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**Peacebuilding: The Option for Security and Development  
in the Northeast Nigeria**

**Dr. RAJI Rafiu Boye, Salisu Uba**

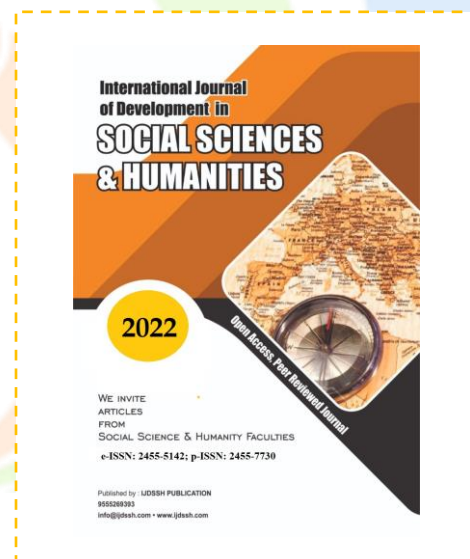
Department of Political Science, Faculty of Social and Management Sciences,  
Yobe State University, Damaturu

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## ABSTRACT

Peace-building is an activity that comes before, during, and after a conflict, crisis, or war. Peace-building aims to prevent the re-occurrence of conflict. Where there is conflict, peace-making is engaged to resolve its causes. It attempts to keep the peace no matter how fragile it may be. Peace-building tries to reach out to the warring parties to make and sign peace agreements. It also involves implementing peace-building attempts at rebuilding the institutions and infrastructures torn by conflict, crisis, strife, and building bonds of peaceful mutual benefit among people previously in disagreement. Peace-building addresses the causes of conflicts: such as social injustice, and religious intolerance, including economic, political, and developmental factors involved in the origin of conflicts. The insurgency in Northeast Nigeria lasted more than a decade. It had taken a severe toll on property, economic development, and political aspects of the population. This paper viewed that the application of peace-building to the resolution of the crisis in the region will serve the required intention of returning peace. The research uses a qualitative method for data collection and analysis. It recommends that the Federal Government of Nigeria constitute a high-level delegation to reach out to the aggrieved groups for dialogue through non-violent diplomacy mechanisms, for a resolution to end the insurgency. The "Operation Safe Corridor" programme alone is not sufficient because it opens ways only for willing members, meaning that those unwilling can continue causing problems. However, a well-coordinated high-power committee, including the international organizations, should be involved in the peaceful resolution of the security crisis in Northeast Nigeria.

**Keywords:** *Northeast Nigeria, conflict, peace-building, security, development.*

## INTRODUCTION

Since the outbreak of the insurgency in the Northeast beginning in 2009, the security and development of the region have been negatively affected. A large portion of the region's population has lost its productive power resulting in displacement and an unfavorable enabling environment. The Boko Haram insurgency crisis commenced with killing, maiming, and burning of villages and townships in the region. The activities were prominent in Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe states. These had led to the destruction of structures, schools, masjids, churches, bridges, and electricity/ water supply systems. Worst is the effect on the livelihood that led people to flee their communities in search of safety. The crisis equally drove out

the non-natives of the region that constitute the backbone of its businesses and development.

By 2016, the population of those displaced by the insurgency had risen to 1,920,471. The majority of the IDPs were in Borno (1,525,404), followed by Yobe (139,550) and Adamawa (132,626) (DTM, 2016). The International Rescue Committee (IRC) (2016) reported that a mere 8% of this displaced population lives in official camps and receives institutional support. An estimated 7 million people require humanitarian assistance, with another 3 million in need of food assistance in the region. The IRC asserted that the IPC scale lists the region at Level 4—humanitarian emergency. Over 1.5 million displaced

people are in acute need of shelter, food, clean water, healthcare, and education.

The cost of destruction incurred in the crisis as narrated in 2016 by the spokesperson of Yobe state government, Abdullahi Bego, was worth \$149 Million. That of Borno was estimated to be \$5.9 Billion. These include the destruction of 1098 health centers and classrooms, 5,168 vehicles, and 109,267 livestock. Also, hundreds of villages were destroyed, while the villagers became IDPs in the township and the capital city. These have caused economic and social disruption and thus insecurity. Repairing these damages requires peace-building for peace, security, and development to be restored.

The Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN), the state government, and International Non-Governmental Organizations have attempted to resolve the security challenges without success. The mechanism chosen by those involved seemed faulty, hence the elusive results. The option of peace-building proposed by this research bore some active ingredients for overcoming the crisis being experienced in the region. Peace-building should aim at security and development, the twin elements required for the advancement of the North East, for a brighter posterity.

The research attempts to show the prospects of peace-building for security and development through its application to the current situation in the northeast region.

The term peace-building injects into the world of conflict dictionary with former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's "An Agenda for Peace" identified as one of the several instruments available to address violent conflicts. Initially defined as:

Post-conflict action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace to avoid a relapse into conflict. However, it was gradually expanded to refer to integrated approaches to address violent conflict at different phases of the conflict cycle. Thus, conflict prevention and peace-building are often considered two sides of the same coin (Tschirgi, 2003).

The introduction of the military force to dislodge the Yusuffiyya sect in July 2009, and the subsequent deployment of the Joint Military Task Force (JTF), the Civilian JTF, the Multi-National Joint Military Task Force (MJTF), seems not to be very effective in ending the scourge of the insurgency. The affected communities continue wallowing in backwardness, abject poverty, pauperization, impoverishment, and displacement. These approaches deserve a change in tactics in ending the insurgency, and peace-building seems to be an option. Peace-building shall introduce peaceful ways of ending the dispute, check and resolve the causes of the

conflict, and prescribe an antidote for preventing future re-occurrence of the insurgency in the region.

Resolving the conflict will involve knowing the true causes of the insurgency. The UNDP (2018) believes that the conflict is triggered by a structural development deficit, including a sense of grievance between some sections of the society and the government, lack of trust in the police and other security apparatus, unemployment, and wants prominent among voluntary recruits. Other identified root causes of the conflict include unequal access to services and justice, ineffective governance, low human security, lack of economic opportunity, infrastructure, and environmental degradation, resulting in communities in the region feeling marginalized and aggrieved. The present research sees other causes of the insurgency as voodooist, getting-rich-quick syndrome, and greediness. Since the situation has degenerated into armed insurgency, the solution lies in peace-building. Brechenmacher (2018) concludes that Boko Haram's resilience highlights the limits of a purely military solution to Nigeria's conflict; a broader demobilization, rehabilitation, and reintegration strategy is necessary.

### ***Concepts of peace-building***

Peace-building is a long-term process of encouraging people to talk, repairing

relationships, and reforming institutions. For a positive change to last, everyone affected by a destructive conflict has to be involved in the process of peace-building. Transforming relationships is key to putting an end to violence.

Peace-building is generally seen as a process that facilitates the establishment of durable peace and which tries to prevent the recurrence of violence by addressing root causes and the effects of violent conflict through reconciliation, institution building, and political as well as economic transformation.

Peace-building is a process of strengthening a society's capacity to manage conflict in non-violent ways (inter-peace website). The term peace-building first emerged in the 1970s through the work of Galtung (1976:290) who called for the creation of peace-building structures to promote sustainable peace by addressing the 'root causes' of violent conflicts and supporting indigenous capacities for conflict management and conflict resolution. Since then, the term peace-building has covered a multidimensional exercise and tasks ranging from the disarming of warring factions to the rebuilding of political, economic, judicial, and civil society institutions. Galtung opines that conflict resolution mechanisms - peace-building, peacemaking, etc:

Should be built into the structure of the society and be remained there as a reservoir for the system itself to draw upon, just as a healthy body has the ability to generate its own antibodies and does not need ad hoc administration of medicine (1976: 298).

Even in 1992 when the concept of peace-building was used by the Secretary-General, his intention was not to resolve the conflict and abandon the conflicting parties to themselves, fearing reverting to skirmish. He categorized peace-building as a programme aimed:

. . . to develop agriculture, improve transportation or utilize resources such as water or electricity that they need to share, or joint programmes through which barriers between nations are brought down by means of freer travel, cultural exchanges, and mutually beneficial youth and educational projects. Reducing hostile perceptions through educational exchanges and curriculum reform . . . (Boutros-Ghali, 1992: 56).

