

Counterterrorism in the Lake Chad Basin Commission and Its Effects on Tenure

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논문 요약

이 글은 아프리카 지역의 정부조직인 차드 분지 호수위원회(LCBC) 회원국이 테러조직인 보코하람의 테러 행위에 맞서기 위해 형성한 다국적군의 활동이 참여국 정치지도자들의 권력 유지에 어떤 영향을 행사하는지 조사했다. 2010년에서 2018년 기간 나이지리아, 카메룬, 니제르, 차드의 정치지도자들과 관련된 데이터를 조사한 결과 이 지역에서 독재국가의 지도자들보다 민주주의 국가의 정치지도자들이 반테러주의 활동의 실패에 대해 더 많은 정치적 비판에 직면한 결과 권력 유지에 실패했음을 파악했다.

주제어 : 다국적연합군, 반테러리즘, 보코하람, 차드 분지 호수위원회, 민주주의, 지도자 임기, 권력유지, 지역통합

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I. Introduction

Maintaining peace and security is of primordial concern in all regions of the world. Threats to security often begin at national levels and before long spreads to an entire region. To these regional threats, only regional responses will mitigate or solve the crises. This has been the case with one of the most deadly terrorist groups in world, Boko Haram, which originated and has its base in the Sambisa forest of Nigeria and later spread its heinous tentacles to countries in the Lake Chad Basin (LCB) sub region. The gains resulting from regional integration within the sub-region was thus greatly threatened by the sporadic attacks on both military and non-military targets perpetrated by Boko Haram. This then necessitated a regional response in dealing with this menace. Consequently, in 2012 the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) under the political auspices of the Lake Chad Basin Commission saw its mandate expanded to manage the Boko Haram menace and broadly promote regional peace and security in the Lake Chad Basin. The MNJTF comprising of about ten thousand (10000) troops from four countries; Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon and Niger has relatively succeeded in containing the combat capacity of this terrorist group(UNSG report 2017).This however, has led to diverse political consequences for leaders of member states of the MNJTF operation. This paper seeks to analyze why a largely perceived successful regional counterterrorism efforts has led to diverse political consequences for leaders of the participating member states of the Multinational Joint Task Force.

Neoliberal Institutionalism, an umbrella theory of international relations, acknowledges the role of both state and non-state actors in the international system. It argues that states create interdependence between each other by establishing political and economic institutions that foster ties (Keohane & Nye, 1987). This paper looks at the counterterrorism operation against Boko Haram by the MNJTF and its effects on political survival of leaders in member states. To conduct a succinct study, this paper adopts a qualitative analysis relying on secondary sources of data from academic publications, official documents both from governments and relevant international institutions and of course news articles from accredited media organizations. The phenomenon of leaders in Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger between 2010 and 2018 is used to examine the relationship between regional counterterrorism efforts in the LCB and chances of political survival. This paper will examine how the level of democracy, alongside nationalistic sentiments in member states affects leaders' political survival.

Thus the main research question of this study is: does counterterrorism in the Lake Chad Basin Commission affects leaders' political survival? We find out why under similar conditions, the political consequences in Nigeria in 2015, under President Goodluck Jonathan was different from his counterparts in the sub-region.

We argue that counterterrorism in the sub-region through the MNJTF framework, has seen an overall relative decline in the terrorist activities of Boko Haram. The level of democracy operational in the LCBC states however, is just as important as the counterterrorism operation in determining a leaders' political

survival. We rely on the first level of analysis where political survival is what matters most to leaders of third world countries. To better explain the correlation between the counterterrorism and political survival in the LCBC, we develop and test a new hypothesis: '*Reactionary war hypotheses*'. The reactionary war hypothesis as developed in this paper, aims at improving the existing diversionary war literature in explaining in a different perspective the rationale behind international conflict initiation especially in third world countries and how it influences leaders' stay in power. We present a new perspective that departs from the original premises of the diversionary war theory. The reactionary war hypotheses also aligns with the regional integration theory and submits that, increase regional integration fosters cooperation leading to increase success in counter terrorism operations. This paper also establishes that, political systems operating within the LCBC greatly influence leaders' probability of either staying in power or losing same. We try not to be dismissive of the fact that all the countries under review claim to be democratic as attested by respective provisions of their Constitutions.

