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Boko Haram Insurgency and its Deradicalization Process in Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper examines the lingering Boko Haram insurgency in north-east Nigeria which has metamorphosized into banditry and kidnapping amongst other organized crimes confronting the sustainable development agenda of the Nigeria state and citizens and the sub-Saharan Africa region. It questions the Nigeria political leaders decision to downsize military confrontation against insurgents and their adoption of 'soft power' approach of deradicalization. It adopts a desk research method by relying on secondary documents, through a strength, weakness, opportunity, and threat analysis frame within the sustainable development goals 16 - peace, justice, and strong institutions. This is the basis to examine the deradicalization program of former insurgents in north-east Nigeria. It presents a core argument within the theoretical frames of Niccolo Machiavelli's political doctrine and philosophy that 'it's better to be feared than to be loved' within global experiences of deradicalization. Amongst the findings therein, this paper observed that the deradicalization policy and program by the Nigeria Federal government was rather hasty with inadequate coherence amongst state and non-state actors. This suggests that rather than decline in the Boko Haram insurgency, an escalation is seen in the wider network of banditry and organized crimes. Thus, this paper posits that the only 'repentant insurgents' are the 'dead ones'.

Keywords: *Deradicalization, conflict transformation, insurgency, and sustainable development*

I. INTRODUCTION

The trajectory of sustainable development in any society is driven by the prevailing social order and peace agenda pursued by its leaders and followers. Before the advent of colonial administration by the European adventurers in Nigeria, indigenous kingdoms, empires, and decentralized states existed in their defined social orders and peace agendas. These social entities became the basis for the creation of Nigeria in 1914 by the British colonial administration, to serve 'their' narrow interest. This era was similar across Africa, Asia, Latin America, North America etc. The conquest of the British empire as other 'colonial power' across continents of the world came through lethal and 'soft' (diplomatic) power.

The anticipated resistance against colonial regimes followed the pattern of 'maximum' – lethal force seen in the creation of the law enforcement agents, loyal and created to work despite the indigenous natives as majority. This consistency resonates with the arguments of Hobbes (1588-1779) through his written philosophical work the "Leviathan". This is a mythological, whale-like sea monster that devoured whole ships. Hobbes likened the leviathan to government, a powerful state created to impose order. Hobbes began Leviathan by describing the state of nature where all individuals were equal. Every person did what he or she needed to do to survive.

As a result, everyone suffered from "continued fear and danger of violent death" He thought that the life of man in a state of nature would be "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short." Thus, he made a defense of the absolute power of kings. This disposition remained the signature notes of many colonial administration until their last strongholds gained political independence in Africa and beyond, ie. South Africa in the 1990s. This monopoly of power by the state in the Nigeria context is on the decline and taking the posture of a failing state.

Herbt cited in Kaldor (2007) argues further that many African states never enjoyed state sovereignty in the modern sense that is 'unquestioned physical control over the defined territory, but also an administrative presence throughout the state'. This draws a corollary with Kaldor's observation that one of the key characteristics of failing states is the loss of control over and fragmentation of the instruments of physical coercion. The ascension and steadfast remnants of insurgency groups in north-east Nigeria in the first decade of the millennium and beyond affirms this assertion. The failure of the state ie. Nigeria armed forces and its security architecture to contain Boko haram and its affiliates of Islamic insurgency groups has expanded the net of organized crimes ie, kidnapping for ransome and rituals, banditry, cyber crimes with high propensity spreading around the west Africa and Sub-Saharan regions.

This paper in its broad and specific objectives examines the justification of Nigeria's government deradicalization program to insurgents against contrary arguments within theoretical lens, for punishment as better deterrent to downsize and eliminate terrorism and other organized crimes. This is driven by two research questions of; "what is the deradicalization policy and program to address insurgency in north-east Nigeria"? and "to what extent has the Nigeria government deradicalization program reduced insurgency occurrence within the SWOT analysis lens"?

II. METHODOLOGY

This paper being a desk research, relied heavily on secondary documents. These are books, reports, academic journals, online data sources amongst others. Following a qualitative genre, emphasis was placed on a phenomenal approach in the study using research questions tied to the objectives of the study, driven by core arguments.