The argument is that often ‘the pendulum of peace-building analysis is swung from one extreme to the other. Killingsworth (2013) cited Paris who seeks to establish a middle ground between what he describes as these ‘extremely positive and extremely negative views of peace-building’. Also, Campbell, Chandler, and Sabaratnam complained about the instability of peace-building at the teething stage and the bashing that scholars threw at the subscribers to the theory. Because peace-building has been broadly used, it’s often been an ill-defined term connoting activities that go beyond crisis intervention such as long-term horizon of protracted intermediate conflicts and wars, and develop a comprehensive, multifaceted strategy for ending violence and achieving sustained reconciliation (Lederach, 1997:33). Peace-building includes building the capacity of non-governmental organizations such as religious institutions for peacemaking and peace-building as well as a global partnership for peace-building that involves addressing social and political sources of conflicts as well as reconciliation. Peace-building does not start and stop with the launch and termination of military operations and shedding of fire and tactical operations. Rather, peace-building is understood as a comprehensive concept that encompasses, generates, and sustains the full array of processes, approaches, and stages

needed to transform crisis toward more sustainable, peaceful relationships (Lederach, 1997:8). That is why the British Army describes peace-building as

Actions which support political, economic, social and military measures and structures aiming to strengthen and solidify political settlement in order to redress the causes of conflict. These mechanisms to identify and support structures that tend to consolidate peace, advance a sense of confidence and well-being and support economic reconstruction (1997:2).

Majority of efforts towards ending the insurgency crisis in the North East put more emphasis on structural transformation, with a primary focus on the use of force. Peace-building is a distinct idea. For instance, peacemaking involves stopping an ongoing conflict, whereas peace-building happens before a conflict erupts. Peacekeeping (the JTF and CJTF) prevents the resumption of fighting following a violent crisis; it does not address the underlying causes of violence or work to create societal change, as peace-building does. It also differs from peace-building in that it only occurs after the conflict has slowed down, not before it begins. Even conflict resolutions include some components of peace-building, such as

state building and socio-economic development.

Peace-building, as a strategy, according to United Nations Peace-building Support Office (2007):

must be coherent and tailored to specific needs of the country concerned, based on national ownership, and should comprise a carefully prioritized, sequenced, and therefore a relatively narrow set of activities aimed at achieving the above objectives” (UNPBSO, 2007: 5).

Conflict and wars are complex, insurgent crises are more intricate and difficult to unravel. They cannot be resolved overnight. However, with patience, creativity, the commitment of the high authorities concerned and dialogue, it is possible to transform conflicting societies into more peaceful ones. Therefore, any activity deployed by the FGN and supported by the International Non-Governmental Organizations must be sustained and tailored toward addressing the root causes of the insurgency in the North East.

The International Association for Humanitarian Policy and Conflict Research (2007-2008) notes that peace-building has tangible and intangible dimensions. Tangible dimensions include: “the number of weapons destroyed, soldiers demobilized, jobs created,

or dialogues held". The intangible dimensions include: "reconciliation between former antagonists, trust in public institutions, and new norms of dispute resolution". Thus, while focus is given more to tangible outputs, it is noted that the intangible and qualitative process of change "are much more difficult to induce and assess" when crisis or war is unending.

However, the ignition of "Operation Save Corridor" aimed at reducing the foot-soldiers and supporter of the Boko Haram insurgent group and a good aspect of peace-building did not work as expected. The number of renegading repented BHT is about to ruin the OPS initiation. Moreover, the opinion of the stakeholders across the affected communities in the North East should be sought. For instance, Raji (2020) opines that

Peace-building cannot succeed without the cooperation and ownership of the people who are been helped. Lasting peace cannot be imposed (has been done, currently) from outside; it must be generated from within. This implies that local people must be actively involved in setting the agendas for peace-building, as well as leading participants in the process (2020: 60).

Therefore, the involvement of the communities concerned usually precipitates the success of peace-building worldwide.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study adopts a theoretical approach for explanation and interpretation of the context of the paper. Thus, the qualitative method was used for data collection and analysis. Secondary data were consulted, including journal articles, policy documents, books, newspapers and magazines, and internet sources. The data generated were analyzed using content analysis.

### ***Why do we need peace-building?***

Peace-building attempts to address the underlying causes of conflict, assisting communities in resolving their differences peacefully and laying the foundations for preventing future conflicts. The number of violence has increased dramatically in the North East since 2010. The region urgently needs to respond differently. Violent conflict affects everyone; wars prevent communities from developing, stop children from going to school, and make it harder for people to access healthcare. Poverty then drives more conflict, and the cycle continues.

