MULTI-NATIONAL JOINT TASKFORCE (MNJTF) AND INSECURITY IN LAKE CHAD BASIN AREA: INSIGHTS FOR REGIONAL UNITY

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Abstract

The influx of bandits and refugees from the Chadian war distorted the peaceful economic activities at the Nigerian land border in the Northern part of the country. These banditry activities led to an upsurge in cases of smuggling of light arms and ammunition, drugs, human trafficking as well as other illicit border activities. Where these banditry activities were resisted, they resorted to the killing of innocent Nigerian citizens and terrorising the border area. The then Head of State, General Sani Abacha, created the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF) in 1994 and charge them to flush the miscreants from the border to ensure free flow of human, goods, and services. However, as dynamic as security situations are, the Joint Task Force was later rebranded and charged with additional responsibilities to tame terrorist organisations like Boko Haram within the Lake Chad Basin (LCB) area. Hence, this study critically examines the MNJTF mandate- taming insecurity in the LCB. To achieve this, the study employed a historical research approach, relying on secondary sources of data. Thus, a qualitative descriptive method was used to analyse the data collected. Theoretically, the study adopted the regional integration theory as its analytical framework. Its major strands are the customs union, monetary union, functionalist and federalist theorists. Its findings include: the MNJTF was birthed in an unfriendly environment where mistrust, hatred, and suspicion thrived. Also, the MNJTF inherited an aged-long ideological difference between members of the LCB area. Based on the findings, the study recommends among others; that there is need for LCB states to return to the drawing board and resolve their aged long differences which bred mistrust and suspicion. The study recommended that LCB states must be committed in letter and spirit to the MNJTF by contributing their manpower, finances, and timely information. This will make the Force potent and formidable to achieving her core mandate.

Keywords: Multinational, Joint Task Force, Insecurity, Lake Chad Basin

Introduction

The clause for the inter-dependence of nations has made it permissible for citizens to migrate from their home state to other nations of the globe. Migration is the process or movement of people from one place or culture to another. It is one of the greatest features of man. It is a process or phenomenon which is as old as man. Migration is arguably, one of the greatest features of Sub-Sahara Africa. The continent has been described as having the world's greatest mobile population. History records that the African Sub-Sahara had one of the greatest migrations with the Bantu migrating from their original land that is inhabited today by Nigeria and Cameroon, to form settlements throughout the entire Southern half of the continent (Castles and Miller, 2009).

Sequel to the 1885/1887 Berlin Conference, which balkanised and partitioned Africa, the concept of migration was strange. Hence, Africans enjoyed the culture of travelling or moving from one place to another as pastoralists, muggers, and traders. However, the Berlin Conference tamed African free movement and introduced a restricted concept of the border to her. African territory was subsequently partitioned among western Capitalist or colonial powers thus giving birth to the concept of border or artificial boundaries (Michalopoulos and Papaioannou, 2016). Furthermore, the forceful takeover and control of African States with the new form of leadership called colonialism did not entirely alter the inter-relatedness between Africans. They were only separated into different countries but the African culture and language were not altered. Migration, therefore, never became part of a state policy in Africa until post-independence.

However, the changing economic fortunes of the various African countries attracted notable mobility as economically buoyant states started to invest in Africa. In the long run, their investment had a multiplier effect on the economy. A buoyant and flourishing African economy thus attracted more immigrants. It should be noted that immigrants move with diverse intentions. Some are wise, others otherwise. Immigrants with positive intentions move in search of greener pastures, higher and quality education, tourism or to join family members. Others move to maim and kill innocent citizens as well as for terrorist attacks. Migration whether for wise or otherwise (positive or negative) intentions, has implications that might also have a positive or

negative effect on the receiving economy. However, the movement of terrorists and other non-documented immigrants through the porous borders has social defects or implications on the receiving economy. These social defects take the form of an upsurge in crime and criminality at the borders which includes the smuggling of illicit products, trafficking of (humans and drugs), and religious carnage which triggers the death of innocent and harmless citizens. This development constitutes security challenges and threatens the peaceful co-existence and survival of such economies (Adeola, 2012).

