

ARMAMENT AND DISARMAMENT IN NIGERIA: JUXTAPOSING NIGER-DELTA MILITANCY AND BOKO HARAM INSURGENCY IN NORTHERN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Armed conflicts have continued to bedevil Nigeria and account for innumerable loss of lives and properties. The volume of both legally and illegally possessed arms in Nigeria is alarming. They serve as motivation for conflicts and are used to perpetuate them. It appears that arms held by the military and especially civilians in Nigeria have continued to increase exponentially and are often times used indiscriminately. However, in as much as proportionate arms are sine qua non for a nation's defense as a last resort, its availability to civilians who use them for criminal activities spell doom for any nation. Hence, drawing from scholarly publications and internet works, this study looks at armament and disarmament in Nigeria. It also juxtaposes Niger Delta militancy/disarmament and Boko Haram insurgency in Northern Nigeria, baring their similarities and differences. Borrowing a leaf from the relative success of Niger Delta amnesty/disarmament and considering the obstinate character of Boko Haram insurgents, this study advocates for a similar strategy of disarmament for Boko Haram. This of course, will not be without cumbersome challenges. Therefore, this paper makes recommendations that are believed to be helpful in carrying out this task. That way, arms will be controlled in Nigeria; there will be less armed conflict and colossal loss as a result of armed conflicts.

Introduction

Armed conflicts have continued to plague Nigeria as a nation. These conflicts are perpetuated with the use of arms. The sort of arms imported into and produced in Nigeria, especially in recent times, is rather frightening and worrisome. The availability

of these arms on the other hand, serves as motivation for more conflict. With empirical evidences almost everywhere in Nigeria and particularly in the Northern part of Nigeria, there is no gain-saying that the proliferation of small arms and other weapons in Nigeria is becoming a 'norm'.

Armament and disarmament are vital aspects of conflict but it is unfortunate that they are often not given the well deserved pride of place in the discussion of conflict. Scholars tend to concentrate on conflict and its consequences, while underplaying the means that are used to perpetuate and some times, serve as motivation or deterrence to conflict as the case may be. The subjects of armament and disarmament are crucial aspects of armed conflict that must be given considerable attention in the study and management of armed conflict in Nigeria and elsewhere. More so, with the sectarian violence and Boko Haram insurgence in the northern part of Nigeria and other crimes committed in other parts of Nigeria with arms, the Nigerian armed forces are being equipped with more sophisticated arms to tackle these menaces. The need for self-defence as a nation also seems to have precipitated the purchase of higher degree of arms in Nigeria. At this point, one may say without equivocation that there are way too many arms in circulation in Nigeria and this could lead Nigeria to the stage whereby a great percentage of its citizens illegally posses arms and of course use them indiscriminately.

Several studies have shown a direct correlation between the amounts of arms in circulation with fire arms related deaths in a country. For instance, Boseley (2013) states that United States of America has the highest private gun ownership (10.2 per 100000 guns per head) among twenty seven developed countries and also has the highest rate of fire arms related death. On the other hand,

Japan with one of the lowest guns per head has the lowest rate of fire arms related death. This finding therefore refutes the belief that arms make a country safer.

Possession of arms could be licit or illicit. However, whether licitly or illicitly possessed, arms are destructive and create enemies, violence and insecurity because their presence leads to their use. Arms can kill and inflict enormous long-lasting injuries not just to humans alone, but also to the environment, economy and is capable of hindering sustainable development. The scarce resources that should be used to develop the country and better the lives of its citizens are now used to acquire arms, compensate victims of armed conflict and clean up the damage of armed conflict on the environment, which further cripples the country's economy.

