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Private Military Contractors gains in containing Boko Haram in Nigeria

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Declaration

Declaration of Authorship

I confirm that this Master's thesis is my own work and I have documented all sources and material used.

This thesis was not previously presented to another examination board and has not been published.

Date: 14/03/2017 Signature: Thando Ian Mkandla

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

(A.C.I.R.C)	African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crisis
(CJTF)	Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF)
(COIN)	Counterinsurgency
(CoT)	Counter-terrorism
(DV)	Dependant Variable
(ECOWAS)	Economic Community of West African States
(ICG)	International Crisis Group
(IV)	Independent Variable
(NDF)	Nigerian Defense Force
(P.M.C)	Private Military Contractors
(R.U.F)	Revolutionary United Front
(S.T.T.E.P)	Specialized Tasks Training Equipment and Protection
(SADF)	South African Defence Force
(U.N.I.T.A)	Union for the Total Independence of Angola

Abstract

The growing role of Private Military Companies (P.M.C) has led to a magnitude of security concerns internationally. Due to their past reputation, P.M.Cs have been demonised by the international community in the form of scholars as well as journalists, as their personnel have been misunderstood for mercenaries (De Nevers 2009). It is therefore important to clarify the difference between contractors and mercenaries. However due to the growth of different actors and security threats, Private Military Companies have emerged as an effective alternative solution in engaging non-traditional threats in the international arena, a role states have increasingly failed in. Private Military Companies have become more successful in applying counterinsurgency tactics due to their structural setup, skills and expertise as well as technological advancement and understanding of warfare. This has led to an increase in reliance from states including the United States, Angola, and more recently Nigeria. Through the examination of the Nigerian case study, the thesis paper aims to understand how the P.M.C (S.T.T.E.P) was able to apply its COIN tactics effectively in combating Boko Haram. It is important to examine the Nigerian case study as P.M.C success could possibly be used to combat the proliferation of terrorist manoeuvres such as Al-Shabaab. The Nigerian case is also important as it displays how S.T.T.E.P working together with the N.D.F could strengthen their COIN campaign against Boko Haram.

Key Words

Private Military Company, Boko Haram, Nigeria, Relentless Pursuit, Counterinsurgency, Specialized Tasks, Training, Equipment and Protection, Nigerian Defense Force

Chapter 1

Introduction

The end of the Cold War has resulted in the shift from traditional to unconventional warfare, which has led to the emergence of non-state actors. These non-state actors have acquired the necessary capabilities that enable them to shape global warfare and politics. It is important to note that due to the rise of non-state actor capabilities, the modern nation state has experienced a rather rapid breakdown of its monopoly of violence (Small 2006). As a result, Private Military Companies, such as Specialized Tasks, Training, Equipment and Protection (S.T.T.E.P), have been approached as an alternative source of security to assist the NDF in their efforts to combat the Boko Haram insurgency. The research provides a detailed analysis on whether S.T.T.E.P were effective in their campaign to contain Boko Haram.

This introductory chapter presents an overview of the history of religious violence and social injustices leading to the formation of the Boko Haram insurgency, current make up and the resource, training and support of the Boko Haram insurgency. This section also outlines the research objectives, questions and the methodology which informs the study.

Background on Boko Haram

Nigeria has been subject to religious divide separating Christians and Muslims, leading to longstanding intra-religious conflicts which have further divided the Nigerian citizens. Formerly being a British colony, the country is known to be multicultural, multi-ethnic as well as multi-religious. Such great divides have led to constant power struggles which have been fuelled by poverty, corruption, inequalities and other multiple social ills.

During colonial period, both Islam and Christianity spread, however Christians were more privileged as they created a new elite which currently controls the postcolonial economy as well as bureaucracy. Such inequality led to religious clashes dating as far back as 1953 in what is known as the Kano riot. Both northerners (Muslims) and southerners (Christians) clashed for four days over the issue of self-government and resulted in the deaths of 36 people (Prof. Mohammed 2015). Following the Kano riot, the Igbo Genocide of 1966-1970 resulted in the deaths of over 2 million Igbo people most of which were killed by hunger and disease during the war in Biafra, a self-

proclaimed Igbo state (Dr. Ekwe-Ekwe 2011). The conflict caused by alleged oil claims and distribution of income, led to a successful military coup which placed Nigeria under the rule of the Igbo. However, Muslims in the North responded by starting an uprising in which they massacred Christians from the Igbo which in turn fled south.

Following the Igbo massacre, in the late 1970s, religion became as disruptive as ethnicity. Multiple religious riots took place laying claim to multiple lives. The first major religious violence in Nigeria was associated with the Maitatsine sect, which managed to draw support across major cities and towns in Nigeria. In 1980 the sect had started riots across several northern towns leading to the deaths of over 5 000 Nigerians (Prof. Mohammed 2015). After having rejected an Islamic preaching event, riots were triggered in Kano after having granted a Christian preaching event. The riots took place in 1991 and left 500 people dead due to ensuing religious tensions and discrimination (Prof. Mohammed 2015).

Even before the existence of Boko Haram, Nigeria has been experiencing large scales of religious conflict. However, with the formation of Boko Haram, the Northern part of Nigeria has over the years fallen victim to a rise in terror and violence perpetrated by the insurgency. Boko Haram (meaning western education is unlawful) is identified as a fundamentalist religious sect which was initially formed in the 1990s in north-eastern Nigeria (Falode 2016). It is a predominantly Sunni sect aiming to enforce a strict form of Shariah law and believes in the use of extreme physical and psychological violence in the realization of its objectives. Boko Haram has since waged a prolonged conflict with the Nigerian state since 2002. In 2004, the group began to clash with security agencies and during October of that year, it ambushed and killed 15 members of a police patrol team in Kala-Balge (Olojo 2013). Despite countless clashes with policing forces, Boko Haram was only regarded as a major security threat to the Nigerian state in July 2009, as clashes with the Nigerian security forces resulted in over 1,000 casualties across several cities in the Northern region (Olojo 2013). Such clashes have escalated into a conflict that has continuously threatened the physical identity of the state as it threatens to carve out its own Caliphate state. Boko Haram has successfully carried out village raids, suicide bombings and most famous, the abduction of the 270 Chimbok girls. As a result, the Boko Haram phenomena has led to the loss of Nigerian territory, the displacement of millions of civilians as well as the tragic death of thousands of affected civilians (ICG 2016). Most analysists believe Boko Haram will be hard to eradicate as it stems from deep structural challenges faced by the Nigerian states such as the

presence of poverty and low levels of formal education particularly acute in the northeast, longstanding economic disparities including oil-fed corruption; chronic mismanagement; growing inequalities between regions, structural violence; and dysfunctional federalism are some of the key underlying factors which led to the formation of the group (ICG 2016). However recently it seems to have an agenda beyond that of domestic affairs having pledged its allegiance to the Islamic State (Olojo 2013).

Though it is a religious sect at its core, it is important to note as an insurgency, Boko Haram has both a political and a social strategic objective. According to Falode, "The political objective, of course, is the creation of an Islamic caliphate starting from Nigeria then extending to West Africa and the sub-region" (Falode 2016). The Caliphate state will enable the insurgency to impose its Sharia Laws. The idea of what is referred to as "political shariah" by Marc-Antoine Perouse de Montclos serves as an alternative to the western style democracy and challenges the secularity of the Nigerian state (De Montclos 2015). Boko Haram's founding leader Mohammed Yusuf, in Thurston states, "The shari'a of Islam is a perfect and complete shari'a…It is appropriate in every time and place, globally" (Thurston 2016). The statement by Yusuf indicates how important the imposition of Sharia is to the insurgency and its supporters as he refers to it as 'perfect' and 'appropriate' globally. Yusuf challenges the notion of western democracy over sharia as he further states "We see a state in which Muslims are living, but they refuse the Islamic shari'a in its totality, and put in its place the system of democracy" (Thurston 2016). Yusuf's statements suggest the implementation on sharia upon Muslims as it is the call for Allah which is the foundation of Boko Harams political objective.

On the 24th of August 2014, the current leader of the insurgency Abubakar Shekau, declared a caliphate in the areas in which Boko Haram had control over with Gwoza being its capital. Shekau stated, "We are in an Islamic caliphate. We have nothing to do with Nigeria. We don't believe in this name" (Who are Nigeria's Boko Haram Islamist group? 2016). By creating a caliphate state, Boko Haram intends to lead the creation of a purely Islamic political system in which Sharia will be the rule of law and potentially lead to the re-enactment of pure Islam particularly around the Lake Chad region. After having pledged its allegiance to the Islamic State, territory under Boko Haram control became known to the Islamic State as the Islamic State of West Africa Province, a part of the global caliphate it aimed to establish (Who are Nigeria's Boko Haram Islamist group?

2016). The call to the establishment of the caliphate displays Boko Haram's stance against democracy and western education. Its current leader Shekau's stresses his resentment towards western democracy and education in his address to former President Goodluck Jonathan in Thurston as he states, "The disease is unbelief, and as Allah says, Disorder is worse than killing (Qur'an 2:191). Everyone knows democracy is unbelief, and everyone knows the Constitution is unbelief, and everyone knows that there are things Allah has forbidden in the Qur'an, and that are forbidden in countless hadiths of the Prophet, that are going on in Western schools" (Thurston 2016). His statement suggests that it is against Islam for a Muslim to defend and associate with western education and democracy and the only way to preserve a purely Islamic society is through the formation of a caliphate which practices Sharia.

Boko Haram are against the Western values of democracy and western education as it reveals how they have led to a corrupt system led by the greedy elite (Pieri and Serrano 2014). Fuelled by the massive oil fed corruption, dysfunctional federalism system leading to growing inequalities between regions and the continuous mismanagement of state assets, Boko Haram has been able to use anti state propaganda to gain its civilian support. In fact, most Muslim activists in Nigeria have conflicted against the idea that "Islamic" banks, courts and other institutions can co-exist alongside secular institutions at both the federal and state level (Thurston 2016). According to the journal by the International Crisis Group, state legitimacy was at the core of the formation of Boko Haram (Boko Haram on the Back Foot? 2016). Most communities and civilians that are sympathetic with the insurgency believe it would bring about change in the government or view the group as an alternative form of governance. The U.S Guide to Counterinsurgency also highlights that insurgencies such as Boko Haram tend to use their political strategy to gain support from the locals by persuasion, subversion and coercion (Burgos, Kilcullen and Porter 2009). Its political nature also contests the Western values, challenges the secularity of the state, and reveals the corruption of a system that depends on a greedy ruling elite (Pieri und Serrano 2014).

Falode addresses Boko Haram's social objective as he states, "the social objective is the creation of an Islamic administrative system that will rival, in its simplicity and theodicy, every other form of a secular and religious system of governance" (Falode 2016). The insurgency's social objectives are very much alike as its political objectives as they both stem from the group's religious ideology. Boko Haram believes that through the creation of its caliphate state, it will lead to a purely Islamic society which will rid of the 'infidels, kafirs, Non-Muslims' responsible for the social ills through

their westernized culture and ideologies. Thurston states "Boko Haram asserts the right to declare Muslim leader's apostates, rebel against allegedly infidel states, and use force to impose the Salafi creed and a strict interpretation of Islamic law on civilians" (Thurston 2016). It clearly indicates that its lead social objective is the creation of a purely Islamic society which will abide according to sharia cleansing social ills as it is the way of Allah.

According to Meagher, "A critical factor behind the rise of Boko Haram is the profound poverty and deprivation affecting the Muslim north of Nigeria" (Meagher 2014). As indicated by Meagher, Boko Haram has social objectives it appeals to, that stem from the social injustices leading to its formation. The predominantly Muslim northern region of Nigeria seems to have experienced harsh social ills compared to their southern Christian counterparts. The experience of higher poverty and unemployment rates, has led to the resentment against western education as it failed to deliver on the promise of employment and economic prosperity. Instead, the social ills have created a fertile recruiting ground in which large numbers of young men join the insurgency in hopes of finding better living conditions (Meagher 2014). One cannot help but indicate the rather fitting definition of an insurgency that Moore gives us and how it perfectly fits in describing Boko Haram as he states, "an insurgency is a protracted violent conflict in which one or more groups seek to overthrow or fundamentally change the political or social order in a state or region using sustained violence, subversion, social disruption, and political action" (Moore 2007). Based on Moore's definition, it is a clear indication that Boko Haram is fitting of the term as it has both a political and social objective as well as has resorted to insurgency tactics to achieve its objectives.

Boko Haram has managed to gain sympathy amongst some of the youths in Northern Nigeria where it continues to grow. According to Olojo, "about half of former members said their communities at some time supported Boko Haram, believing it would help bring about a change in government" (Olojo 2013). This highlighted that state legitimacy is a core problem in the region and the group might continue to receive support until there is regime change. Because of its growing terror in the country, the Nigeria government under President Goodluck Jonathan attempted to combat the insurgency via the use of the Nigerian State Army. Instead, the army's rather violent counter-insurgency campaign did little other than fuel insurgency support from the locals. During the Maiduguri military crackdown, former Boko Haram leader Yusuf along with other civilians were executed in police custody at that time proving to be more harmful to the civilians than the insurgency (ICG 2016). Having faced some serious security threats from non-

state actors such as the Niger Delta militant, Nigeria has never had its neighbouring states dragged into its domestic security issues (Falode 2016). Nigeria has received support from neighbouring states such as Chad and Cameroon who are also fighting to drive out the insurgencies out of their borders with slightly more success than the reputable Nigerian army.