More so, the terrorist attack of 9/11/2001, on the World Trade Centre, New York, exposes the negative impact of undocumented migration. Sovereign nations were awoken and forced to consider the negative implications of open borders, hence stringent measures were resorted to, to tame insecurity across the borders. In Africa, the Lake Chad Basin area has had its fair share of border insecurity. Nigeria, for instance, had suffered serious armed confrontations from her neighbours who exported religious "fanatism", crime and criminality, terrorism, drugs, human trafficking, and other anti-social practices through her porous borders. Thus, despite Nigeria's avowed foreign policy of Africa as a centre-piece, she cannot but resort to 'force' to tame insecurity, terrorism, and criminality which has ravaged and still threatened her sovereignty and livelihood (Straubhaar, 2006).

Statement of Problem

The drive for employment and other better opportunities triggers rural-urban migration across borders. Hence, rural dwellers tend to move from rural areas to the cities. This, therefore, means that economically endowed or technologically developed states magnets prospective immigrants. In West Africa for instance, states like Nigeria, Cote'd Ivoire, Ghana, and Senegal are immigrant's destinations. These states experience a teeming inflow of people from other parts of Africa. The drive to move into Nigeria is compounded as she shares borders with both Francophone and Anglophone states, making her experience a daily upsurge or influx of immigrants through her porous borders.

Castles and Miller (2009) opined that the geo-strategic location and natural endowments of Nigeria place her among the most radicalized Muslim states in the world. This, therefore, informs the threat that she receives from the Al-Qaeda terrorist sect. Also, as an "African Big Brother" and as a member, co-founder, and signatory to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) treaty, she observes the ECOWAS Protocols for Free Movement of Nationals and Goods throughout the West African sub-region. This, therefore, picks her as a target for most immigrants.

Also, Nigeria shares boundaries or borders with Central Africa. Republic of Chad and Cameroon, are Central African states which share borders with Nigeria within the Lake Chad Basin (LCB).More so, Central Africa Republic is seen to be notorious for protracted violence and wars. Immigrants escaping from these violence-prone zones for safety move to Nigeria (her Big Brother), which is richly blessed with a good quantum of natural resources; and also considered by her neighbouring states to be economically viable. Coupled with the problems of porous borders, Nigeria becomes a destination for terrorism, crime and criminality, drug and child trafficking, and the smuggling of other illicit goods. Most recently, the surge of terrorist activities by Boko Haram (BH) and the nefarious acts of the Fulani nomads attest to the porous nature of the Nigerian borders.

The formation of the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF) in 1994 by the Late Gen. Sani Abacha regime was to tame border insecurity and its related border crimes. However, undermining the presence of the MNJTF within the borders of the LCB area, insecurity thrives. This is the problem that this study intends to unravel. This study, however, investigates how the formation of the MNJTF has tamed insecurity as well as increased regional unity in the LCB area.

Literature Review

Conceptual Clarification

Concept of Migration

Migration is the movement of people from one place to another, state or country in search for greener pastures, better education, tourism or safety.

Movement from one state or country to another is referred to as cross-border migration. In Africa owing to the ECOWAS Policy of Free Movement of Persons and Goods across neighbouring states and compounded by porous borders, cross-border migration with its aftermath of smuggling of arms, trafficking of human and drugs occurs daily.

As stated earlier in this study, migration is akin to Africa. Available statistics showed that between 2015 and 2019, there was an unequal increase of African migrants against immigrants from other parts of the world to Africa. Thus, Africa witnessed an upsurge in migration from 23.5 million in 2015 to 26.5million in 2019. This is about a 13% increase which is caused by the increasing regional integration policy, crisis, and other social indicators (UNECA, 2021). According to Marie-Lawrence and Hein (2016), about 86% of African migration is related to conflict and the desire to flee from war-prone zones. In fact, according to IOM (2019), large numbers of African migrants were provided with assistance in 2019 to aid their return and reintegration to the Democratic Republic of Congo, Comoros, Malawi, Zimbabwe, and South Africa.

Concept of Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF)

What is today referred to as the MNJTF, was the brainchild of Late Gen. Sani Abacha, the then Head of State of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Its formation in 1994 was to police the north-east region of Nigeria against Chadian armed bandits. Recall that within this period, the Chadian crisis was on, hence refugees, as well as bandits, were seen fleeing from war-torn Chad to a safer state. The neigbhouring Nigeria, with porous borders, became their most preferred option. The then Head of State of Nigeria, Gen Sani Abacha, having sworn to protect the sovereign integrity of Nigeria, did the needful and formed the MNJTF and charged them to clear the border regions of these miscreants and to promote free movement of persons and goods across the borders.

