



Article

Civilian Joint Task Force as a Supplementary Force in the Boko Haram Conflict in the Lake Chad Region

Nnamdi Azikiwe Journal of
Political Science (NAJOPS).
2023, Vol. 8(2)
ISSN 2992-5924
©NAJOPS 2023
Reprints and permissions:
www.najops.org.ng

Muhammad Reza SULEIMAN
Department of Political Science and International Studies,
Ahmadu Bello University,
Zaria, Nigeria.

Tukur BELLO
Department of Political Science
Al Qalam University,
Katsina, Nigeria.

Abstract

The Boko Haram insurgency has been raging since 2009. It has cost many lives, displaced many people and destroyed the sources of livelihoods of the inhabitants of the region and its environs. Several strategies were adopted individually by Nigeria, and collectively, by the Lake Chad Basin Commission member states and Benin Republic (LCBCs+Benin), in order to prosecute the war to its logical end and bring peace to the region. The people of Borno State of Nigeria, mostly youths, came up with the idea of a non-combatant, voluntary Civilian Joint Task Force to assist the military, first, with intelligence, and later assisting in operations and guarding the IDP Camps. However, the CJTF has been levelled with allegations of exploitation and molestation of girls and women in the camps and in regained territories. This paper looks at the role the CJTF plays in the fight against Boko Haram as well as its missing links. Using documentary analysis and anonymous interviews, this paper finds out that the CJTF assists troops in fishing out the Boko Haram fighters living within communities. It also finds out that the CJTF take advantage of their positions to 'settle scores' with individuals. The paper also finds out that, in a post conflict, the CJTF will pose another important problem for the peace in the Lake Chad region. This is because these youths, the CJTF, are already hardened and exposed to combat. It is recommended that the CJTF be maintained but adequate arrangements must be put in place to either absorb them into the conventional military and paramilitary services, or be properly demobilized/disengaged and empowered with training to lead a successful post conflict life.

Keywords: Civilian JTF, Civil militia, Boko Haram, Lake Chad Region, Post conflict.

A: Introduction

The Civilian Joint Task Force, CJTF, is a voluntary group formed by youths and vigilante groups in 2013 to support the Nigerian security forces in the fight against Boko Haram in northeast Nigeria and to protect local communities from attacks by the Boko Haram. The group has been engaged in security operations and even combat as well involved in providing security to internally displaced persons in camps.

Civilian JTF is believed to have between 23,000 and 26,000 members in Borno and Yobe states. It has been accused of systematic sexual violence, mass executions, recruiting child militia and diverting food from civilians. In this paper, an attempt has been made to look at the high points as well as drawbacks of the CJTF in the fight against Boko Haram (The Economist, 2016).

A terrorist group set up in Maiduguri, Boko Haram began its violent insurgency in northeastern Nigeria in 2009 (Alozieuwa, 2021; Thurston, 2016) although it emerged "as a local Islamic group" in 2002

Corresponding Author:

Muhammad Reza Suleiman, Department of Political Science and International Studies, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria. Email: mrsuleiman@abu.edu.ng

(Shuaibu and Salleh, 2015). Yet Perouse de Montclos (2014) located the group's origin to the *Nigerian* 'Taliban' crisis of 2003. Whatever the date of its actual formation, the Boko Haram has been classified as a deadly terrorist organization that has caused havoc to the Lake Chad region especially Nigeria (2012).

Since then, the crisis has spilled into neighboring Niger, Chad and Cameroon, prompting a regional military response, the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF). More than 35,000 people have been killed and two million others displaced, sparking a dire humanitarian crisis in the region (Global Center for Responsibility to Protect, 2023) although the United Nations Development Programme's 2021 Report puts the number at 350,000 (UNDP, 2021). However, the UNDP figure includes those there were indirectly killed by the conflict. The Boko Haram split into two factions in mid-2016 – the one led Abubakar Shekau, known for suicide bombings and indiscriminate killings of civilians, and the one led by Abu Mus'ab Al-Barnawi, which attacks military and government targets and calls itself Islamic State of West Africa Province. As stated above, this paper looks at the high points as well as the missing links of the CJTF by focusing on the apparent excesses of the group as well as its likely transformation in future given similar trends elsewhere (Raleigh, 2016; Meagher, 2007).