Since its first attacks back in 2009, and six years of Nigerian State Army failing to address the issue of Boko Haram, the tide only began to turn for Nigeria after Goodluck Jonathan began to seek the use of Private Military Companies most notably Specialized Tasks Training Equipment and Protection (S.T.T.E.P), an internationally recognized military provider firm formed in 2006 by Eeben Barlow. S.T.T.E.P only functioned for a period of 3 months; between January and March, it was able through its training and tactics, to dent Boko Haram operations. The hired P.M.C could reclaim territory for the Nigerian government in a matter of weeks. The significant difference in tactics, as well as the short time it took to successfully combat Boko Haram, is noteworthy given that Nigeria's army, ranked 4th in the continent, is considered as one of the most powerful in Africa (African Countries Ranked by Military Power 2016). Although the threat posed by Boko Haram is still present, S.T.T.E.P involvement could generate momentum which managed to turn the tide in favour of the Nigerian Army in the fight against Boko Haram.

Research Objective

The objective of this study is to evaluate the role played by the Private Military Company, Specialized Tasks, Training, Equipment and Protection (S.T.T.E.P), in turning the tide against the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria. In its efforts to investigate the research question, the study highlights the growing nontraditional alliance between states and non-state actors in their efforts in tackling unconventional threats to national security.

Research Question

To what extent were P.M.C counterinsurgency tactics effective in making gains towards containing Boko Haram?

Rationale

The following study is key to understanding how counterinsurgency tactics such as relentless pursuit was effectively implemented as a tool, by the Private Military Company S.T.T.E.P, in their joint effort with the NDF, in turning the tide against Boko Haram.

Using the counterinsurgency theory, the thesis intends to evaluate the application of the COIN tactic (relentless pursuit) applied as well as trained by the Private Company, as they have proven over the years to be instrumental in dealing with insurgency threats. This has been evident over the years, as we have witnessed a growing reliance by states in using P.M.C's as an alternative to their very own state armies or simply to aid their armies such as the United States of America in the 2003 Iraq War, the use of Executive Outcomes by both the Angolan government in 1993 civil war against the Union for the Total Independence of Angola (U.N.I.T.A) insurgency and the Sierra Leone government in the 1995 civil war against the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) insurgency (Spearin 2007).

The nature of this study is to understand the effectiveness of the Private Military Company S.T.T.E.P in containing Boko Haram in Nigeria. This, therefore, means that this study firstly aims to investigate whether S.T.T.E.P was successful in containing the Nigerian insurgency Boko Haram by investigating the effectiveness of the COIN tactic applied. Based on the short time period investigated, the study also aims to display why and how the Private Military Company was more effective than the Nigerian army in dealing with the insurgency. The study also aims to evaluate whether this is a special case or if P.M.C's can be used effectively in other African cases in addressing security threats especially those concerning humanitarian rights. Lastly, the study aims to display how S.T.T.E.P could effectively operate while remaining within the International Humanitarian Laws and Rules of War. Its ability to abide by the rules also serves as a measure of P.M.C effectiveness since it enhances a P.M.C's credibility if it does not cause civilian casualties.

The thesis will begin by discussing the methodology of the research undertaken to provide the reader with an understanding of how data was collected as well as the variables explored. The research will then provide a literature review chapter which helps the reader understand much of the material used, the type of material used as well as determine if the material used is a credible

source. Following the literature review, the research will then proceed onto discussing the tactics used by Boko Haram leading to their notoriety and the desire for the Nigerian government to hire S.T.T.E.P. Having discussed tactics employed by Boko Haram, a section on S.T.T.E.P intervention will be discussed, as to which it will explore how as well as when did the P.M.C in question (S.T.T.E.P) become involved in the war against Boko Haram. The research will proceed to explore the COIN tactics applied by both the affected state as well as S.T.T.E.P in their efforts to contain the insurgency. The tactic relentless pursuit will be examined along with its strategies, to determine whether they were effective in containing the Boko Haram insurgency. The research will determine the effectiveness of the COIN intervention by investigating the indicators listed below in the methodology section.

Methodology

The research will carry out a qualitative analysis approach or interpretation of data as it is primarily made of exploratory research. Qualitative research consists of analyses of existing literature on the topic, with this literature coming from credible and academically reliable sources which will provide a greater understanding of the subject (Van Evera 1997). The research is aimed at understanding the growing Private Military Company phenomenon by providing insight on its effectiveness in the case study of Boko Haram in Nigeria.

The research will use what is known as process tracing in which the investigation carried out attempts to explore the chain of events or the decision-making process which the initial case conditions are therefore transformed into case outcomes (Van Evera 1997). Process tracing in this research paper intends to trace the strategic mechanisms and tactics used by S.T.T.E.P to contain Boko Haram in Northern Nigeria from January 2015 till March 2015. This therefore means it intends to display the cause and effect link which connects the independent variable, in this case being (S.T.T.E.P Intervention) to the dependent variable outcome (failure/success in Boko Haram insurgency in Northern Nigeria) via the use of the intervening variables (cooperation between P.M.C and state army, bush tactics, relentless pursuit, equipment advancement). According to George and Bennet, causal mechanisms are defined as the “causal processes and intervening variables through which causal or explanatory variables produce causal effects” (Bennett and George 1997). The dependent variable is potentially capable of variance as the outcome can change between failure and success in containing Boko Haram in Northern Nigeria. It is, therefore,

important to note that these causal processes reflect how the independent variable via the above-mentioned intervening variables can impact on the dependent variable.

The following indicators will be used to measure the outcome (D.V)

- Repossession of territory
- Frequency of Boko Haram attacks (including suicide bomb attacks)
- Capturing of Boko Haram personnel
- Presence of civilian casualties
- Change in Boko Haram Tactics
- S.T.T.E.P operations under the International Humanitarian Laws and Rules of Wars

The reason for choosing Nigeria as a case study to evaluate the effectiveness of P.M.C's is simply, Nigeria is the most recent African case in which Private Militaries have allegedly taken up an active role in combating Boko Haram since the Executive Outcomes period. Nigeria is also seen as a powerful African state, therefore, it also serves as an opportunity to measure its institutional capabilities such as the military up against P.M.Cs. Lastly growing Jihadist extremism proves to be a global security threat, therefore Nigeria with its diverse society would display whether P.M.Cs provides a long term solution or not.

Limitations

The major limitation with this research topic is the difficulty in obtaining government documents discussing S.T.T.E.P involvement; number of casualties faced by civilians, NDF and Boko Haram; human rights violation reports and finally honest progress reports on Boko Haram activity. As a result the research has to rely heavily on media reports as well as N.G.O reports to provide some assessment to evaluate S.T.T.E.P's effectiveness.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

The following literature review will contain three different types of literature. These include primary sources such as previously done interviews and blogs, secondary sources such as books and journals that address the scholarship on PMCs, as well as media reports. The first segment focuses on providing a review of the Counterinsurgency theory. The second segment provides a review of material covering S.T.T.E.P involvement against Boko Haram in Nigeria.

Counterinsurgency Review

Due to the unconventional nature of warfare investigated, the counterinsurgency theory serves as an integral part of this thesis as it provides the research with a conceptual understanding of the topic as well as a theoretical approach to engaging the Boko Haram insurgency under investigation. However, the thesis aims to investigate the counterinsurgency tactics and strategies applied by S.T.T.E.P as well as the NDF and evaluate their effectiveness in containing Boko Haram. The counterinsurgency literature provides guidelines as to what is deemed as a successful counterinsurgency campaign.

COIN literature provides an array of definitions to the term 'insurgency'. According to Moore, "Insurgents employ guerrilla and terrorist tactics, espouse revolutionary and radical causes, pose asymmetric threats to modern conventional forces, operate on the legal and moral margins of societies, and blur distinctions between civilians and combatants" (Moore 2007). The literature by Moore provides an insightful definition of the term insurgency, to which most of the characteristics will be used in the research to depict whether Boko Haram does qualify to be labelled as an insurgency. However, the literature seems to neglect the fact that insurgencies can possess different characteristics and seems set on rejecting other proposed definitions. Moore fails to expand on many of the characteristics he discusses. However, the research provides expanded characteristics of the insurgency in both the background as well as tactics section of the paper.

Moore defines counterinsurgency as, "an integrated set of political, economic, social, and security measures intended to end and prevent the recurrence of armed violence, create and maintain stable political, economic, and social structures, and resolve the underlying causes of an insurgency to establish and sustain the conditions necessary for lasting stability" (Moore 2007). Moore provides

a well-rounded definition which considers the causes and dynamics of insurgencies as well as the multi-dimensional complexity of dealing with insurgencies. The definition by Moore aligns with the research paper in such a manner that military and security operations should not be ignored nor should they be prioritized, but they should be placed within the wider context of the conflict at hand (Moore 2007). Moore's contribution supports the research's claim that S.T.T.E.P's military contributions on their own will not be enough to provide long term stability, however they would prove sufficient in providing short term success in a COIN campaign. It therefore helps the researcher not only consider what S.T.T.E.P did on the field to make their counterinsurgency efforts effective but also to investigate on off the field strategies implemented which could have helped further their counterinsurgency efforts. What Moore fails to do however is provide further insight as to what social or political aspects of COIN states should take meanwhile the research specific to its case study, provides how COIN parties can apply social, political and economic COIN strategies to help provide long term stability.

Moore suggests that there are two counterinsurgency strategic approaches. He suggests the first, is predominantly military focused and is largely concerned by the physical defeat of the insurgents. The second he suggests intends to resolve the conflict in all its dimensions. Through this approach, counterinsurgency is not focused on the defeat of the insurgency but it is rather focused on providing lasting stability within the state or affected region. To effectively provide long-term stability, the following objectives according to Moore need to be met: "1) violence and subversion were brought to a level manageable by local security forces; 2) political, economic, and social institutions were built to address the many of the structural problems fomenting instability, and; 3) the hatreds, mistrust, and prejudices that fuelled the conflict were transformed" (Moore 2007). Moore can distinctively highlight the two different COIN approaches which are predominantly used. He also suggests that the second more-long term approach is most effective over the first. However, Moore does not seem to indicate as to why some COIN campaigns tend to resort to the first approach over the second. Learning from Moore's gap, in discussing the S.T.T.E.P intervenes section, the research describes as to why the Nigerian government takes the more sudden militaristic approach over the more long-term COIN approach.

The U.S Government Counterinsurgency Guide by Burgos, Kilcullen and Porter, shares similar views to Moore's successful COIN efforts. The guide suggest that a successful COIN effort requires the following: " The affected government is seen as legitimate, controlling social,

political, economic and security institutions that meet the population's needs, including adequate mechanisms to address the grievances that may have fuelled support of the insurgency; the insurgent movements and their leaders are co-opted, marginalized, or separated from the population; armed insurgent forces have dissolved or been demobilized, and/or reintegrated into the political, economic, and social structures of the country" (Burgos, Kilcullen und Porter 2009). The requirements provided by the guide are like those provided by Moore which provides the research with solid COIN criteria for measuring the long term or short-term effectiveness of S.T.T.E.P in containing Boko Haram in Nigeria. The guide, however, further points out that due to the extreme difficulty in identifying insurgencies once their manpower has dropped below a critical mass, COIN intervention in the affected country may end years before the insurgency ceases to exist (Burgos, Kilcullen und Porter 2009). It is, therefore, important that the effectiveness of S.T.T.E.P is not based on the total annihilation of Boko Haram but rather S.T.T.E.P's ability to break down Boko Haram to a point where they can be comfortably contained by the affected government forces.

According to the U.S Government Counterinsurgency Guide, there are three phases leading to the successful implementation of COIN. These phases are namely 'establishment of control', 'consolidation' and 'transition' phase (Burgos, Kilcullen und Porter 2009). The three phases are regarded as the duration of the COIN intervention in which the first phase 'establishment of control' involves the use of force as the affected government tries to regain control lost to the insurgencies; the second phase 'consolidation', which is the longest involves the affected government extending its control in areas once controlled by insurgencies by reinstating pro-government network through eliminating illicit governance structures and illegal economic activity that supports the insurgency; the last phase 'transition' simply involves the transfer of authority from an intervening actor back to the affected nation but also the handover from local military forces to local civilian authority (Burgos, Kilcullen und Porter 2009). The three phases provided by U.S Counterinsurgency guide are crucial to the research in understanding the different phases of counterinsurgency. However, the literature makes the mistake of assuming that counterinsurgency is a linear step by step process. Due to the short period in which S.T.T.E.P operated in Nigeria, the research suggests that COIN campaigns do not follow a linear pattern phase as suggested by the U.S Counterinsurgency Guide but rather all three phases can be carried

out simultaneously, and in the Nigerian case, the third phase was carried out by S.T.T.E.P before it completed the second phase.

