Riding or Reaping the Whirlwind?
An Account of the EU's Engagement with Insecurity in Northern Nigeria

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About the Author

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Abstract

The relations of the European Union (EU) with Africa are increasingly spreading beyond the domain of humanitarian and development cooperation. The continent's growing potential is producing vast webs of interlinkages in the realms of energy and commerce, among others. At the same time, such interdependencies bring with them increased vulnerabilities to insecurity on the continent. Nigeria exemplifies such a dilemma. The country has just taken the top spot as Africa's largest economy. Of late, however, violent Islamic extremism ravages the north of the country, threatening the stability of one of Europe's foremost energy suppliers and a growing trade partner. Thus, this paper sets out to uncover the EU's response to such a crisis, as well as examining the factors lying behind this response. While the study argues that the issue is potentially 'Europeaniz-able' from a member state perspective, deep engagement is seen to be held back by the absence of an effective entry point for securitization with this important ally, as well as the intractability of the EU's purported multi-functional approach to the idiosyncrasies of the conflict in question, in which not only transnational terrorist groups, but also the central government are centrally implicated in deepening insecurity.

> *"Only a few have sown the wind, but that wind*
> *was fanned by the breath of appeasement. Only one*
> *choice remains; to ride, or else reap, the whirlwind."*
>
> Wole Soyinka, Nigerian Nobel Laureate[1]

Introduction

A diffuse insurrection is currently unleashing a wave of extremist attacks in the north of Nigeria, targeting schoolchildren, women, public and religious figures alike. This campaign of savagery has being on-going since 2009, with 2014 seeing a major increase in indiscriminate, brutal assaults. So far costing over 4,000 lives[2], a catastrophic humanitarian crisis is now affecting over 3 million civilians[3] in a country that is home to the highest concentration of impoverished people in Africa.[4] Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan has made repeated calls for increased European assistance to counter the insurgency.[5] While neighbouring Chad, Niger and Mali are the focus of a dedicated European Union (EU) Sahel strategy, and Brussels pays heavy attention to combatting on-going crises in the nearby Central African Republic and the Gulf of Aden, Nigeria languishes at the bottom of the list of EU aid contributions, receiving the lowest share of Official Development Assistance (ODA) per capita in Africa.[6]

On the one hand, Nigeria is regularly viewed in humanitarian and developmental terms. Geographic distance and economic insignificance traditionally meant that insecurity in sub-Saharan Africa typically had no direct implications for Europe beyond ethical considerations. But on the other hand, April 2014 saw Nigeria officially overtake South Africa to become the continent's biggest economy.[7] In combination with its hegemonic status in the West-African sub-region, its role as Africa's largest oil producer as well as its most populous nation,[8] this latest crown paves the way for Nigeria's positioning as a significant actor in global relations. Relatedly, emerging multipolarity, greater global pressure on energy resources and rapidly expanding African economies have seen the region shoot up the European foreign policy

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[1] W. Soyinka, "The Butchers of Nigeria", *Newsweek*, 16 January 2012.

[2] International Crisis Group, "Curbing Violence in Nigeria (II): The Boko Haram Insurgency", Brussels, *ICG Africa Report*, no. 216, April 2014, p. i.

[3] BBC, "Nigeria's Boko Haram Insurgency 'Affects Millions'", *BBC World News*, 26 March 2014.

[4] The World Bank, "World Development Indicators", Washington, DC, The World Bank Dataset, 2014.

[5] B. Agande & I. Shaibu, "Jonathan Seeks Foreign Assistance to Tackle Boko Haram", *Vanguard*, 20 April 2012.

[6] Author's own calculations, derived from The World Bank, *op. cit.*

[7] Y. Kale, "Measuring Better: Rebasing/Rebenchmarking of Nigeria's GDP", Abuja, Nigeria National Bureau of Statistics, 6 April 2014.

[8] E. Karmon, "Boko Haram's International Reach", *Perspectives on Terrorism,* vol. 8, no. 1, 2014, p. 79.

agenda in the "new scramble for Africa".[9] Such increased interest in Africa's potential corresponds with greater vulnerability for the Union. Terrorist bombings inside their own borders over the last decade awoke Europeans to the fact that external crises can likewise be internal crises; expanding interlinkages through technology, trade, and migration now render insecurity less constrained by Westphalian borders. Thus, the positioning of Nigeria at the interface of two extremes – that of high potential and that of severe instability – forms the departure point for this paper. The research that follows was prompted by the observation that limited consideration has been devoted to occasions where internal crises break while external indicators flourish. With Nigeria as a clear case in point, it sets out to uncover the extent to which the EU is engaging with the issue of insecurity in the North, as well as the factors that explain this degree of engagement.

Following an overview of the Boko Haram insurgency, this paper moves to examine European interests and activities in the country. On the basis of these findings, the research then turns to analyse the current level of engagement. In doing so, it puts forward the argument that, rather than preferences of key member states standing in the way of a process of 'Europeanization' vis-à-vis Nigerian security, securitization is in fact held back due to an absence of appropriate entry points for such a process. This is seen to demonstrate the limits of the EU's proclaimed comprehensive approach in dealing with atypical conflicts of deep complexity.

The Rise of a Whirlwind

This section outlines the evolution of the Boko Haram threat against the backdrop of the post-colonial Nigerian state, including brief overview of international responses to the insurgency.

A Country Divided

Present-day Nigeria is more or less an artificial alliance of over 250 different ethnic groups, amalgamated in 1914 by the British administration.[10] Commentators point to colonial divide-and-rule strategies, engendering uneven socio-cultural, economic and political development between northern and southern protectorates, as a

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[9] P. Carmody, *The New Scramble for Africa*, London, Polity, 2011.
[10] O. Uzoechina, "'State Fragility' and the Challenges of Development in West Africa", *ALC Research Report*, no. 3, 2008, pp. 35-36.

contributing factor to destabilizing tensions today.[11] Significant unrest between Muslims and Christians over political power is now a recurrent feature.[12]

Exacerbating such struggles are the massive resource rents that the state has accrued. Poor management of such wealth has acted as a persistent conflict accelerator, where large scale corruption, kleptocracy and 'Dutch Disease' syndrome often lead to serious dissent aimed at rectifying allegedly unfair national distributions of revenue.[13] Such inequities are seen to disproportionately neglect the development needs of the Muslim north. Figures from 2011 demonstrate that while 27% of Christians live below the poverty line in Nigeria, 72% of Muslims find themselves in such a margin.[14] It is thus no surprise that vast swathes of the northern populace view the state apparatus and its current southern representative, Goodluck Jonathan, as illegitimate.[15] Feeding on popular discontent related to unresolved social tensions and diminishing economic opportunities, Boko Haram's [16] early incarnation under fundamentalist salafist *mallam* Mohammed Yusuf saw itself as a buffer to the mainstream political authorities,[17] but was nevertheless a non-violent one when it emerged at the turn of the millennium.[18]

A Feasible Insurgency

Of late, Boko Haram has developed the means to sustain extended campaigns of mass violence through ideological outreach toward international jihadist groups, providing operational and logistical support to embolden the movement.[19] Trans-border links have furnished Boko Haram with new modalities with which to inflict suffering, rendered viable through lucrative resources courtesy of Al-Qaeda in the

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[11] M. Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1996, p. 26.

[12] J. Lengmang, "The Upsurge of Religious Fundamentalism", in G. Best (ed.), *Religion and Post-Conflict Peacebuilding in Northern Nigeria*, Ibadan, John Archer, 2011, p. 101.

[13] Uzoechina, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

[14] V. Thomson, "Boko Haram and Islamic fundamentalism in Nigeria", *Global Security Studies*, vol. 3, no. 3, 2012, p. 49.

[15] D. Agbiboa, "Why Boko Haram Exists: The Relative Deprivation Perspective", *African Conflict & Peacebuilding Review*, vol. 3, no. 1, 2013, pp. 144-157.

[16] In this thesis, Boko Haram, which translates as "Western Education is Forbidden" is understood as the collection of inter-linked Islamist insurgent groups in the north of Nigeria. Although it is recognised that break-away factions such as Ansaru exist, the nature of the network is such that it is ill-understood and such nuances are beyond the scope of this research. See International Crisis Group, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-23.

[17] O. Bello, "Nigeria's Boko Haram Threat: How the EU Should Act", *FRIDE Policy Brief*, no. 123, Madrid, FRIDE, April, 2012, p. 3.

[18] D. Agbiboa, "The Ongoing Campaign of Terror in Nigeria: Boko Haram versus the State", *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development*, vol. 2, no. 3, 2013, p. 4.

[19] O. Bello, "Quick Shift or Quicksand? Implementing the EU Sahel Strategy", Madrid, *FRIDE Working Paper*, no. 114, November 2012, p. 14.

Maghreb (AQIM) as well as al-Shabaab.[20] Such funding supplants revenue that the group derives from cross-border trafficking in illicit goods.[21]

Furthermore, deep-seated incapacities at the heart of the federal government have played into Boko Haram's hands.[22] The governing apparatus in Abuja holds middle-income status buttressed by vast oil reserves, and does not, perhaps, meet typical weak state criteria. But illusions of strength are dispelled by a deep gulf that exists between Nigerian society and the institutions of the federal state. This is particularly pronounced in the north. Ake's comparison to Hobbes' "pre-political state" that fails to "engender any legitimacy, even though it made rules and laws profusely" aptly captures the animosity and illegitimacy with which vast swathes of the populace view the ruling class.[23] Such notions have been buoyed by repeated operational shortcomings. Since 2009, ambush tactics of Boko Haram have repeatedly caught national security agencies off guard.[24] A belligerent, brutal 'anti-terror campaign' of state-perpetuated violence as well as an acknowledgment by the President that the police have been infiltrated by members of the sect exacerbates already high levels of insecurity and distrust of the state on the part of northerners.[25]

International Attention

While the organization has evolved into multiple, loosely affiliated groups, which complicates analysis, it is nonetheless possible to say that the primary targets of Boko Haram have, thus far, been their own countrymen.[26] However, the dramatic contextual shift that occurred at the international level after 9/11 means that along with much non-state violent activity, the northern Nigerian situation has come to be viewed through the securitized lens of the 'war on terror'.[27] Close by, fallout from Libya and Mali is feared to contribute to a globally threatening salafi-jihadi breeding ground in the Sahel, compounded by porous borders and vast, 'ungoverned'

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[20] International Institute for Strategic Studies, "Boko Haram: Nigeria's Growing New Headache", *IISS Strategic Comments,* vol. 17, no. 9, 2011, p. 3.