B: Methodology

As a qualitative research, this paper use largely secondary sources which include published materials, audio, visual and internet materials related to the topic. However, in order to further validate these, anonymous interviews were conducted with victims of CJTF abuses as well as their relations, members of security agencies as well as some displaced persons in IDPs and those in Maiduguri metropolis. The study population was therefore drawn using two sampling techniques – the purposive and snowball. Since the researchers had a fair knowledge of the stakeholders in activities of CJTF, we identified the some members of the group, other security agencies particularly the military and police as well as the victims of the excesses of the CJTF. What necessitated the use of snowball was that the above set of respondents linked us up to other respondents and snowball sampling technique is that sampling technique in which the population units leads to new units (Dragan and Isaic-Maniu, 2013; Cohen and Arieli, 2011).

In-depth interviews were conducted both physically and virtually. The interviews were transcribed and analyzed manually. Because some of the interviews were conducted in Hausa and Kanuri, the services of professional translators were secured to translate them into English. In order to be certain meanings were not lost and or twisted, a forward and backward translation was carried out on the transcribed data with the help of an independent media professional.

C: The Civilian Joint Task Force: A Review of Literature

Many motives push human communities to organize in order to achieve certain goals. The need for security is one of such reasons. While some states and governments resort to the use of civil defense forces in order "to protect their territory from rebel groups" (Estancona, Bird, Hinkkainen and Bapat, 2018: 215) or "work independently of state to shield local population from insurgents" (Jentsch, Kalyvas and Schubiger, 2015: 755). Some civil militias are formed with religious, ethnic or even economic subplot. This is the case with Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda and the Janjaweed of Sudan (Stanton,

2015: 915-916). The goal of any civil militia is to protect communities from some form of threats to peace and security (Hoffmann, 2007).

Civil militia groups, rebellious and pro-government, are an important feature of protracted conflicts. Government backed militias are gaining more prominence in contemporary conflicts (Carey and Mitchell, 2019). Civil militia groups have been featuring as actors in many conflicts with different names in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Rwanda, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Sudan, and so on. In the Iraq conflict, United States government has used Sunni groups to fight Shia insurgents; in the Ukraine conflict pro-government militias have fought against Russian sponsored separatists.

However, the idea and use of civil militias have predated contemporary period. Anderson (2005) argued that it has a long history and was a feature of colonial security apparatus. Branch (2009) and Janowitz (1977) studied the use by colonial government in Kenya of a civil militia group to fight the Mau-Mau uprising, but Janowitz further looked at other cases especially the Colombian government's strategy of using the militias to fight the FARC rebels. Thompson (1966) also studied how the colonial government used the civil militias to address uprisings in Malaya and Vietnam. Thompson (1994) on other hand studied civil militia and mercenaries as tools for state building in Eastern Europe.

Civil militias can also be formed to address grievances and to also correct manifest injustices in society (Waal and Ibrek, 2013). But Schuberth (2015:303) has settled that civil defense groups are "citizens who organize themselves into groups to take the law into their own hands in order to reprimand criminals". He further stated that they are group of citizens "joined together for self-protection under conditions of disorder." This second definition by Schuberth (2015) appropriately captures the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF).

Despite their advantages, civil militias have been labeled with certain drawbacks. Steinert, Steiner and Carey (2019) argued that one of the disadvantages of civil militias is that they can engage in illegal ways to enrich themselves even at the expense of the law. In their words, they stated:

members of government-linked militias can enrich themselves through illegal means without fearing punishment from the state. They are unlikely to face negative repercussions for their illegal activities as long as the groups fulfill an important role in the government's counterinsurgency strategy (Steinert, Steiner and Carey, 2019: 251).

However, these are ways governments, especially authoritarian regimes, incentivize such groups mainly for regime protection. Contrary to some views, the transformation or even deliberate use of civil militias as instrument of violence by governments is not unique to Africa (Steinert, Steiner and Carey, 2019). Based on the foregoing, one can conclude that the idea of the civil militia can be anchored on two broad needs: the economic and political situation of the societies engulfed in crisis which creates vulnerabilities/insecurities and thereby the resolve to resolve to defend themselves; and, a legal backing by government for these informal groups to help the government address insecurity and other problems. These have been adequately tackled by scholars. Therefore, the intention of this paper is to look at the specific case of the CJTF and their excesses in Lake Chad region, particularly in Borno State which is the nucleus of Boko Haram insurgency.