III. DISCUSSION

Deradicalization

According to Kruglanski et al. (2019) several terms are used to refer to the phenomenon of deradicalization, including 'desertion,' demobilization,' 'defection,' 'rehabilitation,' 'reconciliation,' 'dialogue,' and 'disengagement.' The main reason for the use of different terms in different societies seems to be a realization of the

socio-political activities attached to each term. But two of these terms, deradicalization and disengagement, are used more frequently. The former is mainly used in Asian societies, and the latter in European ones.

Deradicalization and disengagement can be defined as the process of individual and collective withdrawal. Disengagement refers to a behavioural change, whereas deradicalization implies a cognitive shift, i.e. a fundamental change in understanding. Kruglanski pointedly notes further that the 9/11 terrorist attacks triggered the global war on terror led by the United States. Many terrorists were killed, captured, and imprisoned. But, ironically, prisons themselves became centres of radicalization and recruitment.

Imprisoned terrorist leaders and activists successfully used their interaction with other prisoners to motivate and bring them into the fold of their respective groups. This led to the recognition that the war against terror is a war of ideas as well, which cannot be won solely through killing and arresting terrorists, collecting intelligence, or securing borders. It was realized that efforts were needed to eliminate hatred, intolerance, and extreme interpretations of religion. In that context, deradicalization and rehabilitation programs have been launched in many parts of the world.

In specific terms, deradicalization or rehabilitation program is generally seen as "an important and effective strategy to combat terrorism and extremism." Several countries have developed such programs to win the hearts and change the minds of the radicals (Kruglanski et al 2019, Noor & Hayat 2009). Expectedly, the Nigeria government having fought its own war on Islamic insurgency and terrorism using lethal force in the new millennium since 2008 upwards adopted a 'soft' power approach by the initiation and pursuit of a deradicalization policy and program. Glazzard, in the United States (U.S) Institute of Peace (2023) report provides succinct insights to Nigeria's violent extremism challenges as he stated that the Northeastern Nigeria, particularly the states of Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe, has long been prone to insecurity and conflict, being a product and fallout (my emphasis) of the region's marginalization and relative political and economic neglect.

Following historical narratives, the USIP, report (2023) states that Boko Haram emerged as a heterodox religious sect in Borno in the early 2000s. Following the failure of an attempted uprising in 2009, it transitioned to being a guerrilla movement, terrorist organization, and insurgent force, embroiling the Nigerian armed forces and those of neighbouring states in an increasingly indiscriminate conflict that drew in Nigeria's neighbours in the Lake Chad Basin. By 2015, Boko Haram had become the world's most lethal terrorist group, controlling swaths of territory in the three northeastern states and neighbouring countries.

The group is estimated to have killed around 35,000 to 50,000 in Nigeria, the majority of whom were killed in Borno State; and the UNDP has estimated that the wider conflict has displaced over three million people and contributed to the deaths of 350,000 in the Lake Chad Basin. Despite an intensifying security response, including a state of emergency in the northeastern states, Boko Haram became stronger territorially and militarily, so much so that in 2014, the federal government recognized that restoring a measure of security using military force alone would be impossible.

Furthermore, the USIP report notes that both the federal government and its international supporters had mandated an

approach that complies with human rights and based in the rule of law, but this perspective must contend with a lack of compliance with human rights in the armed forces, which are accustomed to mounting kinetic (lethal force) responses to security threats. Nigeria's national security strategy originally aimed to treat all levels of Boko Haram and all categories, including offenders, detainees, and volunteers.

The National Security Corridor (NSC) program from 2014 to 2015 sought directly to disengage Boko Haram fighters and members at all levels by promoting defection and processing military detainees in a rehabilitation program. However, the federal government altered course somewhat after public opposition to what was seen as favourable treatment for insurgents still engaged in a violent conflict. This opposition to the deradicalization program becomes the basis to consider the contrasting arguments rather than interrogating in-depth the program process and its outcomes. Aside the socio-economic advantages of the suggested extermination violent extremist groups and their members, theoretical arguments in global context are discussed.

Conflict Transformation
Conflict transformation refers to "approaches that seek to encourage wider social change through transforming the antagonistic relationship between parties to the conflict" (Buckley-Zistel 2008:21 cited in Haider, 2011). In addition, it is process and structure-oriented with an emphasis on social change. Haider observes that conflict scholars and practitioners, such as Burton, Galtung, Lederach and Mitchell, have emphasised that peace agreements and peace processes will produce only a fragile peace in the absence of fundamental social change and transformation. Thus, they opined that in attaining conflict transformation there should be dialogue based on empathy, non-violence and joint creativity or escalation to violence.