Counterinsurgency (COIN) serves as a theoretical overview to which strategies employed by the Private Military Company, Specialized Tasks Training Equipment and Protection will be discussed and evaluated whether they as a COIN tactic, have proven effective in their efforts to help contain the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria. COIN also helps understand the insurgency further as it seeks to investigate the motives as well as the nature of insurgency attacks which helps in formulating strategies and tactics to counter the insurgency. Such detail on the insurgency will help evaluate the effectiveness of the COIN strategies adopted in containing Boko Haram as it enables the researcher to assess whether attack frequencies have dropped, the nature of attacks has changed as well as the ability to garner public sympathy based on initial motives of the insurgency has decreased. COIN, therefore, provides this study with the two strategic approaches which will be used to measure the effectiveness of S.T.T.E.P in containing the Boko Haram insurgency. Unlike most Counterinsurgency literature, which focuses on explaining COIN and its characteristics, the research applies COIN and evaluates how effective its tactics and strategies were against the Boko Haram insurgency.

Material on S.T.T.E.P Involvement

Primary Sources Review

The interview carried out by Jack Murphy (author at SOFREP), on Eeben Barlow provides a direct first-hand source which discusses the issue of S.T.T.E.P presence and tactics in Nigeria. The interview provides confirmation of S.T.T.E.P involvement in the fight against Boko Haram despite government's efforts to try to deny the P.M.Cs involvement. The 6-part interview addresses the issue of Boko Haram in a step by step process. In part 1, Barlow simply points out the successes carried out by both the Nigerian Strike Force and S.T.T.E.P against Boko Haram in the limited 3 months they were involved. Barlow states, "The campaign gathered good momentum and wrested much of the initiative from the enemy," the statements points out how S.T.T.E.P has been able to shift the momentum acknowledging the continuing existence of the Boko Haram threat that is still present (Barlow 2015). In Part 2 titled Development of a Nigerian Strike Force, Barlow speaks on how the PMC helped to reorganize the Nigerian Strike Force making it more effective in the fight against Boko Haram, this goes from tactical training to rearming the Nigerian Strike Force with

the necessary equipment for counterinsurgency attacks (Barlow 2015). It is also important to note the success of these COIN strategies and tactics will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of S.T.T.E.P in containing Boko Haram. Part 3 which is perhaps the most useful for the research is titled Tactics Used to Destroy Boko Haram. In this section, Eeben Barlow discusses the different tactics used under the COIN strategy against Boko Haram. It is through using these tactics that the research intends to investigate and display in what ways S.T.T.E.P involvement proved to be effective in containing Boko Haram. Part 4, 5 and 6 focuses on different agendas however part 6 titled South African Contractors Withdrawal from Nigeria in which Barlow addresses how he projects the Nigerian Strike Force performance against Boko Haram without S.T.T.E.P supervision. Barlow also provides advice which could better Nigerian Strike Force chances against Boko Haram. The SOFREP interviews provide the researcher with necessary information on S.T.T.E.P operations in Nigeria based on details provided by Eeben Barlow.

Eeben Barlow's blog proves to be a second vital first-hand account of S.T.T.E.P intervention in the fight against Boko Haram. According to Barlow, 'relentless pursuit' is one of the COIN principles or tactics that have been neglected. Barlow believes that through relentless pursuit one can wrestle the initiative from the enemy and place the enemy in a position of "continual disadvantage and then exploit it with speed, aggression, and firepower" (Barlow, Eeben Barlow's Military and Security Blog 2011). Barlow argues that through this tactic, one can continuously pursue the enemy with speed and aggression resulting in the exhaustion of the enemy as it is unable to rest, eat or sleep due to continuous attacks (Barlow, Eeben Barlow's Military and Security Blog 2011). Relentless pursuit according to Barlow requires that the troops can eat whilst on the move, can track an enemy at speed, can leap-frog ahead of the enemy by means of helicopters, have outstanding communications, are aggressive, are adept at night operations and must outgun the enemy as well as have a good tracker. Barlow's blog asserts that Relentless Pursuit was the major COIN tactics implemented by S.T.T.E.P in their efforts against Boko Haram. The research intends to further investigate how S.T.T.E.P used relentless pursuit in their COIN strategy against Boko Haram. The research will, therefore, evaluate the effectiveness of the relentless pursuit tactic by assessing the frequency of attacks by Boko Haram during the period S.T.T.E.P was in Nigeria and comparing the reclaimed territory to that lost to Boko Haram during the intervention period.

Secondary Sources Review
Scholarly Journals

The second segment provides a literature review of scholarly articles which have been using to address the research question.

The article by Michelle Small has proven useful for the research as it has provided the researcher with the challenges the traditional Weberian state faces from the existence of P.M.Cs. Weber observes that "one can define the modern state only in terms of the specific means peculiar to it…namely, the use of physical force" (Small, Privatisation of Security and Military Functions and the Demise of the Modern Nation-State in Africa 2006). The co-existence of states alongside P.M.Cs means states are giving up their sole claim to statehood which is the sovereign claim over the monopolization of legitimate violence. As a result, Small claims "PMCs simultaneously strengthen the state as they disassemble them" (Small, Privatisation of Security and Military Functions and the Demise of the Modern Nation-State in Africa 2006). In essence, P.M.Cs have been decisive in dealing with rising threats while it weakens state capacity and capabilities. This will prove critical in the research as it begins to raise questions over the long-term effectiveness of S.T.T.E.P's COIN intervention. Small also provides theoretical insight on how P.M.Cs are efficient due to their structural formation as private businesses.

P.W Singer provides the research with background knowledge on the rise of the Private Military Company industry. In his article breaks down Private Military Companies into three different groups namely military provider firms; military consulting firms and lastly military support firms (Singer 2001). This helps the researcher in getting a general understanding of P.M.Cs as Singer goes beyond to listing dynamics leading to the rise of P.M.Cs these being "the end of the Cold War and the vacuum this produced in the market of security, transformations in the nature of warfare, and the normative rise of privatization" (Singer 2001) . Singer has been instrumental in understanding why the Nigerian government required the services of P.M.Cs in combating Boko Haram. Lastly, Singer also provides a theoretical explanation for the efficiency and effectiveness of P.M.Cs which is instrumental in understanding the research problem as well as addressing it. Singer states, "Corporatization not only distinguishes PMFs from mercenaries and other past private military ventures, but it also offers certain advantages in both efficiency and effectiveness" (Singer 2001)

The report *Boko Haram on the Back Foot?* by the International Crisis Group provides an analysis of Boko Harm activities since their encounters with COIN actors. The author of the journal states "On 24 December 2015, President Buhari declared that "technically" Nigeria has "won the war" against Boko Haram. It is true that for several months, the group has carried out fewer attacks, and those smaller, on softer targets and with reduced success" (ICG 2016). The report monitors Boko Haram activities over the past year and reveals how the insurgency has weakened compared to its past efforts before COIN tactics had been applied. It serves as an important source for the research as it reveals how the insurgency was affected by the applied COIN efforts providing the research with the much-needed information on how the insurgency was contained. The ICG states "the group has carried out fewer attacks, and those smaller, on softer targets and with reduced success" (ICG 2016). This comes because of COIN efforts carried out against them forcing the insurgency to operate at a much smaller scale and against smaller targets. The article reflects the effectiveness of COIN in containing the Boko Haram insurgency as it highlights the elements in which Boko Haram has been affected. However, the article fails to display exactly how Private Military Companies have contributed to the containment of the insurgency and makes little to no reverence of Private Military involvement. Therefore, looking at the shift of tactics by the Nigerian army upon the highlighted time frame in which S.T.T.E.P is involved in relation to the frequency of Boko Haram will serve as a testament to the effectiveness of P.M.C involvement.

In the book by Peri and Serrano, titled *By the Numbers: The Nigerian State's Efforts to Counter Boko Haram*, provides the research with an analysis of the violent confrontation between the Nigerian state and the Boko Haram insurgency in north-eastern Nigeria. The book provides background information of the Boko Haram insurgency as well as discusses some of the tactics used by the insurgency. This proves key to the research as it allows for the comparison of the effectiveness of tactics used before and after counterinsurgency tactics are used. Such information is vital in analyzing whether the insurgency has been effectively contained during the period in which S.T.T.E.P becomes involved. The book also discusses the numerous reasons leading to the formation of the insurgency. It is important that these factors are addressed in order to reach a long-term counterinsurgency objective that offers stability within the region. Such information is vital as it helps assess whether the COIN intervention is carried out successfully by the affected state as well as S.T.T.E.P. Most importantly the book discusses government response to the Boko Haram insurgency. Freedom Onuoha in Pieri and Serrano states, "To reduce the operational

capability of the sect, the Nigerian government has adopted several measures, including prosecution of arrested members, deployment of special security forces, temporary closure of parts of borders in northern Nigeria, deportation of illegal immigrants, capacity building of security forces on counter-terrorism (CoT) and counter-insurgency (COIN) operations, installation of surveillance equipment, and collaboration with foreign partners" (Pieri and Serrano 2014). Not only does the willingness to collaborate with foreign partners display Nigeria's willingness to counter Boko Haram but it also serves as testament to their counterinsurgency effort's in hiring P.M.C's to help contain Boko Haram. The article however does not draw on the governments' ill treatment leading to the continuous support of the insurgency from civilians. This research paper assesses Nigeria's efforts to counter Boko Haram, but it also highlights the flaws committed by the Nigerian government leading to the formation and successes of Boko Harm.

The article by Emeka Umeagbalasi titled *Silent Genocide in Nigeria,* serves as a statistical source in which it highlights human rights violations as well as casualties in Nigeria from as early as 1999 till 2016. Although figures encompass all non-lawful incidents including murder and torture. It does, however, highlight figures of atrocities caused by both Boko Haram and the state in their counterinsurgency efforts. The article states, "Nigeria's human rights records have soured and deteriorated steadily over the years, earning their worse status under the present Buhari Administration" (Umeagbalasi 2016). To further prove the effectiveness of the role played by S.T.T.E.P, the research needs to consider its ability to operate within the International Humanitarian Laws and Rules of Wars. Therefore the article will serve as a comparison of human rights violations carried out by the state during the P.M.C's involvement from January till March. A substantial difference in human rights violations would then indicate whether the COIN intervention proved to be more successful under P.M.C guidance as compared to the COIN operations under the current Buhari administration. The article continues to highlight the number of state-related human rights violations in their counter-insurgency efforts as Umeagbalasi states "8000 criminal deaths or civilian detainees' custodial deaths which Amnesty International (AI) in its report of 2015 linked to the Nigerian Army during its counter-insurgency operations in the northeast Nigeria" (Umeagbalasi 2016). The statement indicates many human rights violations which if largely carried out during the period of P.M.C intervention would indicate the COIN intervention as ineffective. The Buhari administration is believed to be responsible for the deaths of over 1500 civilians over the course of seventeen months (Umeagbalasi 2016). The monthly

average of 88 state related deaths will be compared to the monthly average under S.T.T.E.P leadership to determine the scale of human rights violations in the two different COIN campaigns.

In the Global Terrorism Index of 2016, the document serves as an analysis of terrorist activities across the globe. It compares terror-related deaths and attacks which provide the research with figures used in the counterinsurgency analysis. The document provides a very detailed account of Boko Haram-related tragedies in Nigeria. The document indicates that in 2015 Boko Haram faced an 18% reduction in the number of people killed from its attacks (Global Terrorism Index 2016). It also raises that the decline in casualty figures in Nigeria is a result of sustained military action by both the Nigerian government and neighbouring countries (Global Terrorism Index 2016). The research must take into account the contribution made by S.T.T.E.P by analysing casualty figures in their active months regardless being one of the most active periods of the insurgency.

Media Reports

Most of the media reports provided in the literature review provide more of a chronological sequence of events that occurred in Nigeria. They can provide detailed accounts according to when they occurred which helps the researcher piece together events. It simplifies the research as most of the necessary background material as well as factual events are easier to find using media reports. Media reports although possibly sensational, provide the researcher with on the ground accounts of the current Boko Haram crisis. They also provide accounts from different actors in the crisis mainly from some of the Private Company's personnel as well as Nigerian personnel. Most of the media reports also aim to serve as proof of the involvement of P.M.Cs as they report on their presence in the affected country.