That-notwithstanding, the efforts at disarmament and demilitarization in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria by the Late President Umar Musa Yar'adua led administration in 2009 is quite commendable. Even though the exercise obviously did not record 100% success, it no doubt, brought about relative peace in that region. Without mincing words, there is need to reduce and control the wanton use of arms in Nigeria, especially as it has to do with the ongoing reckless use of arms in the Northern part of Nigeria. This no doubt, is a tremendously difficult challenge but at the same time, it could be the best protection against the untold dangers of uncontrolled armament.

This study, drawing from scholarly publications, dictionaries and internet works, tends to take a close look at armament and disarmament in Nigeria, juxtapose the Niger-Delta militancy and Boko Haram insurgency in the Northern part of Nigeria so as to examine their similarities, differences, applicability and inapplicability of disarmament in resolving the conflicts and so

on. Finally, recommendations will be made and then the curtain will be drawn. The theoretical framework adopted for this study is the 'frustration-aggression' social theory of conflict which postulates that when needs, desires or expectations are not met, individuals or groups get frustrated and often times, vent their frustration through aggression, either directly or indirectly, towards those they hold responsible for disappointing their ambitions.

CONCEPTUALIZING ARMAMENT AND DISARMAMENT

Armament: Etymologically, armament comes from the Latin root *armare*, to arm or furnish with weapons. According to Merriam-Webster (2014), armament is the sum total of a nation's military strength or the process of arming one's self for war. For Zanders (2013), armament is a "structured process of increasing the quantities of weapon holdings; replacing existing weapons with new ones" (p. 8). Armament from the above definitions has to do with the increment or summation of military weapons and equipment. In agreement with the above definitions, Macmillan Dictionary (2014) defines armament as "the process of providing the armed forces with weapons to fight in a war" (p.1). Armament could also be used to refer to any equipment for resistance by the military, a group of individuals or an individual. It is the act of equipping with arms and weaponry for either offensive or defensive showdown or war. It is also weapons considered collectively. In a nutshell, armament, for the purpose of this work, will be taken to mean production, acquisition of weapons and military equipments by military forces and also the legal or illegal production and/or acquisition of arms by groups or individuals for either self-defence or aggression.

Disarmament: Disarmament is the exact opposite of armament. It has to do with the reduction, control or abolition of weapons. For Zanders (2013), disarmament is the “reduction of levels of specified weapon categories to zero” (p. 8). It is the act of laying down arms or the condition of being disarmed. In the words of Mifflin (2009), disarmament is “the act of laying down arms, especially the reduction or abolition of a nation’s military forces and armaments” (p. 1). Disarmament could be total or partial. Total disarmament connotes a condition whereby arms or certain kinds of arms and weapons are completely removed or abolished, while partial disarmament is a situation whereby particular categories of arms and weapons are removed or abolished. Disarmament therefore is either the total or partial withdrawal of arms as a way of waning a conflict/war situation, deterring aggression or violence or a strategy of peace building. Olaniyi and Aligwekwe (2013) however define disarmament as “the collection, documentation, control and disposal of small arms, ammunition, explosives and light and heavy weapons of combatants and often also of the civilian population” (p. 23). Olaniyi and Aligwekwe’s definition is apparently more encompassing than that of the other scholars cited above. It highlights the processes, kind of arms and most importantly includes the civilians in disarmament agenda. Edeko (2011)’s definition of disarmament is also quintessential. He states that “disarmament includes disarming of combatants and irregular forces, weapons buyback programmes and arms embargoes and control” (p. 72).

ARMAMENT AND DISARMAMENT IN NIGERIA

Considering armament in Nigeria, the first question that comes to mind is how much arms are in circulation in Nigeria or how heavy is the burden of armament in Nigeria? Alpers, Philip

and Marcus (2014), estimated the number of both licit and illicit guns held by civilians in Nigeria at two million (2,000,000). They estimated the rate of private ownership of guns in Nigeria at 1.5 firearms per one hundred (100) people. They however admit that it is very difficult to count unlawfully held guns in Nigeria but places the estimate at one million (1,000,000). Hence, the rate of unlawfully held guns by civilians in Nigeria is estimated to be 0.71 illicit firearms per one hundred (100) people.