Within the ambit of the Nigeria context in seeking to attain a conflict transformation in putting down the Islamic insurgency group Boko haram and their minions there has never been any known peace agreements but an attempt of peace process through the Federal government deradicalization program. However, the nature of the warfare, and fallout from the violent conflict perpetuate by insurgency groups has shrunk the space for creativity on both sides. The composition of insurgency groups membership come within the complexity of religion is driven by widespread unemployment and poverty created by the socio-economic structures within the Nigeria state. It is within this dimension that the Federal government deradicalization policy and program can gain footholds as a process towards conflict transformation.

Peacebuilding
Peacebuilding, as defined by the United Nations (2009 cited in Haider 2011), involves "a range of measures targeted to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict, to strengthen national capacities at all levels for conflict management, and to lay the foundations for sustainable peace and development". In specific terms, the UN adds that peacebuilding strategies must be coherent and tailored to the specific needs of the country concerned, based on national ownership, and should comprise a carefully prioritised, sequenced, and therefore relatively narrow set of activities aimed at achieving the above objectives.

Relatively, the component of peacebuilding should carry the instruments of reconciliation as noted by Lederach cited in Bloomfield et al. 2003. These peacebuilding instruments are

healing, truth-telling, restorative justice, and reparation. However, the asymmetrical nature of the insurgency warfare and other associated organized crimes makes it incongruent with conventional warfare and likewise the rules of engagement and the options for peacebuilding and even matters of reconciliation.

Hence, the National Security Corridor (NSC) program from 2014 to 2015 which sought directly to disengage Boko Haram fighters and members at all levels by promoting defection and processing military detainees (USIP, 2023) in a peacebuilding rehabilitation program is faulted to be not a thoroughly planned and executed deradicalization policy and program which is debateable. This could resonate with Bloomfield et al (2003) observation that violent conflict produces a wide variety of offenders – men and women, state and non-state actors, local and foreign individuals and organizations, general and foot soldiers who miss out in the peacebuilding process 'advertently or inadvertently' (my emphasis).

Sustainable development
Even in utopian paradigm, the concept of development remains the desire and expectation all societies regardless of their existing contradictions. It is this urge that drives the pursuit for development to sustainability mode in whatever context. This could be the obvious reason the institutional vehicle known as the sustainable development goals (SDGs) is relevant to this paper discourse.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), otherwise known as the Global Goals, are a set of objectives within a universal agreement to end poverty, protect all that makes the planet habitable, and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity, now and in the future. The goals were adopted by all member states of United Nations formally in 2015, for the period 2016–30 to address the overwhelming empirical and scientific evidence that the world needs a radically more sustainable approach. The goals provide a well consulted framework that is sufficiently scientifically robust, politically acceptable, and publicly intuitive. The goals provide us with our best chance of ensuring the necessary collaboration and alignment as we implement global approaches to securing a fair, healthy, and prosperous future for ourselves, our children, and grandchildren (Morton et al. 2017). In specific terms the sustainable development goals (SDGs) is projected primarily to achieve the following summarised objectives.

- ✓ Eradicate poverty and hunger, guaranteeing a healthy life.
- ✓ Universalize access to basic services such as water, sanitation and sustainable energy.
- ✓ Support the generation of development opportunities through inclusive education and decent work.
- ✓ Foster innovation and resilient infrastructure, creating communities and cities able to produce and consume sustainably.
- ✓ Reduce inequality in the world, especially that concerning gender.
- ✓ Care for the environmental integrity through combatting climate change and protecting the oceans and land ecosystems.
- ✓ Promote collaboration between different social agents to create an environment of peace and ensure responsible consumption and production (Hylton, 2019; Saner et al., 2019 cited in Mensah, 2019)

In the sustainable development goal 16 the focus is on institutionalizing participatory and deliberative democracy to achieve peace, justice, and strong institutions. Herein, this goal will have a 'trickle down' effect to boost public trust, bridge divides, make government more inclusive, and deliver more equitable and effective outcomes. The corollary brings to the fore the government non-involvement of enough stakeholders ie, civil society organizations at different strata and individuals representing segments of the local society where insurgency has occurred to be part of the deradicalization policy and program.