Adam Nossiter of *New York Times* (media) claims that Private Military Company presence is because of election pressure from both the Electorate as well as the opposition party mainly the All Progressives Congress which was led by Buhari. Also, claims by Nossister suggest to the researcher that there could be other factors led former President Goodluck Jonathan in hiring P.M.Cs. The article continues by stating that P.M.C's played a decisive role in the efforts to push back Boko Haram by implying that the 'mercenaries' were actually responsible for the effective operations against Boko Haram using 'relentless pursuit' tactics. The article uses personnel involved in the conflict as primary sources using Nigerian government officials, who have remained anonymous in the interests of self-protection (Nossiter 2015). The government officials

acknowledge the importance of P.M.C's in combating Boko Haram, stating P.M.C's "are in the vanguard in the liberation of some of the communities" displaying their crucial role in the fight against Boko Haram. As mentioned above the article serves as proof of S.T.T.E.P presence as it contains testimonies from government officials as well as other diplomatic officials reflecting on the role of the P.M.C as well as mentions the use of relentless pursuit as the strategy used. However the article fails to highlight how exactly P.M.C's such as S.T.T.E.P helped in containing Boko Haram, which is something the research paper aims to do well. What the article fails to do however is provide an account from Boko Haram in which they too could comment on the role of P.M.C's in the fight against them.

The second article by Bongani Mbindwane of the *Daily Maverick* links the South African government to the involvement of S.T.T.E.P in combating Boko Haram in Nigeria. The article helps provide the researcher with a widely accepted United Nations definition of the term mercenary to display the interest of private gain carried out by the contractors. It then articulates the lawlessness of contractor involvement in Nigeria under the Regulation of Foreign Military Assistance Act 15 of 1998, Sections 3-4. This has proven useful as it exposes the lawful consequences that P.M.Cs face in South Africa, as well as display the risk contractors have placed South Africa in, despite not being part of the conflict (Mbindwane 2015).The article proves useful to the research topic as it also aims to address some of the consequences faced by P.M.Cs. However, the article fails to examine the laws carefully as S.T.T.E.P is not a South African registered company. The research on the other hand explores how Eeben Barlow along with other P.M.C personnel can manoeuvre around the law as well as their status in the International rules of War.

The online IOL news article by Peter Fabricius highlights the involvement of South African citizens in combatting the Boko Haram insurgency. The article labels the combatants as 'mercenaries', as well as links them to Eeben Barlow, co-founder of S.T.T.E.P International suggesting their contracted involvement. The article states "Eeben Barlow, who headed the Executive Outcomes private security firm, has been named as the person behind a secretive former South African Defence Force (SADF) contingent that is helping Nigeria to combat Boko Haram" (Fabricius 2015). The article points out the pressures leading to the Nigerian government deciding to hire the Private Contractors. It provides the research with the much-needed evidence to prove the existence of the P.M.C in Nigeria. However, there is mention of other numerous P.M.Cs which

makes it difficult to monitor the effectiveness as well as fails of S.T.T.E.P International as data is most likely to be mixed up. The article differs from others as it makes effort to mention as to why Nigerian government resorted to using P.M.C's due to electoral pressures. However, it fails to mention other reasons as to why the government would resort to S.T.T.E.P instead of using other avenues such as regional organizations. The research however manages to address the different avenues the government could have used as well as what strategic advantage was there in using S.T.T.E.P.

The Telegraph article by Colin Freeman suggests that the P.M.C S.T.T.E.P International led by Eeben Barlow was able to turn the tide against Boko Haram in a matter of three months. Freeman states "But after just three months on the ground, a squad of grizzled, ageing white mercenaries have helped to end Boko Haram's six-long year reign of terror in northern Nigeria" (Freeman 2015). The article suggests that the P.M.C had been hired in January 2015 and operated for three months. According to Barlow, his company used more of an aggressive strike force which helped shift the momentum away from the insurgency in their favour. The article is useful for several reasons. Firstly, it serves as a testament to the involvement of S.T.T.E.P in containing Boko Haram. It also supports the time-frame claims that have been made vastly giving the researcher a more specific period to investigate. The article also attempts to discuss the role of the P.M.C in the battle against Boko Haram. Barlow in Freeman states how S.T.T.E.P's role shifted training a small team specialized in saving the kidnapped schoolgirls to actually training the Nigeria's largely traditional army in "unconventional mobile warfare" (Freeman 2015). This has led to the adaptation of most of the tactics by the Nigerian task force. The article mentions the tactics used and trained to the Nigerian Special Task Force. It mentions tactics such as 'relentless pursuit' and 'bush tracking' as one of the tactics used in their counterinsurgency efforts against Boko Haram (Freeman 2015).

The Vanguard news article claims that the private company S.T.T.E.P were being rehired under the newly elected Buhari administration which had once shunned against the use of contractors. The article states the contractors were rehired as they "appeared to be the most practical option if headway was to be made against militants whose guerrilla tactics are new to the Nigerian military" (Dec Deadline: Again, Nigeria 'hires mercenaries' to battle Boko Haram 2015). The consideration to hire the once shunned P.M.C proves to the researcher that their initial involvement proved to be rather effective if not decisive in shifting the momentum from the insurgency group. The article proceeds to claim that over 1700 people had been killed since the Buhari administration had taken

over office on the 29th of May 2015 as reported in the October 7 report from the International Society for Civil Liberties and the Rule of Law (Dec Deadline: Again, Nigeria 'hires mercenaries' to battle Boko Haram 2015). The article has managed to provide the researcher with important figures which will be used to compare the civilian death toll during the period in which S.T.T.E.P had been deployed in the fight against Boko Haram with those provided during the Buhari administration. If results prove to be lower during the intervention, it would indicate certain effectiveness by the P.M.C. Lastly, the article provides a statement made by a high ranking political figure concerning the use of S.T.T.E.P by the previous administration. Garba Shehu begins by denying allegations of the Buhari administration considering hiring the P.M.C as he states, "Since coming into office, this government did not have any engagement with mercenaries of any kind and there are no plans to do so" (Dec Deadline: Again, Nigeria 'hires mercenaries' to battle Boko Haram 2015). However, Shehu confirms the use of S.T.T.E.P by the previous Goodluck Jonathan administration by stating "It is true that the previous administration hired South African mercenaries to fight Boko Haram," (Dec Deadline: Again, Nigeria 'hires mercenaries' to battle Boko Haram 2015). Getting such a statement from the current presidential spokesman verifies the once denied involvement of P.M.C's in containing Boko Haram.

Other newspaper reports from the *B.B.C, ENCA, The Guardian,* and *Reuters* all provide vital statistical information used in the analysis of S.T.T.E.P's effectiveness in containing Boko Haram. They are used as a source of civilian death toll reports, Boko Harm attacks, military casualty reports as well as human rights violation reports. All news articles face the same disadvantage. Based on the lack of government transparency and official reports, the articles are unable to provide accurate figures. The research therefore gathers different tallies provided by both newspaper articles as well as journals and reports from N.G.O's and helps provide somewhat of a combined estimate which gives us an idea of the impact Boko Haram as well as S.T.T.E.P has had in the COIN warfare.

Chapter 3

The following chapter discusses the tactics used by Boko Haram. It displays the multiple tactics the insurgency used to achieve their objectives. Having an array of tactics proved difficult for the NDF forces to defeat Boko Haram leading to S.T.T.E.P intervention. After having discussed Boko Haram tactics, the following chapter sets the scene on S.T.T.E.P intervention. It discusses the type of P.M.C services offered by S.T.T.E.P in accordance to the "tip of the spear" typology, when, why as well as well as how S.T.T.E.P played a role in containing Boko Haram. By looking at the COIN principle (relentless pursuit) applied, the chapter displays how the principle works through the application of multiple step by step prerequisite strategies which ensure relentless pursuit is executed well.

Boko Haram Tactics

It is important to note the different tactics employed by Boko Haram in carrying out their attacks both prior to and after the COIN efforts involving S.T.T.E.P. It is important to understand the relationship between the changing tactics, and the number of deaths. A change in tactics could come because of meeting continuous resistance from the COIN forces, or it could simply be initiated by the accuracy of attacks under a different tactic. Hence there would be a rise in death tolls with less frequent attack.

Initially, Boko Haram mainly carried out armed assaults using firearms particularly machine guns on their targets between 2009-2014 (Pricopi 2016). According to the Global Terror Index in Pricopi, these attacks were responsible for 63% of the 2014 Boko Haram inflicted deaths (Pricopi 2016). The attacks would require armed Boko Haram personnel to travel to a targeted village and shoot at everyone except for those who are kidnapped and forced to join the insurgency. However due to the initial launch of the Nigerian government's counterinsurgency efforts, the insurgency attacks proved to be costly to the insurgency as they began to experience casualties caused by multiple encounters with government forces (AlJazeera 2016).

Due to an increase in government encounters, Boko Haram switched its tactics and began including bombing in their arsenal of attacks. According to Stephanie Busari of the CNN, Boko Haram received military training from similar insurgency groups such as Al Shabaab in Somalia (Busari 2016). Having received training Boko Haram then increased their bombings threefold from 2013

and laid claim 1490 lives, 14 times more than the previous year (Pricopi 2016). This new tactic targeted civilians in public places, proving to be highly effective as it accounted for an increase in civilian casualties with a minimal response from the Nigerian military. The use of bombs also led to an increase in suicide attacks carried out by Boko Haram. In 2014 alone, Boko Haram carried out thirty-two suicide attacks compared to three in the previous year and targeted civilians in public areas such as educational and religious institutions as well as market places (Levin, Schweitzer and Yogev 2015).

Apart from a few volunteers, the suicide attacks are mainly perpetrated by individuals that might have been kidnapped by the insurgency and forced into carrying out the attacks. Due to the numerous checkpoints and strict searching of males in general by government forces, the group therefore included the use of females in their terror attacks (Pricopi 2016). Women are generally viewed as innocent and believed to pose minimal threat hence their ability to go through checkpoints undetected and loosely searched and yet their clothes can conceal weapons with relative ease (Freedom and Temilola 2015). Women have been assigned other roles and been included in some of the insurgency tactics most famous being arms smuggling, armed assaults as well as being turned into wives for male combatants in the group (ICG 2016). The use of women was a rather thoroughly thought out tactic which started with the kidnapping of the 270 Chimbok girls in April 2014. The effectiveness of female combatants led to further kidnapping of hundreds of women and girls being trained and used for more assaults on unsuspecting civilians. Most famous of the suicide attacks is the use of two females aged 17 and 20 who carried a suicide attack killing 60 people and injuring 80 in a Nigerian camp in Dikwa on the 11th of February 2016 (Pricopi 2016). Another bombing tactic for Boko Haram has been to disguise themselves as mad people to gain unrestricted access to highly guarded areas and markets as the COIN forces had become aware of the use of female personnel. Both males and females disguised as mad people simply approach crowded public spaces and detonate themselves. This tactic has also been noticed and state officials have begun warning people to be weary of Boko Haram disguised as mad individuals approaching the markets.

Boko Haram is also well known for carrying out raids on small towns and villages in the North-Eastern part. According to Pricopi, these raids vary in size and scale as he proceeds to state “some attacks were carried out by just two or three gunmen on a motorcycle, some by hundreds of fighters supported by tanks and antiaircraft weapons mounted on flat-bed trucks” (Pricopi 2016). Such

attacks carried out mass killings, abductions, robberies and caused serious damage to critical infrastructure. Due to their objective of creating a purely Islamic caliphate, which comprised of Muslims only, it certainly was part of their tactic to take control over multiple towns and expand their caliphate territory (Falode 2016). In order to take over towns, the insurgency would first send a large wave of combatants to raid the unsuspecting towns assaulting the community targeting police and military institutions; as soon as armed forces have been defeated the insurgency usually seizes all arms and ammunition as it adds onto their arsenal; finally, the insurgency then executes targeted civilians mainly those who are of influence in the town (Pricopi 2016). The insurgency tends to depend on its fear and ruthless tactics to ensure that people living in the town they control do not try to retaliate against and live under insurgency law or sharia.

Boko Haram employs multiple tactics to carry out their attacks mainly on unsuspecting civilian in public spaces. One could suggest that switching tactics could be done to keep the COIN forces confused and clueless as to how they can defeat the insurgency. However, the change in tactics could also be attributed to the gains made by the COIN forces, forcing the insurgency to adapt to different tactics which limit encounters with COIN forces. It is important to monitor insurgency movement and actions to fully analyse the reason behind change in tactics. The next section therefore discusses COIN tactics applied by S.T.T.E.P during their involvement in the fight against Boko Haram.

S.T.T.E.P Intervenes

Before proceeding into S.T.T.E.P intervention, it is important to understand the type of private military services that the P.M.C provides. Moesgaard suggests that *military provider firms* are firms that provide battle services and have the closest proximity to the battlefield (Moesgaard 2013). These would include firms that partake in lethal action and would be involved in Boko Haram encounters. *Military consultant firms* just provide advisory and training services, strategic, operational and organizational analysis and education, and are not involved in the battlefield (Moesgaard 2013). These firms would typically help in building up strategies and train clients however they do not join clients in battle. Lastly, we have *military support firms,* these firms only provide mere services such as non-lethal aid, assistance, logistics, intelligence, technical support and transportation (Moesgaard 2013). Based on the detailed reports, S.T.T.E.P would more likely

be classified as a *military provider firm* as they were involved in ensuring their relentless pursuit was effectively executed by being present on the battlefield.