The above estimates are for guns alone. Aside guns, there are many other small arms and light weapons used during armed conflict. As a result of the dearth of statistical data, one may not be able to categorically state the summation of all arms and weapons held by civilians in Nigeria. However, if Alpers, Philip and Marcus (2014)'s estimates are anything to go by, then there are far more guns in Nigeria compared to the United States. Similarly, if the correlation between the amount of arms in circulation and firearms related death is anything to go by, then there should be far more firearms related deaths in Nigeria compared to the United States. In Nigeria, such deaths are not properly documented.

Furthermore, as a result of the exponential growth of armed conflict since the return of democratic rule in 1999, the Nigerian government has made efforts and continues to make efforts to equip the military with more arms so as to be able to fight these internal aggressors. Particularly, President Goodluck Jonathan administration which has witnessed unprecedented activities of terrorist attacks, sectarian violence, militancy and all manner of political, ethnic, economic and religious crises allots a staggering chunk of Nigeria's yearly budget to security and armament. This implies the acquisition and production of more arms and ammunitions, recruitment of more hands into the military and

general reinforcement of the security apparatus in Nigeria. This can serve as inkling to the probable amount of 'military armament' in Nigeria. Of course, these arms are to be used to fight the also heavily armed insurgents, militants and criminals. Recently (February 2014), the Governor of Borno state, Alhaji Kashim Shettima, over the national television claimed that Boko Haram insurgents are better armed and motivated than the Nigerian military forces and that is the reason for the military's ineptitude to overcome them. Fotion, Kashnikov and Lekea (2007) seem to agree with the Governor's view. They state that terrorists "have increasingly powerful and portable weapons" (pp. 111-112).

Ukanah (2012), decrying how much arms have gotten to the hands of individuals and groups in Nigeria asserts that "reports of seizures and interceptions of arms and ammunition are simply indicative of how far Nigerians are arming themselves" (p. 379). Continuing, Ukanah, without giving dates, alleges that weapons worth about two hundred million naira were intercepted as they were being transported to Jos-Nigeria. He also alleges that missiles similar to the ones being used in Afghanistan were also said to have been seized on their way into Nigeria. One however wonders how much of those weapons have successfully made their ways into the country. Massive accumulation and acquisition of arms by groups and individuals in Nigeria present a challenging and increasing dangerous obstacle to Nigeria.

Understandably, defense against every form of aggression is paramount in every society. Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria (2012) asserts that "it is a primary duty of government to ensure security of life and property of citizens all over the nation. There can be no excuse for failure in this primary duty" (p. 1). Hence, borrowing a leaf from Peschke (1999), the actuality of the Latin adage that says, '*si vis pacem, para bellum*', meaning, if you

want peace, prepare for war. This adage remains germane even in present times because a country has to be sufficiently prepared for the eventuality of war. Peschke (1999) however warns that such preparations must remain proportionate so that it does not foment fear of aggression in the neighbouring states which could lead to arms race.

Armament, no doubt, is a necessity for any nation's military to combat internal and external aggression and Nigeria is not an exception. Even though presently in Nigeria, apart from insinuations of foreign sponsorship of some internal aggressors, there are no issues of external aggression. At the moment, Nigeria is faced with various arms-related crimes such as kidnapping, militancy, armed robbery, sectarian violence and terrorism. Hence there is need for 'military armament' both to combat internal crises that cannot be settled peacefully and to defend its citizens in case of external aggression. Peschke (1999) is of the opinion that "reason proves the right of the state to self-defense by war from the insight that the authority that is responsible for the common good of a nation cannot lack the means necessary for this purpose" (p. 637). The 'means' in the above citation refer to weapons of warfare. It is imperative that each nation arms itself to enhance the capacity of its military against aggression especially as a last resort in line with the theories of just war. More so, Aliyu (2009) pointedly states that "the security of a state directly translates to its ability to protect its citizens, as well as national assets, from both internal and external threats" (p. 9). Contributing to the importance of 'military armament' in a state, Vatican II Fathers (1965) succinctly state that;

As long as the danger of war remains and there is no competent and sufficiently powerful authority

at the international level, governments cannot be denied the right to legitimate defense once every means of peaceful settlement has been exhausted. State authorities and others who share public responsibility have the duty to conduct such grave matters soberly and to protect the welfare of the people entrusted to their care (no. 79).

