

# CHAPTER 30

## MUSIC, A POTENTIAL TOOL IN HOMELAND SECURITY AND COUNTER-TERRORISM: NIGERIA IN PERSPECTIVE

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### Abstract

In Nigeria, it is apparent that different security personnel are saddled with the responsibilities of fighting terrorism using a face-to-face approach with different ammunitions and war gadgets for so many years now. Regrettably, it appears that nothing is being done to curb the resultant effects of terrorism in Nigeria, as terrorist activities are still in the progressive dimension. Terrorism, as a complex global phenomenon requires multiple techniques and approaches. If there is any other measure, technique or approach to be employed in the fight against insecurity and terrorism in Nigeria, music is a potential tool in this regard. The mission of music against terrorism is to underscore the futility of violence. This paper was designed to explore different ways music could be used in homeland security and counter-terrorism in Nigeria. To achieve this, the concept of terrorism, brief historical trends of terrorism in Nigeria, objectives, targets of attack, and modus operandi have been meticulously articulated. In conclusion, the author recommends that Government should establish a Federal Ministry of Entertainment charged with the responsibility of ensuring that songs released by these contemporary musicians are screened and certified for National integration that will foster peace within the country.

**Keywords:** Music, A Potential tool, Homeland security, Counter-Terrorism

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### Introduction

A time exists in the history of Nigeria when terrorism was insignificant to the Government of the Federation and the Policymakers in Nigeria. During this time, the major concern of the Government was on various ways of curbing illicit drugs, child trafficking and unwanted

pregnancies. Despite having multifarious ethnicities, Nigeria was once at peace with each other. The economy was booming. Ethnic discrimination was not too noticeable as it is now. There were no nationalist separatist groups. Governance in that era was based on competence and capabilities devoid of ethnic considerations. But recently, Nigeria has fallen apart in terms of the security of lives and properties. The lives of innocent Nigerians are being cut short on daily basis due to different forms of terrorist attacks. Different measures which have been taken to curb the menace by the Nigerian Government appeared not to be yielding any meaningful results. This paper argued that music is a potential tool in homeland security. Through music, people from different ethnic groups are brought into the interactive relationship, harmony and integration and where there is harmony and integration, terrorism becomes thing of the past.

### **Terrorism**

The term 'terrorism' just like beauty, is in the eyes of beholders. One man's freedom fighter is another man's terrorist. This is why the definition of terrorism is a difficult concept to decipher and it has been a veritable source of contention in the domain of academia and even, the policy makers for decades of years. While some scholars aligned with open-ended definitions, others have delineated several definitions but all seemed to explore and encompass the basic elements that typify what terrorism is. According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 'terrorism' is the use of violent acts to frighten the people in an area as a way of trying to achieve a political goal. **UN Security Council Resolution (2004)**, asserts that 'terrorism' is a criminal act, including, against civilians, committed with the intent to cause death or serious bodily injury, or taking of hostages, with the purpose to provoke a state of terror in the general public or a group of persons or particular persons, intimidate a population or compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act. **FBI's** definition of terrorism is “the unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a Government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives. Terrorism is defined as the systematic use of violence and intimidation to coerce a government or community into acceding to specific political demands (Pearsall & Trumble, 2006). Article 2 of the draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism according to Adedire, S.A; Ake, M & Olowojolu, O. (2016) defined terrorism as:

Any person who commits an offence within the meaning of this Convention if that person, by any means, unlawfully and intentionally, causes: death or serious bodily injury to any person; or serious damage to public or private property, including a place of public use, a state or government facility, a public transportation system, an infrastructure facility or the environment; or damage to property, places, facilities, or systems referred to in paragraph 1 (b) of this article, resulting or likely to result in major economic loss, when

the purpose of the conduct, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population or to compel a government or an international organization to do or abstain from doing any act (Pp 67-74).

Hombey as cited in Danbaba, A.V.M, BG. (2012) observed that 'terrorism' is a form of rebellion against the state or constituted authority. However, the most widely accepted definition of terrorism is that it is a special form of clandestine, undeclared and unconventional warfare waged without any humanitarian restraints or rules. In other words, it is the use of violence either singly or in groups, military and non-military, directed against government or individuals to cause political change or extension of diplomacy or political ideology by one state against another or by a group of individuals against the state.

