Issues in Terrorism, Human Rights and Sustainable Democracy in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: *The concept of terrorism has plethora of definitions. The central idea behind terrorism entails the use of violence to pursue objectives which may be focused on influencing government decisions. The attainment of a stable polity and sustainable democratic rule in a developing nation like Nigeria is commendable. But seemingly endless pace of human rights abuses and killings threatening the corporate existence of Nigeria is becoming worrisome. Since independence in 1960, she has played host to disparate violent conflicts and security threats such as ethno-religious violence, bloody military coups, Niger-Delta uprising, kidnappings, armed robbery, herdsmen war on local communities and farmers. It is the realisation of this fact that this paper focuses on terrorism and human rights abuses as a cog in the wheel of Nigerian development. This paper also discusses human rights and sustainable democracy as a panacea for integrated rural development in Nigeria. The paper concludes by advocating consolidating instruments for the eradication of terrorism in Nigeria. And that sustainable democracy can only be achieved when government genuinely confronts the social, political, economic and developmental issues facing the country.*
KEYWORDS: *Terrorism, Human Rights, Sustainable Democracy, Good Governance,Banditry.*

I.   INTRODUCTION:

Terrorism, Human Rights and democracy are complex phenomenon for which it is succinctly difficult to account. Terrorism is a malignant phenomenon that date back to antiquity. The term terrorism was coined in 1795 by French government during the "Reign of Terror" when revolutionaries opposed the actions of the government. It presents itself in various forms and shapes. Often times it has a confusing if not bewildering mix with other violence response by humans to issues and things that irritate them, annoy them or aggravate them into various manner of responses. The term terrorism carries with it a moral undertone. It is used wilfully and maliciously in branding an adversary or an opponent. Terrorism is a method of combat that includes a target of violence, a state of chronic fear, mobilization for target of violence, a state of chronic fear, mobilization for target of demands or attention.

According to Schmid (1988), the most common elements of defining terrorism include fear and or terror and threat. Academic literature has two common elements when defining terrorism, that is, violence or threat of violence against civilians and behaviour/acts intended to coerce, compel, or intimidate the population into some form of action. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS), stated that terrorism is "any activity that involves an act that is dangerous to human life or potentially destructive of critical infrastructure or key resources and must also appear to be intended.

1.   To intimidate or coerce the civilian population.
2.   To influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion.
3.   To affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination or kidnapping. Generally speaking, the target of a terrorist attack is not the victims who are killed or maimed in the attack but the Federal Government that is intended to be destabilised (Amaraegbu, 2011). National legislation in regard to acts of terror helps one to identify the fundamental elements of terrorism. For example, the 1984 United Kingdom legislation on terrorism (cited in Dupuy,2004), stated that terrorism consists of "the use of violence for political ends and includes any use of violence for the purpose of putting the public or any action of the public in fear". In the same vein, the 1987 United States law defined terrorism in the following words: "the organising, abetting or participating in a wanton or indiscriminate act of violence with extreme indifference to the risk of causing death or serious bodily harm to individuals not taking part in armed hostilities. The Common Position of the European Union's Council adopted in December27, 2001 list possible acts of terrorism to include murder, hostage-taking, massive destruction of various types of infrastructure, criminal assault on internationally protected persons such as diplomats, hijacking of planes or ships, production, possession, transportation or supply of explosives and various other weapons, and setting fires and so on (Dupuy, 2004). Human Rights and Terrorism intersect in the sense that both act as catalyst

for each other. Without dwelling on which one came first, like the chicken and egg debate, terrorism could be a reaction to human rights abuse, while human rights abuse could lead to terrorism.

The concern for human rights is as old as humanity itself. Though, the expression "human rights" as a term or art, is of recent origin (Sills, 1968:2). Human rights are often traced tostoics. Zero, the founder of the stoic school of thought propounded the theory of natural law under which human beings were supposed to have natural rights. The concept of justand unjust had always existed throughout the civilizations (Khan, 1998:124-12). Thus the idea of inalienable rights of man postulated by poets, philosophers and even politicians as a normative ethical concept prelates the very political system, which produces the law making institutions, as we know them today. It can be observed that in the course of the development of the notion of human rights, the theory of natural law has always play a dominant role (Khan, 19988)

Human rights are rights that are held by all human beings unconditionally, unalterable and they are inalienable. Although human rights are termed natural rights, it need be emphasised that not all human rights are human rights. The concept of natural rights states not only that there are certain human rights but also that these rights has certain further epistemic properties and certain metaphysical status (Feinberg 1973: 85). However, theory of human rights is neutral with respect to questions of moral ontology and moral epistemology (Irele, 1998: 126).