Vatican II Fathers in the above excerpt point out that even though armament is a necessity, peaceful means of settling conflict must always be sought first. To lay credence to this, Peschke (1999) in his treatise, avers that; “uttermost efforts to avoid force are not merely recommended, but in the strict sense obligatory” (p. 638). Peschke’s stance here is unequivocal. It is essential to make efforts to avoid the use of military action as initial intervention in every conflict situation. Reiterating the obligation to oppose war, Bill and Jared (2010) state that “crying out in opposition to war ... is neither emotionalism nor self-pity. It is the highest expression of human reason based on an unflinching perception of the dignity of life” (p. 222). However, when all other means of resolving conflict such as mediation, negotiation, arbitration and so on fail, then military intervention may be used as a last resort.

In a nutshell, the Nigerian state has the right to armament so as to deter crime, maintain order in the nation and in readiness for self-defense as a last resort but may not acquire such weapons of mass destruction or those that have adverse effects on the ecosystem such as nuclear or biological weapons. The horrors and aftermath of such modern weapons are debilitating, grossly dreadful and they are capable of causing human extinction. Nigeria should join its voice with the International Community to clamour against nuclear and biological weapons. On the other hand, the use of weapons or arms by state security apparatuses need to be

monitored so that they are not used indiscriminately or maliciously by those that have legal possession of them. It is usually catastrophic when soldiers misuse arms just as it is when civilians do the same.

Furthermore, masterminds of armed conflict in Nigeria - unscrupulous demagogues, religious pedagogues, militants and criminals allegedly acquire these arms and furnish themselves or their usually brain-washed followers with them. These arms are then used to commit all sorts of havoc. The availability of arms to these perpetrators of evil has spelt doom for Nigeria and it is in fact a pointer to the preparation for worse showdowns in the near future if they are not disarmed and properly reintegrated into the society.

Akinosho (2014) decries the heavy amount of arms illegally possessed by Nigerians. He avers that this plays “a central role in fostering instability and ... is motivated by weak governance, insecurity and poverty” (p. 5). Edeko (2011) quite agree with Akinosho and reveals that “licensed weapons being stolen or lost, have played a major role in exacerbating crimes and armed violence in Nigeria ... this phenomenon threatens the consolidation of democracy and security ... which is necessary for sustainable development” (p. 57). Onuoha (2006) gives a more shocking revelation about criminals’ source of arms in Nigeria. He alleges that sometimes, members of the Nigerian armed forces are complicit in the proliferation of arms. He also states that insurgents either steal or purchase arms from military personnel. According to him, soldiers sometimes double-up as arms dealers. He however believes that the reason for the leakage of arms from official sources include; lax control over national armouries and poor service condition of security personnel.

Armament is like a double-edged sword. It can either help a nation to defend its citizens against internal and external aggression or completely mar a nation when it is wrongly used by either the right or wrong persons. Arms serve as motivation and means of war/violence. Hence, people can be quite obstinate and nasty in a conflict situation when they have surrounded themselves with arms.

There is therefore the need for an effective disarmament of individuals and groups that are not part of the military in Nigeria. This will help deter violent crime and avert the kind of menace the United States is facing now as a result of arms culture. Even though there are arguments for and against gun control in the United States, it has obviously done them so much harm as individuals pull the trigger at slightest provocations.