The need for peace-building is everywhere because peace-building, according to Lederach (1997) and Hazen (2007), refers to only post-conflict or post-crisis contexts.

Galtung (1976) used the term broadly to refer to any stage of the conflict. Before conflict becomes violent, preventive peace-building efforts, including economic, social, educational, health, legal, and security sector reform programmes meant to address potential sources of instability and violence, should be tackled. Peace-building efforts should aim to manage, mitigate, resolve and transform central aspects of the conflict through official diplomacy, the civil society peace processes, and informal dialogue, negotiation, and mediation. Peace-building addresses economic, social and political root causes of violence and fosters reconciliation to prevent the return of structural and direct violence.

International peace-building actors have invested heavily in a ‘good governance’ agenda over the past decades, encouraging and compelling post-conflict governments to adopt administrative and financial practices that are transparent and efficient. The logic behind this is clear: bad governance, discriminatory practices, and corruption are factors behind the onset and continuation of violent conflict in the North East region. Therefore, addressing unscrupulous governance, corruption and discrimination will lessen/minimize the conflict (Collier, 2007). Part of what the government needs to do in Nigeria and especially the North East region is to evolve and eschew good

governance and all its components that include the following:

- ❖ *Accountability* the Key requirement of Good Governance and this is applicable to government, civil society and private sector. It deals mainly with political, legal, administrative and social accountability; it signified that holders of post of responsibility, whether elected or appointed must be answerability, sanction, redress, and system improvement
- ❖ *Transparency* portend free flow of information, accessibility of information to those affected by decisions taken in governance process
- ❖ *Responsiveness*, is equated with citizen orientation, citizen friendliness, timely delivery of services and redress of citizen grievances
- ❖ *Effectiveness* and *efficiency*, which has to do with optimum use of resources, competency and performance of civil servants result orientation
- ❖ *Rule of law*, which includes fair legal framework, impartial enforcement machinery, independent judiciary
- ❖ *Participation* is the cornerstone of Good Governance, opportunities for citizens to participate in decision



making, implementation and monitoring of government activities  
Freedom of expression and association, organized civil society

- ❖ *Equity and inclusiveness* - All groups, particularly the most vulnerable, have opportunities to improve or maintain their wellbeing. Equal opportunities for participation in decision making process
- ❖ *Consensus Orientation*, mediation of different interests in society to reach a broad consensus on what is in the best interest of the whole community.

With the above-mentioned in place, good government is achieved, preventing the occurrence of poverty, wants, injustice, and eventually averting violent conflicts, thereby guaranteeing peace, security, and development.

### ***Approaches to peace-building***

Peace-building is an approach to maintain peace and stability in society, whether in conflict or in harmony. Since scholars believe that it is not only when conflict or crisis erupted that we require peace-building. Just as Galtung suggests, peace-building:

Should be built into the structure of the society and be remained there as a reservoir for the system itself to draw upon, just as a healthy body has the ability to

generate its own antibodies and does not need ad hoc administration of medicine (1976: 298).

The following constitutes some of the approaches to peace-building that could end the insurgency crisis in the North East region.

**Non-violence approach:** is the personal practice of not causing harm to one's self and others under every condition. It may come from the belief that hurting people, animals and/or the environment is unnecessary to achieve an outcome and it may refer to a general philosophy of abstention from violence. It may be based on moral, religious or spiritual principles, but also the reasons for it may be purely strategic or pragmatic (Sharp, 2012).

Peace-building is an activity that aims to resolve injustice in non-violent ways and to transform the cultural and structural conditions that generate deadly or destructive conflict. It revolves around developing constructive personal, group, and political relationships across ethnic and, religion, and racial boundaries. This process includes violence prevention, of course the JTF and CJTF are doing some of these preventions; conflict management, and post-conflict reconstruction or trauma healing, i.e., before, during, and after any given case of violence.

If people should mind their businesses and allow others to enjoy the breath of life, conflict will be minimal. But interference, denial and preventing the success of others is quick at breeding crisis. Peace education is also a prerequisite for non-violent approach to peace-building, which must be propagated in our society to reduce the violent crises.