Theoretical framework

Putting forward an appropriate theory for this study maybe mainly by the context of the Nigeria experiences. Some social scientist scholars argue that theories cannot suffice for matters of reconciliation and peacebuilding. Obviously, multidimensional phenomenon as violent extremism and extremists originate and thrive on different pedestal of human factors. A brief review of theoretical views here may justify the choice of theory for this paper. Mbah (2014) in describing the elite theory as postulated by Vilfredo Pareto and Gaetano Mosca in 1939 posits that elites are people who have some distinct qualities by which they are differentiated from the general mass of people.

Thus, Mbah argues that the democratic system must rely on the wisdom, loyalty, and skill of their political leaders and not on the population at large. In the Nigeria context and geo-political experiences, the elites have fallen short of expectations many times and leaving behind them the tension of a fragile and failing state. This resonates with the public choice theory that originated from Buchanan and Tullock (1962). The tenet of the theory holds that:

1. Public officials (politicians, bureaucrats, individuals etc. seek and maximize their personal interest.
2. Decisions made by public officials are guided by their own self-interest.
3. The individual is the unit of analysis.
4. Limited government role is preferred through such measures as privatization and contracting (outsourcing).
5. Stricter control on bureaucrats through the executive or legislature.

These highlighted tents strongly describe the elite class in Nigeria and suggest reasons why the war against terrorism and violent extremist is prolonged.

Murshed and Tadjoeddin (2007) referring to Collier and Hoeffler (2004) greed and grievance theory state that civil wars stem from the greedy behaviour of a rebel group in organising an insurgency against the government. Greed is about opportunities faced by the rebel group. The opportunities can be disaggregated into three components: financing, recruitment, and geography. The most common sources of rebel finance are the appropriation of natural resources, donations from sympathetic diasporas residing abroad, contributions from foreign states (hostile to the government) or multinational companies interested in the region.

A mixture of all this description can be found in different proportions in the Nigeria insurgency experiences. Thus, this paper's justifiably choice of Niccolo Machiavelli's political leadership style (subsumed in transformational leadership theory) in his thesis write up 'The Prince' (1513) cited in Shafritz et al. (2007). Machiavelli's makes analogy of the quality of a great leader with the comparism of the lion and the fox in the 'Prince' (1532) thus:

A prince being thus obliged to know well how to act as a beast must imitate the fox and the lion, for the lion cannot protect himself from traps, and the fox cannot defend himself from wolves. One must therefore be a fox to recognize traps and a lion to frighten wolves.

This statement is the basis for the Machiavelli leadership style postulation which posits that "it is better to be feared than loved" as a leader. He argues that one ought to be both feared and loved but as it is difficult for the two to go together. However, he adds that it is much safer to be feared than loved when a choice and situation demands. Shafritz et al. (2007) provides the corollary herein with the former president of the United States of America, George Bush Jr. and his choice of war over diplomacy in the fallout from the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks with United States (U.S) decision and response with a war on Iraq and anywhere where the suspected terrorist was found across the world, Afghanistan, Pakistan etc.

In the Nigeria context on the war against violent extremist since 2009 four presidents have had to superintendent - Umaru Yar dua (2007-2010), Goodluck Jonathan (2010-2015), Muhammadu Buhari (2015-2023) and Bola Ahmed Tinubu (2023-Till date). This paper opines that the political leaders involved thus far in the war on violent extremist and terrorist are yet to demonstrate the expected 'Midas touch'.

Invariably in the late 20th century and the new millennium saw the advent of what Kaldor (2007) and other scholars across multi-disciplines describe as 'new wars' in global lens and experiences. Conflicts gravitating to violence and mass destruction of different sorts and dimensions after World War II have featured around the globe. The confrontations have metaphorized from conventional warfare to asymmetrical modes to even non-combat (physical combat) in nature to ideological and cyber digital modes that require similar and higher responses from state and non-state actors.

One of such events of violent conflict was the September 11, 2001, attacks on United States of America soil, referred to as the 9/11 terrorist attacks that triggered the global war on terror led by the United States (Kruglanski, et al. 2019). Notably, many terrorists were killed, captured, and imprisoned. But, ironically, prisons themselves became centers of radicalization and recruitment. Imprisoned terrorist leaders and activists successfully used their interaction with other prisoners to motivate and bring them into the fold of their respective groups (USIP, 2023, Kruglanski et al. 2019).

Invariably, this led to the recognition that the war against terror is a war of ideas as well, which cannot be won solely through killing and arresting terrorists, collecting intelligence, or securing borders. It was realized that efforts were needed to eliminate hatred, intolerance, and extreme interpretations of religion. In that context, deradicalization and rehabilitation programs have been launched in many parts of the world. A deradicalization or rehabilitation program is generally seen as "an important and effective strategy to combat terrorism and extremism." Several countries have developed such programs to win the hearts and change the minds of the radicals (Kruglanski et al.,2019).