The Nigerian government under former President Goodluck Jonathan struggled to combat the insurgency. Over the course of six years the Nigerian state lost control over territory which Boko Haram had captured in their raids in the North-eastern part of the country. The group had killed tens of thousands as well as displaced millions of civilians from their homes. According to Adedapo Adeniran, "Nigeria is too large and unwieldly for any one power to govern as a single entity with contradictions of language, custom, culture, religion, habits, ethnicity, outlook and vision" (Adeniran 2002). The statement suggests a state the size of and as diverse as Nigeria becomes difficult to police as it is difficult to formulate policy which ensures effective governance.

With the elections fast approaching initially being scheduled for the 14th of February 2015, President Goodluck Jonathan believed defeating the insurgency would boost his election campaign and help in winning over votes. In January 2015, the Jonathan administration sought private military company, S.T.T.E.P, to help strengthen the government's counterinsurgency efforts as it would train a Nigerian unit to find and rescue the 270 kidnapped Chibok girls (Campbell 2015). Due to the continuous onslaught experienced by the government forces against Boko Haram, the P.M.C were then hired to train Nigeria's demoralised army and instruct the COIN efforts against the Boko Haram insurgency. Instead of training NDF combatants, S.T.T.E.P personnel became actively involved along with the NDF in the 'field' leading to the involvement of what John Campbell labels as an "aggressive strike force" responsible for pushing Boko Haram on the back foot and containing the insurgency (Campbell 2015). Therefore S.T.T.E.P was implanted into the NDF for the period of their contract which lasted three months, ensuring that they were synchronised into the NDF broader strategic and operational objectives which made sure both entities work cohesively. Not only did the embedding of S.T.T.E.P into the NDF provide much needed efficiency, it also promoted a sense of legitimacy as the PMC worked together with government forces to achieve government led objectives (J. Campbell 2015). The COIN effort could make these significant gains essentially regaining territory and beating back Boko Haram over the course of three months, something which the Nigerian Defence Force had failed to do alone over the course of 6 years (Freeman 2015).

Although there seems to be confusion on the company's registration, S.T.T.E.P is a privately-owned security firm registered in Gibraltar. However, it comprises of trainers and advisors drawn from conventional, clandestine, and covert units of the pre-1994 South African Defence Force (STTEP INTERNATIONAL 2009). It also includes personnel from the Special Forces and the South African Police Special Task Force. P.M.C's such as Executive Outcomes have a track record both in Angola and Sierra Leone. Despite Executive Outcomes' racist and anti-humanitarian reputation, it proved rather effective in employing bush tactics against the insurgencies in both Angola and Sierra Leone Given S.T.T.E.P's reputation, it seemed strategically attractive to Jonathan's administration as it possesses a "depth of expertise in high-tempo ground and air operations, and its particular institutional knowledge of combat operations in Africa" (Pfotenhauer 2016). It is also of strategic importance that Jonathan's administration hires S.T.T.E.P because they boast a primarily African- centred approach as their expertise, training regimes and doctrine are suitable for African plains. These include thick bushes and harsh terrains. Due to its heavily African based workforce, S.T.T.E.P is arguably an African company which offered the Nigerian government African solutions to African problems, an agenda driven by most African countries (Pfotenhauer 2016). Due to the duration of its contract being three months, it is clear the Jonathan administration hired S.T.T.E.P to achieve short term goals, what Pfotenhauer describes it as "a crisis intervention measure" (Pfotenhauer 2016). It is important to note that the S.T.T.E.P was not there to replace the functions of the NDF which are to be a peace enforcing or pose as an actor facilitating conflict resolution, but rather S.T.T.E.P's role seems to have been to provide military assistance and relief to the NDF through military training, assisting in relentless pursuit and providing intelligence. Instead of going through the channels such as the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crisis (ACIRC), or the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Goodluck Jonathan's administration opted to hire S.T.T.E.P because it possessed far better expertise in high-tempo ground and air operations as well as its institutional knowledge of combat operation in Africa (Pfotenhauer 2016). S.T.T.E.P was also hired after the failures from state forces and international partners providing much needed immediate response therefore reacting more promptly than intergovernmental organizations would. Immediate response by S.T.T.E.P provided the NDF with much needed strategic breathing space, space which the government capitalised on the gains provided through the role S.T.T.E.P played (Pfotenhauer

2016). S.T.T.E.P, was given a short-term objective, a task they carried out so well that it sparked interest in analysing the COIN tactics used to achieve their goals over a period of 3 months.

S.T.T.E.P and the NDF worked to avoid overall force disjointedness and poor communication. S.T.T.E.P was also able to provide valuable operational and tactical viewpoints which proved crucial for the relative gains made against the insurgency. To begin with, S.T.T.E.P proved to be a source of doctrinal advice and proficiency in unconventional warfare, warfare which according to Pfotenhauer "the NDF was not operationally au fait" (Pfotenhauer 2016). Its proven track record therefore led to a boost of battleground morale which was much needed by the NDF to successfully employ the COIN principle 'relentless pursuit'. According to Nossister of the *New York Times*, S.T.T.E.P came equipped with much needed military advancements such as artillery, gunships, night vision goggles, attack helicopters and armoured personnel carriers which was equipment needed for a successful 'relentless pursuit' campaign (Nossiter 2015). Such advancements coupled with the high levels of human intelligence led to a more efficient approach against the Boko Haram insurgency.

Perhaps the most important contribution provided by S.T.T.E.P is its COIN principles which it introduced to the NDF. As Eeben Barlow states "One aspect I feel is not emphasised enough in COIN operations is the principle of 'relentless pursuit'" (Barlow, RELENTLESS PURSUIT: A NEGLECTED COIN PRINCIPLE? 2011). The introduction of 'relentless pursuit' into the COIN operations is believed to have shifted momentum from the insurgency allowing for the much-needed gains against Boko Haram. S.T.T.E.P also provided its 'bush tracking' skills which proved necessary for its 'relentless pursuit' to be a success as it allowed for the COIN forces to track down the insurgency (South African guns-for-hire deployed in Boko Haram fight – UK report 2015).

Initially Goodluck Jonathan's administration denied the use of S.T.T.E.P in the gains they had made over the insurgency group. It is logical to believe denial was solely to maintain operational security from their Boko Haram adversaries and continue to hold the upper hand in their recent clashes (Pfotenhauer 2016). However, following the newly voted Buhari administration, confirmation of S.T.T.E.P involvement surfaced as well as rumours of a possible rehiring by the Buhari administration. Due to their apolitical stance, intelligence on operational and tactical viewpoints, possession of military advanced equipment, prompt response and political pressures

from the public to the government, the Jonathan Administration hired S.T.T.E.P to assist in their counterinsurgency efforts against Boko Haram.

Having discussed how and why S.T.T.E.P got involved in the COIN efforts against Boko Haram, it is important to follow up by discussing the COIN principles that they introduced leading to the impressive 3-month gains made against the insurgency.

S.T.T.E.P COIN Principles

Relentless Pursuit

One of the flaws committed by the NDF was approaching Boko Haram using conventional warfare tactics as they had been trained only to engage against traditional enemies. Meanwhile Boko Haram employed guerrilla style tactics which proved to be difficult to deal with for the Nigeria's initial COIN efforts. Due to S.T.T.E.P's vast intelligence, Nigeria's COIN efforts were reviewed and restructured as tactics were altered to better suit the type of warfare (Pfotenhauer 2016). One of the most important tactical alterations was the inclusion of 'relentless pursuit' by S.T.T.E.P into the joint COIN efforts against Boko Haram.

Eeben Barlow above expresses his disappointment on the underappreciation of 'relentless pursuit' as a COIN principle. Barlow voices this as he believes the principle played a crucial role in beating back the insurgency and managing to shift the momentum away from Boko Haram to the once demoralised NDF (Barlow, Eeben Barlow Speaks Out 2015). However, it is to be noted that 'relentless pursuit' is not an easy principle to apply as it highly demanding of troops who aim to apply it in their battlefield tactics. Barlow begins by stating the aim of 'relentless pursuit' is to wrestle momentum and initiative from the enemy in this case being Boko Haram (Barlow, Eeben Barlow Speaks Out 2015). According to Barlow initiative and momentum is important as frustration is increased amongst the troops when the insurgency has the two on their side. Not only does it make the enemy more confident but they become more daring compared to the demoralised NDF, meaning there is a higher frequency of attacks. Barlow states "The frustration is increased when it appears that the enemy has the initiative – which he indeed has at times - as he can choose his place, time and method of attack" (Barlow, RELENTLESS PURSUIT: A NEGLECTED COIN PRINCIPLE? 2011). With the enemy being in control of momentum and initiative, it places troops in a reactive mind set meaning attacks on the NDF become unpredictable and highly costly as troops are unprepared. Also, the enemy can manipulate the outcome of the battle as they choose

the terrain in which to fight, when to fight and how to fight. Most of these attacks do not last long as they aim to kill or wound as many troops as possible in the shortest amount of time.

To wrestle back the initiative, S.T.T.E.P and the NDF had to place Boko Haram under constant disadvantage. Accompanied by a lot of firepower, it is essential that the insurgency is pursued with relative speed and aggression, testing the troops concentration and endurance non-stop (Barlow, RELENTLESS PURSUIT: A NEGLECTED COIN PRINCIPLE? 2011). The continuous pursuit ensures that the insurgency forces lose focus as they become fatigued and in a state of exhaustion. It does not allow Boko Haram the time to eat, sleep or rest while the pursuing S.T.T.E.P and NDF troops on the ground are constantly substituted with fresh and energised troops without losing momentum. The pursuit drains Boko Haram's morale leading to the insurgency group to a state of panic making costly mistakes. However, S.T.T.E.P also needs to be able to identify the costly mistakes made by the Boko Haram insurgency allowing them to seize the initiative (Barlow, RELENTLESS PURSUIT: A NEGLECTED COIN PRINCIPLE? 2011).

According to Barlow the troops involved in carrying out relentless pursuit must do so with minimal equipment to lighten the weight load. Barlow states, "Troops conducting the relentless pursuit should not be over-burdened with equipment and gadgets. They should only carry the very essentials of what is required to achieve their mission" (Barlow, RELENTLESS PURSUIT: A NEGLECTED COIN PRINCIPLE? 2011). Due to the demanding aggressiveness and use of speed, having a lot of equipment will not only slow down the troops allowing the insurgency time to recover, it would also tire down the COIN troops leading to them making costly mistakes themselves. Besides being able to operate with only the essential equipment, to carry out a successful 'relentless pursuit' operation, the following steps need to be taken;

1. **Eating while on the move:** S.T.T.E.P and NDF troops should be trained how to eat while on the move. It is essential that they can do so as meal preparations take up a lot of time giving up a lot of precious momentum as Boko Haram can slip away or be given valuable time to rest and strategize. Both S.T.T.E.P and NDF personnel should only carry prepacked dry rations and water on their 'relentless pursuit' mission and can only access fresh foods once substituted by other troops (Barlow, RELENTLESS PURSUIT: A NEGLECTED COIN PRINCIPLE? 2011). It is also important that troops remain focus even as they eat

on the move as this could lead to vulnerability and ambush. Therefore, during the pursuit, food should not be prioritized to maintain momentum against the insurgency.

2. **Ability to Track:** tracking is a very important tool of 'relentless pursuit'. Thanks to the vast experience in the apartheid South African Defence Force, S.T.T.E.P was well equipped with experienced bush trackers who play a vital role in the pursuit. First and foremost, the trackers should be able to tell the direction in which the insurgency travelled in. This will help point out the pursuing troops in the right direction saving vast amounts of time and ensuring that the COIN force remains hot on the heels and maintains momentum. According to Barlow good trackers can "tell the age of a track as well as well as indicate if the enemy is carrying heavy loads, the types of weapons he has (this is identified when locating enemy resting points), if the enemy is moving hurriedly, what he is eating and so forth" (Barlow, RELENTLESS PURSUIT: A NEGLECTED COIN PRINCIPLE? 2011). Not only do trackers point out the direction but they also serve as intelligence as they prepare the COIN troops for the types of weapons they can expect to fight against, the pace they need to keep at, as well as the condition of the insurgency they are chasing down whether they are fatigued or not. One of the most valuable tools trackers have is their ability to spot disturbances in the area. These disturbances are an indication of tripwires and possible landmines or IED (Barlow, RELENTLESS PURSUIT: A NEGLECTED COIN PRINCIPLE? 2011). Such skills ensure that the COIN forces advance cautiously without encountering fatalities or warning the insurgency of their advancements.
3. **Ability to leap frog ahead of the enemy:** Leapfrogging is the ability to position the troops in a position ahead of the insurgency to block and ambush the insurgency. Once the trackers had established the route or direction in which the insurgency is headed, as well as the age of the track, helicopters are then called in to collect the troops and deploy them in an advanced position (Barlow, RELENTLESS PURSUIT: A NEGLECTED COIN PRINCIPLE? 2011). The use of helicopters is essential for this operation as transports troops swiftly to tactically advantageous ground without having to encounter the insurgency as well as raising the alarm to the pursued insurgency. Helicopters are also vital in the substitution of troops as it replaces tired troops with fresh troops from camp. It manages to keep the momentum up as quick pickups and drop offs can be done.