Late president Musa Yar'adua in the bid to disarm militants in the Niger Delta area of Nigeria granted them amnesty and asked them to lay down their arms. This well celebrated exercise, even though it did not record 100% success, was to a great extent effective as this amnesty, disarmament and reintegration went a long way to bring peace, development and security in that region. Similar or a better strategy can also be used to disarm individuals and groups who unlawfully possess arms and use them to the detriment of the country and its citizens. When this is done, these individuals should be reintegrated so as to ensure peace in the society. Olaniyi and Aligwekwe (2013) opine that "disarmament alone cannot guarantee quality peace building but as the weapons are taken away from them, they should equally be ... helped to integrate socially and economically into the society" (p. 23). Disarmament serves as deterrence to crime and it also deters arms race within a country or between countries.

JUXTAPOSING NIGER-DELTA MILITANCY AND BOKO HARAM INSURGENCY IN NORTHERN NIGERIA

This section tends to place Niger-Delta militancy/disarmament and Boko Haram insurgency in northern Nigeria side by side so as to point out the similarities and peculiarities of both.

Both Niger Delta militants and Boko Haram insurgents have agitations against the Nigerian state and use firearms, explosive devices, light weapons and other violent approaches to champion their courses with martyr bombing (suicide bombing) as Boko Haram's peculiarity. However, while the Niger Delta militants operate mainly in the south-south region of Nigeria and are self acclaimed freedom fighters for resource control and environmental justice, Boko Haram insurgents on the other hand operate in the northern part of Nigeria, especially the north-east and claim to be vanguards of a religious dogma. More so, the profile of the Niger Delta militants is not absolutely stealth unlike Boko Haram insurgents. The height of militancy in the Niger Delta was around 2008-2009 before they were offered amnesty and they seemed to have targets such as expatriates and oil installations, while the height of Boko Haram insurgency has been from 2009 till present with apparently no particular targets. Their impact is felt on a larger scale as they kill both Christians and Muslims, bomb and torch churches, mosques, markets, schools, police stations, telecommunication facilities, government buildings and so on.

The discovery and exploration of oil in the Niger Delta region ironically left the people of that region with obnoxious consequences on their sources of livelihood and ecology as they suffered oil spillage on their land and water bodies, deforestation, noise pollution and all manner of ecological hazards, without

much to show for it. It appeared the government gave a deaf ear to their demand for attention to their contaminated and devalued environment. Hence, the resultant effect was an outbreak of aggression in the region. Restive youths began to engage in kidnapping of expatriates, oil bunkering and all forms of armed violence. It is alleged that thousands of lives were lost and government as well as Multi National Companies lost millions of dollars to the activities of these militants. Generally, there was high incidence of violence in the Niger Delta and this continued to escalate until they were granted amnesty by late President Yar'adua who asked them to drop their arms, renounce militancy in exchange for career training, education, stipends and so on.

The government's strategy was that of Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR). Even though there were bottlenecks in the implementation of this amnesty, it apparently achieved its purpose to a large extent as there is relative peace in the region now than was the case before the amnesty.

On the other hand, Boko Haram, which refer to themselves as people committed to the propagation of the prophet's teachings and jihad ([Arabic](#): *والجهاد للدعوة السنة اهل جماعة*, *Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati Wal-Jihad*) have been unleashing what could be described as hell on people in the Northern part of Nigeria. Boko Haram claims to be an Islamist movement which vehemently opposes '[man-made](#)' laws. They apparently seek to abolish the [secular](#) system of government. In [Hausa language](#) *Boko Haram* translates as 'Western education is sacrilege' or 'a sin'. The activities of these insurgents have led to the loss of several lives and properties. More worrisome is the fact that despite the amount of force the government has applied in trying to surmount them, they appear to be waxing stronger. The economic cost of the

damage Boko Haram has caused Nigeria is unquantifiable. This calls for a review of the current approach.

