Oasis International School Model United Nations

Security Council

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Guiding Package - Guide de Recherche

Topic 2: Terrorism in Central and Western Africa - Sujet 1: Terrorisme en Afrique Centrale et en Afrique de l'Ouest

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Abstract

While counter-terrorism in the Middle East has been on the United Nations' agenda for long, combating terrorism in African countries, such as Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon and Mali, has become of equal importance since it became a growing issue threatening the maintenance of international peace. Not that it only grew in the Soviet-Afghan War (1979-1989) with the presence of *Mujahideen*, but it has also emerged when followed by Al Qaeda's terrorist act in the United States, 2001. By then, the formation of terrorist groups, much related to each other, increased in African countries endangering civilians and abusing citizens' rights.

Actually, the measures to combat terrorism in Central and Western Africa, specifically, have been given priority after terrorist acts increased recently, including the armed insurgency in Mali, the deadly attack on the Kenyan mall, and the kidnapping of more than 200 Nigerian school girls. Consequently, the founding of terrorist organisations in Central and Western Africa have remarkably increased in northeastern provinces of Nigeria particularly, spreading then in border countries. Generally all related, *Al Qaeda, Ansar al-Dine, Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa, Ansaru,* and *Boko Haram* are the most outstanding and active radicals in the African region.

These successive chaotic acts led by terrorists have not only caused monumental destructions, but have put lives of civilians at high risk. Having no homes, lack of food and clean water, many citizens flee their countries in search of basic life needs. The Security Council has now put at its agenda a priority to combat terrorism in Africa.

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Introduction

Through the past years, the United Nations has worked on the international efforts of counter-terrorism in the Middle East. However, more efforts are still needed to combat terrorism in Central and Western Africa, certainly by UN Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) and more specifically by the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED). In fact, there has been an initiation of groups, related to Al Qaeda or to radical Islamic organizations, propagating terrorism in Central and Western Africa, all deriving from the same beliefs of Islam rejecting foreign principles and forcing application of **Sharia law**. Whereas other organizations like *Ansaru* and *Al-Qaieda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)*, are specifically endangering a country's national stability and threaten its maintenance of international peace. The absence of national stability, therefore, puts at risk the regional stability, too.

I.   Definition of Key Terms[1]

● **Ethnic:** of, relating to, or characteristic of a sizable group of people sharing a common and distinctive racial, national, religious, linguistic, or cultural heritage.

● **Extrajudicial:** Outside of the usual judicial proceedings.

● **Extremism:** One who advocates or resorts to measures beyond the norm, especially in politics.

● **Federal:** of, relating to, or being a form of government in which a union of states recognizes the sovereignty of a central authority while retaining certain residual powers of government

● **Radical:** Arising from or going to a root or source; basic: proposed a radical solution to the problem.

● **Riots:** A wild or turbulent disturbance created by a large number of people

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[1] The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition copyright ©2000 by Houghton Mifflin Company. Updated in 2009. Published by Houghton Mifflin Company. All rights reserved.

- **Terrorism:** The unlawful use or threatened use of force or violence by a person or an organized group against people or property with the intention of intimidating or coercing societies or governments, often for ideological or political reasons.
- **Sharia law[2]:** the code of law derived from the Koran and from the teachings and example of Mohammed; "sharia is only applicable to Muslims"; "under Islamic law there is no separation of church and state"

II.   <u>Background Information</u>

1) <u>Origin of the Islamic movement</u>

As known in history, the African states area has long been divided **ethnically**, with each country divided to kingdoms and states. Some of these kingdoms have spread Islam among them, while others had rare Islamic roots. By then, seeing that Islam's core of ideologies established social and political systems, leaders utilized religion to ensure a secured authority on the people.