[21] D. Agbiboa, "No Retreat, no Surrender: Understanding the Religious Terrorism of Boko Haram in Nigeria", *African Study Monographs,* vol. 34, no. 2, 2013, p. 67.

[22] J. Fearon & D. Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency and Civil War", *American Political Science Review,* vol. 97, no. 1, 2003, p. 80.

[23] Ake, *op. cit.,* p. 3; Alozieuwa, *op. cit.,* p. 2.

[24] Akinola, *op. cit.*

[25] M. Martinelli & U. Ilo, "Why the EU has a Stake in Nigeria's Democracy", Abuja, *OSIWA,* July 2012; Human Rights Watch, "Spiraling violence: Boko Haram attacks and security force abuses in Nigeria", *HRW Report,* October 2012; Bello, "Nigeria's Boko Haram Threat", *op. cit.;* Bamgbose, *op. cit.,* p. 128; Bello, "Quick Shift or Quicksand? Implementing the EU Sahel Strategy", *op. cit.* p. 3.

[26] B. Gil-Schwandl, "A Tale of Two Jihads: Mali, Nigeria and the EU", *Working Paper,* 13/26, Lisbon, Contraditório, June 2013.

[27] Serrano & Pieri, *op. cit.,* p. 196.

spaces.[28] Thus, the growing reach and sophistication of Boko Haram attacks means that the group is being seen by external observers to pose an existential threat to regional and Western interests.[29] The recent approach of the US toward Nigeria and the wider Sahel is undoubtedly characterized by a counter-terrorism mind-set.[30] Additionally, strong condemnation of the actions of Boko Haram has been expressed by the United Nations (UN), the African Union (AU) and numerous international leaders.[31] In response, increasing instances of anti-Western rhetoric in statements issued by the group have been recorded.[32]

European Interests

This section sets out the main areas of European interest toward Nigeria, both in terms of member states and in terms of the institutions of the Union, although there is often a certain degree of overlap. It seeks to illustrate that Europe has strong interests in Nigeria, and that these are multifaceted and multi-locational.

Colonial Linkages and Diaspora Ties

Historically, EU interactions with African states have often been channelled through the privileged relations of former colonial partners, which acted as a major component of leverage.[33] As the former colonial power, Britain has maintained favourable bilateral ties with Nigeria, now institutionalized under the Commonwealth.[34] Connections are viewed positively on both sides, with a 2009 *Afrobarometer* survey reporting 60% of Nigerians felt that Britain was generally helpful to the country.[35] Warm relations are deepened by strong diaspora links,[36] with the

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[28] B. Eveslage, "Clarifying Boko Haram's Transnational Intentions, Using Content Analysis of Public Statements in 2012", *Perspectives on Terrorism*, vol. 7, no. 5, 2013, p. 51; Z. Elkaim, "Analysis: Resilient Boko Haram an Increasing Threat", *The Long War Journal*, December 2013.

[29] J. Pham, "Boko Haram's evolving threat", *Africa Security Brief*, no. 20, Africa Center for Strategic Studies, place??, April 2012, p. 20.

[30] US Congress, "Boko Haram: Emerging Threat to the U.S. Homeland", Hearing before the Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence of the Committee on Homeland Security, 30 November 2011, Washington, USG Printing Office; US Department of State, "Terrorist designations of Boko Haram commander Abubakar Shekau, Khalid al-Barnawi and Abubakar Adam Kambar", Washington, Office of the Spokesperson, Press Release, June 2012.

[31] Institute for Security Studies, "PSC Report Programme", *ISS Report*, no. 31, Addis Ababa, February 2012.

[32] Adesoji, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

[33] S. Keukeleire & T. Delreux, *The Foreign Policy of the European Union*, London, Palgrave MacMillan, 2014, p. 124.

[34] G. Faleg, "United Kingdom: The Elephant in the Room", in F. Santopinto & M. Price, (eds.), *National Visions of EU Defence Policy*, Brussels, CEPS Paperbacks, 2013, p. 137.

[35] Afrobarometer, *Afrobarometer Online Data Analysis*, retrieved 20 April 2014.

[36] UK House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, "Extremism and political instability in North and West Africa-Written Evidence from FCO", London, Stationary Office, 10 May 2013.

influence of "one of the biggest diaspora communities" in Europe acknowledged by Commission President Barroso. [37] Unsurprisingly, Nigerian migrants are a sizeable minority in the UK, but are also a prominent subgroup in member states such as Italy, Spain and Ireland where they represent almost 10% of the migrant community. [38] Thus, strong British-Nigerian relations, combined with the fact that the UK holds a relatively loud voice within the EU, firstly leads to the expectation that Nigerian interests are strongly represented at the European level.

Development Cooperation

Development cooperation is central to the EU's identity as an external actor; [39] fostering "the sustainable economic, social and environmental development of developing countries, with the primary aim of eradicating poverty" is laid down in the Treaties as a stated objective of the Union. [40] Nigeria has the highest concentration of impoverished people on the entire African continent, with 115 million people living below the extreme poverty threshold of $1.25 per day. [41] Thus there is a clear case for EU developmental interests in Nigeria. Furthermore, EU development cooperation in Africa can be understood as a vehicle for spreading the values of the Union, such as democracy and stability, [42] as well as to enhance its legitimacy and visibility. [43]

That said, the status of the EU as a donor in Nigeria tends to be that of "development enabler", [44] in contrast to more prominent donor roles in neighbouring countries. ODA from the European Commission to Nigeria has fluctuated around €70 million per year over the last 5 years. [45] To put such figures in perspective, however, Nigeria reported a

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[37] European Commission, "A Centenary to Celebrate in Union and Unity", Speech given by José-Manuel Barroso at the Nigeria Centenary Conference, Abuja, 27 February 2014.

[38] Author's own calculations, derived from UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, *Trends in International Migration Stock: Migrants by Destination and Origin*, New York, United Nations, 2014.

[39] G. Le Pere, "AU-EU Security and Governance Cooperation", in Adebajo & Whiteman, *The EU and Africa, from Eurafrique to Afro-Europa*, London, Hurst, 2012, p. 258.

[40] European Union, "Consolidated versions of the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union", *Official Journal of the European Union*, C83, 30 March 2010, art. 21 TEU.

[41] The World Bank, *op. cit.*

[42] V. Adetula, D. Kew & C. Kwaja, "Assessing Democracy Assisstance: Nigeria", *World Movement for Democracy/FRIDE Project Report: Accessing Democracy Assistance*, May 2010, p. 2.

[43] M. Carbone, "International Development and the European Union's External Policies: Changing Contexts, Problematic Nexuses, Contested Partnerships", *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, vol. 26, no. 3, 2013, p. 487.

[44] Bello, "Nigeria's Boko Haram Threat", *op. cit.*, p. 1.

[45] Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development, "International Development Statistics Online Databases", OECD Development Assistance Committee, April 2014.

GDP of €322 billion for 2012,[46] meaning EU institutions contributed to 0.02% of the Nigerian economy that year. By contrast, the Commission's ODA to neighbouring Niger represented 3.34% of the national budget.[47] Thus, while European officials might have a strong interest in Nigerian development cooperation, their relative muscle here is miniscule. At the same time it must be recognized that the Union's development policies are a shared competence. Member state ODA contributions to Nigeria exceed that of the Commission, with the overwhelming bulk coming from the UK, and small sums transferred from Germany, France and Denmark, among others.

Turning to the UK's development cooperation toward Nigeria, increasing aid-based emphasis was placed on the region following the 1997-2010 Labour government's 'pivot' to Africa, notably through the establishment of the Department for International Development (DfID) as well as Tony Blair's 'Commission for Africa' which aimed at stimulating new thinking on African development.[48] The legacy of this era means that issues of development and aid have played a leading part in British relations with African countries.[49]

Security

Given its developmental interest, the EU also holds an inherent interest in Nigerian security, as its 2003 European Security Strategy purports that "security is a precondition of development", in that "conflict makes normal economic activity impossible".[50] This so-called 'security-development nexus' signals the growing importance of relations with African countries outside of strictly donor-recipient relationships, with European leaders of late stressing economic and political development as crucial to tackling global insecurity through the pursuit of 'human security'.[51] Thus the EU can be said to have an altruistic interest in Nigerian stability as a route to wellbeing in the country.

EU interest in Nigerian security also reflects a strong desire for stable regional partners in terms of its own internal wellbeing. Challenges to peace in Nigeria and the wider Sahel region are a threat to the southern borders of Europe; illicit trafficking, energy

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[46] Kale, *op. cit.*

[47] Author's own calculations derived from: World Bank, *op. cit.*

[48] A. Vines, "Africa and the United Kingdom: Labour's Legacy, May 1997-May 2010", in T. Chafer & G.C. Cumming (eds.), *From Rivalry to Partnership: New Approaches to the Challenges of Africa*, Farnham, Ashgate, 2011, p. 32.

[49] P. Williams, "Britain, the EU and Africa", in Adebajo & Whiteman, *op. cit.*, p. 357.