The economic, political, religious, social and ecological implications of armament in Nigeria, which for want of space are not spelt out in details here are quite enormous, awful and despicable. One therefore wonders if there could be a more efficient and less expensive way of handling conflict or crises other than the use of arms. The 2009 disarmament in the Niger-Delta which came under the guise of amnesty was as it were, efficient to a great extent and less expensive.

A similar strategy used for Niger Delta militants could perhaps make a difference in the case of Boko Haram in Northern Nigeria. This of course will not be without improvement on the loopholes identified in its implementation in the Niger Delta and adjustments to accommodate the peculiarities of Boko Haram. It must be established here that the way to sustainable peace must be peaceful. Nonviolent ways of handling conflict have been and can still be effective. Ejovi and Ebie (2013) agree that “it is only through peace that sustainable development can be guaranteed” (p. 132). More so, Ejovi and Ebie are of the view that disarmament and its necessary appendages – demobilization and reintegration are imperative ways of resolving conflict and managing post-conflict situation around the world so as to guarantee lasting peace.

Disarmament for Boko Haram will certainly be very challenging but enormously rewarding if well planned and properly executed. Even in the case of the Niger Delta militants, amnesty/disarmament was not without difficulties and seemingly insurmountable challenges. It is pertinent at this point to note that the Nigerian government, led by President Goodluck Jonathan had

in the past offered to negotiate with and perhaps grant amnesty to Boko Haram but the proposal was allegedly declined.

Unlike the Niger Delta militants, Boko Haram is peculiar in the sense that it is confessedly agitating for a course that is seemingly unrealistic – the imposition of shariah law in Nigeria, abolition of western education and democracy. Secondly, they are supposedly faceless. Also, Boko Haram is said to be an ideology and not a group of individuals.

Be that as it may, there is need for the federal government to first of all, develop the strong will to peacefully disarm this group and strategize on the best way to go about it. Military engagement in this issue can only lead to more loss of lives, properties and collateral damage. Ideologies are not killed with a gun and since the armed forces have not been able to attenuate, let alone totally do away with Boko Haram, peaceful ways of disarming them should be considered so that the collateral damage and economic loss they cause Nigeria as a country will be reduced. Till today, the debate is still on in the United States if the US-led war on terrorism has been a success or a failure. Reputable human rights organizations like Amnesty International continue to lament and protest the gross human rights abuses, killing of innocent people/non-combatants and collateral damage as a result of this war. Not even the use of drones has been impeccably efficient.

In a nutshell, even with the lapses of amnesty (disarmament, demobilization and reintegration) in the Niger Delta, it was able to wane violence. Therefore, it is believed that well articulated and thought through strategy for disarmament in the northern part of Nigeria will be effective in handling Boko Haram conflict in that area.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Apparently, the major bottleneck in starting up a constructive dialogue with Boko Haram is ability to reach them. This study recommends that they be reached through either political or religious leaders. Aliyu (2009) and Abia State Government (2012) believe that Boko Haram is a political creation operating under a religious guise. Boko Haram is therefore probably a political entity. It could be recalled that the malevolent activities of this sect heightened after the announcement of 2011 presidential election. It could be that they were aggrieved by a perceived political injustice. Aliyu (2009) opines that religion and ethnicity are being manipulated to serve political interest. More so, Boko Haram claim to be some Islamic army fighting the course of jihad. Hence, they could either be unmasked through political mediators. Also religious mediators like the Sultan of Sokoto could be engaged. It was reported on CNN recently (May 2014) that Alhaji Shehu Sani who had mediated between Boko Haram and the federal government in the past, suggests that the federal government should employ Islamic clerics to serve as a go-between between it and Boko Haram. Sani, talking from his first hand experience should be taken seriously in this case.