However, in 1998, four years after its initial formation, the Joint Task Force became truly multinational as Chad and Cameroon saw the need to join forces with Nigeria to protect their neighborhoods from terrorist and banditry attacks. The “Force” was therefore expanded to accommodate these states and charged

to deal with common cross-border security problems in the LCB region. With its headquarters in Baga, Kukawa Local Government Area, Borno State, and with her first Commander as a Nigerian, the Force commenced her security operations.

However, as dynamic as security concerns are, the Force was again overhauled and given a counter-terrorism mandate. She was thus charged to deal squarely with the BH menace within the LCB. Its composition includes security personnel drawn from Nigeria, Chad, and Niger with a Nigerian Brigadier General, as its Commander. The updated MNJTF was to operate side by side with the Operation Restore Order, a Nigeria Joint Task Force (JTF) whose operational zone was the Borno State border area. These two forces were administratively and operationally different from each other but worked harmoniously (Musa, 2013).

Going forward, Boko Haram attacks has spanned beyond Nigeria to her neighbouring states. Hence, in March (2014), defense personnel from the LCB states (Chad, Cameroon, Niger, Central Africa Republic (CAR), Libya, Algeria, Sudan, and Nigeria) met in Cameroon to review the security situations within the region. These states saw the need to join forces to combat armed trafficking, terrorism, and cross-border crimes within the region. The MNJTF was again reviewed but left its headquarters in Baga. This means that the Force was charged to patrol the LCB region, conduct military operations against smuggling of arms and terrorist activities as well as facilitate free movement (Kindzeka, 2014).

In a ferocious attack in January (2015), Baga, headquarters of MNJTF was captured by BH terrorist group. This defeat elicited doubts as other members of LCB doubted how faithful Cameroon, Libya, and CAR are to the March, (2014) security pact. This is because, upon citing the BH invaders, military personnel from these states flee in different directions thereby making it easier for the terrorist to capture Baga (Roggio, 2015). The Force was again turned into a Nigerian concern as Chad and Niger formerly withdrew her force.

In another development, in January (2015), the AU met to review the extent of her support for BH terrorism within the LCB area. More so, in an AU Assembly Summit held in Addis Ababa, the Peace and Security Committee

(PSC) authorized a reinvigorated MNJTF. In furtherance to this meeting, AU, ECOWAS, EU, UN, and LCB redrafted the operational plans of the MNJTF. The mandate, headquarter, and leadership of the Force was again reviewed. Hence, its new mandate was to focus on preventing BH from having free access to the borders of the LCB; increase the number of troops; transfer its management to the LCBC as well as moved its headquarters from Baga, Nigeria to N'Djamena, Chad, with Gen Illiya Abbah appointed as the Force Commander (Albert, 2017). For emphasis, the rebranded MNJTF was charged to protect the border area of the LCB and to ensure that BH does not gain access to the border, or launch their attacks through the borders. More so, with a secured border, each of the LCB states can deal with the BH menace within their respective countries. In Nigeria for instance, a special force was created and stationed at her border area to do the job. The force was called Operation Lafiya Dole (Peace by Force) and was commissioned to be in charge of border areas, especially the Sambisa forest. This Joint Task Force (MNJTF and JTF) was expected to deal divisively with the BH terrorist group.

Concept of Insecurity

Security is a complex phenomenon. It appears in diverse forms. Its meaning varies from culture to culture. This means that different cultures attribute different meanings to what they consider as security. According to Lahav (2013), culture and period (time), gives different meanings and form to security. Thus, the importance of security to nations cannot be over-emphasised. Its importance, therefore, makes nations invest a chunk part of their budget to national security (Mbachu, 2012). Security is further sub-divided into internal and external. Nation's armed forces are in charge of security situations in the country. Internal security includes threats for secession and cult or gang-related clashes. External security on the other hand takes the form of cross-border crimes, smuggling of illicit or contraband goods, and trafficking of humans and drugs. The porosity of borders constitutes the greatest threat to border security.

Insecurity on the other hand is as old as man. Apart from being the fear of many, it has become the word on the lips of every Nigerian and the LCB states. It can also be seen as the state of being subject to danger or injury. It is the anxiety that is experienced when one's life is threatened. According to the

Advanced English Dictionary, insecurity is a state of not being secure or lacking confidence.