As expected, the Nigeria political leadership of the Federal government along with regional political leaders (ie. Governors) in north-east Nigeria toed this line of deradicalization program for the Boko harm insurgent combatants and their affiliates. The

prolonged nature of the warfare against religious extremists mainly in north-east Nigeria demanded changes in the peacebuilding strategies and the tinkering with the calls for amnesty and reconciliation as a means an end.

Osungboye (2021) corroborates that, despite the various efforts of the government to end the insurgency activities, it has not succeeded in doing so, and hence, Boko Haram activities continue. Noting further, that the sect has successfully carried out 1,639 offensive attacks on villages, towns, churches, mosques, motor parks, government offices, and international institutions (Akubo and Okolo, 2019 cited in Osungboye 2019). Due to the insurgency activities, over 37,000 armless civilians have been killed and more than 2,500,000 have been displaced (CFR, 2020 cited in Osungboye 2019) and still counting (my emphasis).

Apart from the insecurity challenges caused by insurgency activities, there are also economic and monetary ramifications. For instance, many local and foreign investors that have age-long businesses in northeastern parts of the country have relocated to other parts of the country while a good number of investors have left the country (Adegbami, 2013; Attah and Mokwenye). Despite this obvious atrocities, emotional dynamics, grievances, and the logical demand for justice which fundamentally drives peacebuilding, the Nigeria political leaders embraced the idea of radicalization of religious extremists in north-east Nigeria.

Barkindo and Bryans (2016) observe that the Nigerian de-radicalisation programme shares many similarities with the European models in terms of design however they differ considerably in terms of the scale of former combatants, challenges to re-integrating them, and capacity issues which makes recidivism measures even more problematic. They noted further that Nigeria's de-radicalisation initiatives have their roots in the government's 2014 National Security Strategy, which called for an expansion of a 'soft approach' which would include a countering violent extremism programme which has a three component - strategy of counter-radicalisation, communication, and deradicalisation.

This includes the official de-radicalisation programmes which have been developed in prisons and other government-run facilities, the policy of amnesties being offered to former Boko Haram combatants as part of Operation Safe Corridor, and in local initiatives and informal efforts to re-integrate former Boko Haram combatants into communities. Relatedly, the Nigerian prison de-radicalisation programme was publicly launched in 2014, as part of a countering violent extremism (CVE) programme to also include community-based counter-radicalisation and strategic communications and reached the end of its first phase of development and implementation in April 2016 (Barkindo and Bryans, 2017).

Drew and McGroarty, (2015) corroborate that in 2015, hundreds of Boko Haram members were in detention, with forty-seven having taken up the government's safe passage offer of prison sentences with counselling support in the de-radicalisation programmes. While Ochulo (2017) concur that since then the number of Boko Haram defectors in prisons, and specifically the rehabilitation programmes, has supposedly increased exponentially to an estimated 800 members. This forgone discussion provides the basis to undertake the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) of the federal government of Nigeria deradicalization policy and program in north-east Nigeria against insurgency and extremist violence.

IV. FINDINGS

Deradicalization Policy and Program in North-East Nigeria: SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Adoption of non-lethal military engagement (soft/diplomatic power)
- Downsized casualties and collateral damage
- Local, National, West Africa regional and international cooperation/support. (www.thecable.ng/tinubu-recieves-egyptian-pakistan-envoys-seeks-collaboration-to-end-violent-extremism/) The attempts to strengthen the federal government's deradicalization policy and program came to fore as Nigeria's current democratic president, Bola Tinubu sought collaboration with Egypt and Pakistan to end violent extremism through global cooperation when he received their newly appointed envoys. He stated thus: "we must do more to stop extremists. We need to enhance our collaboration and exchange of ideas and knowledge in these areas," … (Mom, 2024).