For instance it could be recalled that at the political level, disrespect for the fundamental democratic rights of the people in Nigeria reached its apogee with the annulment of the June 12, 1993 presidential election by the regime of General Ibrahim Babangida. During the succeeding regime of General Sani Abacha (1993-1998), the county was suspended from the Commonwealth in November 1995 for gross human rights abuses (Ojo, 1997: 104-112). Without gainsaying, the military is indeed antithetical to human rights safeguard and observance. Claude Ake put it poignantly thus: "the military and democracy are in dialectical oppositions''. The military is a taut chain of command; democracy is a benign anarchy of diversity. Democracy presupposes human sociability; the military presupposes its total absence, the inhuman extremity of killing opposition. The military demands submission, democracy enjoins participation; one is tool of violence, the other means of consensus building for peaceful coexistence" (Ake, 1995: 34).

II. BRIEF LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature on terrorism, human rights and democracy are united in the challenges confronting them. One of the major issues about terrorism in Nigeria is the difficulty in trying to understand it. On terrorism, there are as many definitions as their perspectives. Thus, instead of clarifying, it compounds and confuses. For instance, an eminent jurist while noting that terrorism could be a tactic, or strategy, "a crime and a holy duty; a justified reaction to oppression and an inexcusable abomination" also agrees that it is a veritable option for the weaker side to a conflict. The weaker side, he contends, achieves the "advantages of military force at a fraction of the cost" (Ajibola, 2010: 5-6).

Quite cardinally, terrorism is undoubtedly a criminal act that influences or affects directly or indirectly an audience beyond the immediate victim. The strategy of terrorist is to commit acts of violence and intimidation that draw the attention of the local populace, the government and the world to their cause. The terrorists plan their attack to obtain the greatest publicity, choosing targets to symbolise what they oppose. The effectiveness of the terrorist act lies not in the act itself, but in the public's or government's reaction to the act. Terrorism is a threat to all states and to all peoples, with an ability to strike any-time, anywhere. It is an attack on the core values of democratic governance namely the rule of law, the protection of civilians and their fundamental human rights; mutual respect between people of different faiths and cultures; and peaceful resolution of conflict (Ajibola, 2010).

Notwithstanding, the appreciation of terrorism as war, it creates the problem of delineating civilians and non-combatants in an environment characterised by terrorism. Modern warfare, at least in post-world war two, is frequently fought amongst civilians, between civilians and for civilians. What is more, the then Organisation of African Unity (OAU), now African Union (AU), cognisant to its antecedents, and not labelling liberation struggle fighters and groups as terrorists, defined terrorism as any act which is violation of the criminal laws of a State Party and which may endanger the life, physical integrity or freedom of, cause serious injury or death to, any person, any number or group of persons or causes or may cause damage to public or private property, natural resources, environmental or cultural heritage and calculated or intended to :

i. Intimate, put in fear, force, coerce or induce any government, body, institution, the general public or any segment thereof, to do or abstain from doing any act, or to adopt or abandon a particular standpoint, or to act according to certain principles; or

ii. Disrupt any public service, the delivery of any essential service to the public or create a public emergency; or create general insurrection in a State (Imobighe, 2010:49).

Gurr and Cole (1970), in their book titled, The New Face of Terrorism, came up with a useful definition of terrorism. They noted that terrorist groups generally seek specific political, religious or social objectives, and will employ violence to achieve their objectives in a number of complementary ways that are often interlinked with strategies and tactics that are designed to intimidate and coerce government, increase the cost for the state of continuing in the conflictand to win a political victory over the state. Gurr and Cole saw this definition as being useful because it focused attention on terrorist use of violence as a means to generate propaganda, to demonstrate to their enemies and the world at large, that their cause is still alive and their group is still active and that is exactly what the militant Islamic group is doing in Northern Nigeria.