In modern history, internal strife has been a serious concern to Africa and the LCB area in particular. Cases of insecurity have been regular of recent. This range from activities of militancy and piracy in the Niger Delta and her sea borders which seem to have characterized much of the current democratic dispensation in Nigeria. However, very recently, new forms of discord or insecurity emerged with religious extremists (Boko Haram), Fulani nomads, Eastern Security Network (ESN), Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), and armed militant or militia springing up and threatening the life and corporate existence of the Nigerian State and the LCB states at large.

Other security indices include the persistent tension between the North and South, growing unrest in the East and South, the Niger Delta unrest, violent incidents, kidnapping, religious differences, unemployment, and other socio-political grievances that are fuelling the unrest in Nigeria.

Theoretical Review

The regional integration theory is most suitable for the explanation of border inflows in this study. Although borders are complex and multi-dimensional, the theory unites several interrelated branches and concepts. These concepts include politics, economic, sociology, and international relations among others (Bolanos, 2016). Originally, the theory was developed in Europe. It explains economic interactions within the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in about 1952. Ernest Haas stands out as its major proponent. The theory anchors on the following strands. They are customs union issues, monetary union issues, and functionalist theory, federalist and communication theories. According to Sapir (2011), the process of regional integration involves the tightening of financial links between countries. To achieve this therefore, free movements of factors (both physical, financial, capital, and labour) are permitted within the region. Regional integration permits border liberalization. The strand for customs and common market theory synchronizes with the ECOWAS Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons and Goods. This, therefore, serves as the justification for the surge in cross-border migration around the West African sub-region.

However, in a bid to encourage business activities within the ECOWAS sub-region, the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons and Goods was ratified. ECOWAS failed to be proactive and consider future developments like technological advancements, cases of war, and its security implications of the Free Movement policy on nationals through the ECOWAS sub-region on the safety of the region. The challenges of cross-border migration and insecurity that West Africa suffers today, trace their origin from this protocol. This, therefore, explains the suitability of the regional integration theory for this study.

Empirical Review

Adeola & Fayomi (2019), while addressing the Political and Security Implications of Cross Border Migration between Nigeria and her Francophone neighbours, identified the borders between these neighbouring states as a major source of concern for policymakers when articulating and formulating an acceptable foreign policy that will capture the interest of both states. The study pointed out that the porosity of the Nigerian borders is the reason for the influx of migrants from Niger, Chad, and Sudan into Nigeria. The paper observed that migration between these states is an issue that needs adequate attention as it has aided international terrorism, smuggling, and criminality across states.

Again, Olumu, Alao & Adewumi (2019), carried out an empirical examination of Border Security Issues and Challenges facing the Nigerian Customs service. The study revealed that regulation of migration flows and the containment of border disputes remain cardinal for security agencies stationed at border units across the world. This implies that in a globalized world, controlling access to territories and cities is cumbersome. Thus, there is the need for synergy between regional security agencies in terms of intelligence gathering. Also, technological advancements have made it easier for international migration thereby increasing interaction around the world for sports, tourism, and employment. In reality, since migration is a human feature, controlling it becomes a serious challenge, especially in a globalized world. It is therefore paradoxical for the Customs service to strive to stop or control cross-border migration through the borders. It is on this note that the study does not only

identify challenges to border security but also proffered useful suggestions and recommendations.

Osimen, Anegbode, Akande & Oyewole (2017), in a related study: The Borderless Border and Internal Security Challenges in Nigeria; x-rayed the Nigerian security situation and linked some of her current security challenges to porous borders and ideological differences. The study established that Nigeria's borders with Cameroon, Niger, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Sao Tome, and Principe are not properly delineated. The study revealed that these states shared borders that are similar to the British and French territories that were set up in 1889. The absence of a properly delineated border gives room for free trade between these states, thereby aiding infiltration of illegal migrants which in the long run, births security challenges. Controlling migration in such a situation becomes a herculean task thereby posing a serious threat to the Nigerian state. The study, therefore, attempts to probe into the nature of Nigerian borders using the analytical framework of assessment in emerging trans-border crimes.

There is an unending interest among scholars in the Multinational Joint Task Force and security in the Lake Chad Basin. It was observed that previous studies did not take cognizance of ideological differences, mistrust, and suspicion within personnel from the Lake Chad Basin states in their analysis. Therefore, the study examines the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF) mandate and insecurity in the Lake Chad Basin in the light of the above, hence the relevance of this study.