***Peace and Justice Approach:***

As much as we long for peace to reign in our communities we should bear in mind that justice is the only means to sustain whatever level of peace we achieved. According to Kroc institute:

**Peace-building** is the development of constructive personal, group, and political relationships across ethnic, religious, class, national, and racial boundaries. It aims to resolve injustice in nonviolent ways and to transform the structural conditions that generate deadly conflict. Peace-building can include conflict prevention; conflict management; conflict resolution and transformation, and post-conflict reconciliation.

Therefore, ending the current Boko Haram Terrorist crisis, will be the beginning of

stable communities where other requirements to build the communities shall commence. Several injustices have pervaded the communities of the North East, with the killing and maiming of innocent population of the region. The losses of properties and strategic government establishments that benefit the population; schools, water supply, healthcare facilities, etc. Without the restoration of these essential facilities peace will still elude the communities affected.

***Restorative Justice Approaches***

Whatever we do to bring about peace in the North East, if it does not include justice it might not completely succeed. This is where restorative justice comes in while using peace-building approach. According to Raye and Roberts, restorative justice is an:

Approach or response to crime/harm that, to the extent possible, produces healing, restoration of health, and a re-establishment of the relationships and wholeness for the parties and the community. The value of ‘justice’ holds a commitment to accountability and to an experience by all the parties that is just, fair and equitable (2004:10).

Restorative justice refers to “an approach to justice that seeks to repair harm by providing an opportunity for those harmed and those

who take responsibility for the harm to communicate about and address their needs in the aftermath of a crime.”

Restorative Justice:

- Provides opportunities for victims, offenders, and communities affected by a crime to communicate (directly or indirectly) about the causes, circumstances, and impact of that crime, and to address their related needs.
- Uses processes, including conferences, dialogues and circles, guided by skilled facilitators, and can take different forms depending on the community, program, case, participants, or circumstances.
- Uses processes that may take place at all stages of the criminal justice system and can be used with adults and youth.
- Is based on an understanding that crime is a violation of people and relationships. The principles of restorative justice are based on respect, compassion and inclusivity.
- Encourages meaningful engagement and accountability and provides an opportunity for healing, reparation and reintegration.
- Is used in every province and territory and is supported by legislation and

federal, provincial and territorial government programs and policies.

Taking these approaches together, the requirement for security, peace, and development in the North East against the backdrop of the BHT is not the use of force.

The application of peace-building will suffice, needless to say that the FGN offer of ‘the olive branch’ might be applauded, but shall also include the procedure of justice, because peace without justice in crisis ridden communities will not last.

The communities in the affected areas are eager to receive government invitation to talk with the repentant BHT, narrate their experience and receive the request for forgiveness from the members of the BHT. Many have the determination to forgive them and move on.

***Peace, Security, and Development as prerequisite for peace in the North East***

To achieve a lasting peace, Joshi and Wallenstein (2018) prescribe five dimensions which include the following:

Negotiations and agreements not only aim at avoiding the return of war but also seek to: (i) promote reconciliation, (ii) develop mechanisms for resolving future disputes, (iii) provide for reliable security, (iv) open economic opportunities for marginalized

segments of the population, and (v) generate space for civil society. These five dimensions together provide for quality peace after war (2018: 5).

A mixture of locally and internationally focused components is key to a long-term sustainable peace. MacGinty (2020) says that while different "indigenous" communities

utilize different conflict resolution techniques, most of them share the common characteristics described in the table below. Since indigenous peace-building practices arise from local communities, they are tailored to local context and culture in a way that generalized peace-building approaches:

**Table 1 shows the three dimensions of Peace-building**

| 1 <sup>st</sup> Dimension   | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Dimension  | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Dimension  |
|---|--|--|
| Taking away weapons<br>Tension reduction initiatives<br>Re-integrating former combatants into civilian society. ( <i>Activities of the OPSC</i> ) | Rebuilding basic facilities, transportation and communication networks, utilities<br>Developing rule of law systems and public administration<br>Building educational and health infrastructure<br>Providing technical and capacity-building assistance for institutions<br>Creating legitimate and accountable community institutions. ( <i>Post conflict reconstruction, activities of the NEDC</i> ). | Trauma counseling<br>Transitional justice and restoration<br>Community dialogue<br>Building bridges between different communities<br>Increasing human rights<br>Gender empowerment<br>Raising environmental awareness<br>Promoting economic development<br>Developing a civil society and private sector that can represent diverse interests and challenge the state peacefully |