Golder and Williams (2004) argued that the lack of consensus on what constitutes terrorism points to its inescapable political nature, perhaps best encapsulated in the aphorism that one person's terrorist is another person's freedom fighter. According to Burton (1979), terrorism includes a range of social and political problems whose behavioural scope is boundless and includes behaviour that appear to be abnormal. Then a functional clarification of terrorism by Brown (2007) has it that terrorism is an unconventional political violence or the threat of political violence meant to have an impact on both the immediate victim and the audience that is carried out by non-state actors and or clandestine state agents.

The malignancy of terrorism, which in some circles is being accepted as a concept has engendered enquiry as to the cause or causes. The factors advanced are many and varied. But in the plethora, the following stand out: religion, ethnicity, bad governance, illiteracy, inadequate educational system, a lopsided economic system, poverty, unemployment, culture, ideology, demography as in population growth, popularly designated in some literature as "population bulge". The factors in Nigeria appear not to be exhaustible and as if the country is on a race to perdition. But it has genuinely brought up the issue of whether terrorism can be eradicated, managed or minimised. The answer or answers seem to be lurked in the expressions such as "combating terrorism", "counter terrorism", "contending with terrorism", "and countering terrorism". When all is said, however, the Nigerian government policy on terrorism, de facto and de jure, is spread on the broad outline of prevention, deterrence, confrontation and negotiation such as leading to amnesty or a Truth and Reconciliation Committee.

Be it as it may, all terrorist analysts agree that they are common elements identifiable among the majority of the definitions of terrorism. According to various descriptions, terrorism is characterised by some common strings: political, psychological, coercive, dynamic and deliberate. Terrorism always plead a political cause, involves the committing of terrible acts intended to cause political change. The above are reasons that enrich the tendency to assume that militant network in the south-south region of Nigeria have appropriated the title, "Freedom Fighters" to camouflage terrorism.

On the Concept of Human Rights

When we speak or write about Human Rights, we are espousing those universally recognised and accepted rights, they are inalienable rights for being born human. These rights were articulated poignantly by the European Philosophers of the seventeenth century. When the thirteen British colonies in the Americas rebelled and declared independence despite the contradictions in the colonies at the time, they justified and declared that:

When the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands, which have connected them with one another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation. We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, (Davidson, J. W, et al 2010:81).

Human Rights as an expression and practice are fast gaining currency in Nigeria and for now it means all things to all people. It is considered either a "dividend" of democracy or a practice brought about by the dehumanising of the Nigeria citizen by various factors. What is more, issues in human rights date back in time of slave trade, through colonial times when the various groups that make up Nigeria were serially abused and their Fundamental Human Rights violated by the British imperial powers. Shortly thereafter, the civil war ensued and the assault on human rights continued. The post-civil war was not any better. However, the decade of the nineteen eighties and nineties brought a unique characterisation and definition to human rights in Nigeria. If anything, it was during this period that Nigerians, notwithstanding the civil inter-regnum of 1979-1983, felt that human rights was an exotic concept and only meant for democratically elected governments.

It is interesting, however, that during this orgy of military governance that Nigeria set up the National Human Rights Commission in 1995. It is very likely that the Human Rights Act of 1995 was set up in compliance to the UN Resolution 48/14 of 1993. But it will not be an exaggeration to suggest that it was an ephemeral move to douse the agitation for democratic governance and minimise the reactions to human rights

abuses. Whatever the reason may have been, the commission was assigned the task of studying matters relating to human rights and help the government formulate policies that will guarantee human rights for her citizens; publish regular reports on the state of human rights in Nigeria; organise seminars, workshops and conferences on human rights issues so as to enlighten the public; collect data, maintain a library and generally disseminate information and materials among other things (Odimegwu, 2009:364).

The Human Rights Commission, while not a "still born child", has not grown to maturity nor has its impact significantly affected human rights issues. The Commission in collaboration with some non-governmental organisations (NGO's) recently concluded that the government with its various agencies conducts various activities tantamount to human rights abuses in the following mould.