Methodology

Study Area

The study area is the Lake Chad Basin (LCB). The LCB comprises Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, Algeria Niger, Sudan, Libya, and Central Africa Republic (CAR). However, the study focused on only four of these states because of their direct access to the lake. These four states are Nigeria, Cameroon, Niger, and Chad.

Method of Data Collection and Analyses

The study is historical research thus relies on secondary data. This means that data was sourced from the internet, official documentaries, seminar papers, newspapers, journals as well as textbooks. In analyzing data for the study, thematic and content analysis was used since the study is a qualitative one. To this end, this study used the qualitative descriptive method for its analysis. It is an aspect of content analysis.

Results and Discussion

MNJTF and Insecurity in LCB Area

The MNJTF was formed with a mandate to tame insecurity along the LCB area. Though the force has tried, it is cardinal to state that she has not been able to fulfill the mandate that informed her creation. To date, insecurity, terrorism, smuggling of arms and ammunition as well as human trafficking still persist. These have not only undermined the joint efforts of the border security personnel (MNJTF) but also left more to be desired. It is also expedient to state that in assessing the viability, success, and functionality of a security outfit, the background, and environmental factors should be considered. These factors have a great impact on the success or failure of the security regimen. A friendly background, favourable environment, acceptable and purpose-driven policy can engender the success of any security outfit. The opposite gives a negative result. The point here is, the factors making for the success of a security outfit, are the same as those responsible for the success of an international peace-keeping operation. The only difference is that, in the case of a security outfit, it is not a third party that provides the security regimen, but the affected states which are bedeviled by the threat of insecurity. Other states can support, but the affected states, take the lead against their common enemy. What is cardinal here is that the affected states must be on the same page, and view any intruder as an enemy to their corporate existence. It is only then they can sincerely join forces to fight the declared enemy. This scenario worked against the MNJTF thus, affecting her performance and functionality.

At the inception of the Boko Haram (BH) insurgency, Nigeria and her LCB neighbours saw it as a Nigerian problem that does not need a foreign intervention. Even with the formation of MNJTF in 1994, it did not assume a multinational role until 2002 when BH terrorism extended to the neighbouring states before other nations joined the force. The history of the formation of today's MNJTF, suggests that the states were forced to join the mission by unforeseen circumstances. Ordinarily, Chad and Cameroon would have had no business forming a security alliance with Nigeria and vice versa. For a security regimen to be functional, therefore, trust and confidence in the team are sacrosanct. The MNJTF has all it takes to be functional and fulfill its mandate and be seen as a solution to African security concerns, but trust which is a core security attribute is lacking in the MNJTF.

Moving forward, the African Peace and Security Architecture sees the MNJTF as a strange security outfit that is not fit to guarantee regional security. It is simply a formation for LCB states. The LCB encompasses both ECOWAS and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). While Niger and Nigeria are ECOWAS states, Chad and Cameroon are ECCAS states. Forming a security regimen to protect these states with diverse cultures, languages, and orientations, has made full implementation and achievement of MNJTF objectives near impossible. It, therefore, becomes an issue of serious concern for them to form a united force against these terrorists.

As an African Big Brother, Nigeria played significant roles in the liberation struggles in Apartheid South Africa, Sierra Leone, and Liberia. However, owing to her pride, she was reluctant to allow foreign intervention during her troubled season (Theroux-Benoni, 2015). Nigeria will be willing and ready to collaborate with other crisis-ridden states to protect their borders against terrorism, but will not want such collaboration in her situation.

Also, undermining the aforementioned facts, it was doubtful whether ECOWAS was willing and financially able to intervene in a crisis affecting a large state like Nigeria. On the other hand, ECCAS will not want to lead in the Nigerian crisis when ECOWAS is still undecided. The responsibility to protect and solve her problems thus fell on LCBC to organise troubled Nigeria and her neighbouring states to quell the 'mutual' problem. This in itself is a condition for the non-functionality of the MNJTF.

To summon the courage to form an international security outfit is easier than to make it function effectively. This is the case with MNJTF which at its formation faced internal and external threats. Internal problems entail factors making it difficult for member states of the MNJTF to work in harmony to achieve their set goals. The external concerns are foreign but affect the functionality of the force. They are treated below.