[50] European Council, *A Secure Europe in a Better World. European Security Strategy*, Brussels, 12 December 2003, p. 2.

[51] R. Youngs, "Fusing Security and Development: Just another Euro-platitude?", *European Integration*, vol. 30, no. 3, 2008, pp. 420, 430.

disruption and irregular migration originating in Nigeria all represent potential destabilizing forces to European security.[52] The proliferation of extremist movements in Western and northern Africa moves the core of the terrorist threat closer to the borders of Europe.[53] Concerns are exacerbated by a global discourse depicting Africa as "the world's soft underbelly for global terrorism".[54]

Within the EU, security in Nigeria is significant for a number of member states. Firstly, those on the southern frontier find themselves vulnerable to aforementioned risks due to geographic proximity. Secondly, explicit citing of "Britain, America, Israel and Nigeria" in videos released by Boko Haram's leader in 2013 and references to Presidents Obama and Hollande in tandem with claims that operations will be directed at "the whole world" would suggest that France and the UK are on high alert.[55] Thirdly, member states are finding their attention drawn by growing incidences of kidnappings, with British, French, German, Greek and Italian nationals abducted by Boko Haram to date.[56] A suicide bombing in Abuja's UN headquarters in 2011, which claimed European victims,[57] further drives home the nature of Boko Haram as more than simply a diffuse, latent menace to European states.

Energy and Trade

Nigeria is the largest oil producer in Africa and the fourth largest exporter of liquefied natural gas (LNG) globally.[58] Furthermore, Nigeria consistently features in the top ten exporters of oil to the EU, largely to southern and western member states.[59] 44% of Nigeria's oil exports go to Europe, with rates of export to the continent accelerating rapidly; 40% increases were recorded in both 2011 and 2012.[60] Commerce in machinery and foodstuffs is also significant.[61]

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[52] Mattelaer, Simon & Hadfield, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
[53] T. Renard, "Confidential partnerships? The EU, its strategic partners and international terrorism", *ESPO Working Paper*, no. 4, European Strategic Partnerships Observatory, January 2014, p. 8.
[54] US Congress, "Africa and the War on Global Terrorism", Hearing before the Subcommittee on Africa of the Committee on International Relations, House of Representatives, Washington, USG Printing Office, November 2001, p. 6.
[55] Karmon, *op. cit.*, p. 76.
[56] International Crisis Group, *op. cit.*
[57] F. Onuah, "UN Deputy Secretary General Visits Nigeria Bomb Victims", *Reuters*, 28 August 2011.
[58] US Energy Information Administration, "Nigeria Country Report", 30 December 2013.
[59] Eurostat, "Energy, transport and Environment Indicators", Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union, 2011.
[60] US Energy Information Administration, *op. cit.*
[61] European Commission, DG Trade, "European Union Trade in Goods with Nigeria", 7 November 2013.

In terms of member states, Spain and the Netherlands are the largest importers of crude oil from Nigeria. In addition, 12% of the UK's crude oil imports currently come from Nigeria, with the House of Commons noting that price rises due to instability in Nigeria exerts considerable vulnerability on the country.[62] Regarding LNG, Spain, France and Portugal are all major Nigerian clients.[63] Interestingly, despite weak historical links, Nigeria has become France's largest African trading partner, with mutual investments of almost €6 billion in 2013.[64] France has strong energy interests in the region; 80% of French electricity is provided through nuclear power, much of which runs on West African uranium.[65] Equally, German-led plans to harness solar energy from across West Africa for export to Europe under the DESERTEC Foundation also have strong commercial interests in the region, and hence in stability in Nigeria.[66] Several European multinational corporations play leading roles in Nigerian oil and gas sectors, including Royal Dutch Shell, Total and ENI. Furthermore, plans are afoot to bring natural gas from oil fields in the Niger Delta directly to Europe via the proposed 'Trans-Saharan Gas Pipeline'.[67] Referring to a projected 8% per annum growth rate on a recent visit to Lagos, British Prime Minister Cameron described the Nigerian economy as a "dream waiting to happen".[68] Steadily growing British investment in the country is reportedly set to approach €10 billion in 2014.[69] Thus, especially in light of recent diversification pressures, the importance of Nigeria as a source of energy and potential growing market to a multitude of European constituencies cannot be overstated.[70]

Regional Integration

An interest more specific at the EU level is that of promoting regional integration. This is seen in an emphasis on multilateral institutions and regional organizations in a number of documents, including the Treaties and the European Security Strategy.[71] As a successful case of peace through regional integration in itself, the EU thus attempts to diffuse this model of security through backing policies such as economic

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[62] UK House of Commons, *op. cit.*, p. 40.
[63] Nigerian National Bureau of Statistics, "Foreign Trade Statistics 2012", Abuja, *NBS*, no. 505, 2012.
[64] M. Caldwell, "Security Worries Overshadow Nigerian Centenary", *Deutsche Welle*, 27 February 2014.
[65] Gil-Schwandl, *op. cit.*, p. 19.
[66] *Ibid.*, p. 17.
[67] US Energy Information Administration, *op. cit.*
[68] G. Akinsamne, "Cameron-Nigeria is a Dream Waiting to Happen", *This Day Live*, 20 July 2011.
[69] O. Obada, "Fighting Terrorism and Keeping the Peace: Interview with Nigerian Minister of Defence", *Worldfolio*, April 2013.
[70] Bössner & Stang, *op. cit.*, p. 1.
[71] Keukeleire & Delreux, *op. cit.*, p. 300.

integration, common markets, and others that may indirectly impact regional security.[72]

Consequently, given that much EU foreign policy toward Africa is foreign policy 'by subvention',[73] the EU has a strong interest in ensuring the functioning of the regional organizations that it finances. In particular, the EU's African Peace Facility channels funding to the AU and to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to support regional integration and regional stability. As the hegemon in the West African subsystem, Nigeria is a vital strategic partner for the EU, via the architecture of ECOWAS, headquartered in Abuja.[74] Nigeria has contributed immensely to peace operations in a variety of African conflicts,[75] and thus its leadership in the domain of regional security and integration is of crucial importance to the EU.

European Activity in Nigeria

Having examined general European interests in Nigeria, this section turns to look at what these mean in practice, with particular focus on the security realm. Incorporating analyses of documents as well as tangible activities, it hopes to lay the groundwork for ensuing analyses of Europeanization and 'securitization'.

Member State Activity in Nigeria

Nigeria is the focus of strong attention from the UK. At the legislative level, the country has a dedicated All-Party Parliamentary Group,[76] and attention toward Nigeria has noticeably expanded at the very time when downsizing and cutbacks across the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and DfID were occurring, but an exception was made for Nigeria on the grounds of population size and strategic interests.[77] DfID now runs one of the largest aid programmes in the north of Nigeria,[78] hinting at incremental rapprochement of security and development activity.

On a declaratory level, London has been resolute in supporting the federal government's combat against extremism, although it increasingly expresses reservations about aspects of official 'counter-terrorism' policy.[79] In 2011, Nigerian

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[72] Piccolini & Minou, *op. cit*, p. 16.
[73] Keukeleire & Delreux, *op. cit.*, p. 146.
[74] Martinelli & Ilo, *op. cit.*
[75] Uzoechina, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
[76] Vines, *op. cit.*, p. 36.
[77] *Ibid.*, p. 35.
[78] International Crisis Group, *op. cit.*, p. 46.
[79] H. Odiogor & V. Ojeme, "Boko Haram: US, UK Advocate non-military Approach", *Vanguard*, 3 Februrary 2014.

media praised the UK's reported preparedness "to provide any assistance [it] can to the UN and Nigerian authorities to bring those responsible to justice."[80] Such pronouncements proved premature, as the FCO subsequently admitted that actual military assistance provided fell well short of what was requested by the federal government due to grave concerns over human rights transgressions by federal forces.[81] Thus, while holding back in some areas, the UK has nevertheless cooperated with Nigeria on advice and assistance in the fields of anti-terrorist finance measures, judicial training and emergency counter-terrorism strategies.[82] However, reservations prevail, allegedly on human rights grounds, about deeper engagement with the Nigerian military.[83]

France is viewed to have taken on a leadership role in terms of security in the wider West African region.[84] A 2008 White Paper on Defence and National Security and its later revision point to strategic uncertainty associated with globalization and terrorism as a primary cause of concern, explicitly identifying Boko Haram and the decentralization of Al-Qaeda as key threats.[85] Fallout from French actions in northern Mali have had a spill-over effect on the Nigerian situation, thus indirectly implicating France.[86] Although its footprint is small, Paris does have a development cooperation programme with the country, spending €3.5 million in 2012.[87]

Elsewhere, the Nigerian Ministry of Defence proclaims to have Memorandums of Understanding with its equivalent in many EU member states.[88] While President Jonathan has repeatedly called on member states such as Germany to support technical capacity in areas including intelligence gathering, responses have been hesitant.[89] Italy has sent a special envoy to the region and strengthened bilateral relations toward Nigeria with a view to helping to tackle "terrorism, human trafficking and poverty".[90] Additionally, development spending has increased, with Germany and Denmark, among others, recently raising ODA levels for Nigeria.[91] On a diplomatic level, member states are strongly represented in Abuja, with nineteen

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[80] O. Majoyeogbe, "Before the next terrorist attack", *The Guardian*, 4 September 2011.
[81] UK House of Commons, *op. cit.*, p. 36.
[82] Akinsamni, *op. cit.*
[83] UK House of Commons, *op. cit.*, p. 36.
[84] *Ibid.*, p. 49.
[85] M. Muniz, "France: The Frustrated Leader", in H. Biehl, B. Giegerich & A. Jonas (eds.), *Strategic Cultures in Europe*, place?, SSIB, 2013, pp. ??.
[86] International Crisis Group, *op. cit.*, p. 28.
[87] Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development, *op. cit.*
[88] Obada, *op. cit.*
[89] Agande & Shaibu, *op. cit.*, p. 6.
[90] Bamgbose, *op. cit.*, p. 135.
[91] Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, *op. cit.*

European embassies present. [92] In spite of this, security cooperation is not widespread.

