an effective **threat perception** in the **mindsets** of **citizens** and **situation** watchers as well as reduce such group likelihood to form into a **credible insurgency**. Its usage elicits in the perception of observers the view that such a group are seen as **criminal** and **misguided miscreant** as well as that said group are confined to a **particular region** where their ability to threaten the lives of citizen are constrained. Such concerns have been bantered around by government to validate actions against the militant in such a way that justify their actions.

A stack deviation of Militancy from Insurgency is that they do not have as their **primary** **aim “to replace a government”.** Their actions are meant to cause a **reform** (**MEND** and **Niger-Delta Avengers**) or call for **liberation** or **fight** for a **particular political ideolog**y or again, the overthrow of a government, **which is that last resort of a militant group**. In terms of stated goals, Militancy may be categorized as that which is used to **preserve existing privileges**, to bring about **reform**, to achieve **revolutionary change** and **secession**. Examples of Militancy around the world are the **Tamil Tigers** in **Sri Lanka**, the **Islamic Militancy** in Pakistan, and The **Niger-Delta Militancy** in **Nigeria**.

**6.2. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INSURGENCY AND MILITANCY**

Militancy and Insurgency are closely related concepts but yet are distinctly separate. Although both concept have distintive features, it does not obscure the existence of a relationship between them. And so, there exist conditions that lead to their emergence of both similar concepts. Such conditions make them jointly related, thereby creating difficulty in separating the terms from each other. Hence it is said **Militancy leads to Insurgency**. As such, both have a **positive relationship** with each other. Such is because **Militancy** and **Insurgency** both start at the **recruitment** or **pre-insurgency stage** and then graduate into **warfare aspect** of at the **incipient conflict stage** or **open warfare stage**. The relations between the two concepts are most time defined by the way they are used. For example, the Insurgents in Iraq are regarded as by the USA as an Insurgency, while the actions of the Taliban is called Militancy. Its use lies in the eyes of the beholder.

* 1. **DIFFERENCE BETWEEN INSURGENCY AND MILITANCY**

Despite the similarities and confusion that arise from the twin concept of **Insurgency** and **Militancy**, there exist differences. The first is that **Militancy** is a condition which experiences the use of **violence**, being **combative** or **predisposed** to fighting, force is the **mains recourse** for a militant. At the same time, insurgents are open to other strategies. The second is that **Militancy** seeks to **oppose the ruling authority** in other to extracts from them **accommodated changes** brought about by **reforms** that can endits **activity.** Yet, an **Insurgency** is **far drawn out** and set out to **cause a transformation**; such modification is **not quickly abandoned** and is rarely accommodated by reforms. The third is that **Militancy can lead to Insurgency, but Insurgency does not lead to Militancy**. Such is because **Militancy** involves **limited** or **restricted armed struggle** that can snowball into a **whole insurgency** that can overthrow a regime. The objectives of Militancy may not be too extreme and may just be limited in scope until it escalates to the point of Insurgency. Another is that **Militancy** can be **easily diffuse** (**parties** can be **resolved easier** than **Insurgency**). Said is because it is easier to **limit the effect** of a militant group **political aspiration** or the **seriousness** and **organizational capacity** of the group to pose a **significant threat**.

* 1. **FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE RISE IN MILITANCY**

Same as that of Insurgency.