2) <u>Example of country's instability: Situation in Nigeria</u>

When Nigeria gained its independence in 1960, two political official groups were considered powerful: Hausa-Fulani for the Northern People's Congress NPC and Igbo-led National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (changed to National Council of Nigerian Citizens). The Nigerian federal government was already weak having obstacles cooperating and dealing with ethnic, economic and political growing issues. Thus, confrontations concerning ideologies and values started growing during the years 1960-1970: civil war, military rule, and economic issues. It was not before 1979, with the Second Republic, that the major power was in the hands of the National Party of Nigeria (NPC successor). The United Party of Nigeria representing Yoruba states remained in opposition, reviving **extremism** and opposition by emerging **riots** during 1980-1992.

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[2] "Sharia Law" in The Free Dictionary online. Available on: http://www.thefreedictionary.com/sharia+law, consulted on October 22nd, 2015

Northern Islamic states of Hausa and Borno were in conflict with southern Yoruba and Igbo states, because of their refusal of Christianity and Western education. The constitution of the Second Republic marks their initiative of adding clauses serving Sharia law.

3) Terrorism by Al Qaeda after September 2000

After 9 September terrorist attack, Al Qaeda started the African expansion by *Etihad al Islam* in Horn of Africa and the *Algerian-backed Salafist group*. It viewed Central and Western Africa ideal for spreading Islam using the dissatisfaction of Muslim people, mainly in the South. In addition, Islam was now related to political groups (such as NPC in Nigeria), which were also connected to Muslim Brotherhood groups of Qadiryya and Tijaniyya. Islam was now part of several African cultures, ideas and societies, adding up to the struggles of cooping between **radical** Muslims and politicians.

4) The rise of extremism in Africa: Boko Haram

Since 2000, Muslims with radicalized ideologies organized themselves together. It was in 2002, when *Mohamed Yusuf* formed Maiduguri group to officially fight back Western education and ideologies using violence. With his history of a previously trained Salafist, jihadi, member of *Shiites* and leader of armed religious attacks in 1980-1990, many Islamic students or unemployed people were attracted to join his *Jam'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidd'awatti Wal jihad*.

From the meaning of "Western education forbidden," Hausa's native language named it Boko Haram. Rising, Boko Haram aimed to eliminate anything westernized and create a fully fundamental Islamic state. From 2002 to 2009, it used nonviolent forms to harshly criticize the governments on education and morality. They were much focused in Nigeria. Therefore, their criticism led the Nigerian government to respond brutally, and clashes eventually started violence.

5) Terrorism by Boko Haram

In July 2009, Boko Haram launches campaign enforcing *Sharia* on Nigerian people. In response, 25-30 July, Nigerian forces invaded militants hideout in Dutsen Panshi of Bauchi and televised the assassination of *Yusuf* and leaders. Militant riots invaded then Bauchi, Kano, Yobo and Borno causing the death of over 700 people and the destruction of government buildings, police stations and churches.

With origins similar to *Yusuf*, *Abu-Bakr Shekau*, attended Borno State College of Legal and Islamic studies of *Dar'ul Tawheed* and viewed women as second-class citizens to serve men. As leader, his goal now was to achieve authority violently. Terrorism emerged. In 2010, the United States declared Boko Haram an official terrorist organization, causing danger in Northwest Africa and threatening international peace.

6) Examples of terrorist attacks committed by Boko Haram

2010	Prison break in Bauchi, 700 prisoners flee.
June 2011	Bombings on Nigerian police headquarters.
August 2011	Bombings on UN buildings in Abuja, causing the death of hundreds of Nigerian and international diplomats.
July 2013	150 civilians killed.
September 2013	Execution of 65 college students in Yobe and the killing of 100 civilians
February 2014	Izghe massacre with the killing of 106 civilians of a Christian village.
	Assassination of nine vaccinators to treat polio in Kano, because of the opposition to Western Medical treatment
14 April 2014	Kidnapping of 200 school girls in Northeast, Chibok, with the intention to sell them as slaves and marry them to older men.
June 2014	Abduction of 68 women/girls from Damboa, Borno. It was not until 7th July that 60 of them escaped by a military attack on Boko Haram.

Since 2012, Boko Haram burnt over 300 schools in Christian areas leading to 10000 losing education. The year of 2014 marked the growing of violent massacres, bombings and attacks on political buildings, focusing on the strategy of choosing locations where Nigerian forces have less power.