EU Activity in Nigeria

On a declaratory level, recent EU discourse has seen a more comprehensive, equitable approach being taken toward African countries,[93] evident in the 2007 Joint Africa-EU Strategy's (JAES) accentuation on security issues, joint action and continent-to-continent relations in all sectors beyond aid.[94] The evolution of the EU's security and counter-terrorism strategies over the same period[95] highlights a growing recognition that the Union's internal security rests on stability outside its borders.[96] However, in placing 'human security' as a central goal, the EU's discourse positions referent objects of security as both states and individuals, inside and outside the Union alike. These objectives are not necessarily compatible, [97] as will be demonstrated below. EU-Nigeria relations centre on the 2009 'Joint Way Forward' (JWF), through which both parties committed to enhance cooperation and dialogue at federal level, as well as through state and local governments.[98] The elevation of relations beyond that of the basic Cotonou Agreement and JAES framework is seen as recognition of Nigeria's growing importance. [99] While Bello denounces the document as a mere restatement of broad undertakings of the JAES,[100] the JWF nonetheless drives home the point that EU-Nigeria relations go beyond development cooperation.

In terms of instruments, at numerous points since independence, the EU has employed tools of diplomatic sanctioning toward Nigeria. Following good governance and human rights violations in 1993 and 1995, the Union suspended assistance and imposed restrictions,[101] demonstrating a politically assertive manner. In the run up to the highly charged 2007 elections, the Union took the lead in

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[92] Interview with an official, European External Action Service, Brussels, 8 April 2014.

[93] Mattelaer, Simon & Hadfield, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

[94] Council of the European Union, *The Africa-EU Strategic Partnership: A Joint Africa-EU Strategy*, 16344/07, Brussels, 9 December 2007.

[95] European Council, *op. cit.*, p. 2; European Council, *Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy - Providing Security in a Changing World*, S407/08, Brussels, 11 December 2008, p. 2; Council of the European Union, *The European Union Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism*, 14781/1/05, 24 November 2005; Council of the European Union, *Revised Strategy on Terrorist Financing*, Brussels, 17 July 2008.

[96] Renard, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

[97] Youngs, "Fusing security and development: just another Euro-platitude?", *op. cit.*, p. 423.

[98] European Council, "Nigeria-EU Ministerial Meeting Prague,Joint Communiqué", Brussels, 10 June 2009.

[99] Interview with an official, European External Action Service, *op. cit.*; Martinelli & Ilo, *op. cit.*

[100] Bello, "Quick Shift or Quicksand?", *op. cit.*, p. 14.

[101] Bamgbose, *op. cit.*, pp. 130-133.

coordinating electoral assistance among donors.[102] However, although lambasted by the head of the EU Election Observation Mission as the worst elections he had ever witnessed, [103] the EU remained uncritically committed to engagement, deepened thereafter through the 2009 JWF process, endeavouring to align EU efforts to the priorities of the federal government.[104]

As regards financing, the EU has offered financing through the European Development Fund (EDF) since Nigeria's transition to civilian rule in 1999, as well as funding good governance initiatives through channels such as the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights. [105] However, EDF funds must be negotiated and co-managed directly with national authorities and cannot be disbursed on counter-terrorism efforts,[106] effectively limiting the scope for manoeuvre between policy communities. [107] Conversely, the EU's Instrument for Stability (IfS) allows for flexibility in situations of insecurity.[108] Following a request from the Nigerian government for counter-terrorism assistance, the IfS assembled a short term response package for intelligence and training,[109] in addition to €10 million to promote the role of Northern women in seeking peace and security in 2013.[110]

In terms of institutional architecture, the bridging of security and development domains has undoubtedly been facilitated through the setting up of the European External Action Service (EEAS), as well as the integration of Commission personnel and the EEAS under one double-hatted Head of Delegation. In Abuja, this has reportedly translated into an effective division of labour and good working relationship between policy communities. [111] Regarding dialogue, annual EU-

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[102] *Ibid.*, p. 10.
[103] A. Enabulele & A. Ewere, "When the Shepherd becomes the Wolf: What is wrong with the Independent National Electoral Committee in Nigeria?", *Journal of Politics and Law*, vol. 3, no. 2, 2010, p. 185.
[104] Council of the European Union, "Note from the EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator to the European Council", 9990/12, Brussels, 23 May 2012.
[105] *Ibid.*
[106] European Community, Partnership agreement between the members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States of the one part, and the European Community and its Member States, of the other part, signed in Cotonou on 23 June 2000, *Official Journal of the European Union*, L 317, 5 January 2012, art. 35 [hereafter, "Cotonou"].
[107] Sherriff, *op. cit.*
[108] European Parliament & European Council, "Regulation (EC) No 1717/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 November 2006 establishing an Instrument for Stability", *Official Journal of the European Union*, 24 November 2006, L 327/1-11.
[109] Council of the European Union, 2012, *op. cit.;* Obada, *op. cit.*
[110] European Commission, "Commission Decision on a Special Measure in Favour of Nigeria to be financed from the 10th European Development Fund", COM(2013) 6613 final, 3 October 2013.
[111] Interview with an official, European External Action Service, *op. cit.*

ECOWAS talks tackle issues of common interest,[112] while the JWF facilitates EU-Nigeria dialogue at multiple levels, with EEAS officials, at the Council of Ministers level, as well as dialogue at state governor and local government level.[113] Moreover, party-to-party dialogue such as the 'Windhoek Meeting;' continue apace, yet participants on both sides report Nigerian resistance to what is often viewed as European impositioning.[114] Such political engagement is conceded to be a long-term process, through which "norms put down roots", not necessarily yielding tangible short-term outcomes.[115]

At the end of this section, it is clear that aside from the growing, albeit reticent, involvement of the UK, EU member states by and large are relatively unengaged in the security affairs of Nigeria. At the EU level, on paper the Union appears increasingly engaged on security issues, with relevant policy instruments and institutional structures seeming increasingly amenable to stability considerations. Nonetheless, the overall impression is one of a slightly disjointed, apolitical, albeit relatively equitable relationship between the EU and Nigeria.

Is Nigeria 'Europeaniz-able'?

This section contends that engagement with security issues in Nigeria cannot be said to be hampered by a reluctance for the pivotal member states to Europeanize existing bilateral relations with Nigeria. On the contrary, the diffuse spread of Nigerian ties with Europe means that a large majority of member states have an active interest in the stability of the country.

Europeanization

The above sections demonstrate that numerous European states hold strong bilateral ties to Nigeria. In the past, it is alleged that such relations acted as a major constraint on EU foreign policy in that situations where member states' former colonies were considered too sensitive, nationally, for EU-level deliberations.[116] However, the opposite often holds true at present, in that member states increasingly attempt to upload national foreign policy priorities to the European level through a process of

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[112] European External Action Service, "ECOWAS & EU", *EEAS*,. Retrieved?
[113] European Council, 2009, *op. cit.*
[114] Interview with a Nigerian politician, *op. cit.*; Interview with a Member of European Parliament sitting on ACP-EU Committee, Brussels, 24 March 2014;
[115] *Ibid.*
[116] I. Taylor, *The International Relations of Sub-Saharan Africa*, London, Continuum, 2010, p. 51; Keukeleire & Delreux, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

'Europeanization,' understood as the projection and pursuit of domestic foreign policy approaches and objectives at the EU level.[117]

Security issues in Africa have been described as a field particularly conducive to the Europeanization of member state policies.[118] At the same time, national approaches toward African conflicts are less than consistent. [119] The assertion that EU considerations on the issue are often driven by internal power relations has led some commentators to remark that the level of engagement with regard to a particular region or situation is determined primarily by the motives and preferences of the big states.[120] This section seeks to investigate whether the security crisis in northern Nigeria is amenable to so-called Europeanization vis-à-vis national preferences.

A French Obstacle?

Firstly, in examining the role of France on the issue, it must be recognized that the country holds multiple, complex ties to a variety of regional actors across Africa owing to its colonial history, and is frequently portrayed as playing a "hyperactive diplomatic role."[121] Concurrently, France has been a primary proponent of a general process of Europeanization, demonstrated by continued and active support of all major EU security developments.[122] As the founder of the entire EU-ACP system, Gegout remarks that France is undoubtedly the most influential member state in this domain.[123] Indeed, most major EU security initiatives toward Africa have come on the back of French proposals, such as the conception of the Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel during the French presidency of 2008.[124] Consequently, claims that Francophone Africa receives disproportionate attention from the EU are often put forward,[125] including allegations that France "wants to favour its former colonies to the detriment of other developing states." [126] The preponderance of Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions to francophone states could lend support to such claims.[127]

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[117] *Ibid.*, pp. 129-130.
[118] Bagoyoko & Gibert, *op. cit.*, p. 790.
[119] *Ibid.*
[120] C. Gegout, "EU Conflict Management in Africa: The Limits of an International Actor", *Ethnopolitics*, vol. 8, nos. 3-4, 2009, p. 408.
[121] Bello, "Nigeria's Boko Haram Threat", *op. cit.*, p. 4.
[122] Muniz, *op. cit.*, p. 7.
[123] Gegout, *op. cit.*, p. 404.
[124] Sherriff, *op. cit.*
[125] Gil-Schwandl, *op. cit.*, p. 17.
[126] Gegout, *op. cit.*, p. 404.
[127] For instance, EUFOR Tchad, EUTM Mali, EUCAP SAHEL Niger, EUFOR RCA.