### **Brief Historical Trends of Terrorism in Nigeria**

Many historians acknowledged that 'terrorism' in Nigeria started in the pre-colonial era and colonial era. Oyeniyi in Eke (2012) remarked that during this era, secret societies were involved in acts of terrorism such as killings, lootings, armed robbery and perversion of justice and so on. Most of them were used by the Local Chiefs as agents of terror to eliminate opponents and threaten the opposition (p. 423). Oshita as cited in Eke (2012) asserts that colonialism remains the most brutal form of terrorism in the history of Nigeria with deep roots in the economic and political agendas (p. 424). Akanji (2007) noted that during the colonial era, the British government began a system of repression against the people, not only in the Niger Delta but also in the South East region of Nigeria with the forceful removal of established traditional rulers and replacing them with colonial stooges through the introduction of the indirect-rule and appointment of warrant chiefs. Examples are the removal of King Jaja of Opobo, Nana Olomu of Itshekiri and William Dappa Peple of Bonny and other traditional chiefs in the Eastern region because they opposed British imperialism and the exploitation of their people (pp. 55-65).

Shortly after these eras, terrorism in Nigeria assumed different dimensions both in scope, weaponry and strategies as a result of the killing of the Editor-in-Chief of News-Watch-Magazine Dele Giwa, on October 19, 1986, during the regime of General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida, through calculated and predetermined letter bomb. When the news broke out, Nigerians were shocked and speechless. This is because nobody ever believed nor imagined at all that Nigeria could be among the catalogue of nations where political buccaneers attack people with parcel bombs. However, the annulment of the June 12 presidential election which Bashiru M.K.O Abiola was popularly acclaimed to have won brought a new phase of terrorism in Nigeria. Important personalities were killed and numerous properties worth millions were shattered. Metropolitan cities were deserted in a twinkle of an eye due to a follow-up riot that broke out in many parts of Nigeria. Having seen that the pressure was much for him to continue in office, Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida bowed down and stepped aside in August 1993 and installed an

interim government headed by Chief Ernest Shonekan.

Immediately Chief Ernest Shonekan took over the interim government, Nigerians were terrified due to lots of terrorist activities that accompanied his administration. One of the prominent activities of the terrorist during this time was the highjack of one of the Nigerian Airways 'Airbus A330' with one hundred and forty nine (149) passengers on board by a notable group of Nigerians known as 'Movement for the Advancement of Democracy' (MAD) and diverted the Airbus to Niamey, the Capital City of Niger Republic. The ringleader of that very act was a man called Jerry Yusuf. Thereafter, 'James Ajibola Idowu Ige also known as Chief Bola Ige, on the 23rd of December 2001 in Ibadan was assassinated. He was the former Attorney General and Minister for Justice of the Federation. As that was not enough, assassination and politically motivated killings became the norm even in the Capital City of Nigeria, Abuja. Finally, it escalated to what we have now in Nigeria which ranges from Boko Haram, Fulani Herdsmen MEND and Unknown Gun Men etc.

### **Objectives of terrorism**

The objectives of terrorist groups are not the same. They have different objectives depending on the reasons why such terrorist groups emerged. Using Nigeria as a reference point, the steering forces of major terrorist groups include ideological variations, political agitations, regional demands, political marginalization, religious differences and quick money syndrome.

### **Targets of attacks of terrorist**

The major targets of terrorist attacks in Nigeria are mainly; security personnel, military installations and hard wares, populated areas, government officials, markets and plazas, commuter parks, diplomatic buildings, government institutions, Churches and Mosques amongst others.