However for purposes of this study, this paper associates itself with the Democracy Index as published by the Economist Intelligence Unit Limited 2019. According to this report, Nigeria operates a hybrid system whereas Cameroon, Chad and Niger are considered autocratic states. We note that in hybrid systems we witness a more democratically 'active' and pluralistic society whereas in autocratic states, they are largely 'passive'. This respectively, characterizes states under review in the sub region.

These two control variables will greatly explain why counterterrorism by the MNJTF has led to converse political consequences in the sub-region. Leaders in Nigeria are more likely to suffer audience cost and lose office when the public loses trust in them. This partly happens because of the presence of relatively robust democratic institutions like regular free and fair elections and an independent press.

The story is not the same for autocratic regimes in the sub-region. Despite the semblance of some democratic practices, the system overall is managed by 'strong leaders' who most of the time, regardless of public opinion or elections still remain in power. They are least likely to suffer consequences because of an international conflict irrespective of their performance. Cameroon, Chad and Niger fall under this category.

This paper draws inspiration from the works of Jack Levy (1989) on the diversionary war theory. We also allude to the subsequent diversionary peace theory developed by Giacomo Chiozza and H.E. Goemans (2003). In both cases, though with divergent opinions, they establish the relationship between tenure and international conflict. Cognizance will also be given to the article of James D. Fearon (1994) where he amongst other things reiterates how domestic audience cost implicate how leaders make decisions in International crises. The two level games expounded by Robert D. Putman (1988) will also be instrumental in establishing the reciprocal relationship between diplomacy and domestic politics.

For better analysis, the first section of this paper looks at the existing theoretical literature on regional organizations and theories

that link international conflict to tenure. The second section develops the *reactionary war hypothesis*, a germane innovation in this paper that establishes the relationship between international crises, regional integration and tenure. Our independent variable for this essay is, counter terrorism via the Multinational Joint Task Force. We shall use the political tenure of leaders as dependent variable. The third section, presents a synopsis of the counter terrorism operation by the MNJTF. The fourth section further looks at political consequences of the counterterrorism operation. The fifth section presents the conclusion and policy recommendations. What then explains counterterrorism at the sub-regional level and its varied political consequences is the focus of this paper.

II. Theoretical Framework of the study

This paper fundamentally looks at how intergovernmental institutions created at the level of the region fosters regional integration and solve common problems, in our case, counter terrorism against Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin. The paper also looks at existing theories that link international conflict to the risk of losing office. The starting point of this paper was to look at an International Relations theory that adopts the role of non-state actors in international politics. *Neoliberalism* is the theory adopted in this paper as it envisages regional organizations as valid actors in the international system. Proponents of this theory such as Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye (1977), among other things posit that States create interdependence among themselves in various ways such as through political and

economic institutions. Economic interdependence for instance, they argue increases the cost of war, hence making it unprofitable for states to go to war. Indeed it is their opinion that institutions play a crucial role in enhancing cooperation between states by creating interrelated games and reducing transaction cost. This according to neoliberal Institutionalists, is a cogent response that mitigates the anarchy that characterizes the international system. Neoliberalism is antithetical to neorealism and was developed as a response to realist assumptions. The latter capitalizes that anarchy is an irredeemable characteristic of the international system and States are unitary rational actors of the system. Neorealists, argue that what matters most to states in this anarchic environment wherein they operate is power, measured in terms of material capabilities, as it is the only means to assure ones security. States are concerned with maximizing relative gains. These views and more were developed by major proponents such as Kenneth Waltz(1979).