Firstly, the absence of mutual trust between Nigeria and Cameroon possess a serious threat to the functionality of the MNJTF. This was pronounced in the crisis over ownership of the Bakassi Peninsula. Originally, Bakassi was a Local Government Area in the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Boundary delineation is a remote factor leading to the Bakassi Peninsula crisis between Nigeria and Cameroon. Recall, that before the 1884/1887 Berlin Conference, Africans lived without borders. However, after this conference, Africa was partitioned to serve the economic interest of the colonialist. These western powers failed to consider the future implications of the artificial borders on African unity. Furthermore, these borders were not properly delineated. Originally, Bakassi Peninsula was a German enclave, but after WW1 and WW2, the Bakassi peninsula became one of the spoils of the war. Firstly, it became part of Southern Nigeria in 1946. However, in the run-up to independence, maps from that period showed Bakassi Peninsula, in Cameroon (Vanguard, Sept. 20, 2012). Contentions over ownership of the troubled Bakassi Peninsula made Cameroon approach the International Court of Justice, The Hague. It was resolved with a judgment in the favour of Cameroon. To date, losing Bakassi Peninsula to Cameroon is a seed of discord between Nigeria and her neighbor.

Secondly, Nigeria had border issues with Chad. It should be noted that the dynamics of border issues between Nigeria and Chad were worse than the Bakassi Peninsula crisis. Poor border delineation elicits concerns between these two neighbouring states. In fact, Chad contends ownership of the Lake. She acclaimed that such ownership concerns informed why the Lake was named after her (Vogt, 1992). This crisis blossomed making Nigerian fishermen and farmers residing within the Lake resort to self-help, as they were denied fishing rights by Chadian soldiers (Johnson, 2014). The build-up of this crisis led to the deportation of about 700,000 Chadians from the Nigerian state. The interrelationship between these neighbouring states got

worse leading to military actions which led to the death of innocent citizens from both states (Tilde, 2014).

Going forward, Nigeria had ideological differences with Chad, which also brought mistrust between the two neighbouring states thus posing a serious threat to the functionality of the MNJTF. Recall that Chad was engrossed in a protracted crisis in the early 1980s. Hence Chadian rebels flocked the Nigerian border and posed security challenges. In fact, in a national security meeting, the then Governor of Borno, Alhaji Mala Kachala updated the Presidential Committee about the large-scale smuggling of arms and daily child trafficking through the Northern borders. The Governor remarked that most of these rebels reside within the Sambissa forest. To date, the Sambissa forest poses a grave security threat to the Nigerian state (IRIN, 2002).

Furthermore, as a result of the Chadian war, arms move freely to Chad under the guise of prosecuting the war. Also, Libyan outright support for Chad in the supply of arms infuriated Nigeria and threatened her headship within the LCB area. In addition, Ghadafi's leadership style and personality were an affront to Nigeria and her foreign policy option. Conscious of this dislike, Ghadafi has severally sponsored the Islamic revolution in Nigeria via the Jam'yat ad-Da'wa al-Islamiya. However, to quell Ghadafi's threat to the unity of Nigeria, Nigeria voted for UN Council Resolution 1973 (of March 17, 2011). By this vote, Nigeria authorized the UN to resort to using every other instrument to neutralize Libyan offensive capacity during the Libyan crisis. NATO acted as directed. Such action and interference led to Ghadafi's death in 2011 (Albert, 2017).

All of the aforementioned issues made it very difficult for Nigeria, to confide in her neighbours within the LCB for security aid against the BH menace. She rather resorted to closing down her borders when the BH attacks were too fierce and she feels that the terrorists were using her neighbouring states as a safe haven (Thisday Newspaper of 23rd February 2014).

The age-long suspicion and mistrust existing between these states provided an unfriendly background for the MNJTF to fulfill its mandate. It, therefore, worked against the sincere commitment of these states hence making it impossible for the MNJTF to actualize her mandate. For instance, in 2015,

MNJTF gave a deadline to end the BH menace. By this deadline, member states of the LCB are to fulfill their obligations by availing their military personnel of the onslaught. Chad failed to do the needful.

Also, Nigeria feels unsafe each time Chadian and Cameroon soldiers cross the Nigerian borders on an offensive onslaught against BH. Nigeria perceives such military offensives as an intrusion. A development that emanates from the age-long suspicion and mistrust among these neighbouring states.