…… extra judicial, summary and arbitrary executions, political killings and violence, communal conflicts, torture, cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment and punishment of persons, disregard for the right of the child and discrimination against women, waves of ethnic cleansing, suppressions of freedom of expression and the media; disregard for the rule of law and the suppression of the independence of the judiciary etc., the list seems endless and the score on each count of the human rights record is depressingly poor (Odimegwu, 2009: 258).

Human rights in Nigeria, much as being inalienable right and carrying with it a moral high-ground, are still as much as a contract between the government and the governed. It is not an individual right without some form of order and control. As a universal norm it does not imply that the right should be enjoyed without order, duty and a sense of responsibility with one another. It is not one way relationship with government. If anything, it should be symbiotic. Otherwise, the resultant effect would be disorder if not anarchy. It would be a step towards atavism or the Darwinian"survival of the fittest".

One of the most pressing issues on human rights in Nigeria is that the knowledge is elitist as it is exclusive. It percolates around a relatively small number of Nigerians. Significantly around those that study, practice and perhaps enforce the law, and those other few with literate education. Indeed, it is true of a country, with a purported population of between 160 million to 170 million and an illiterate population of about 64 million, meaning a possible 45 to 48 percent illiterate population saying nothing of the current quality of education, or an educational curriculum that does not inculcate history and human rights issues, it is not unlikely that the average Nigerian does not know much about their rights. Such an anomaly can only perpetuate human rights issues and abuse.

Human Rights And Nascent Democracy In Nigeria

In respect of the military and crisis management in Nigeria, there is no doubt that the military is an instrument of conflict resolution just as it is an instrument of foreign policy. The term military power usually refers to the capacity to kill, maim, coerce and destroy. Although occasionally this same power may be possessed by individuals within the state-as the feudal barons possessed it during the Middle Ages and as drug barons and political warlords possess today in weak states-nowadays military power is monopolised by states and used primarily by governments to protect their states from external aggression and internal subversion.

The use of soldiers in the Tiv crisis in the First Republic, the intervention of the military in the politics of the First Republic through a coup detat, the sacking of the villages of Odi in the Niger Delta and ZakiBiam in Central Nigeria and the deployment of the Joint Task Force (JTF) to the Niger Delta are instances of the madman theory. The usual excuse is that the military is often deployed for security purposes. But as Barry Buzan and Barry Jones (1981:159) ask: if security consist of retaining a relative advantage in relation to the other members of the system over a board spectrum of activities, to what extent are the military means appropriate? They answer thus

Military tools for all their technical sophistication are exceedingly crude in relation to many socio-political objections. They are well suitable to sweeping tasks like to destruction or disruption of existing structures, or the conquest and control of people, but they are much less useful for the fine-tuning of voluntaristic exchange relations where neither conquest nor destruction is required.

To be sure, technological miracles have given the average soldier in modern time's mobility and fire-power infinitely greater than his predecessors.

Taking the element of human rights one after the other for instance glaringly buttresses that when we rely extensively on Human Rights Practices as compiled by US Bureau Democracy, Human Rights and Labour, between 1999 till date, government's human rights record is still poor, although there were some improvements in several areas, serious problems still remain. On respect for the integrity of the person, including freedom from political and other extra judicial killings, it would be recalled that the national police, army and security forces

committed extra judicial killings and used excessive force to quell civil unrest under previous military regimes. It is however, on record that police and military personnel used excessive and sometimes deadly force in the suppression of civil unrest, property vandalization, and inter-ethnic violence.

In November 1999, Odi, a large town in Bayelsa state, 12 policemen were killed by the ethnic militiamen. A few hours after the news of the policemen's death was broken, the federal government deployed military troops to Odi and the town was levelled. Till date government did not hold accountable any of the soldiers involved in the destruction of the town and the massacre of several hundred inhabitants. Similarly, in October 2001, there was dispute between Benue's warring Tiv and Jukun of Taraba State. The Tiv suspected that government was not being fair enough to them in the border conflict and their militia abducted 19 soldiers. A few hours after burying the soldiers killed in the conflict, the military invadedTiv land killing more than 70 inhabitants in the first instance (Tell, 2001: 30-34).