Regional Integration theory, with roots in Neoliberalism further explains why states establish regional institutional frameworks to either further strengthen ties among themselves or address a common threat. Karns and Mingst (2010) categorize two factors that account for the emergence of regional organizations/institutions. In their opinion, regional organizations are created for economic and political reasons. Politically, the emergence of regional institutions could reflect the power dynamics in a particular region or sub-region, a stronger state or group of stronger states can compel weaker ones to join regional organizations. Secondly, a shared political ideology for example, liberal democracy can also account for states willingness to work together through regional

frameworks. Thirdly and even more importantly, the existence of a common internal or external threat e.g. a hostile state, terrorist group, humanitarian disaster etc. are all political factors that influence the formation of regional organizations. Indeed this is the focus of this paper, the expansion of the task of the Multinational Joint Task Force(MNJTF) by the Lake Chad Basin Commission, to combat a common menace posed by Boko Haram in the sub-region. Economically, the creation of regional organization is often to increase the size of the market in order to attract foreign investment in the region. These are factors driving regionalism in the world and most often, the political factors preponderate because of the ultimate desire to maintain peace and security.

A comprehensive study on Regional Integration and conflict management was carried out by Swanström(2005). He makes a pertinent distinction between conflict prevention and conflict management. In his opinion, regional institutions are more suitable in conflict prevention than conflict management. Just like other scholars of the Regional integration theory, he is of the opinion that regional economic integration is more helpful in preventing conflicts by increasing the cost of war through interdependence. Swanström is also cognizant of regional security institutions like the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe(OSCE) with specific structural mechanisms to prevent conflicts. But he however insist that regional political organizations provide only mediation and consequently create what he calls "Culture of Prevention" in the region. Adeleke(1996) looks at how the Economic Community of West African States(ECOWAS) has been efficient in establishing peace in East Africa through military

intervention.

Notwithstanding, scholars like Walraven (1998), question the efficacy of Regional Institutions in conflict prevention and conflict resolution. He contends that these structures more often than not, lack the institutional and political capacity to fulfill their mission. This paper notes the existence of lacunae in quantitative research on the relationship between regional integration and conflict resolution especially in light of the ongoing counterterrorism battles across several regions of the world and in our case, the Lake Chad Basin. We also draw some insights from the work of Isaac Olawale Albert(2017) that among other things looks at the challenges faced by the MNJTF as a security regimen.

Regarding the theory that links international conflict to risk of losing office, this essay takes cognizance of the diversionary war theory and the game theoretic model. According to the latter, how leaders respond to an international crisis shape their chances of political survival. Allusion is made to the article by Robert D. Putnam (1988). Before now most of the existing literature that link international conflict to tenure in office was based on the *diversionary war literature*. For instance, Levy(1989) in his elaboration of the diversionary war literature, argues that leaders become more likely to initiate conflict when faced with high risk of losing office. Indeed, Bueno de Mesquita et al(1992) share this opinion. Leaders invoke some nationalistic sentiments to protect their stay in power. He also contends that regime type will greatly affect leaders' prospect in power as a result of international conflict. As the risk of losing office increases, leaders become less likely to initiate a crisis. As risk of an international

crises increases leaders become more likely to lose office. This is particularly so in democratic regimes. James Fearon on his part establishes how domestic audience costs implicate the way leaders make decisions in cases of international crises. He finds that the higher the audience cost, the less likely it is that a state will back down once it has made an initial decision to escalate. The 'rally around the flag hypotheses' is developed by these authors to elucidate on this point. They argue that democracies allow for more opportunities to sanction their leaders, for instance through regularly scheduled elections. These scholars mostly adopt the first level of analysis in explaining the priorities of third world countries. In these countries, political survival of leaders preponderates more than state interest. Borrowing from their literature and cognizant that the states under consideration in this paper are third world countries, we will also share the opinion that political survival is what matters most to leaders in these countries. This essay however holds the view that the diversionary war theory is not all encompassing as it fails to acknowledge the fact that certain international conflicts in these third war countries are not often diversionary but reactionary to an existing menace. This often also has an effect on a leader's tenure in office.

This essay will adopt some core premises of the diversionary war literature but seeks to improve it by presenting the reactionary war hypothesis which according to this paper best explains counter terrorism in third world countries, particularly in the Lake Chad Basin.

III. The Reactionary War Hypothesis

As noted in the introduction, this paper adopts and seeks to improve on the diversionary war theory by presenting a Reactionary war hypothesis in explaining counterterrorism in the LCBC and its effect on political survival. This hypothesis as developed in this paper addresses our research question. Unlike the diversionary war theory, our starting point is with international conflict and how it affects tenure and not vice versa nor insists on reciprocity between risk of losing office and chances of conflict initiation. The reactionary war hypothesis developed in this essay posits that:

1) The probability of leaders working together to address an international crisis increases in face of a common threat irrespective of whether the leader faces a risk of losing office or not. This is also the case irrespective of the regime type.