*Adopted with modification from MacGinty (2020)*

While most of the indicators as highlights in MacGinty’s are ongoing the rigor to make it successful are sometimes not attached, that is why the dividend are yet to be seen\_??? For instance, the initial issues in peace-building according to MacGinty (2020), is to take the guns and other weapons of violence away. This will now open the door for reintegration. However, the communities that were offended through the violent activities of the BHT were not ready to accept the repentant members back to their places of the ancestral origin, hence, this calls for

reconciliation and resettlement of the entire communities’ members.

For security and development to reign in community experiencing violent conflict, embracing the OECD objectives of peace-building will accelerate the process. According to the OECD (2010), it describes peace-building objectives to include:

- Preventing *communities* from lapsing or relapsing into conflict;
- establishing structures and incentives for peaceful mitigation

of conflicts; incentivizing elite commitment to peace processes, while laying the groundwork for those processes to be made more inclusive over time; establishing a framework for political, economic and security transition; jump-starting recovery; demonstrating peace dividends by meeting the urgent needs of the population (2010: 10).

In the same vein, the Paffenholz, Abu-Nimer, and McCandless (2005) highlighted that the success of any peace-building activities will depend on the following:

- a) Inculcating a theory of change and conflict transformation in programme and policy effectiveness. The communities must be ready to imbibe the new ways of doing things, since assistance might be coming from other communities such as from international organizations. Therefore, changes that do not compromise the communities' religion and core culture can give way.
- b) Combining development needs with peace and conflict analysis... In essence the development need to be introduced in the communities must be such that can favor resolution of

the prevailing conflict and this can only be achieved after understanding the causes of the previous conflicts. The major escalating factor of insurgency in the North East are poverty, illiteracy and underdevelopment.

- c) Anticipating and assessing the relevance for peace-building in the planning stage of interventions and conducting several interim assessments to examine such relevance. Needless to say that a thorough assessment of people needs must be asserted to project people oriented policy/programme towards peace-building. For instance, reopening of markets, farming activities, the health centers, education and several other utilities will assist the success of peace-building programme.
- d) Undertaking risk assessments that anticipate the impact of the conflict on interventions (both negative and constructive types of impact);
- e) Introducing a culture of conflict-and-peace-focused monitoring and evaluation into programme and policy implementation by supporting self-evaluations and organizational change for mainstreaming, including a gender perspective (2012: 3).

In addition to these, there should be political will for effective implementation of the people oriented activities that can bring better life to the communities affected by conflict and insurgency. The correct assessment of the above and the willingness to act on the outcomes of the assessment led to success of peace-building that engendered peace, security, and development in conflict ridden societies. These are the missing links in the efforts to end the insurgency activities in the North East and herald peace, security, and development.

It has been generally agreed that most important risk factors in war, rebellion, insurgency and terrorism were fear, insecurity, poverty, and underdevelopment of the communities' economy, leading to overdependence on natural resources. In the case of the North East, location of these resources are inaccessible as result of the insurgents' group occupation of the farming, fishing, and other resources space. This had largely prevented large numbers of farmers from their farm-lands and resultant food shortage and economic downturn.

The research believes that without security there won't be peace and without peace there will not be development. The absence of development means continuous circle of conflict which is detrimental to the survival of the region, hence the most important focus

now should be an adequate restoration of security, through ending the shooting.

At this junction, stabilizing should takes place to allow the communities to bounce back to its flourishing position. Just as viewed by Brechenmacher (2018), stabilization and development cannot take roots without an integrated civilian-military process to create conditions where locally legitimate authorities and systems can peaceably manage conflict and prevent a resurgence of violence. The economic hub and peace in the community will only ensue after certain level of stability has been achieved.

It is a known fact that markets in the region have ceased to operate on their full capacity and without fear of intrusion by the BHT. In Yobe state, in the year 2021 and particularly the Babbangida market operates under the fear of attacks and invasion by the insurgents, likewise Buni Yadi and Geidam market, which have been patronized by traders from all walks of lives. These markets experience continuous invasion from the insurgents who carted away their goods and proceeds of the sales, thus, forcing many out of business.