However, while there may be a degree of truth in the assertion that France is the primary driving force behind EU external action in Africa,[128] it is no longer possible to say that French interests are restricted to its former colonies. Indeed, Jospin's modernizing socialist reign from 1997 was keen to scale down France's presence in *Françafrique* and to realign its strategic and diplomatic vision toward commercial interests.[129] A concerted effort was likewise undertaken to dilute the French sphere of influence into a broader whole, encompassing a number of Anglophone African states, under the *Zone de Solidarité Prioritaire* programme in development cooperation.[130] Such initiatives mean that France is paying ever-increasing attention toward Nigerian issues.[131]

Economic interests are playing a growing role in French foreign policy in general,[132] and as its largest African trading partner, these interests are increasingly located in Nigeria. Strong French interest in Nigerian affairs was illustrated by the presence of François Hollande as guest of honour at the Centenary celebrations in 2014, during which the President declared: "We will always stand ready not only to provide our political support but our help every time you need it, because the struggle against terrorism is also the struggle for democracy." [133] Thus, it becomes clear that any assertions holding France as the weak link in EU-Nigeria relations are no longer tenable given ever-strengthening interrelations between the two states.

A British Hurdle?

Along with France, the UK holds a pre-eminent status in matters of EU foreign policy.[134] Therefore the question must be raised of whether a reluctance on the part of the UK to Europeanize relations with its former colony plays a part in determining the engagement of the EU with Nigerian affairs. While the *Françafrique* umbrella ensured that strong post-independence ties were generally maintained between France and its former territories, often considered the country's *chasse gardée*,[135] no such protection or exclusion can be said to characterize British attitudes toward its

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[128] Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 354.
[129] G. Cumming, "Britain and France in Africa since Saint-Malo: Towards an Uneasy Partnership?", T. Chafer & G.C. Cumming (eds.), *From Rivalry to Partnership: New Approaches to the Challenges of Africa*, Farnham, Ashgate, 2011, p. 67.
[130] Bourmand, *op. cit.*, p. 51.
[131] Cumming, *op. cit.*, p. 67.
[132] Gegout, *op. cit.*, p. 409.
[133] Quoted in Caldwell, *op. cit.*
[134] Faleg, *op. cit.*, p. 132.
[135] F.X. Verschave, *De la Françafrique à la Mafiafrique*, Paris, Tribord, 2003.

former colonies, initially viewed as a "source of trouble rather than opportunity."[136] This hands-off approach is evident through limited UK involvement in Africa during the Cold War, in contrast to that of France. Any notions of a UK-France rivalry are dispelled considering the 1998 signing of 'Saint-Malo II', which committed both sides to cooperative, harmonious policies toward Africa, and to promote an EU common position there.[137] This synthesis was further enhanced with the creation of the Peace and Security Council and the EEAS, which has seen greater alignment and convergence of British and French policies toward African security issues.[138]

As outlined above, the UK's interest in Nigeria covers a broad spectrum of goals. British strategic and foreign policy objectives, insofar as they concern Nigeria, are largely consistent with those espoused by the EU in general. One reason for this is the active role that Britain has played in designing many of the relevant documents and strategies underpinning EU-Nigeria relations. Documents such as the European Security Strategy, and the EU Counterterrorism Strategy are largely British initiatives, and thus to some degree reflect British visions for EU foreign policy.[139] London is said to view the EU as possessing added-value at the softer end of the security spectrum.[140] Indeed, the comprehensive approach espoused by the EU in recent years is viewed as particularly compatible with the quest of the UK FCO for effective co-ordination.[141] Thus, contrary to what is often supposed, the UK has been an active and positive influence from the outset on institutionalized European security cooperation. At the same time, more recent attitudes to EU security policy are tempered by pragmatic considerations underpinned by budgetary pressures on defence spending as well as frustration with bureaucratic complexities in Brussels.[142]

As such, it is reasonable to assert that the UK is unlikely to proactively, single-handedly push for stronger EU engagement in Nigeria at present. Neither, however, is it likely to object to a progressive Europeanization of relations with the country. Indeed the House of Commons' evaluation of approaches to West Africa actively advocates the use of EU influence to shape approaches toward the region.[143] Correspondingly, the establishment of the EEAS is generally viewed as helpful in plugging gaps in the UK's African presence due to cutbacks under the

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[136] C. Clapham, *Africa and the International System*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996, p. 88.
[137] Cumming, *op. cit.*, p. 75.
[138] *Ibid*, pp. 75-81.
[139] *Ibid*; Renard, *op. cit.*, p. 9.
[140] Faleg, *op. cit.*, p. 135.
[141] *Ibid.*
[142] Faleg, *op. cit.*, p. 207.
[143] UK House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, 2013, *op. cit.*

Comprehensive Spending Review. [144] Indeed, both the Brown and Cameron administrations have promoted burden-sharing among EU members as a means to maintain influence with African states.[145] Such calls echo the 'national projection' facet of Europeanization, whereby national foreign policy often finds new opportunities to pursue objectives though the ability to resource-pool, burden-share and legitimize external efforts with the support of EU institutions and other member states.[146]

Is Nigerian Security 'Europeaniz-able'?

As outlined earlier, a large majority of member states have strong interests in Nigerian stability and wellbeing, related to factors involving energy reserves, commercial interests, diaspora links and development cooperation. External EU strategies can be seen as a 'win-win game', and Nigeria is no exception here. EU institutions view them as an opportunity to draw member states into a more coherent approach, while member states can perceive them as a way to influence EU institutions.[147] As such, the ability for relations between the EU and national foreign policy to represent a 'positive sum game' arguably applies to the key member states' approach *vis-à-vis* Nigeria.

Platforms of Securitization

Any discussion of securitization must give consideration to the object of security in question. Thus in examining the engagement of the EU on issues of insecurity in Northern Nigeria, it is important to examine the attention invested in respective levels, or platforms, of security, as well as the challenges that it faces in gaining traction on each platform. As such, this chapter will examine EU engagement in Nigeria at levels of human, state and regional security, respectively, and will in turn investigate the hurdles the EU faces in its pursuit of peace and stability at each platform.

Human Security

The concept of human security, while contested, shifts the focus to individuals instead of states, aiming "to protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfilment." [148] As regards developing populations, human security arguably aims to equally advance the security interests

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[144] Vines, *op. cit.,* p. 36.
[145] Williams, *op. cit.,* p. 344.
[146] Keukeleire & Delreux, *op. cit.,* p. 132.
[147] Sherriff, *op. cit.*
[148] UN Commission on Human Security, *Human Security Now,* New York, United Nations, 2003, p. 4.

of outside actors.[149] In this way, conceptions of human security overlap with those of a 'security-development nexus' through development programmes that increasingly aim at "bettering self-reliance in the interests of defending international society".[150] EU development cooperation efforts directed at alleviating poverty and improving economic opportunity in northern Nigeria are thus viewed equally as an effort to enhance human security.

The extent to which the EU addresses human security is at the outset limited by Nigeria's status as a lower middle income country.[151] As the EU moves to direct its focus on development assistance toward low-income fragile states,[152] Nigeria's positioning outside this category means that aid plays an increasingly marginal role in its relationship with the EU.

Juxtaposed against Nigeria, the EU faces insecurity issues in the Sahel that involve some of the world's most economically and institutionally underdeveloped states. Here, while the allocation of resources toward the alleviation of human insecurity undoubtedly faces challenges, these can be characterized as having a more generic 'developmental' nature.[153] Targeted action toward reducing poverty and enhancing economic growth in Niger and Chad takes place in contexts where the EU possesses leverage in terms of aid impact. Such fragile institutions and weak economies are arguably favourable to EU development cooperation and thus offer a conducive environment for effectively promoting human security.

Under the Cotonou Agreement, the entry point for EU-Nigeria relations is the Minister for Planning, acting as coordinator at the governmental level.[154] However, the JWF facilitates enhanced interaction with local government, civil society, the private sector and other non-state actors.[155] So given that EU engagement does not necessarily have to be channelled through the central government, it is arguable that this should allow for greater accessibility and leverage in the area of human security. A common theme involves promoting a multi-pronged socio-economic regeneration in the north of the country in order to break the vicious cycle of

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[149] Larcher, *op. cit.*, p. 386.

[150] Duffield, *op. cit.*, p. 154.

[151] The World Bank, *op. cit.*

[152] European Commission, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, Increasing the Impact of EU Development Policy: an Agenda for Change, COM(2011) 637 final, Brussels, 13 October 2011.

[153] D. Fiott *et al.*, "The Sahel Crisis: Where do European and African Perspectives Meet?" Institute for European Studies, *Policy Brief Issue*, no. 2, Brussels, March 2013, p. 20.