2) Leaders chances of political survival greatly depend on regime type. This paper adopts for purposes of this essay, the regime types operational in the LCBC as articulated by *the Economist Intelligence Unit* Limited democracy index for 2018. Wherein, Nigeria is considered a hybrid regime and Cameroon, Niger and Chad considered autocratic regimes. Leaders of autocratic regimes find it easier to exploit and rally nationalistic sentiments in face of an international crisis than leaders of hybrid regimes like Nigeria. What Giacomo calls 'Rally around the flag'. This is partly because democratic institutions are either nonexistence or very weak whereas in hybrid regimes like that of Nigeria, it is relatively strong. For instance, it is possible for

autocrats to shape public opinion by controlling the media whereas it is not very easy in Nigeria ever since the military rule was abolished and democracy instated in the early 2000's. Hence leaders in Nigeria are more likely to suffer an audience cost during elections than their counterparts in Cameroon, Niger and Chad when the public has a negative perception of the counterterrorism response. Perception of victory greatly increases leaders' chances of survival in both regimes. However, a negative public perception will hardly cause leaders of autocratic regimes to lose office because of their ability to manipulate presidential elections.

IV. Boko Haram and the Counterterrorism operation by the Multinational Joint Task force

In this section, we look briefly at the origins of Boko Haram and the response it has received at both the country and the sub-regional level. We intend to heavily refer to the 2017 Country Reports on Terrorism submitted in 2018 by the State Department's bureau of Counterterrorism. The paper also alludes to the 2017 report submitted by the United Nations Secretary General to the Security Council. Cognizance is also given to Virginia Comilli's (2017) article, which narrates a succinct description of the birth, development and containment of the Boko Haram terrorist group in the LCB.

Boko Haram is a deadly jihadist terrorist group that saw its emergence in early 2002. It is based in Yobe State in northeastern Nigeria. This group had as founding leader, the unorthodox preacher, Mohamed Yusuf. He amongst other things at inception

bemoaned the bad governance, poverty and other “Western ills” in Nigeria and called for a religious revival as a logical response these “vices”. When the leader was neutralized by the Nigerian government in 2009, the scale and brutality of Boko Haram violence escalated under Yusuf’s deputy, Abubakar Shekau.

The sect used crude and rudimentary tools to perpetrate violence in Nigeria. The use of child suicide bombers and mass abduction became rampant. Notably, the kidnapping of 276 ‘Chibok girls’ from a school in Borno State in 2014 completely elevated both domestic and international attention to the threat posed by this group. Attacks on soft targets notably, mosques, churches and market places became rampant. Today this group is based in the Sambisa forest in Borno State and can boast of both crude and sophisticated weapons which they use for their operation. From 2015, Boko Haram intensified and expanded its activities beyond the Nigerian borders and increased its campaigns to capture and control territory in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states. It also regularly orchestrated sporadic attacks in the far north region of Cameroon, southeast region in Niger and Ngouboua village in Chad. This sect exploited and penetrated the cultural, linguistic and religious ties shared by Chad, Niger and northern Cameroon to implant their heinous vision. In 2015, Boko Haram pledged its allegiance to the Islamic State (IS) and changed its name to the Islamic State West African Province (ISWAP). Reports have it that between 2009 and 2016 about thirty thousands (30000) people died from Boko Haram related attacks. Enormous property has been destroyed by this sect leading to the displacement of about 2.4 million people. The region has been plagued with severe food

crises affecting about 66 million people and has grounded economic activity in the sub-region. A fierce humanitarian challenge also plagues the region with about two hundred thousand Nigerian refugees alone spread across the sub region, particularly in Cameroon. Faced with this regional challenge, only a multinational response could effectively salvage or mitigate the problem. When Boko Haram began its cross border attacks, countries were first reluctant to launch a crackdown for fear of retaliation and reasonably so because of limited capabilities. However these states at individual levels, attempted to prevent the activities of this sect within its borders. As the threats increased, it forced governments of the four countries towards military cooperation. The climax was when leaders of these countries met in Paris on 17th May, 2014 and declared war on the terrorist group.