The issue of democracy and good governance has remained a popular point of call to many political analysts the world over. This is in view of the fact that democracy and good governance have been seen as a panacea for sustainable development. In order to consolidate its gains, modalities have been put in place by governments and international organisations to ensure its sustenance. In West Africa and indeed in Nigeria, efforts have been put in place by successive administrations of individual countries towards democratisations. Collectively, this effort is reflected in the establishment of Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance by Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The Protocol is a bold attempt by the Member-States to consolidate peace, security and stability in a sub-region that has been inundated with dictatorship, bad political leadership and notorious Civil Wars.

However, in recent times, many, if not all West Africa Countries have witnessed and are still witnessing threats to lives and properties, terrorism and terrorist lynching, blatant violation of human rights, electoral malpractices and violence, bloody civil strife and brutality, brutality as a result of regimes that lacks legitimacy. The proliferation of these vices and other undemocratic acts call for a rethink on the existence of the Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance of the ECOWAS. Indeed, the severity of these problems most often threatens the very existence of many West African States (Azaigba and Banke, 2014:48). This has continued to undermine strategies aimed at institutionalising democracy and its practice among countries in the sub-region.Democracy according to (Larry, 2004) consists of four key elements: First a political system for choosing and replacing the government through free and fair elections, second the active participation of the people as citizens in political and civil life, third protection of the human rights of all citizens and fourth, the rule of law, in which the laws and procedures apply equally to all citizens (Bernard, 2004). Democratisation could, therefore, be seen as a process in the transition to a more democratic political regime. It is a process by which a society could progress from authoritarianism to minimalist democracy to substantive democracy. That is, a change from an authoritarian political system to a democratic political system. The ideal result is to ensure that a State is built on the basis of "democracy and social justice" where "sovereignty belongs to the people from whom government through the constitution derives all its powers and authority". (Diamond, 2004).

The introduction of Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance by the Authority of Heads of States and Governments in 2001 was a milestone in ECOWAS' bid to democratise the sub-region. According to Article 1 of the Protocol, the following shall be declared as constitutional principles shared by all Member-States:
a. Separation of power-the Executive, Legislative, and the Judiciary.
b. Every accession to power must be made through free, fair and transparent elections
c. Zero tolerance for power obtained or maintained by unconstitutional means.
d. Popular participation in decision-making, strict adherence to democratic principles and decentralisation of power at all levels of governance.
e. The armed forces must be apolitical and must be under the command of a legally constituted political authority; no serving member of the armed forces may seek to run for an elective political office etc.

Emphatically, therefore, the Protocol reiterated the organisation's acceptance of the principle of separation of powers among executive, legislature and the judiciary and accession to proper through free, fair and transparent elections. The protocol also has a zero tolerance for power gained or kept by unconstitutional means. In line with the new democratic rebirth and wave of concession after election defeat, PresidentGoodluck Jonathan of Nigeria in the 2015 presidential elections and John Mahama of Ghana in the 2016 presidential election are good examples. However, the root causes of military intervention into politics and crisis of regime change or political succession are yet to be adequately addressed. For instance, the issue of legitimacy, poor governance, bad leadership, corruption, electoral crisis and political violence as epitomised in Mali's problem of political violence dysfunctionality, have been largely left

unattended to. The political conditions in most of the countries within the sub-region and indeed, Africa as a whole are unsuitable for democratisation and flourishing of democracy (Okeke, 2014 :1)

Challenges Of Democrartic Governance In West Africa

One of the most important problems as earlier mentioned seems to centre on the issue of sovereignty of member-states. In protesting and respecting individual state's sovereignty, West African leaders are prohibited from interfering in domestic affairs of sovereign ECOWAS member countries. As such, certain undemocratic acts and challenges such as violation of human rights, ethnicity, presidential democracy, fiscal federalism, sectarian violence among others are reserved for the individual nation to the exclusion of other ECOWAS nation states for collective decision. This state-centric approach to sub-regional issues cannot augur well with collective efforts at democratisation.