4. **Use of outstanding communication:** communication is essential in relentless pursuit. Firstly, communication needs to be clear especially when registering coordinates for various reasons. To begin with coordinates, provide accurate directions for air support which is used to substitute troops as well as bring in reinforcements in incidents regarding heavy fire exchange. Coordinates are also vital to avoid the exchange of friendly fire between the pursuing forces (Barlow, RELENTLESS PURSUIT: A NEGLECTED COIN PRINCIPLE? 2011). Forces are usually split into teams in which they attempt to attack the insurgency from different frontlines/angles which at times rarely leads to the exchange of friendly fire between the pursuing teams. Lastly communication between troops and operations officers ensures that devised plots, formations and tactics are carried out successfully as well as between trackers to help predict the intended enemy movement.
5. **Aggressive Troops:** Aggression within the troops is key in carrying out relentless pursuit simply because the operation is based on initiating as much contact as possible with the insurgency and being able to install fear hence wrestling the initiative and momentum away from the insurgencies control (Barlow, RELENTLESS PURSUIT: A NEGLECTED COIN PRINCIPLE? 2011). S.T.T.E.P first had to train a demoralised NDF, in turn installing a level of aggression to which was able continuously attack Boko Haram stronghold forcing the insurgency to retreat while the NDF reclaims territories.
6. **Troops should adapt to night operations:** because 'relentless pursuit' is built around the premise of non-stop attack on the enemy, when night falls, troops should be equipped to operate even in the dark. Continuous operations ensure that the insurgency does not manage to regroup and regain momentum but rather the insurgency is always on the run (Barlow, RELENTLESS PURSUIT: A NEGLECTED COIN PRINCIPLE? 2011). In order to operate at night, both S.T.T.E.P and the NDF were equipped with night vision googles which allow the troops to see in the dark using thermal and infrared cameras to project visions. Illumination flares are also used as they brighten the area almost making it clear as day allowing the troops to see ahead as well as around. However, flares are mainly used when engaging the insurgency or signalling down a helicopter as they too can give away the pursuing troops position.
7. **The enemy must be outgunned:** it is necessary that troops on the group carry light equipment but must be heavily armed. To force the insurgency to deploy tactically, it must

be engaged and met with heavy firepower and eventual surrender of the encountered insurgency group (Barlow, RELENTLESS PURSUIT: A NEGLECTED COIN PRINCIPLE? 2011). S.T.T.E.P had access to long distance engagement artillery which may not cause enemy casualties, but is able hinder Boko Haram progress, slowing the insurgency down allowing for the heavy exchange of firepower.

Relentless pursuit proves to be a rather demanding yet effective COIN principle which S.T.T.E.P along with the NDF could apply successfully. Proper training administered by S.T.T.E.P ensured that all troops involved in the 'relentless pursuit' against boko haram were fit, mentally alert and ready to engage in offensive action against Boko Haram. It is important to note the above are prerequisites each soldier must possess which they have been trained in for 'relentless pursuit to have worked out the way it did for S.T.T.E.P and the NDF. According to Thomas Rid, "Relentless pursuit of an insurgent force on the run in necessary to finish its destruction or to prevent it from consolidating in a new haven" (Rid 2010). S.T.T.E.P's application of 'relentless pursuit' led to the containment of Boko Haram, allowing for the government forces to regain momentum and continuously attack Boko Haram pushing them out of their 'caliphate territory'. If 'relentless pursuit' is not applied well counterinsurgency forces risks swinging momentum back in the hands of the insurgency.

Chapter 4

Analysis

The following section analyses and measures the effectiveness of S.T.T.E.P intervention against the Boko Haram insurgency. It employs several indicators: repossession of territory; frequency of Boko Haram attacks; capturing and killing of Boko Haram personnel; civilian casualties and S.T.T.E.P operations under the International Humanitarian Laws and Rules of Wars, to gauge whether the COIN effort was successfully carried out or not. This section will firstly discuss the Repossession of territory, by firstly looking at the amount of territory seized before S.T.T.E.P intervention, which will be compared to the territory under Boko Haram control at the end of the three-month contract. A comparison of the frequency of Boko Haram attacks before and then after the S.T.T.E.P intervention will be discussed and evaluated. Attacks are defined as both armed assaults as well as suicide attacks. The research will also compare the number of Boko Haram personnel captured during the three months of S.T.T.E.P presence to the arrests carried out the rest of the year. Following that, civilian casualty figures caused by both Boko Haram and government forces will be analysed, as the number of casualties is on way to evaluate if S.T.T.E.P operated in a discriminate fashion which attempted to adhere to the International Humanitarian Laws and Rules of Wars.

Repossession of Territory

In their efforts to create a caliphate state, Boko Haram successfully seized towns and villages from the Nigerian state. By the end of 2014 the insurgency had taken control of over 20 000 square kilometres of landed inhabited by over 2 million people. To put it into perspective, Abdullahi Idris of the *Daily Trust* states "The land mass under the control of the insurgents is about the size of Wales in the United Kingdom or the state of Maryland in the United States, and bigger than Northern Ireland" (Abdullahi 2014). According to the *Daily Trust*, the major regions seized by Boko Haram included Bama, Dikwa, Ngala, Kala-Balge and Gwoza which was pronounced the caliphate's capital, all of which are in Borno state. The other seized territories include Gujba and Gulani in the Yobe state and lastly Madagali, Michika and Mubi North in the Adamawa state (Abdullahi 2014). The Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau, made clear that the annexed territory was to be recognized as part of the insurgency caliphate state in which sharia law would prevail.

The annexation of the above-mentioned territories cost the Nigerian government billions of Naira's as insurgents looted shops and business owners fled reducing trade in the region. Annexation proved to be costlier to the citizens however, as lives were lost in raids, women and girls were kidnapped or used as sex slaves by Boko Haram, properties such as livestock were looted as well (McBain 2015).

It is only after S.T.T.E.P had joined the fight against Boko Haram in January 2015 did the NDF begin to reclaim territory from Boko Haram. *VOA* reported that by March 17, 2015, the Nigerian government had been able to reclaim all but 3 of the 20 Boko Haram captured territories (Most Territory Regained From Boko Haram, Nigeria Says 2015). Reports from the government came weeks before the elections and could be regarded as campaign boost. However it is important to question whether territory regained should be credited to S.T.T.E.P's efforts in the joint COIN campaign against Boko Haram.

Caroline Varin in *Boko Haram and the War on Terror* suggests "The dramatic shift of fortunes in March 2015 saw the Nigerian Army regain territory from Boko Haram in Borno State, solidifying that Nigeria had gained a 'secret weapon'" (Varin 2016). The secret weapon Varin is referring to is the use of Private military companies such as S.T.T.E.P, helping the NDF in their COIN campaign against Boko Haram. Varin supports the use of mercenaries by Jonathan's administration as she calls it "his most strategically effective decision" (Varin 2016). S.T.T.E.P's role as discussed earlier was rather diverse and to an extent should be credited for the gains made over Boko Haram during the length of its contract. Their presence was not only able to boost the NDF's morale in the battlefield but also provided much needed training to the NDF for unconventional warfare. Varin further displays why S.T.T.E.P presence should be credited when she states "S.T.T.E.P's services also included an intelligence package and an air wing for the operations that integrated CASVAC, MEDVAC, resupply runs, transporting troops, and even providing air support for the strike force" (Varin 2016). It is highly unlikely that such heavy involvement and S.T.T.E.P presence did not play a significant role in the recapturing of territory back from Boko Haram, especially when those gains have been made during their contract. Eeben Barlow modestly states, "The credit goes to the Nigerian Army, who were supported by the strike force we trained" (Barlow, Eeben Barlow Speaks Out 2015). Despite shifting credit away from his P.M.C towards the NDF, his statement still suggests a significant role the S.T.T.E.P played which is training the strike force.

S.T.T.E.P involvement was rather effective in the recapturing of lost territory. The P.M.C could provide intelligence, equipment and the necessary mental boost needed for the joint COIN effort to operate effectively. S.T.T.E.P involvement meant the NDF was able to regain territory, a feat they had failed to achieve over a six-year period, yet over a course of 3 months with the help of S.T.T.E.P they were able to beat back the insurgency and regain the offensive. Therefore, it is safe to conclude that S.T.T.E.P effectively achieves the first indicator as it helped the NDF regain the once seized Nigerian territory.

Frequency of Boko Haram Attacks

According to the Global Terror Index of 2016, Nigeria experienced a 34 per cent decline in the number of deaths from terror attacks in 2015 compared to the previous 2014 total (Global Terrorism Index 2016). The drop-in deaths were largely attributed to the decline in the number of attacks by Boko Haram in Nigeria. The Global terror index also indicates that due to the joint COIN effort, Boko Haram had been driven out of North-eastern Nigeria hence the drop-in attacks, however neighbouring countries Niger and Cameroon experienced an increase in Boko Haram attacks (Global Terrorism Index 2016). There is relationship between death tolls and attack frequencies that must be acknowledged. With higher attack frequency, the possibility of higher death tolls increases. However, this section simply intends to focus on the number of attacks carried out by the insurgency to determine whether S.T.T.E.P presence is responsible for the shift in momentum and initiative away from the insurgency to the NDF.

Before S.T.T.E.P was hired to help improve the NDF's COIN effort against Boko Haram, the NDF forces lacked aggression and therefore the initiative to attack was on the insurgency's side. Goodluck Jonathan's administration faced criticism for their lack to deal with the insurgency leading to the hiring of S.T.T.E.P. With the initiative on their side, the insurgency could attack whenever they wanted, leading to a significant increase in the number of attacks carried out. As from September 2010 up until the end of July 2014, Boko Haram carried out two hundred and forty-nine attacks killing at least four thousand civilians (Mantzikos 2014). In the first half of 2014 alone, Boko Haram was known as the deadliest group and had killed two thousand nine hundred and twenty-four after having carried out thirty-six major attacks. To indicate the effectiveness of S.T.T.E.P intervention, the data should display a drop in the frequency of attacks carried out by Boko Haram to indicate that the joint COIN effort was able to wrestle back the initiative from the

insurgency. Figures provided by Global Terror Index indicate annual death tolls and attacks for the entire 2015 year, the section intends to analyse the number of major attacks carried out by the insurgency during the three months S.T.T.E.P was contracted by the Jonathan administration (January 2015 – March 2015).

During the first month of S.T.T.E.P being present, Boko Haram carried out a massive assault in Baga and Doron. The assault was carried from the 3rd to the 7th of January 2015 resulting in an estimated two thousand civilian casualties and was known as the Baga massacre; however, the government reported differently (A. Campbell 2015). The government, unlike independent media reports, downplayed the death toll to hundreds when it was in its thousands. Just three days later, on the 10th of January 2015, a bomb exploded worn by a 10-year-old girl in a marketplace in Maiduguri, before the insurgency followed up with an attack aimed at the capital of Borno state on the 25th of January 2015 (Boko Haram 2016). However due to the preparedness and help from S.T.T.E.P; the NDF could fend off Boko Haram despite a follow up attack a week later. Boko Haram however managed to successfully raid Monguno seizing the town and claiming it as part of its caliphate. During the first month of S.T.T.E.P involvement, the insurgency still had the momentum and initiative resulting in the wave of attacks. Boko Haram seemed rather un-phased by S.T.T.E.P presence as they continuously carried out raids.

However, in February there was a significant drop in attacks carried out by the insurgency as the COIN effort began to gain momentum and had the insurgency pushing back. On the 13th of February 2015 Boko Haram was dealt 300 casualties from the joint COIN effort resulting in the loss of 11 towns that they once controlled under their caliphate (Felix and Ola 2015). The insurgency suffered yet another loss from the NDF on the 24th of February as they lost their Dikwa stronghold to the COIN offensive. There was only two significant attack in February carried out by Boko Haram on Nigerian soil. Both attacks were carried out simultaneously on the 26th of February, as a suicide bomber in Biu killed 17 people at a bus station while insurgency militants threw bombs in Jos killing 15 people at a bus stop (A. Campbell 2015). It is clear in February the insurgency was on the back foot as they suffered losses in both territory and militant casualties. It is during this month where we notice a shift in momentum away from the insurgency and towards the joint COIN campaign.

On the 7th of March 2015, the city of Maiduguri was attacked by 4 suicide bombers resulting in 54 casualties (A. Campbell 2015). At this stage, we notice a shift in Boko Haram tactics as the use of firearms and raids become less and instead the insurgency carries out stealthy suicide attacks against unsuspecting civilians. Kukil Bora of the *International Business Times* reports that the insurgency kidnapped about 500 civilians most being women and children on the 25th of March 2015 (Bora 2015). However soon after, on the 27th of March 2015 the joint COIN effort made significant gains when it recaptured the north-eastern town of Gwoza which served as one of the insurgencies headquarters. The insurgency reacted to the Election Day by carrying out multiple attacks in Miringa, Dukku, Birin Bolawa and Birin Fulan (Faul and Umar 2015). The attacks resulted in 41 casualties as the insurgency expressed their views against what they perceived as the exercise of western democracy. Although March experienced an increase in attacks compared to February, it is evident that the COIN campaign had made relative gains against the insurgency.