To sum up, Boko Haram being an extremist group rejects foreign and western cultures, including voting in elections, education and gender equality. Consequently, it exerts terrorist attacks upon the people, using the government's weaknesses for initiatives of enforcing Sharia law. They have aimed to forbid girls from receiving education and threatening Christians in the South by committing several terrorist acts. While the most recent terrorist act was the kidnapping of 200 schoolgirls, in April 2014, the government tries to fight back.

7) <u>Counter-terrorism by African governments</u>

With the governments are weakened while trying to prevent and protect civilians from daily violence. Terrorist groups follow their continuous extremist acts. In response, the government is entitled to use force and violence such as declaring the state of emergency, setting curfews, eliminating communication (cell phones), sending task forces, etc. However, these decisions have only lead to the human rights violations and International crisis impacting civilians. National issues, government corruption and police brutality increased according to Amnesty International 2009's report claiming 3000 **extrajudicial** killings in Nigeria between 2003 and 2009 and 1000 Islamic militants dead in 2013. Many citizens are forced to flee their country to countries of the border in search of medical treatment, food and clean water. The country is left having to face social issues, economic crisis, national and international instability.

8) The role of the Human Rights Watch

In 2013, the Human Rights Watch accused governments of not establishing the right plans to counter-terrorism. They are accused of abuse of civilians by extrajudicial killings and executions, but also exploiting their use of authority. It has declared that the death toll caused by Boko Haram has exceeded 5000.

9) Migrations and refugees fleeing terrorism

The number of refugees and Internally Displaced Persons IDPs is increasing with over 290000 people fleeing their homes, 61000 forced migrations and refugees to border countries

Examples:

- 6800 from Borno to Cameroon, in May 2013;
- 550 to Chad;
- Nigeria declared "temporary refugee status" to provide limited food and water;

10) Social issues

UN office for the coordination of Humanitarian affairs declared millions of civilians in Yobe, Borno Adamawa are facing health risks with the lack of medical treatment, lack of access to clean water and food, and child orphanage.

11) Economic status

Terrorist acts have been impacting this economic growth. In February 2013, federal organizations reported that since 2010, commercial and trading have decreased of about 50% due to the presence of Islamic radicals. Moreover, with the militant attacks, 19000 farmers fled Lake Chad losing 5000 hectares of rice and wheat. Also, the policies of security adopted

by the government limit economic activity: curfews, transportation, closing of shops. On the other hand, oil reservoirs have helped in keeping the situation steady.

12) Other organizations and militant groups

Al Qaeda:

Al Qaeda is connected to Boko Haram by the Islamic Maghreb AQIM (African expansion). Dating back to 2002, when Osama bin Laden gave Salafi groups in Nigeria an aid of 3 million USD, whom later, joined Boko Haram. Even in 2013, reports have proven that combatants of Boko Haram attended *Al Qaeda* trainings in Mali.

Since January 2012 till February 2013, Boko Haram proved its relations on international terms with other extremists: *al-Shabaab* in Somalia and *Al-Qaeda* headquarters in Yemen, Afghanistan and especially Saudi Arabia where leaders of *Al-Qaeda* sent refuge to Yusuf in 2004.

Ansar al-Dine and Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa

Originated by the unity of independent tribes and groups. Ansar al-Dine's coordination with AQIM helped create ties with Boko Haram, sharing same interests of applying *Sharia* law in Mali, Sub-Saharan Africa, using terrorism. As for MUJAO, it's a group of national Malians and foreigner combatants. Being allies of AQIM, makes them also allies for Boko Haram to fund and expertise in terrorist acts.

Ansaru:

An offshoot of Boko Haram, formed in January 2012 under the name of "Vanguards for the protection of Muslims in Black Africa" in Nigeria. They also represent a major threat on a national level, committing international acts of terrorism, like the abduction of the French national Francis Colump in December 2012 and the killing of 7 foreign nationals in Lebanon, in February 2013. Actually, they are tied to the originality of extremist ideologies (Sokoto Caliphate union).