D: The Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF): Nigeria's pro-Government Militia

...|eyes and ears of the security forces and are often the first responders to trouble.
(IRIN, 2014)

The origin of the Civilian Joint Task Force can be traced to the Hollywood movie-like courage of Baba Lawal Jafar when he confronted, caught and handed over an armed Boko Haram fighter to the security. That was the clip hanger that served as push for the youths to mobilize around and set up the CJTF in 2013 (Gana, 2020; Gana, 2019; Pieri and Zenn, 2016; Agbibo, 2015). The youths organized themselves according to neighborhoods and patrolled public gathering centers in their respective areas.

The governments of the different states – Borno, Yobe and Adamawa – affected by Boko Haram conflict adapted the groups and gave them names such that in Borno it is called the Youth Vanguard or the *Yan Gora*, in Yobe it is called Peace Group, and in Adamawa the *Sarkin Baka* (Gulyas, 2021). Within Shuwa Arab community in Borno and parts of Chad, the CJTF is called the *Kesh-Kesh* (Center for Civilians in Conflict, 2019: 1). But there are also the Agro Rangers that patrol the farmland areas of Borno. The governments provided motivation by way of giving allowances and logistics. The military authorities provide supervision as well as training (ADF, 2020). However, the most popular name they are called is the CJTF (this is in order to give them more morale and recognition).

The CJTF has recorded high successes in apprehending Boko Haram suspects, fighting alongside as well as providing intelligence to security forces. From 2013, they have helped the conventional security burst Boko Haram cells, hideouts and women Boko Haram informants. In metropolitan Maiduguri, the CJTF have contributed a lot in putting at bay the incessant attacks by the insurgents (Gana, 2019). They have also been used to augment the security for the Internally Displaced Camps in Borno State (Hassan and Pieri, 2018). Thus, one can say they are indispensable to the Lake Chad region's post conflict.

According to a 2017 report by the International Crisis Group, the CJTF "...makes military operations less blunt and more effective and have reconnected these states somewhat with many of their local communities" (International Crisis Group, 2017). Making the confrontation less likely to affect civilian population, therefore, indicates a highpoint for the CJTF and their importance in the fight against Boko Haram.

However, beyond the values pro government civil defense or militia groups provide in conflicts, they also have a tendency of transforming into a big conundrum for their communities and also international community (Bamidele, 2017: 87-94; Bamidele, 2016; Schuberth, 2015). "National heroes or coming anarchy? Vigilant youth and the war on terror in Nigeria" goes the title of Daniel Agbibo (2017) article. What are the current allegations and also what will the CJTF likely transform into in a post conflict of the Boko Haram crisis? Series of allegations bordering on human rights violations, extortion as well as serving double agent role for the Nigerian military and the Boko Haram have been levelled against the CJTF.

E: The CJTF and Human Rights Violations

The CJTF has been accused by local population and the IDPs for violating their rights. These allegations cover sexual assaults against women and children, personal vendetta against enemies, theft, extrajudicial killings and extortion (Odomovo, 2014; Mamah, 2013). These allegations have been corroborated by the

responses from our Informant A1, Informant A3 and Informant A5. On the case of sexual molestation of women and children, for instance, Informant A1 states: “It is open knowledge that women and children are sexually exploited by the CJTF and the conventional security in the IDPs and in regained territories. Sometimes, they (women) cooperate to sleep with them (conventional security and CJTF) in return for food or money or even differential treatment from other IDPs.” The most important problem to note after the fact that these atrocities are realities is that “...it is open knowledge...” and that the women *willingly* submit themselves to these people. This indicates a humanitarian catastrophe the Boko Haram crisis has caused as well as the need for immediate government response.

According to International Crisis Group (2017). “...they have also committed abuses and become involved in the war economy”. This allegation is given credence by our Informant A5, who charged that sexual exploitation of women and children does not only happen in IDPs but even in the towns. He stated that in an area of Maiduguri Metropolis, he knows of a case where two CJTF members kept exploiting a woman whose husband, a suspected Boko Haram, was at large. He also stated that the CJTF’s highhandedness and verbal insults at checkpoints manned by them is another source of trauma for the local population. According to him “...how they shout and act...they assume they are the military – when they are not!”

Informant A3 on the other hand stated that the CJTF have, no doubt assisted in reducing the conflict especially in the Maiduguri metropolis but that the many reports of human rights violations are towering to diminish their successes. He stated that extrajudicial killings also happen, but he has not witnessed one himself. Informant A4 stated that he and his brothers lost their sheep to theft by members of the CJTF. He said, however, the particular members were apprehended by the police and tried in court. They have been dismissed from the CJTF. Informant A2 on the other hand stated that his brother was wrongly accused to be a Boko Haram member by the CJTF. “They took him away and he has not returned. They killed him!” Asked further if he was tried in the courts, he said “No! If he was tried and it was done properly, they will know he was not Boko Haram. But they killed him and he was innocent”.