Looking at the frequency of major attacks during the period in which S.T.T.E.P was contracted, it is evident that there were relative gains made by the joint COIN campaign as attack frequencies dropped as the P.M.C operations got underway. Prior to their involvement the Boko Haram insurgency would boldly carry out attacks. However, S.T.T.E.P involvement led to the insurgency depending more on stealth attacks such as suicide bombing instead of raids displaying the effectiveness of COIN forces against assault raids. In February, COIN forces seemed to have more of the momentum and initiative on their side as they carried out raids against the insurgency regaining territory and dropping the insurgencies attack frequency. Based on the findings, it is safe to conclude that S.T.T.E.P involvement led to the drop of attack frequency by Boko Haram.

Capturing and Killing of Boko Haram personnel

In this section, estimates and reported Boko Haram member arrests and casualties will be discussed. However, it will prove rather difficult to provide figures due to the lack of government efficiency in reporting arrests and death tolls. The chaos created, as well as the secretive approach by government officials' due to their violation of human rights have led to the lack of documentation of arrests or insurgency casualties (Human Rights Watch 2016). In some cases when figures are raised they usually contradict those provided by civilian witnesses and at times NGOS. A rise in arrests or casualties in battlefield during the months of S.T.T.E.P operation would indicate the PMC's effectiveness in containing Boko Haram.

Prior to S.T.T.E.P intervention, the NDF forces had encounters with Boko Haram resulting in casualties from both ends. However, the section only intends to focus on arrests and insurgency casualties recorded in the three months S.T.T.E.P was contracted. On the 16th of January 2015, Nigerian troops were reported by *ENCA* to have killed 42 Boko Haram members. The killings are believed to have been done on the 13th of January, in a clash with the insurgency as they attempted to seize control over the north-eastern town of Biu. During the same clash, another 5 Boko Haram insurgents were captured and arrested by Nigerian government forces (ENCA 2015). According to reports from the *Guardian*, more than 200 combatants most of which belong to the Boko Haram insurgency were killed on the 26th of January in Maiduguri. Boko Haram is said to have attacked the city but were driven back by the NDF resulting in the large number of casualties (Guardian 2015). Due to the high frequency of clashes, it is inevitable that January 2015 would result in many casualties rather than arrests.

On the 4th of February 2015, the Chadian forces as part of the joint COIN campaign attacked Boko Haram seizing back the town Gamboru for the NDF. Based on their reports, the Chadian army claimed to have killed more than 200 Boko Haram militants in their clash (Boko Haram goes on deadly rampage after Chad offensive 2015). According to the 18 February 2015 report by Bate Felix and Lanre Ola of Reuters, the Nigerian army was responsible for the deaths of 300 Boko Haram militants (Felix and Ola 2015). The casualties came because of a COIN operation to recapture 11 towns and villages which had been previously lost to the insurgency. The source of the body count coming from the Nigerian forces seems to be questionable as the NDF has been previously accused of overstating insurgency casualties while understating theirs as well as civilians' cases in point being the Baga massacre were 2000 civilians were killed while government claimed only 150 casualties (Felix and Ola 2015). The rather high casualty rates being experienced by the insurgency come because of the COIN campaign gaining the initiative and momentum away from the insurgency in February 2015. COIN theory suggests that the first COIN operation should aim for the destruction of the insurgency group, explaining the high casualties experienced by Boko Haram within the first couple of months during S.T.T.E.P intervention. Galula further state, "The goal is reached when static units left to garrison the area can safely deploy to the extent necessary. Consequently, if most of the guerrillas are merely expelled, the result is still good. If they disband into very small groups and stay hidden in the area, the situation is still acceptable if the counterinsurgent sees to it that they cannot regroup" (Galula,

Counterinsurgency Warfare 1964).As the COIN forces together with S.T.T.E.P continuously attack Boko Haram stronghold territories are being recaptured pushing back the insurgency and allowing the NDF to be on the offensive.

On the 27th of March 2015, the Nigerian army managed to recapture the town of Gwoza away from the Boko Haram militants. Most of the militants fled towards neighbouring borders of Cameroon (Boko Haram HQ Gwoza in Nigeria 'retaken' 2015). Based on the report, an eyewitness suggested Boko Haram militants fled heading over the mountain into Cameroonian lands by torchlight after the military assault was successful (Boko Haram HQ Gwoza in Nigeria 'retaken' 2015). However once again the government forces did not produce any casualty figures or captured militant numbers yet they state to have killed many Boko Haram militants.

Due to the lack of official government reports on their COIN encounters with the insurgency, it has proven rather difficult to compile an accurate figure or better yet an estimate on exactly how many Boko Haram militants were killed or arrested by government forces. This comes because of the NDF being previously criticised for violating human rights and being responsible for the deaths of many innocent people. The information the research came across regarding figures was either contradictory and had to be collected from reliable and credible sources. However, based on the data collected above, the sudden increase in mainly Boko Haram militant casualties suggests a shift in momentum and initiative. The joint COIN effort could kill more Boko Haram militants than it lost soldiers suggesting they had made gains against the insurgency as Boko Haram were decreasing in numbers. This suggests that S.T.T.E.P intervention could guide the joint COIN forces to such victories and prevent multiple casualties within the NDF.

Civilian Casualties

Nigerian local civilians are the most affected people by the presence of the insurgency. Since its inception in 2002 the Boko Haram insurgency has been responsible for over 15 000 deaths and the displacement of millions of Nigerians. According to the Global Terror Index, Boko Haram on average killed 11 people per attack in Nigeria. This made the insurgency the deadliest per attack in the world (Global Terrorism Index 2015). Although an estimate of total casualties will be indicated in the three-month period, the research will highlight the events resulting in high casualty numbers. It is safer to indicate events with more than 11 casualties. The north-eastern region being the most affected has experienced a large percentage of civilian casualties caused by Boko Harm.

A good way to measure whether S.T.T.E.P's contribution in the COIN campaign was effective, is to measure whether there has been a significant drop in civilian casualties during their contract.

On the 3rd of January 2015, the Boko Haram insurgency in what was dubbed as the 'Baga massacre' carried out its single most violent attack on the unsuspecting town. The violent attack on Baga and other neighbouring towns left an estimated 2000 people dead making it the deadliest Boko Haram attack (Abubakar and Karimi 2015). The raid, carried out by hundreds of gunmen led to the seizing of Baga and the neighbouring villages as well as a multinational military base. The Nigerian government was quick to downplay the death toll providing conflicting figures which suggested that only 150 plus people were killed and that the numbers did not at all reach the thousands. Based on eyewitness reports as well as satellite images, the damage clearly indicates more than a 150-people died in the massacre. The Baga massacre also left tens of thousands of civilians displaced as some fled into neighbouring Cameroon (Abubakar and Karimi 2015). Following the Baga massacre, on the 10th of January 2015, the insurgency chose to use a 10-year-old girl to carry a suicide bomb attack managing to kill 16 people at a market. During the same day in a separate attack, two more young girls killed an additional three people using suicide bombs strapped to their vests (Alter 2015).

On the 17th of February, 37 people including 17 Boko Haram militants were killed In Biu town. A grenade exploded at a checkpoint killing innocent civilians after a member of the Civillian-JTF had shot and killed a Boko Haram militant as he pulled the pin off the grenade (Audu 2015). The other Boko Haram members were killed after clashes with the NDF managing to drive off the insurgency from the town. On the 19TH of February 2015 killing at least 30 civilians in Thlaimakalama and Gatamarwa, two Nigerian villages close to Chibok (Deadly Boko Haram raids destroy two Nigerian villages 2015). The insurgents are believed to have stormed and torched the village destroying households and looting. The 24th of February resulted in yet another bomb attack resulting in the deaths of 20 civilians. The bombs were set off in a bus station in Kano by a group of six insurgency militants. The town of Biu was under attack once again as yet another suicide bombing killed an estimated 21 civilians on the 26th of February (O. Audu 2015). The suicide bomber travelled on a tricycle and blew himself up in a crowded area. Although February experienced more attacks, there seemed to be an improvement on the total number of civilian casualties during the month. Most of the attacks shifted from assault attacks to more discreet suicide bombings which would not alert COIN forces.

Ndahi Marama of the *Vanguard* reported the insurgency on the 6th of March 2015 had been responsible for killing at least 74 men and 20 children who chose not to join Boko Haram in Njaba (Marama 2015). Despite the large number of casualties, according to the Vanguard there was still no official police or government report which commented or better yet spoke on the attacks. On the 7th of March 2015, the insurgency killed 58 civilians in a series of three suicide bombings in Maiduguri (Duku 2015). The casualty figures were confirmed by the Commissioner of Police Clement Adoda. Justice Commissioner Kaka Shehu stated ""The terrorists are angry with the way they were sacked from towns and villages and are now venting their anger," (Duku 2015). His statement suggests the insurgency carried out the attacks in retaliation to the continuous COIN onslaught carried out on the insurgency. On the 12th of March, a female bomber was responsible for an attack that killed 34 people in a Maiduguri market (Olukayode 2015). The bomb was attached on a vest which she had to detonate. According to Chris Becker in Michael Olukayode of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, "The series of military strikes from the regional force in recent weeks has forced Boko Haram to change its tactics away from capturing and occupying territory, to launching single or double target suicide bomb attacks," (Olukayode 2015). Becker's statement suggests the COIN forces due to their recent gains against the insurgency have forced Boko Haram to switch their tactics as they cannot defeat the restructured COIN forces with the help of S.T.T.E.P.

The Global Terror Index indicates that Nigeria experienced a 34% decrease in terror related deaths (Global Terrorism Index 2016). It continues to state the reason behind the decrease is due to the COIN attacks on the insurgency driving Boko Haram into neighbouring states (Global Terrorism Index 2015). This has negatively affected those states as they experience an increase in Boko Haram related deaths. Although the civilian casualties are still high, the graph below highlights a decline in civilian casualties throughout January till March. This would suggest S.T.T.E.P presence was able to positively affect the impact Boko Haram had on civilian casualties. As pointed out the COIN forces could force the insurgency into switching their tactics which restricted Boko Haram movement limiting their group's movement and having to settle for me subtle attacks.

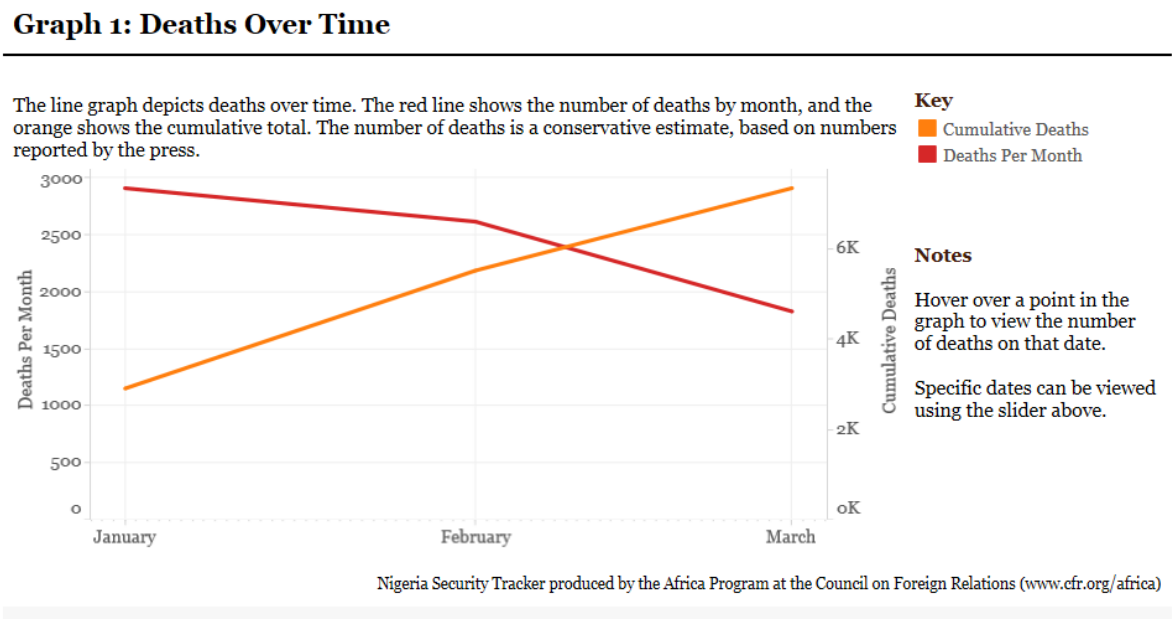


Figure 1: (Nigeria Security Tracker 2017)

Figure 1 provides a line graph depiction of 2015 total deaths according to the Nigeria Security Tracker. The red line on the graph shows a steady decrease in deaths from January to February and further drop from February to March (Nigeria Security Tracker 2017). The drop would suggest the growing effectiveness of the COIN campaign against the Boko Haram insurgency as their attacks on both civilians and security forces become less deadly.