[154] European Community, "Cotonou", *op. cit.*, art. 35; Interview with an official, European External Action Service, *op. cit.*

[155] European Council, 2009, *op. cit.*

inequality, economic stagnation and poverty blighting the region.[156] For instance, in 2013, EU grants of €89 million were directed at attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, economic diversification and improved infrastructure, in effect aiming to advance human security.[157]

While the EU undoubtedly holds good intentions and genuine commitment to promote human security, any interventions to this end are not facing into a social or political vacuum. Indeed commentators argue that the greatest threats to the requisite political promotion of human security on the part of the EU are found in national caveats in situations of relative institutional density.[158] Northern Nigeria might not appear 'institutionally dense' to the European eye. However, many scholars of African studies point to the existence of deeply rooted frameworks of informal social, political and economic networks in peripheral regions that act to redistribute wealth and disseminate power,[159] such as the Islamic systems of sultanates and caliphates in northern Nigeria. [160] These fundamental issues of economic, religious and social empowerment are easily overlooked; recent *Afrobarometer* polls demonstrate that 60% of Nigerians perceive external partners as insensitive to issues of culture and society.[161]

In addition to local-level understandings, overcoming vested interests is crucial to improving human security in Nigeria, and requires more than the simple transfer of development assistance from the EU in order to achieve desired results. Massive rents accrued through oil and associated kleptocratic practices mean that the "strong but unresponsive" nature of the official apparatus and its beneficiaries are as much part of the problem as they are of the solution.[162] Nigerian lawmakers are among the highest paid in the world. [163] Moreover, far from depending on development assistance, it has been argued that a patrimonial segment of the country's political system in fact feels threatened by it.[164]

As such, proposed developmental strategies oriented toward human security improvements, such as the bolstering of community-based land management schemes and the provision of socioeconomic services will inevitably run into stiff

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[156] Akinola, *op. cit.;* Bello, "Nigeria's Boko Haram Threat", *op. cit.,* p. 4.
[157] K. Ogundele, "EU will support Nigeria to Defeat Terrorism – MacRae", *Punch*, 5 May 2013.
[158] Mattelaer, Simon & Hadfield, *op. cit.* p. 5.
[159] P. Chabal & J.P. Daloz, *Africa Works: Disorder as a Political Instrument*, Oxford, James Currey, 1999; Youngs, *op. cit.*
[160] Adesoji, *op. cit.*
[161] Adetula, Kew & Kwaja, *op. cit.,* pp. 15-16.
[162] Uzoechina, *op. cit.,* p. 37.
[163] The Economist, "Rewarding work. Graphic detail", 15 July 2013.
[164] Ifeka, *op. cit.,* p. 35.

resistance from vested interests in northern Nigeria. [165] Effective change through necessary economic empowerment will require the redistribution of power from networks of control and patronage that are deeply entrenched across Nigeria and that incorporate state institutions. [166] Unqualified immunity afforded to senior politicians by the constitution[167] is just one manifestation of potential institutional impediments faced by external partners in the pursuit of development objectives. Much ODA directed toward this region, regardless of origin, is allegedly siphoned into the pockets of federal and state officials.[168]

Technocratically-oriented modalities of the EU are thus argued to be ill-equipped to engage with the complexities of the Nigerian institutional environment, where the formal and legitimate intermingle with the informal and the illegitimate in a myriad of interconnected political and economic functions. Thus, regardless of altruistic aims, any attempt to improve human security in the Nigerian context will have to involve an enhanced understanding and adaptation to the specificities of the political and societal dynamics that must go beyond simple development aid allocation and formulaic dialogue.

State Security

In addition to targeting human security, the EU has re-established the centrality of state engagement after a period during the 1980s and 1990s when state structures were seen as an obstacle to development. [169] At present, the building of state capacities in terms of stable, inclusive governance and administrative structures is viewed as an integral part of addressing security and development, as outlined in the European Security Strategy and JAES. [170] In its assertions that development, security and good governance are mutually enhancing, the EU has become more emboldened in attaching conditionality to aid and trade agreements, ostensibly insisting that norms and practices which encourage good governance and human rights protection are observed at the state level.[171]

Alongside an expanded focus on building stability at the state level, recent years have also seen the EU's relationship with developing countries gradually becoming

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[165] Akinola, *op. cit.*

[166] Ifeka, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

[167] K. Omonobi, "Immunity for President, Govs hampers anti-graft war – EFCC", *Vanguard*, 4 October 2011.

[168] Ifeka, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-37.

[169] P. Vennesson & C. Büger, "Coping with Insecurity in Fragile Situations", *EUI Working Paper*, no. 37, San Domenico di Fiesole, EUI, August 2010, p. 5.

[170] European Council, "European Security Strategy", *op. cit.*; African Union/European Union, *op. cit.*

[171] Le Pere, *op. cit.*, p. 258.

less asymmetrical. Commitments to partnership and ownership are gaining increased emphasis, evident in the JWF,[172] and particularly in the 'roadmap' that emerged from the EU-Africa summit in April 2014.[173] This is viewed as owing to increased agency on the side of African partners.[174] Nigeria presents a particularly strong example of scales tipping to the south of the Mediterranean; the reasoning behind its non-involvement in the Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel is understood to be the document's unilateral nature[175] coupled with the reluctance of Nigerian authorities to engage in a heavily development-oriented strategy.[176] Thus, in a situation of relative interdependence, the effectiveness of pursuing security and stability through the promotion of good governance at the state level is questionable.

Now more than ever before, there is a growing realization by the EU that strategic, mutually beneficial engagement with resource-rich African states such as Nigeria is an urgent imperative.[177] Moreover, any attempt on the part of the EU to engage in security-building relations at the state level in Nigeria must take into account the increased assertiveness of Nigeria and its allies on the international stage, especially with regard to negotiations in global fora and in the arena of trade politics.[178] Indeed, an additional factor weighing on the mind of EU policy-makers at present is Nigeria's non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council for the 2014-2015 term.[179]

Thus, the ability and willingness to engage intensely in tackling insecurity at the state level in Nigeria falls victim to an ever-present tension in the EU; namely, that of internal versus external objectives.[180] Specifically, the external aim to overcome the political disorder in a third country in this instance may be seen as antagonistic to the internal priority of maintaining good relations with strategic partners. This clash of interests is also recognized on the Nigerian side, where reservations have been expressed concerning potential collaborations with external actors in combatting Boko Haram. In a 2012 interview, referring to "foreign agents", a former Nigerian Minister warned that: "When they come ostensibly for security, they have their own

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[172] European Council, "Nigeria-EU Ministerial Troika Meeting Prague-Joint Communiqué", *op. cit.*
[173] African Union/European Union, *Fourth EU-Africa Summit Declaration*, Brussels, April 2014.
[174] Carbone, *op. cit.*, p. 494.
[175] Sherriff, *op. cit.*
[176] Interview with an official, European External Action Service, *op. cit.*
[177] Le Pere, *op. cit.*, p. 257.
[178] Carbone, *op. cit.*, p. 486; Interview with a Member of European Parliament, *op. cit.*
[179] Interview with an official, European External Action Service, *op. cit.*
[180] Keukeleire & Delreux, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

agenda to penetrate our system and subjugate the sovereignty of the country".[181] While the assertion that foreign agents have their own agenda rings true, accusations of dictating the Nigerian political agenda is arguably inapplicable to the EU's efforts. Rather, the agenda of the EU would appear to prioritize stability at almost all costs, even to the detriment of democratic processes. [182] This a-politicization is exemplified in the EU's detachment from the flawed outcome of elections in 2007, described above. Thus, while the previous section on human security outlined institutions particular to Nigeria as an obstacle to the securitization of development policies, this section underscores the limits of the EU's inclination to securitize relations with the state as resulting from internal self-interest.

Regional Security

The third platform on which the EU can be said to seek to engage in security and conflict transformation is at the regional level, that is, in pursuing stability across the wider West African region. As set out above, the EU holds a deep interest in promoting strong regional institutions as a route to achieving security. European support to the security architecture of ECOWAS and the AU is correspondingly underpinned by the JAES and Cotonou mantra of 'African solutions to African problems'.[183] EU efforts to build regional security capacity are evident in its financing of numerous multilateral approaches, including the UN peacekeeping budget,[184] as well institutions working directly on Nigerian security concerns such as the African Centre for Study and Research on Terrorism, mandated to advance the implementation of a counterterrorism framework by the AU.[185]

Moreover, ECOWAS has long been one of the EU's privileged regional partners.[186] The EDF's 2007-2013 Regional Indicative Programme (RIP) devoted almost €550 million to deepening regional integration and stability, which demonstrates the significance that the EU places on building the capacity of ECOWAS. The EU has also funded AU and ECOWAS security efforts in West Africa outside of RIPs, for instance, the ECOWAS mission in Côte d'Ivoire (French acronym MICECI) and the ECOWAS mission in Liberia (ECOMIL) obtained EDF reserve funding.[187] Additionally, the African

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[181] B. Oladele, "Boko Haram: Don't employ foreign agents- David West", *The Nation*, 29 January 2012.

[182] U. Khaliq, *Ethical Dimensions of the Foreign Policy of the European Union: A Legal Appraisal*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2008, pp. 265-266.

[183] European Community, "Cotonou", *op. cit.*, art 11; Le Pere, *op. cit.*, p. 260.

[184] T. Tardy, "Funding Peace Operations: Better Value for EU Money", *Issue Brief*, no. 38, Paris, EUISS, November 2013.

[185] Renard, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

[186] Bello, "Quick Shift or Quicksand?", *op. cit.*, p. 15.

[187] *Ibid.*, p. 15.

Peace Facility and IfS have financed ECOWAS mediation efforts in Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea and Niger, along with a €50 million contribution to the African-led International Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA) in 2013.[188]

Thus, it is clear that through its assistance to regional and multilateral programmes in West Africa, the EU has a general tendency to engage at this level in its efforts to tackle insecurity. However, any consideration of the West African sub-region must take account of the fact that Nigeria is the essential leader there, playing a stabilizing role both bilaterally, as well as through the ECOWAS architecture.[189] Nigeria's status as the organization's lynchpin is underscored by the fact that it furnishes almost a third of the budget of the 15-member group.[190] Furthermore, the country has a large defence budget, spending approximately €15 billion in the period 2010-2015,[191] and it has been instrumental in past peace operations in Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Mali and Sierra Leone.[192]

Thus, to address recurrent security concerns in West Africa, the EU has heretofore relied heavily on its ally Nigeria as an effective hegemon in ECOWAS. Indeed it continues to depend on the country's regional security power in terms of the successful realization of the Sahel and the Gulf of Guinea strategies. Furthermore, the EU is highly conscious of its regional economic role; Nigeria has repeatedly hesitated on a final ratification of the Economic Partnership Agreement designed for West Africa.[193]

Therefore, the ability of the EU to effect change in the Boko Haram situation is clearly complicated by the complex involvement of its anchor ECOWAS state in this conflict. Indeed, Youngs remarks: "The EU has placed significantly more emphasis on Nigeria's leadership of African peacekeeping than on the country's own need for security governance reform."[194] The internal crisis in Nigeria not only threatens the ability of the county to act in its neighbourhood, it also undermines the country's standing. Uzoechina comments: "Nigeria contributes immensely to peacekeeping in parts of Africa", while "keeping the peace at home remains elusive".[195] So the fact that the regional hegemon is deeply embroiled in its own internal crisis means that a favoured

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[188] *Ibid.;* Tardy, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

[189] Bello, "Quick Shift or Quicksand?", *op. cit.*, p. 15; Martinelli & Ilo, *op. cit.*

[190] F. Aribisala, "ECOWAS Imperative for Nigeria", Nigeria Development & Finance Forum, Policy Dialogue, no date.