Good governance: Nigerians have been victims of bad governance. This has precipitated the alarming high rate of crime, militancy and terrorism. Individuals and groups have picked up arms to pursue their courses violently. Truly, the frustration-aggression theory is playing out in Nigeria. Citizens are frustrated as a result of poor or bad governance and they react with aggression to meet their needs or force the government to attend to their needs. It is believed therefore that if government is structured the right way or truly

democratized, there will be less armed crime in Nigeria. Fotion et al (2007) would rather suggest that to slow down terrorist movement, “the political card is to democratize ... create a cluster of just societies Give people a better government and improve their lives, the argument runs, and terrorism would dry up” (p. 118). In agreement with Fotion et al, Emenike (2011) believe that if the government embraces true democracy which is transparent and inclusive, internal strife that deteriorate to armed conflict will end. Creation of jobs and employment opportunities for some of these aggrieved citizens that have picked up arms to show their frustration can also go a long way to wane armament in Nigeria. Importantly, government must make conscious effort to address the remote issues that have probably brought Nigeria this mayhem of militancy and terrorism such as abject poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, exploitation, marginalization, environmental degradation, and so on.

Good intelligence: There is need for Nigerian security apparatus to be given proper and modern intelligence training. Osuagwu (2010) believes that living in a technological era and still talking about manual security does not leapfrog any society. According to Aliyu (2009), intelligence is critical to ensuring national security, especially with asymmetric threats making up most of the new challenges. Knowledge, rather than power, is the only weapon that can prevail in a complex and uncertain environment awash with lopsided threats, some known, many currently unknown. Also, Fotion, Kashnikov and Lekea (2007) opine that intelligence is indispensable for success in the war against all forms of violence and terrorism, especially when the perpetrators keep a stealthy profile. Officers should be trained to deal with espionage and intelligence. When good intelligence is in place, arms will be well

controlled and illegal arms producers and importers will be arrested and prosecuted in Nigeria.

The role of religion: Little (2007) is of the opinion that “proper religion exhibits a preference for pursuing peace by peaceful means (nonviolence over violence) and for combining the promotion of peace with the promotion of justice” (p. 437). Therefore religious leaders and adherents should shun armed violence and trumpet peace with the aid of their scriptures and traditions. Proper intra-religious and inter-religious dialogue and understanding could lead to sheathing the sword and promoting peace in Nigeria. Also, the sanctity of human life should be protected using scriptures and religious traditions.

Finally, government should ensure there is a serious check on the production, importation and use of arms in Nigeria. If disarmament must be effective, then further armament must be seriously checked. Nigerian Immigration Service and other bodies responsible for safeguarding Nigerian borders should make sure that the borders are not porous so as to allow smuggling arms into the country through its borders. This will prevent reckless acquisition and employment of arms. Nigeria should follow the regulations that guide the production, purchase and use of arms.

Conclusion

Armament is seen as a necessity for Nigeria’s security apparatus provided it is proportionate. The possession and use of arms for self defense is a sine qua non for any nation. What is important and needs to be looked into is the nature of the weapons and the purpose for which they are used. However, the possession of arms by individuals or any other group aside the military and

other security agents should be discouraged. This is where the issue of disarmament comes in as a regulatory movement and process since the possession or availability of arms can serve as a drive for conflict.

Considering the relative success of disarmament in the Niger Delta and the abhorrent economic, political, social, religious and ecological impacts of armament in Nigeria which are grievous and ensure unsustainable development, it becomes glaring how needful it is to organize some form of disarmament for Boko Haram too. This is believed to be successful if among other things, the recommendations in this work are religiously followed. Disarmament is a necessity in Nigeria as arms and weapons have found their ways into the hands of ruthless individuals and groups that are using them to wreck havoc. It will help to uphold human dignity and the sanctity of human life since arms are used to desecrate/end human life which is believed to be sacred. With concerted effort from the part of government/religious leaders and adherence to the recommendations made in this work, armament in Nigeria will be well regulated even though it is a known fact that acquiring arms are usually relatively easy compared to controlling them which is an onerous task.

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