Informant A6, a middle ranking police officer, confirmed that cases of theft and burglary, and also physical assaults have been reported and said that the police investigates and deals with such cases appropriately. He however refused to respond to questions on extrajudicial killings as well as rapes committed by CJTF.

Reports have confirmed that the CJTF are involved in the extrajudicial executions in the northeast. Amnesty International (2014) charges that: “...horrific footage of detainees having their throats slit one by one and dumped into mass graves by men who appear to be the members of the Nigerian military and the “Civilian Joint Task Force”, (CJTF), a state-sponsored militia”. The International Crisis Group (2017) gives credence to this allegations. However, the Nigerian government and the military have denied such occurrence.

F: The CJTF: A *White Devil* in a Post Conflict Future?

In addressing this article’s second question as to what the CJTF will likely transform into in a post conflict of the Boko Haram crisis, it will also be good to look at both the advantages the group gives the government and the military as well as the possible blowbacks it portends.

Members of the CJTF have become hardened because most of them have engaged in combat alongside the military. And therefore given their exposure to violence, they may constitute another problem for the Lake Chad region in the future unless government and other stakeholders make a very good plan for them in any post conflict framework. With a dwindling economy and widespread poverty, the Lake Chad region will continue to be fertile ground for potential conflicts especially with the presence of an untamed CJTF that is involved in a series of human rights violations.

Secondly, there is another time bomb ticking – the tensions between the CJTF and other vigilante groups including the Borno Youth Empowerment Scheme (BOYES) and the *Kungiyar Maharba* (The Hunters Group). These tensions are mainly bordered on recognition and support from government (Center for Civilians in Conflict, 2018). The BOYES is funded with monthly stipend and has united with the CJTF and are being given some training. However, the hunters group are not trained, receive minimal support and are not recognized by international stakeholders although the local communities do. A post conflict scenario with these can provide further grounds for conflicts and tensions in the region. Rivalry between or among them can create new tensions that can collapse any post conflict framework. However, the governor of Borno State argues that “the Civilian JTF is not a potential threat to peace in the region because their operations are legalized” (Omoniyi, 2019).

G: Conclusion and Recommendations

In sum, despite its significance in the fight against Boko Haram insurgency, the CJTF is also a ‘white devil’ in that the several atrocities it commits against civilian population are objectionable violations of established norms and international law. For the CJTF to be more effective, there is need for a holistic approach by government to monitor their activities, continue supporting them with logistics and training. Where they are found wanting the government must also sanction the group and its members.

Given global experiences of the transformation of civil militias into organized rebellion against governments and lethal threats to community peace, leaving the CJTF in the Lake Chad region without proper demobilization/disengagement and or cooption into the military, police or paramilitary services will be a double jeopardy for the already weak and volatile security atmosphere in the region. Therefore, government must devise a plan that will coopt them into the conventional military as that will increase the military’s numerical strength in the Boko Haram war.

Governments of the Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroon must continue to collaborate in the fight against Boko Haram by using alternative options such as the civil militias without sacrificing the conventional methods. These governments must cultivate the native intelligence of their people – that is, community service, upon which the idea of the CJTF is founded, in order to address Boko Haram crisis in the region. Academic research can be commissioned ways in which the native intelligence capacities of the people in the Lake Chad region will be harnessed and used as operational codes by the CJTF.

References:

- ADF (2020). “Nigeria’s Agro Rangers Shield Farmers from Boko Haram Raids” October 14. <https://adf-magazine.com/2020/10/nigerias-agro-rangers-shield-farmers-from-boko-haram-raids/>.
- African Affairs*, Vol. 106, No. 425, pp. 639–662. <https://blogs.uw.edu/djh13/files/2017/09/Hoffman-Meaning.pdf>.
- Agbiboa, D. (2015). Resistance to Boko Haram: Civilian Joint Task Forces in North-Eastern Nigeria. *Conflict Studies Quarterly*, Special Issue, pp. 3-22. <http://www.csq.ro/wp-content/uploads/1-Daniel-AGBIBOA.pdf>.
- Agbiboa, D. E. (2017). “National heroes or coming anarchy? Vigilant youth and the war on terror in Nigeria,” *Critical Studies on Terrorism*. Vol. 11, No. 2, pp. 1-23.
- Alozieuwa, S. H. O. (2021). Review of the Evolution of the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF). *African Journal of Terrorism and Insurgency Research*, Vol. 2, Issue 3.
- Amnesty International (2014). “Nigeria: Gruesome footage implicates military in war crimes” August 5. Found at: www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2014/08/nigeria-gruesome-footage-implicates-military-war-crimes. Accessed: September 20, 2020.
- Anderson, D. (2005). *Histories of the hanged: The Dirty War in Kenya and the End of Empire*. New York: W.W. Norton and Co.
- Bamidele, O. (2016). Civilian Joint Task Force’ (CJTF) – A Community Security Option: A Comprehensive and Proactive Approach of Reducing Terrorism. *Journal for Deradicalization*, Special Issue, No. 7, pp. 124-144. <https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/40/55>.
- Bamidele, S. (2017). The Civilian Joint Task Force and the Struggle against Insurgency in Borno State, Nigeria. *African Conflict and Peacebuilding Review*, Vol. 7, No. 2, pp. 85–98. <https://doi.org/10.2979/africonfpeacrevi.7.2.04>.
- Branch, D. (2009). *Defeating Mau Mau, creating Kenya: Counterinsurgency, civil war, and decolonization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Center for Civilians in Conflict (2018). “Civilian Perceptions of the Yan Gora (CJTF) in Borno State, Nigeria”. Being a Report. Washington D.C.: Center for Civilians in Conflict.
- Center for Civilians in Conflict (2019). Nigerian Community Militias: Toward a Solution. https://civiliansinconflict.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Issue-Brief_Africa_Final_Web.pdf.
- Cohen, N. and Arieli, T. (2011). Field research in conflict environments: Methodological challenges and snowball sampling. *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 48, No. 4, pp. 423-435. http://www.europhd.net/sites/europhd/files/images/onda_2/07/27th_lab/scientific_materials/pop/cohen_arrielli_2011.pdf.
- Dragan, I. and Isaic-Maniu, A. (2013). Snowball Sampling Completion. *Journal of Studies in Social Sciences*, Vol. 5, No. 2, pp. 160-177. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/229607586.pdf>.
- Estancona, C., Bird, L., Hinkkainen, K. and Bapat, N. (2018). Civilian Self-Defense Militias in Civil War. *International Interactions*, Vol. 45, No. 2, pp. 215-266. https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/138345/1/II_accept_9_14.pdf.
- Gana, M. L. (2020). Strategy of Civilian Joint Task Force Militia in Combating Boko Haram in Northern Nigeria. *International Journal of Legal Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1.

<https://cejsh.icm.edu.pl/cejsh/element/bwmeta1.element.ceon.element-aca1bb06-8140-3bc4-abee-44bfc4612c13/c/pdf-01.3001.0014.3126.pdf>.