[191] Author's calculations derived from I. Benjamin, M. Ismail & N. Anthony, "FG Spends N3.3trn in 4 Years on Security", *Leadership (Abuja)*, 10 March 2014.

[192] Tardy, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

[193] Interview with an official, European External Action Service, *op. cit.*

[194] Youngs, "The EU and Conflict in West Africa", *op. cit.*, p. 339.

[195] Uzoechina, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

option of the EU, that is, instrumentalizing the power of Nigeria via ECOWAS in order to pursue security goals, is clearly off the table in this instance. This means that a major entry point through which the EU frequently seeks to tackle insecurity is rendered unavailable.

An Atypical Crisis

In response to crises, the EU's 'comprehensive approach' proclaims to have a "wide array of policies, tools and instruments at its disposal [...] spanning the diplomatic, security, defence, financial, trade, development cooperation and humanitarian aid fields". This section will expound the view that EU engagement with Nigerian insecurity is impeded by the intractability of an atypical crisis to the EU's instrument-driven approach.

A Complex Insurrection

In response to crises, the EU's 'comprehensive approach' proclaims to have a "wide array of policies, tools and instruments at its disposal."[196] This paper, however, argues that EU engagement with Nigerian insecurity is impeded by the intractability of an atypical crisis to the EU's instrument-driven approach.

Firstly, in terms of grievances, a West African expert on regional insecurity interviewed for this study describes the fundamentalist movement's original incarnation as "hijacked" by those with a political agenda. [197] Thus, complicating concerns regarding jihadism, extreme violence and humanitarianism, is the overtly political tone of the insurgency. Many are said to feel outraged by the instatement of southern Christian Jonathan as President on the death of northern Muslim Yar'Adua, seen to violate the terms of the rotational presidency practice.[198] Indeed, certain voices allege the true aim of Boko Haram is to ensure that power returns to the north in the upcoming presidential elections in 2015.[199] Other commentators such as Nobel Laureate Soyinka paint a more radical scenario: "Their aim is to bring society to its knees, to create a situation of total anarchy that will either break up the nation or bring back the military."[200]

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[196] European Commission, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, *op. cit.*, p. 3.
[197] Interview with a West African expert on international security affairs, via telephone, 28 April 2014.
[198] Alozieuwa, *op. cit.*, p. 3.
[199] O. Obinna, "Boko Haram is battle for 2015, says Chukwumerije", *The Nation*, 29 September 2011.
[200] Soyinka, *op. cit.*

Secondly, regardless of their true ends, attention certainly must be paid to the group's means. One the one hand, northern Nigeria is home to ideological movements in the form of religious fundamentalism, ethno-nationalism and youth organizations. Yet on other hand, organized crime, human, narcotic and arms trafficking are operated in the region as highly profitable activities. Both categories can be mutually reinforcing and are often deeply interconnected.[201] Thus, from an external perspective, it is extremely difficult to distinguish genuine, grievance-based movements from entrenched elements motivated by profit-making opportunism.

A third layer of complexity, touched on above, lies in the weak state capacity in northern regions. The challenge of addressing the movement inside Nigerian borders is compounded by the accessibility of vast swathes of the Sahel, from which Boko Haram can operate as a source of strategic depth. Furthermore, as a conflict zone itself in terms of AQIM and Tuareg movements, as well as a transit area for criminal traffickers, cross-border activity of Boko Haram in effect poses an exponential threat.[202] Thus, the dearth of official governance in the north of Nigeria along with porous borders not only renders the group's activities more difficult to trace and to tackle, it also risks further destabilizing neighbouring areas.[203]

The EU Is Ill-equipped to Deal with Boko Haram's Complexity

Firstly, as regards any response to the political grievances of the group, democracy assistance by the EU has generally concentrated on support for the electoral process in Nigeria, as outlined earlier. Indeed, many Nigerians express frustrations at reductionist conceptions of democracy by donors, including the EU, who are seen to exaggerate the role of elections in democratic development, overlooking the imperative to improve democratic integrity.[204] Bello describes further EU initiatives such as educational improvement, support to energy reform, arms control, justice sector overhaul and intelligence upgrades as largely addressing symptoms of political dysfunction in Nigeria, and criticizes a reluctance by the EU to confront the root causes, such as the interruption of the presidential rotational arrangement.[205]

Secondly, concerning the remunerative aspect of Boko Haram's operations, the EU's purported comprehensive approach again falls short here. The EU Counter-Terrorism Strategy barely mentions Africa, and is relatively quiet on confronting the profit-based component of insurrectionist activity, demonstrating a certain disconnect

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[201] Ifeka, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-38; International Crisis Group, *op. cit.*, p. 24.
[202] Mattelaer, Simon & Hadfield, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-15.
[203] UK House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, *op. cit.*
[204] Adetula, Kew & Kwaja, *op. cit.*, p. 11.
[205] Bello, "Nigeria's Boko Haram Threat", *op. cit.* p. 5.

from broader EU external action.[206] The EU has made advances in terms of quelling formal funding to extremists, for instance in freezing assets of international terrorist enterprises, as well as pressuring multinational corporations to reform supply chains.[207] But less progress has been made by the EU in stemming flows to more localized extremist movements. The fact that Boko Haram relies heavily on kidnapping and trafficking to illegitimate markets means that similar interventions are not applicable to this variety of viability. This is not to say that the EU is not active in the fight against organized crime and illicit trafficking in West Africa; the most recent RIP supports ECOWAS counternarcotic efforts, along with EU dialogue on the issue.[208] Rather, the crux of the problem here seems to be understanding and intelligence, where links between extremists and criminal trafficking have not been fully identified, thus hindering the implementation of joined-up, comprehensive responses.[209]

Finally, the EU faces further dilemmas in responding to gaps left by the weak state presence in the region. Effective halting of insurgent mobility and stemming of criminal flows inevitably requires improved policing and boundary management. International partners can play an important role in frustrating the further development of links between Boko Haram and external terrorist groups through support on this issue.[210] However, the region's porous frontiers are spanned by families and communities, many of whom rely on border crossings for their livelihoods.[211] Any efforts at policing boundaries must take caution not to cause damage to legitimate income generation for local inhabitants. Further, measures aimed at obstructing the movement of Boko Haram members could jeopardize the ECOWAS free movement agenda, inadvertently impeding the EU's interest in promoting regional integration in the area. Thus, finding the correct equilibrium here poses a formidable challenge for any policymaker, even for an actor who has many instruments available such as the EU.

Framing by the Government

The preceding section underscored the challenges that the EU faces in terms of the nature of Boko Haram's insurrection. Our attention now shifts to the Nigerian

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[206] D. Keohane, "The Absent Friend: EU Foreign Policy and Counter-Terrorism", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, vol. 46, no. 1, 2008, pp. ?.

[207] J. Prendergast, "The New Face of African Conflict", *Foreign Affairs*, number/volume?, March 2014, pp. ?.

[208] M. Reid, "West Africa, the EU's Mexico", *Columbia Journal of European Law*, vol. 19, no. 1, 2012, pp. 7-8.

[209] Interview with a Nigerian politician, *op. cit.*

[210] Donnelly, *op. cit.*

[211] K. Meagher, "A Back Door to Globalisation?", *Review of African Political Economy*, vol. 30, no. 95, 2003, p. 59.

government's response to the insurrection, followed by an account of the implications of this response for the EU. Extremist interpretations of Islam are indeed new concepts to West Africa. However, the Nigerian government has arguably shot itself in the foot by painting a picture of an international jihadist threat inside its borders. As outlined above, Boko Haram bears much similarity to insurgencies that have taken place in the region over the last number of decades. Nevertheless, following the introduction of the Terrorism (Prevention) Act in 2011, the Nigerian government proscribed Boko Haram as a terrorist group in June 2013.[212] During the same period, a state of emergency was declared in three northern states.[213] Such moves set the scene for a heavy-handed military response.

Pre-existing attitudes of external powers to the wider West African region no doubt contribute to the description of Boko Haram as terrorist threat. The US military previously defined the Sahel as a "breeding ground for terrorism". [214] Correspondingly, a former US Ambassador to the country declared in 2009 that "if there was a prize target for terrorism in Africa, Nigeria should be it".[215] It is also important to acknowledge the role that globalized communications have played in perpetuating such depictions. The familiarity of northern Nigerian communities with the 'war on terror' and its targets mean that hearsay labels were frequently grafted onto locally-rooted movements. Thus, the nickname of 'Taliban' was applied to Nigerian Islamic factions prior to any proven links between the groups. [216] Designations such as "Afrighanistan" by international media outlets commenting on the region are not helpful in distinguishing fact from fiction. [217] Arguably, such branding has in effect created a self-fulfilling prophecy in light of recent spates of suicide bombings, previously unknown in the country. Additionally, the framing of Boko Haram in overtly religious, jihadist terms arguably paved the way for a defeatist viewpoint among many authorities in the deeply religious country. When queried by a Nigerian newspaper on suggested responses to the Boko Haram insurgency, one Borno State legislator responded that "there is nothing […] that has not been done", adding that "presently we need prayers so that God will touch the perpetrators of these evils to repent, […] only God can answer our prayers."[218]

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[212] International Crisis Group, *op. cit.,* p. 32.
[213] Agbiboa, "The Ongoing Campaign of Terror in Nigeria", *op. cit.,* p. 11.
[214] Quoted in Larcher, *op. cit.,* p. 384.
[215] P. Lyman, "The War on Terrorism in Africa", in J.W Harbeson & D. Rothchild (eds.), *Africa in World Politics,* Boulder, Westview, 2009, p. 293.
[216] Ifeka, *op. cit.,* p. 32.
[217] The Economist, "Afrighanistan?", 26 January 2013
[218] O. Audu, "Interview: Nigerians must turn to God to solve Boko Haram-Borno lawmaker", *Premium Times*, Abuja, 27 April 2014.