### **Modus operandi of a terrorist group**

To accomplish their missions and objectives, terrorist groups have chosen to;

- Apply different grenades to kill the masses while they are asleep.
  - Use cars loaded with explosions to bomb populated areas.
  - Disguise in different ways to suit their targeted audience.
  - Physically raid civilians in their various abodes.
  - Bury heavy dynamite on the grounds detonate immediately after someone stepped on it.
- etc

### **Music as a potential tool in homeland security and counter-terrorism**

In Nigeria and even, in the international communities, it is evident that different security personnel are saddled with the responsibilities of fighting terrorism using a face-to-face approach

with different ammunitions and communication gadgets. Ojukwu (2017) observed that 'in the wake of the current security challenges and social instability in Nigeria today, there is a great need to employ a broad range of measures in dealing with the situation' (p. 98). If there are any other measures to be employed in the fight against insecurity and terrorism in Nigeria, music is a potential tool in this regard. Just as a trumpeter looks for his or her mouthpiece before the performance, music is seen as a mouthpiece of every Nation bringing to the public domain the consequences and ineffectuality of violence and terrorism through the libretto of songs. In other words, musicians cannot fight terrorism through direct combatant with the terrorist but through the lyrics of their music. A typical example of this is the recent anti-Boko haram song released by a group of Nigerian soldiers while in the Sambisa forest. The messages conveyed through the lyrics of that particular song are a great weapon to counter the activities of the Boko haram sect. It is on record that Boko haram justifies their actions when they kill by calling on Allah but this group of soldiers composed an anti-Boko haram song to counter their justification of killings in a music video that has gone viral. The lyrics of the song asked the Boko haram to stop using "Allah" to justify their killings as Allah is great and does not kill people. The lyric to the song goes thus;

No dey use Allahu Akbar dey kill people.  
Allah is great, e nor dey kill person.  
Boko haram they dey kill people,  
Allah is great, e nor dey kill person.

There is no doubt that this particular music will get to the Boko haram sect and it is only God can tell how it will influence them. Sometimes, lyrics of discipline and moral values are entrenched in most of the songs composed by contemporary composers to inculcate a sense of discipline among our youths. With music, freedom, justice and equality in our society are conquered and expressed. It facilitates communication which goes beyond words, enables meaning to be shared and promotes the development of an individual group. Through music, people from different ethnic groups are brought into the interactive relationship, harmony and integration and where there is harmony and integration, the act of terrorism will cease to be a reality but a dream. Since music deals with familiar themes and issues of the moment and, it is a language of the soul that knows no bounds, it could be applied in countering terrorism in Nigeria. It is a medium through which the terrorist could be persuaded to re-think as they stand to gain nothing from a such terrorist act. Okafor as cited in Ojukwu (2017) speaking in favour of music in social stability maintains that:

Music helps to bring a lot of stability into the mind. It not only provides punctuation to the tedium and rhythm of work but also helps to keep the mind from running wild, and not being a destructive force within the individual (p. 102).

The uniting force of music can also be seen in this piece of music composed by Oyedeji, B.A. It is called "Great Nigeria". The libretto of the song is as follows.

Nigeria, Nigeria  
Nigeria, the land of blessings,  
Land of salient people,  
Land of richest, cultural heritage  
Famous round the world,  
Giant of Africa, let us Unite,  
To build one Nigeria.

Refrain: Let's come together, let's come together  
To build one great, one great, one great  
One great Nigeria.

The short musical piece above has tremendous implications for the current calls for division in Nigeria as a result of bad governance. If Nigerians could listen to the above songs and even more that were not listed here, abide by and implements the lyrics of the songs both in heart, body and mind, the current security challenges we have now will become a thing of the past.

### **Recommendation**

Since it is explicit in this paper that music facilitates communications and has a uniting force that can judiciously be applied to counter terrorism in Nigeria, the following recommendations were made by the author.

- Musicians especially musicologists should be encouraged to compose songs that have moral values, emphasizing the futility of violence and preaching unity with their musical lyrics.
- Government should establish a Federal Ministry of Entertainment charged with the responsibility of ensuring that songs released by these contemporary musicians are screened and certified for National integration that will foster peace within the country.

If these recommendations are properly implemented, the fight Nigeria is leading against terrorism will cease to be a dream but a reality.

### **Conclusion**

It has been seen that the greatest weapon of music against terrorism lies in the lyrics of the songs. Music is seen as a mouthpiece of a Nation, uniting people of different religions, building trust and relationships, enabling meaning to be shared and facilitating communication which goes beyond words. This discourse has brought to the public domain different ways music could be used in combating terrorism in Nigeria and the author hopes that the Nigerian government would implement the above two recommendations.

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