While the link between peace-building and the provision of an individual security is undoubtedly a vital one, it alone does not do justice to the way in which 'peace' is understood in PCPB. Peace-building, as

Galtung (1976) pointed out, implies something more positive and dynamic than simply creating stability to prevent violent conflict. Rather, it entails building political, social, and economic institutions, and revolves around notions of capacity-building, good governance, inclusion, economic opportunity and individual well-being. Hence, to incorporate this comprehensive understanding of peace, we need to add the concept of development into the peace-building equation.

It is expected that development assistance will flow to rebuild damaged structures. This cannot be done under insurgents' attacks. This has distracted many efforts by the governments at the state and federal level, including the efforts of the international non-governmental organizations. Similitude of these occurrences were witnessed in communities of Gujba local government - Goniri, Buni-yadi Buni Gari and Gujba Town, etc., where several reconstructed structures were promptly destroyed by the members of the BHT. Therefore, adopting peace-building option that would create atmosphere of peace and reconcile the aggrieved community with insurgents will go a long way to bring peace, encourage economic and social development.

### *The Prospects*

Security challenges have led the insurgency crisis that began over a decade ago to become protracted. Several efforts have been made to eradicate the crisis but to no avail. This paper views that the issues around peace-building could improve the situation and engender resolution of the insurgents' activities.

Because the insurgency crisis touches the entire activities of the communities in the affected area in the north East, particularly the Gujba LGA, there is a need to apply the belief of the 'Inter-peace website', which urges the strengthening of a society's capacity to manage conflict in non-violent ways. The Federal Government of Nigeria Operation Safe Corridor approach is relevant to peace-building, as envisaged by this research. However, without imbibing the empowerment of the members of the communities to get to talk to each other as required in the restorative justice, many essential issues might be swept under the carpet; and this could lead to another round of crisis in the near future. Peace-building is a long-term process of encouraging people to talk, repairing relationships, and reforming institutions. For positive change to last, everyone affected by a destructive conflict has to be involved in the process of building peace.

Thus, reconciliation should promptly commence along with the intention of the OPSC reintegration of the repentant BHT into the communities. These might allow the members of the communities to sort out areas of grievances and improvise solutions to those complaints. Compensations should take place for those who lost their financial capital and those who were bankrupted, resulting from the insurgency activities. Schools, markets, health-centres and other essential facilities should be reactivated to encourage people to go back to their various communities and commence their farming, livestock rearing, artisans and trading activities that will revive the economic and social development of the communities.

Building peace means encouraging better, more inclusive governance, and people being safe from harm as well as having better livelihoods, wellbeing and access to justice. Where these conditions are not present, the seeds of division, distrust and violence can grow. Therefore, peace-building requires wide support, especially in the current climate of the insurgents being repenting from destructive activities but faced with suspicions from the communities.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Base on the foregoing, the following recommendations are proffered:

1. All forms of weapons should be taken away from the communities in the North East where the insurgents are reigning. All efforts should be made to collect/surrender weapons in the hands of the BHT's members.
2. There is a need to implement programmes that can promote economic recovery within the community for growth and development.
3. All political, social, and traditional institutions should be actively revived for commencement of the rebuilding of the communities' social capital.
4. Reconciliation meetings be convened regularly in all the communities affected by the insurgency, to discuss the clause and causes of the crisis and the required compromises for the community members to accept the repentant BHT back to their fold.

### **CONCLUSION**

For peace-building activities to be successful, a supportive environment needs to be created for self-sustaining durable peace, reconciling opponents to prevent conflict from restarting; integrating civil society, creating a rule of law mechanisms, and addressing underlying, social, religious, structural, and societal issues likely to trigger reverting to violent conflict. In peace-building, reconciliation incorporates the search for truth, justice, forgiveness and



accommodation between conflicting groups or people. Reconciliation is generally understood to be the reestablishment of friendly relations, though it assumes different forms and roles in different contexts.

The communities could benefit from the involvement of international organizations skillful in conflict resolution; these organizations could be of great value in contributing to resilience and building of social capital in the affected communities of the North East Nigeria. These will assist a quick revamping of the socio-economic and security of the affected community that will lead to end of the activities of the insurgents.

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