S.T.T.E.P operations under the International Humanitarian Laws and Rules of Wars

The Montreux Document intends to promote the respect for international humanitarian law and human rights law when there is a private military contractor involved in an armed conflict. The document is not binding but instead serves as a compilation of relevant international legal obligations and good practices (The Montreux Document 2008).

The documents states that PMC's such as S.T.T.E.P should operate within international humanitarian law or human rights law, imposed upon by national law, as well as other laws such as immigration law, labour law, criminal law, tax law, and specific regulations on private military or security services (The Montreux Document 2008). The personnel are expected to follow the laws of the state that they are serving in and were applicable the law of the states of their

nationality. Given the illegality in South Africa of operating as combat personnel in other states without special permission from the government, the South African citizens in S.T.T.E.P are subject to legal issues upon return (Bosch and Maritz 2011). Barlow rejects this legislation arguing, "It appears that if South Africans are called on to assist an African government fight terrorism it is "criminal". When South Africans are contracted by a foreign PMC, then it is no longer criminal!" (Barlow, Feeding the Narrative 2015). Being that S.T.T.E.P is not a South African based company, it then erases the possibility of prosecuting the South African citizens involved.

The status of the PMC's personnel is based the functions in which they are involved in. Based on the rather semi-active to active role of the S.T.T.E.P, they would be labelled as combatants as International humanitarian law does not allow for a category of ''quasi combatants' (Cameron 2006). Being that S.T.T.E.P is part of the joint COIN campaign together with the NDF, it therefore makes them a member of the armed forces. According to Cameron, "Article 43.2 of Protocol I of the Geneva Convention stipulates that ''Members of the armed forces of a Party to a conflict … are combatants, that is to say, they have the right to participate directly in hostilities'' (Cameron 2006). Since S.T.T.E.P personnel are labelled as combatants in this case, they therefore become an object of attack. Meaning they are no longer protected as civilians but fall under the prisoner of war status (Cameron 2006).

During their three-month service, none of the S.T.T.E.P was subject to persecution by both the Nigerian government as well as International Criminal Court. There also has been a lack of reports suggesting any of the S.T.T.E.P personnel were involved in acts violating human rights, or beyond their status in the rules of war. However, despite being able to operate within the International humanitarian laws, the Nigerian government forces have been heavily criticised for their violation of human rights during their COIN campaign. The NDF has been accused of killing civilians, torture and unjustified murders while in detention (Amnesty International 2015).

Adam Nossiter states that according to an Amnesty International Report, "In the course of Nigeria's war against the Boko Haram terrorist group, at least 7,000 people have died in government detention because of brutal conditions, an additional 1,200 have been "extra judicially executed" by Nigerian security forces, and at least 20,000 have been "arbitrarily arrested" by the authorities" (Nossiter, Abuses by Nigeria's Military Found to Be Rampant in War Against Boko Haram 2015). Given that the figures were recorded by June 2015, it shows the NDF has been

responsible for rather gruesome acts against humanity and have been operating in contravention of International humanitarian laws. The NDF has been accused of torture, mass shooting, use of deadly fumigation chemicals and starvation against prisoners in overcrowded cells. In March 2014, the NDF was responsible for shooting over 600 people at Maiduguri's Giwa barracks (Nossiter, Abuses by Nigeria's Military Found to Be Rampant in War Against Boko Haram 2015). Such events have made the NDF as dangerous as the Boko Haram insurgency as it is responsible for almost the same number of casualties as the insurgency itself.

The NDF is known to have received assistance from a civilian vigilante group known as the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) (Amnesty International Report 2014/15 - The State of the World's Human Rights - Nigeria 2015). The CJTF assisted the NDF to identify and arrests Boko Haram suspects, they were also responsible in some towns of controlling security checkpoints, providing information and intelligence regarding suspected Boko Haram members. However, the CJTF with the help of NDF, have armed themselves with firearms and machetes which in many cases has led to a rise in innocent casualties committed by non-security forces (Amnesty International Report 2014/15 - The State of the World's Human Rights - Nigeria 2015). The CJTF is also known for recruiting children leading to another violation of human rights as it is using minors in security related campaigns. This is arguably the equivalent of using child soldiers as they are being included in life threatening positions.

Not only has the NDF been accused of violating human rights, but they have also been accused of not carrying out their duties of protecting civilian lives from the insurgency group. During the 'Baga Massacre' on the 1st of January 2015, some of the present security forces were reported to have abandoned their posts and retreating hours before the attack came to the village (Amnesty International Report 2014/15 - The State of the World's Human Rights - Nigeria 2015). The abandoning of military service in most states serves as a criminal offence of the national law and is punishable by law.

Although there is a lack of reports in human rights violations during the January-March 2015 period, it certainly does not mean there is a shortage of human rights abuses by the state. Lack of media reports could be attributed to the state being able to censor media reports or manage to cover up shortcomings. The state has been responsible for multiple violations some of which have fed the insurgency as people retaliate from the states' actions against its civilians. However, S.T.T.E.P

on the other hand having a reputable track record and their ability to operate under the international human rights laws could be accredited to the lack of reports against the P.M.C. The P.M.C has indeed failed in instilling the same standard onto the NDF forces in their joint COIN campaign which to an extent could have tainted their reputation. Although S.T.T.E.P has not committed any crimes against humanity, the presence of human rights violations by NDF and the CJTF means there has been lack of respect towards human rights and international law. This essentially means the COIN campaign has failed to operate under the international humanitarian laws.

Chapter 5

Conclusion and Recommendations

The use of Private Military Companies was once viewed as taboo within the global arena. However, since their reintroduction in the U.S – Iraqi War of 2001, P.M.C's are becoming more of the norm in conflict issues as they provide unprecedented service in their warfare contribution. The case study above has shown how Boko Haram proved rather difficult to contain during the NDF's initial COIN effort due to their use of unconventional warfare tactics. Lack of training and understanding of such tactics by the NDF led to the loss of territory triggered by the creation of Boko Haram's caliphate state, increase in civilian death tolls and growing insurgency popularity amongst some of the locals. In a move to counter the gains made by Boko Haram, the Jonathan administration hired the use of S.T.T.E.P a private military company whom through their application of the COIN principle 'relentless pursuit' could make gains in containing Boko Haram over a period of three months. The above research could provide a detailed analysis on whether S.T.T.E.P was effective in containing Boko Haram. The research firstly provided background information which included the root causes leading to the formation of Boko Haram. A discussion on the different types of Boko Haram terror tactics followed allowing for an insight in the operations of the insurgency as well as how it has adapted and evolved to the COIN campaign. The research then discussed when, how and why S.T.T.E.P intervened in the war against Boko Haram. Most importantly a discussion on 'relentless pursuit' was provided in which the research highlighted the tactics used by S.T.T.E.P in their COIN campaign against Boko Harm. To evaluate the effectiveness of S.T.T.E.P intervention, an analysis of the indicators was provided in which both S.T.T.E.P and NDF were scrutinized for their role in the joint COIN campaign.

In order to conclude on the effectiveness of S.T.T.E.P in containing Boko Haram, COIN literature will be used to evaluate whether S.T.T.E.P's contribution serves as a long term or short term solution to Boko Haram. According to Moore there are two types of COIN approaches, there is the predominantly military approach and the multi-dimensional approach (Moore 2007). Based on the research above, it would be reasonable to conclude that the COIN effort with S.T.T.E.P was predominantly militant. Moore's interpretation suggests the militant approach focuses solely on the physical defeat of the insurgency. He states, "This approach requires both overwhelming force

and a willingness to apply extreme measures against not only the insurgents, but the population as a whole" (Moore 2007). The problem with the COIN campaign is that despite S.T.T.E.P making gains in containing and beating back the insurgency, the force applied by the NDF leading to human rights violations towards both Boko Haram and civilians, reinforced the insurgency's pool of recruits as well as some of the root issues leading to the eruption of insurgency groups such as Boko Haram. The militant approach usually results in repressive and authoritarian regimes which only manages the issue of Boko Haram existence and not solve it, as it leaves many of its causes unaddressed (Moore 2007).

The U.S counterinsurgency guide suggests that COIN should remain focused on securing and being able to control a given population threatened by insurgency control. COIN should remain 'population-centric' and not enemy-centric to which the COIN effort becomes focused on solely defeating the insurgency (Burgos, Kilcullen and Porter 2009). In the Nigerian case, the COIN effort seems to be solely invested in defeating Boko Haram meaning it has drifted into an enemy-centric approach. The COIN campaign in Nigeria fails to integrate the required political, economic as well as social measures required to end as and prevent the reoccurrence of Boko Haram. The current approach fails to promote the creation of stable political, social and economic structures which could be used to tackle the underlying ills which called for the emergence of insurgencies such as Boko Haram. It is for the above mentioned reason why the research concludes that S.T.T.E.P intervention in the Joint COIN campaign proves to be effective as a short-term solution. Its services were deemed necessary for short term objectives which would include regaining lost territory, regaining the initiative and most importantly the suppressing of the Boko Haram insurgency.

S.T.T.E.P intervention proved effective in making gains against Boko Haram. It was able to contain the insurgency in its three-month period of services, a feat the NDF struggled to do over six years. However S.T.T.E.P's intervention resulted in short term success and the following recommendations would lead to COIN campaign bearing long term solutions against Boko Haram.

- **Improve Human Rights Conditions on both Civilians and Boko Haram Captives:** First and foremost, the Nigerian government needs to revise its human rights reputation. The Nigerian government, especially NDF personnel have been accused for gross human rights violations by civilians as well as non-governmental human rights bodies such as Amnesty

International (Amnesty International Report 2014/15 - The State of the World's Human Rights - Nigeria 2015 2015). The NDF forces need to be trained on how to treat captured Boko Haram personnel as it limits the chances of further violence as well as mitigates future recruitment. When handled appropriately and given incentives, prisoners cooperate better leading to improved chances of obtaining intelligence while under interrogation (ICG 2016). Continuous death's and tortures while in custody has led to unlawful treatment of prisoners of war and has led to even the deaths of wrongfully accused individuals. Disappearances under government custody has continued to anger civilians leading to the radicalisation of some individuals who end up joining Boko Haram as form of retaliation. Human rights violations by government forces upon civilians do not improve the relationship between society and the government but rather creates tension. It is this tension that leads to the sympathizing of society with the insurgency making it more difficult to defeat Boko Haram as it becomes protected by society.

- **Terminate the Use of Civilian Vigilantes:** the initial use of civilian vigilantes has helped the NDF extract Boko Haram militants who have integrated themselves within society. Civilian vigilantes have also been able to successfully erect checkpoints to which unsuspecting Boko Haram militants have been caught and handed over to government insurgencies. However, as the CJTF grew, it too became a source of human rights violations as volunteers from the CJTF began torturing and killing suspected Boko Haram militants (Amnesty International Report 2014/15 - The State of the World's Human Rights - Nigeria 2015 2015). The CJTF together with the NDF have been responsible for the unlawful detention of suspected Boko Haram individuals. Their interrogation methods are also highly questionable as they torture individuals into accepting their alliance to the insurgency without concrete proof. What was once an idea to get the community involved in the fight against Boko Haram has now become a source of local communal violence further creating tensions amongst the community as well as majority non-volunteer members of the community and the government.
- **Improve on State Legitimacy:** the Nigerian government needs to work towards regaining state legitimacy from local civilians especially those in rural and north-eastern part of Nigeria. To begin this, the government needs to install more transparent government officials especially in areas heavily impacted by the insurgency. Transparent officials and

systems enable the rebuilding of trust between the government and locals especially in states where anger against the state served as a push factor for Boko Haram (ICG 2016). The restoration of social services helps improve on underdevelopment in Boko Haram stronghold areas. Although the relationship between underdevelopment and radicalisation is rather complex, it would not be far-fetched to suggest the possibility of development leading to the de-radicalisation of the certain areas minimizing the possibility of violence. Improvement of social services, as well as employment of transparent officials would certainly lead to the improvement of state legitimacy within society.

- **Resolve Humanitarian Crisis caused by War:** the Nigerian government needs to acknowledge that the conflict with Boko Haram has led to humanitarian consequences which it needs to address. After millions of people had been previously displaced, thousands faced severe food shortages due to lack of production (Payne 2015). The government needs to allocate and seek both humanitarian and developmental aid to help feed and redevelop formerly as well as displaced communities. Continuous ignorance from government brews tension and leads to radicalisation of the community as well as continuous distrust. Humanitarian assistance can also be used in the rehabilitation of many affected civilians. It is important that rehabilitation takes place to avoid grievances amongst the community as it would be important for rebuilding of as well as moving forward of the society.
- **Restructure Counterinsurgency Strategy:** the NDF forces require training in both conventional and unconventional warfare. The troops need to be educated on COIN principles and doctrine to avoid future mishaps. The Nigerian government could renew yet another S.T.T.E.P contract solely focused on training NDF troops on COIN tactics. The NDF also needs to be trained on discipline as well as how to represent the government forces. In the recent encounter, the NDF operated with near impunity resulting in relative military gains, but also proved to be counterproductive as society began distancing themselves away from the NDF.

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