- Gana, M. L., (2019). "Militia Participation in Counterinsurgency: The Impetus of Civilian Joint Task Force Participation in Combating Boko Haram in Nigeria" in *RUDN Journal of Political Science*, Vol.21.3, pp.460-469.
- Global Center for the Responsibility to Protect (2023). Populations at Risk: Nigeria. <https://www.globalr2p.org/countries/nigeria/>.
- Gulyas, A. (2021). The Role of the Civilian Joint Task Force in the Improvement of Security in Borno State, Nigeria. *Journal of Central and Eastern European African Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 32-48. <https://jceas.bdi.uni-obuda.hu/index.php/jceas/article/view/28/30>.
- Hassan, I. and Pieri, Z. (2018). "The Rise and Risks of Nigeria's Civilian Joint Task Force: Implications for Post-Conflict Recovery in Northeastern Nigeria" in Zenn, J. (ed.) *Boko Haram Beyond the Headlines: Analyses of Africa's Enduring Insurgency*. West Point: Combating Terrorism Center.
- Hoffmann, D. (2007). The Meaning of a Militia: Understanding the Civil Defense Forces Of Sierra Leone.
- International Crisis Group (2017). "Watchmen of the Lake Chad: Vigilante Groups Fighting Boko Haram" *Africa Report* 244. Found at: www.crisisgroup.org/africa/west-africa/nigeria/244-watchmen-lake-chad-vigilante-groups-fighting-boko-haram. Accessed: September 20, 2020.
- Janowitz, M. (1977). *Military institutions and coercion in the developing nations*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Jentzsch, C., Kalyvas, S. N., and Schubiger, L. I. (2015). Militias in Civil Wars. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 59, No. 5, 755–769. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24546326>.
- Mamah, E. (2013). "Human Rights Monitor raises alarm over Activities of Civilian JTF" in *The Vanguard*. Found at: www.vanguardnews.com/2013/07/human-rights-monitor-raises-alarm-over-activities-of-civilian-jtf. Accessed: October 15, 2020.
- McCannell, R. (2012). The "Foreign Terrorist Designation" of Boko Haram: Case Study. Case Study # 0417-02 PKSOI Trends Global Case Study Series. <https://pksoi.armywarcollege.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/The-Foreign-Terrorist-Designation-of-Boko-Haram.pdf%20Ryan%20McCannell>.
- Meagher, K. (2007). Hijacking Civil Society: The Inside Group of South-Eastern Nigeria. *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 45, No. 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0022278X06002291.
- Odomovo, A. S. (2014). "Insurgency, Counter-Insurgency and Human Rights Violations in Nigeria," *The Age of Human Rights Journal*, Vol. 3.
- Omoniyi, T. (2019). "Civilian JTF not a potential threat" in *The Premium Times* July 18. Found at: www.premiumtimesng.com/regional/north-east/341627-civilian-jtf-not-a-potential-threat-security-borno-governor.html.
- Perouse de Montclos, M. (2014). Boko Haram and politics: From insurgency terrorism. Perouse de Montclos, M. (Ed.) *Boko Haram: Islamism, politics, security and the state in Nigeria*. Leiden: African Studies Centre. West African Politics and Society Series.
- Pieri, Z.P. and Zenn, J., (2016). 'The Boko Haram Paradox: Ethnicity, Religion, and Historical Memory in Pursuit of a Caliphate'. *African Security*. Vol. 9.1 pp. 66-88.

- Raleigh, C. (2016). Pragmatic and Promiscuous: Explaining the Rise of Competitive Political Militias across Africa. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*. Vol. 60, No. 2, pp. 283–310. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24755912>.
- Schuberth, M. (2015) “The Challenge of Community-Based Armed Groups: Towards a Conceptualization of Militias, Gangs and Vigilantes” in *Contemporary Security Policy* Vol. 36, No. 2. Retrieved: August 17, 2020.
- Shuaibu, S. S. and Salleh, M. A. (2015). Historical Evolution of Boko Haram in Nigeria: Causes and Solutions. Proceedings of ICIC2015 – International Conference on Empowering Islamic Civilization in the 21st Century, Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin, Malaysia, 6-7 September. e-ISBN: 978-967-13705-0-6. https://www.unisza.edu.my/icic/images/Fullpaper/20_-_Salisu_Salisu_Shuaibu.pdf.
- Stanton, J. A. (2015). Regulating Militias: Governments, Militias, and Civilian Targeting in Civil War. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 59, No. 5, 899–923. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24546332>.
- Steinert, C. V., Steinert, J. I., & Carey, S. C. (2019). Spoilers of peace: Pro-government militias as risk factors for conflict recurrence. *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 56, No. 2, pp. 249–263. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/48595941>.
- The Economist, “The Volunteers who help beat Boko Haram are becoming a problem”, September 22, 2016. Found at: www.economist.com/middle-east-and-africa/2016/09/29/the-home-guard.
- Thompson, R. G. K. (1966). *Defeating Communist insurgency: experiences from Malaya and Vietnam*. London: Chatto and Windus.
- Thomson, J. E. (1994). *Mercenaries, pirates, and sovereigns: state-building and extraterritorial violence in early modern Europe*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Thurston, A. (2016). ‘The disease is unbelief’: Boko Haram’s religious and political worldview. The Brookings Project on U.S. Relations with the Islamic World Analysis Paper No. 22. https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/brookings-analysis-paper_alex-thurston_final_web.pdf.
- UNDP (2021). Conflict Analysis in the Lake Chad Basin 2020-2021: Trends, developments and implications for peace and stability. <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2022-08/Conflict%20Analysis%20in%20the%20Lake%20Chad%20Basin.pdf>.
- Waal, A. and Ibek, R. (2013), “Hybrid Social Movements in Africa,” *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* Vol. 31, No. 2.

Authors' Biography

Muhammad Reza SULEIMAN holds a faculty position in the Department of Political Science and International Studies, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. He has publications on foreign policy, democracy and development in local and international journal.

Tukur BELLO is a lecturer in the Department of Political Science, Al Qalam University, Katsina. His degrees were obtained from the prestigious Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. He is widely published and has attended different local and international conferences.