Furthermore, excessive influence from the Islamic States (IS) in the Middle East and other African states poses serious threats to the security architecture. The BH is an Islamic radicalized force and the terrorist group has pledged her loyalty to al-Qaeda, an Islamic organization. On the other hand, IS had distinguished herself by supporting brutality in her teachings and tactics which include terrorist attacks and abductions of members of the military formations as well as religious and ethnic minorities. The sect had also continued to arm its followers against the MNJTF. Since the LCB comprises both Muslim and Christian states, achieving the mandate of the MNJTF became near impossible.

The MNJTF is a potent force capable of solving the African security dilemma as conceived by its initiator and founder; Late Gen. Sani Abacha, former Head of State, Federal Republic of Nigeria. However, certain factors which might be considered as remote and immediate derailed her focus hence tantamount to its functionality. The following points can therefore be deduced from the study.

Firstly, MNJTF like every other security regimen was birthed with deformities. These impediments ranges from unfavourable environmental factors, unity of purpose, and member states' commitment to the core mandate. These are nitty-gritty for their formidability and workability. The absence of these features affects its performance. The environment that birthed the MNJTF aids her nonperformance. ECOWAS is the conglomeration of Anglophone states, with different backgrounds, cultures, orientations, and perceptions. ECCAS, on the other hand, is a union of Francophone states with diverse perceptions, cultures, and orientations. Perception difference about the 'Joint Task Force' is the first reason for its non-performance. Communication difference is next. Also, ECOWAS as a body has her security regimen, so also

is the ECCAS. Introducing MNJTF as a new security outfit was entirely strange. This, therefore, affected the extent of recognition and support from these states.

Security operation flourishes in an environment that houses mutual confidence and trust. A successful security regimen must have confidence in her members and understand itself. Such a team should be devoid of suspicion and work to achieve set goals. This core variable was lacking in the MNJTF where distrust, hatred, division, and suspicion were pronounced. Even the Bible explicitly stated that a house divided against itself cannot stand. Such was the case of the MNJTF.

Finally, pride is not a security apparatus. Nigeria over prided herself in the face of a threatening and terrorizing idol, BH. Nigeria's pride and acclaimed Africa Big Brother disposition suffices amidst grave insecurity situations. BH is a global terrorist group with its members spanned across all nuts and crannies of the world. For the war against terrorism to be won, nations must collectively ally and join forces.

Conclusion

The study examined MNJTF and Insecurity in the LCB: insights for regional unity. The study revealed that the influx of bandits and refugees across the borders is traceable to the Chadian war and this has distorted economic activities and the peaceful atmosphere in the border communities in Nigerian. These bandits and refugees smuggle arms through the Nigerian borders. It was an attempt by the Abacha regime to arrest this ugly situation that birthed the formation of MNJTF.

However, the dynamic nature of insecurity coupled with the porosity of the borders of African states is one factor identified to have promoted terrorism, crime, and criminality within the sub-region. These states were therefore forced by circumstance to join the MNJTF as a platform to collectively defend themselves against a common enemy. However, the sincerity of such motive remains a concern and puzzle for other studies to unravel.

Though created with good intentions, the MNJTF; a potent force formed to proffer lasting solutions to Africa's security dilemma, tried but failed to

deliver on its mandate. Rather than address the reason for its poor performances, the LCB states from time to time had rebranded and enlarged the Joint Task Force, with only limited success recorded. However, since the root of her problems was not addressed, to date MNJTF continues to wobble like a drunk whose intention is to move forward, yet staggers around the same position.

From relevant empirical studies cited above, it is thus concluded that the MNJTF cannot achieve its mandate and form a potent force to challenge terrorism, arms smuggling, human and drug trafficking as well as other cross-border illicit practices that thrived in the region. It is therefore necessary that the LCB states return to the drawing board and address the aged long ideological differences which bred mistrust and suspicion within the security regimen. Based on the findings, the study recommends as follows:

1. Since insecurity is a global phenomenon, LCB states should undermine their aged ideological differences and embrace the MNJTF as a security outfit. These states should appreciate and support MNJTF in the form of personnel, finance, and timely information. Such sincere support will make the force to be formidable and achieve her core mandate with ease.
2. Since terrorism is crime globally, leaders of LCB states should therefore be bold enough to condemn terrorism and work assiduously using the MNJTF security outfit to end the lifespan of the menace in the study area.

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