III.   Major countries involved and organizations :

- The Human Rights Watch (HRW)
- The Christian Association of Nigeria
- The African Union (AU)
- The Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS)
- The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
- The International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL)
- The Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF)
- The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

IV. UN Involvement

The UN Security Council is doing its best effort to combat these terrorist organizations, such as imposing sanctions on terrorist groups, specifically those associated with Al Qaeda. In 2014, specifically May the 22nd, the UNSC officially announced and added Boko Haram to the list on entities linked to Al-Qaeda.

As political analysts explain, "*the majority of Boko Haram's financial support comes in sporadic spurts of cash flow from bank robberies, extortion, and ransom payments, rather than a large, traceable bank account that can be accessed through intelligence operations.*"[3]

"*The UN action unique to the situation in Nigeria must be executed to thwart Islamic militants from attaining financial support and expertise from larger terrorist organizations. Boko Haram and other terrorist groups' unique financial standing and means for acquiring mission-dependent assets necessitate distinct counter-terrorism policy that explores the best options for cutting off economic support to each group.*"[4]

The UNSC also, tried in 2014 to eliminate the terrorism in Nigeria and they have set

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[3] http://www.imuna.org/sites/default/files/CTED.pdf
[4] ibid

foot in the country but no action have been fully taken hence, the strategies that will be used will comprise an "integrated support package" that will be combatting terrorism in Nigeria on an economic, humanitarian and political level.

V. <u>Possible Solutions</u>

The involvement of the UN Security council should:

- Ensure the role of the UN in executing and giving sanctions to all the terrorist groups.
- Find strong methods to counter-terrorism in the Middle East
- Providing aid and assistance to the refugees and migrants who fled their country in search of safety;
- Make sure a strong governmental system is present and in charge of all country's duties

VI. <u>Guiding Questions</u>

- Which aspects of the terrorism in Central and Western Africa are most important to your position and why?
- How can Central and western African countries' governments appropriately address violence within their own borders   while maintaining a regional perspective on terrorism?
- What steps must be taken to confront the humanitarian and displacement crisis in the short-run?
- How much responsibility and authority do UN bodies such as the CTED and Security Council hold in enacting counter-terrorism policy?
- What actions can the CTED undertake to improve economic stability and promote government transparency?
- How can the CTED take effective action against Islamic militants without manifesting an ethnic or religious bias?

VII. <u>**Useful Links**</u>

- http://terrorism.about.com/od/groupsleader1/a/TerroristGroups.htm
- http://www.terrorism-research.com/history/
- http://www.historytoday.com/blog/2011/09/terrorism-historical-context
- www.e-ir.info/2009/07/29/islam-and-politics-in-nigeria/
- http://www.cfr.org/nigeria/boko-haram/p25739
- https://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/boko-harams-international-connections

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- *Country Reports on Terrorism 2013: Boko Haram.* Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of State, 2013.
- *2014 UNHCR Regional Operations Profile – West Africa: Nigeria.* Geneva. UN High Commissioner for Refugees. 2014.

<u>**Appendix**</u>

1) <u>Important names of organizations and their initials</u>

- CTC: Counter-Terrorism Committee

  "CTC works to bolster the ability of United Nations Member States to prevent terrorist acts both within their borders and across regions"[5] Established after 9/11.

- CTED: Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate.

  Assists the CTC, carries its decisions, to assess the ability of each Member State to facilitate assistance in countries.

- AQIML: Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb

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[5] United Nations. Security Council Counter-Terrorism. Available on: http://www.un.org/en/sc/ctc/, consulted on the 3/9/2015.

- NPC: Northern People's Congress

- NCNC: National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons

- JTF: Joint Task Force

- IDP: Internally Displaced Persons

- UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

- MUJAO: Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa

- *Etihad al Islam*

- *Algerian-backed Salafist*

- *Jam'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidd'awatti Wal jihad*

2) <u>United Nations' geoscheme of Africa</u>

NB: Middle Africa is also considered as Central Africa. The topic considers central and western Africa.