In addition, it is pertinent to stress that many West African States are not insulated from banditry, warlordism, and low-intensity conflicts. War situation in many West African countries has made integration on one hand, and the democratic project on the other almost irrelevant. This situation can certainly not encourage the institutionalisation of democracy at sub-regional level. The non-existence of sub –regional electoral body to conduct election of member countries as well as institutional framework to enforce compliance to democratic issues militates against democratisation as envisaged by ECOWAS. In reality, ECOWAS constitutive acts does not provide for tools or mechanisms with which to deal with threatening democratic issues which are internal to member-states. For this reason, ruthless corrupt and unaccountable leaders emerge across the sub-region without the organisation being able to confront them. This factor, according to Azaigba, has also negatively affected the African condition. He further states that there is wide spread of corruption, mismanagement of the economy, inefficiency and lack of probity and accountability in government and sit tight leadership. This disruptive and destructive tendency, in his words, "has contributed in no small measure in strengthening the bands of underdevelopment of the continent and is clearly a threat to any genuine union (Azaigba, 2010:127).

However, West Africa has not been restructured to produce democracy-minded leaders who will champion its institutionalisation. At best, "Africa has produced an underdeveloped and emasculated political class" who do not only lack the dynamics of democratic governance but has out rightly refused to entrench democratic governance in their respective countries. Failed leadership manifests in the inability of some countries to conduct free, fair, and credible elections, the violation of the rule of law and unhealthy political party relations among others. In fact, no nation within the sub-region can serve as a model for others to emulate. In Nigeria for instance, past elections were reported to have been characterised by massive rigging and malpractices. Late President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua owned up that the election that brought him to office as president has flaws. This was sequel to the report of the European Monitoring Group which declared that the election was not free and fair (Time News, 2007:10).

It is heart breaking to know that ECOWAS leaders and member-states ignore this glaring abuse of electoral process which militates against its democratic agenda. The challenge of leadership in Nigeria and the sub-region appears to be problematic. The impact of exogenous influence is another factor that militates against democratisation in Nigeria. Although most countries in West Africa are independent and non-aligned nation-states, nonetheless, they have been under neo-colonialist influences of the super powers and highly industrialised nations of the North. For instance, in Nigeria's Fourth Republic, it was revealed that the reforms embarked upon by the President Obasanjo's administration were "misguided and anti-people" (Adebimpe, 2005:14). This is explainable within the context that most of these policies were externally determined and guided without taking into cognisance the nature of the Nigerian society. A nation which is dependent on another for policy reforms cannot initiate and implement lasting policies. It is important to stress that democratisation is not something that can be imposed from outside as long as the conditions in the subjected society are not favourable.

III.   CONCLUSION

When all is said, terrorism, Human Rights and democracy are strange bed fellows. They serve as a catalyst for each. In Nigeria, as elsewhere, they are influenced by the same issues, either environmental degradation, resource control, economic hardship, bad governance or quest for political power. What is lacking is a proper study and understanding of the phenomena of terrorism, human rights and democracy. For instance, the Anti-terrorism Act which was passed in 2011 was set to be amended by the Federal Government so soon after in 2012 (The Guardian, 2012:1). Such a move is a palpable expression of an issue not properly articulated before the Act went through the legislative mill. All in all, the issue of terrorism in Nigeria dates back in time and would linger for a long while. However, all hands must be on deck for terrorism to be eliminated or eradicated in Nigeria, so that Nigeria can become a country to be reckoned with in global affairs.

Human Rights which is a universal norm, requires an environment where the ideas and ideals of human rights can have a home. De Ruiter said "the fight for human rights is a fight not only against political repression but also against social deprivation and economic exploitation. This applies to countries as well as people" (Mamman, 1999:43-44).

On the other hand, democracy does not necessarily translate to good governance. A country may be democratic but may be lacking the attributes of good governance such as in Nigeria. For these strange bed fellows, the Nigerian citizen is unabashedly apathetic, misinformed or out rightly uninformed about the ingredients of terrorism, human rights and democracy. The unprecedented violence-direct and structural-currently ravaging across the country with its attendant loss of lives and destruction of property is alarmingly unbearable and calls for drastic measures to contain any form of insurgency to save the country from imminent collapse. When we consider the nexus between human rights abuse, terrorism and democratic sustenance, it could be seen that democracy is not safe in a country where a large minority of population is illiterate. It is when efforts are made to confront illiteracy, unemployment and poverty that the country can begin to safeguard human rights beyond mere rhetoric. This becomes imperative in the sense that a polity that abuses human rights cannot make her citizen catalyst to democratic substance. It is frustration, occasioned by growing human, economic, political and environmental catastrophe and the impetus of new technologies that has put the heat on the Nigerian state.

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