Weaknesses

- Issues of human rights violation not addressed on both sides.
- weak retributive justice against suspected and confirmed perpetrators/extremists of mass violence.
- Unstable relationship with civil society
- Dealing with several unknown and splinted radical extremist groups
- 'Repentant Boko Haram terrorist' relapse into violence (Abdullahi, 2024). The Zagazola Makama, a counter-insurgency publication focused on the Lake Chad region (2024) narrates how terrorists suspected to be 'repentant insurgents' dressed in military uniforms invaded Kasuwan Fara area in Maiduguri, burnt down all structures at the security checkpoints and attempted to release eight of their members in custody at the Kasuwan Fara divisional police office (www.thecable.ng/boko-haram-terrorists-burn-down-ndlea-ncs-checkpoints-in-borno/)

Aside undermining the peacebuilding attempts in north-east Nigeria and the Lake Chad region, this resonates with the theoretical underpinnings of this paper that 'it is better to be feared than to be loved'. Likewise, this suggest that the Nigeria government deradicalization policy and program requires urgent re-structurization and overhaul of policy strategies within regional and global frames.

Opportunities

- Collaboration with local communities affected by insurgency in north-east Nigeria.
- Regional collaboration in the Lake Chad and Sahel region of Africa
- Exploring global collaboration with countries with similar experiences and global organizations partnership. (www.thecable.ng/tinubu-recieves-egyptian-pakistan-envoys-seeks-collaboration-to-end-violent-extremism/)

Threats

- Unstable government policy and programs i.e. democratic elections that usher new political leaders in

- Nigeria comes with attempts to 'be new' and maybe 'do government business differently'.
- Winning 'hearts' in insurgency affected communities in north-east Nigeria requires additional retributive and restorative justice measures and appropriate memorialization as part of the peacebuilding framework.
- Poor collaboration and coherence amongst security agencies in Nigeria and in the Lake Chad and Sahel regions. De Coning (2007) cited in Haider (2011) identified four elements of coherence:
  ✓ Agency coherence: consistency among the policies and actions of an individual agency
  ✓ Whole-of-government coherence: consistency among the policies and actions of different government agencies of a country
  ✓ External coherence (harmonisation): consistency among the policies pursued by various external actors in each country context.
  ✓ Internal/external coherence (alignment): consistency between the policies of the internal and external actors in each country context. The peacebuilding and security architecture in place provides the fundamental basis and significant component for sustainable development.

V.   Conclusion

The subject matter of deradicalization policy and program in Nigeria remains relevant to the broader perspective of securing lives and properties in its simplest form by the political leadership across regions and local communities with direct contact with the violent extremists in north-east Nigeria where they have their strongholds. Intuitively, the seeming failure of the Nigeria political leadership to use military (kinetic/lethal force) to end the incursion of Boko haram and its affiliate groups in mainly northern Nigeria, has bolden and widen the network for banditry, and widespread network of organized crimes ie. Kidnapping for ransom, ritual killings, and cyber frauds/crimes etc.

The options of 'soft (diplomacy) power' with the Federal government of Nigeria offering amnesty and undertaking the deradicalization policy and program was rather hasty for a warfare still in progress. Probably, due to the delicate nature of the Nigeria nation-state the previous presidents from 2009 in the confrontation with violent extremist have rather used the Machiavelli leadership approach else where rather than 'crushing' the hydra headed monster – Boko haram and their affiliates the north-east region of Nigeria and the neighbouring Lake Chad and Sahel region of West Africa. This paper concludes with the following recommendations:

1. The Nigeria government, specifically the political leadership across the legislative National Assembly and Executive arms at regional and national levels should reconnect with local communities affected by violent extremists – insurgents. This is aside reparation projects ie. Rebuilding houses, providing back sources of livelihoods etc, victims and non-victims within these communities should be part of the deradicalization policy and program planning and implementation.

2. A deliberate memorialization program in partnership with civil society organizations (CSOs) and development partners should be held yearly or bi-annually with communities affected by violent extremist. The absence of this deliberateness is a gap in the healing,

peacebuilding, and reconciliation framework. In addition, the rehabilitation and deradicalized Boko haram combatants and affiliates should be part of a non-judicial truth-telling process with victims, like in the Rwanda case.

3. The Nigeria government deradicalization program should be reviewed with the aim for inclusion of more state and non-state actors. The need to further disaggregate identified violent extremist for the purpose of 'serving justice' and avoiding future re-occurrence as being witnessed now especially after the immediate past Nigeria government under General Muhammadu Buhari (Rtd) declared that 'Boko harm' had been technically defeated, only for their operations to resurrect and expand to wider networks across the north-west, north-central regions of Nigeria and the Lake Chad and Sahel regions. The Nigeria government currently has no option on this matter but to do the needful. In this context, "It is better to be feared that to be loved".

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