Insufficient understandings and intelligence of the situation undoubtedly impact local analyses. Nonetheless, the unequivocal definition of Boko Haram as a transnational jihadist threat by Nigerian authorities and the subsequent insistence on a shortage of counter-terrorism experience and requisite resources to defeat the menace suggest that such framing on the part of the state is more indicative of the government's desire to mobilize support for counter-measures than it is of the group's actual operations and intents.[219] Owing to what must be partly attributed to an unwillingness to take requisite costly steps to implement a rounded strategy incorporating economic and societal programmes, government officials at all levels have failed to adequately address the root of the problem.[220] Worse, in many respects, they have exacerbated it.

The EU's Intractability to Purported Terrorism

While Boko Haram is demonstrably the product of numerous local factors, the group has subsequently shown itself to be keenly aware of international events. Therefore, any overt EU security engagement in Nigeria is complicated by the risk of compounding the very problem being addressed in three ways. Firstly, any efforts that succeed in curtailing extremist activities in the north of Nigeria could result in deeper fractionalization, closer partnership with foreign 'brother' organizations and enhanced activities outside of the Nigerian territory,[221] thus threatening the efficacy of the Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel. Such exacerbation occurred in Algeria, where effective counter-measures against insurgent groups led to a Sahelian spill-over, creating the present-day incarnation of AQIM.[222] Secondly, although the Nigerian government is keen to lend an international profile to Boko Haram, this is arguably a status that it does not yet warrant, and any explicit involvement by external actors might motivate the group to expand its reach and intensify its attacks.[223] This relates to the third point, namely that international involvement risks provoking blowback from the group toward external targets. A study comparing Boko Haram threats with global activity over the course of 2012 indicated that group elites are highly sensitive to outside events.[224] The kidnapping of a French engineer, for example, was proclaimed by the group as a retaliation for the French intervention in Mali.[225] Given this reactive nature, it is possible to imagine that

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[219] Gil-Schwandl, *op. cit.*, p. 23.
[220] *Ibid.*
[221] Karmon, *op. cit.*, p. 79.
[222] *Ibid.*
[223] Donnelly, *op. cit.*
[224] Eveslage, *op. cit.*
[225] Karmon, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

explicit European actions in northern Nigeria would raise the profile of the principals in question as potential targets for attack.

Thus, while numerous commentators consider Boko Haram's framing as a global terrorist threat as an express attempt of Nigerian officials to garner external support in tackling them, this strategy appears to have been ineffective with regard to the EU. In formulating the crisis as another piece of the global jihad jigsaw, it is argued that the Nigerian government has weakened the amenability of the situation to deeper EU engagement.

Actions by the Government

Disproportionate use of force by the Nigerian state from the outset has triggered numerous complications. Since 2009, the crude crisis response has continued to match carnage with chaos. Marked from the outset by ineptitude, in 2011 the National Security Advisor confessed that the military was ill-prepared for Boko Haram's bombings and had not anticipated the scale of insurgency.[226] Consequent intelligence efforts have continuously failed to forestall Boko Haram offensives and are continuously caught off guard by the group's ambush tactics.[227]

This ineptitude is matched with ignorance; President Jonathan and senior defence figures long stood steadfast by the belief that assaults would eventually tail off. In January 2012 the Chief of Defence Staff is quoted as saying that the group would "soon run out of idiots."[228] However, the attacks continue to come in waves, demonstrating a growing capacity for organized, coordinated assaults.[229] While advances have been made in terms of boosting the capacity of security agencies, the authorities are far from well-equipped. Furthermore, the operationally defective response of the Nigerian authorities, including mass incidences of torture, rape, indeterminate incommunicado detention and extra-judicial killings[230] has exacerbated existing distrust and fear of the state and its security agencies among the Nigerian populace.[231]

Additionally, the continued expansion of state-sponsored, unregulated armed groups is a worrisome phenomenon for any actor concerned with the rule of law. As such, allegations of serious human rights abuses on the side of federal authorities

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[226] O. Adetayo, "Nigeria Not Prepared for Bombings- NSA", *Punch*, 7 September 7 2011.
[227] Akinola, *op. cit.*
[228] E. Akinkuotu, "Boko Haram'll soon run out of bombers – CDS", *Punch*, 12 January 2012.
[229] S. Olukoya, "Nigeria - From Sticks and Machetes to Rocket-propelled Grenades", *InterPress Service*, 14 April 2014.
[230] Martinelli & Ilo, *op. cit.;* Nigerian National Human Rights Commission, *op. cit.*, p. 7.
[231] Akinola, *op. cit.*

deeply undermine efforts at containing the violent activity of Boko Haram. Militaristic state anti-terror campaigns belligerently slaughter both innocent civilians and supposed insurgents alike. Such brutality further alienates the state from the northern public, effectively playing into the hands of Boko Haram.[232] Widespread resentment of the government's heavy-handed response has reportedly fuelled local sympathy toward Boko Haram. [233] Thus, the state's counter-productive response to the insurrection raises awkward questions for EU partners.

The Inability of the EU to Engage with this Heavy Hand

If terrorism is understood as "the calculated use of violence for political ends against civilian society to induce widespread and intense fear",[234] it soon becomes clear that state-sponsored violence is equally worrisome for external policy makers considering Nigeria, complicating the task of providing support. The generic EU approach to promote democracy and development fails here, however, as state-sponsored insecurity caused by purported allies complicates the EU's use of potential instruments for engagement.

The role of security actors in actually causing insecurity raises serious difficulties for the EU and indeed any external partners involved in resolving the Nigerian crisis. Positioning good governance as an immediate condition for EU support to the crisis runs the risk of the EU being side-lined altogether in a relationship that is not marked by asymmetry. However, in declaring good governance as a long-term aim and overlooking on-going infringements of fundamental rights in response to the northern insurrection, the EU risks facilitating and being complicit in repressive practices of the state. As such, the continued implication that both Nigerian security agents as well as swathes of northern citizens exist in a permanent state of exception to international human rights law and democratic constitutions[235] raises an extremely difficult dilemma for the EU that not even the 'comprehensive approach's' extensive toolkit is equipped to tackle.

Conclusion

This paper sought to investigate the extent to which the EU is dealing with insecurity in northern Nigeria, and in turn, what factors explain this engagement. Tracing the evolution of the Boko Haram phenomenon, the sect's emergent extremism is

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[232] Human Rights Watch, *op. cit.*
[233] Bello, "Nigeria's Boko Haram Threat", *op. cit.*, p. 3.
[234] R. Falk, "A Dual Reality: Terrorism against the State and Terrorism by the State", in C.W. Kegley (ed.), *The New Global Terrorism*, Upper Saddle River, Prentice Hall, 2003, p. 53.
[235] Ifeka, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

attributed to the combination of regional grievances based on perceived relative deprivation along with links to transnational Islamist groups as well as the ill-equipped response of the state in the north of the country.

Evidently, the European continent holds a vast array of interests in Nigeria. While these are multifaceted and widely dispersed across member states, security cooperation is shallow and limited to a handful of states, with only the UK demonstrating any real involvement in security matters. At the Union level, an investigation of relevant discourse, instruments and institutions confirms initial suspicions that while relations go beyond that of development cooperation, the EU does not have a strong response to Nigerian insecurity.

Analytically, this paper sought to argue that internal preferences of key member states, namely the UK and France, are not a factor hindering EU engagement with the crisis. Rather, insecurity in Nigeria is amenable to Europeanization in light of evolving attitudes to bilateral foreign policy. Drawing from securitization theory, possible routes for the EU to engage in Nigeria at the respective levels of human, state and regional security were probed. Owing to both internal power dynamics, as well as the country's weight as a strategic and economic power, it is reasoned that the unsuitability of each respective platform leaves the EU without an appropriate entry point through which to engage in securitization with Nigeria. Drawing out the particular idiosyncrasies of the Boko Haram insurrection as well as the government's declaratory and operational response highlights the fact that the blend of instruments at the EU's disposal are ill-suited to dealing with such an atypical conflict, both in terms of the political and transnational modalities of the insurgents, as well as the complicitness of the Nigerian state in perpetuating insecurity.

On the European side, this research has highlighted that trade-offs must frequently be made in promoting stability, development and good governance. As agency on the African end of the equation grows stronger, such trade-offs are likely to become more apparent and more difficult. These challenges add import to the need for greater external understandings that would serve to improve decision making. Overall, this paper hopes to have shed further light on the multifaceted manifestations of contemporary global interdependencies; as noted in the introduction, an increasingly outward-looking African continent poses both promise and peril, a fact which is epitomized in EU-Nigeria relations.

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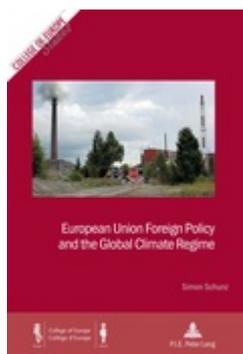
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