The MNJTF created by the Lake Chad Basin Commission in 1998 to address cross border security issues in the Lake Chad Basin was reactivated in 2012, with an expanded mandate to tackle counterterrorism operations. A clearer strategy against this sect was decided in an extraordinary summit of LCBC leaders in Benin on October 2014. It among other things saw the arrival of Cameroon as one of the troops contributing countries. Also, there was an increase in pledges of financial, material and technical support from international actors including the African Union (AU), the United Nations (UN) the European Union (EU), the United States of America, Great Britain and France. The EU was particularly supportive as it provided funding for the force amounting to fifty million euros. This force was set up and has since then conducted military operations to prevent the expansion

of Boko Haram. With a force comprising of about ten thousand (10000) troops from member states, the MNJTF regularly conducts patrols, preventing the transfer of weapons or logistics to the sect or its cells. It continues to regularly search and successfully free abductees, for instance, negotiating the release of some of the kidnapped chibok girls. MNJTF also partakes in psychological operations to encourage defections within the Boko Haram ranks. It is evident that this regional intervention framework to a common threat as the theory of Regional Integration will predict, has greatly seen the dwindling of the sect's activities. Reports by the US department of state, the AU, the UN and some international actors all confirm the relative efficacy of the MNJTF in counterterrorism. In a statement in 2016, UN Secretary General, Ban Ki Moon commended the Lake Chad Basin countries and Benin for the significant progress achieved in combating the terrorist threat posed by Boko Haram. However the institution has not been void of some weaknesses hampering its mission.

Just like in the 1990's, the reinvigorated MNJTF was hampered by many problems and started its mission effectively only in 2015. Deadlines for deployment of various contingents were missed and little progress was made in addressing political, financial and logistical issues involved in establishing a multinational institution. The look warm attitude by the Nigerian government towards regional cooperation also limited progress at the political level between October 2014 and May 2015. Despite the gains made against this sect, violence and child suicide bombing attacks in particular has continued. Concerns also persist about the leadership vacuum in towns retaken from Boko Haram, as the Nigerian

government has found it difficult to consolidate gains made by the MNJTF by setting up effective government structures in some of these areas. Some states in the LCBC still find it difficult to leave up to their financial commitments. Be that as it may, the relative success in containing the growth and development of Boko Haram by the MNJTF cannot be overemphasized. According to the September 2017 Report, submitted by the United Nations Secretary General to the Security Council on the situation in the lake Chad Basin region, the regional military offensive led by the Multinational Joint Task Force have achieved considerable gains in the fight against Boko Haram. The force was among other things able to recapture the sambisa forest in December 2016 that saw a large number of Boko Haram militants including some of their leaders neutralized. This operation has also seen several weapons captured from the group and several abductees held as hostage by this group released. Interdependence created through this regional institution has been able to considerably manage the menace posed by Boko Haram. These achievements, however, has had different political consequences in member states of the Multinational Joint Task Force.

V. Counterterrorism and Tenure

As noted by Clifton B. Parker(2015), terrorism typically ratchets up nationalistic impulses in presidential Campaigns. A major finding of his research on the political impact of terrorism was that it increases the support for incumbent leaders. He also makes allusion to the rally around the flag literature which explains popular sentiments. The situation in member states of the Lake Chad Basin Commission has been rather peculiar. The gains in

regional counterterrorism efforts by the MNJTF were not even in the member states of the LCBC. Nigeria for example continued to suffer more from the violent acts of this group. Consequently, one of the most crucial issues that impacted voter turnout and participation in recent presidential elections in countries of the LCB had been the ongoing counterterrorism effort. Voter perception as to whether the government was succeeding or failing in her ongoing counterterrorism efforts was crucial determining the choice of whether to vote out of office or maintain the incumbent. In some cases, the masses found it prudent to rally around the flag and support the incumbent leader in the war on terrorism. In essence security concerns tended to matter most to voters, as many of them had been impacted in one way or the other as a result of the heinous terrorist acts perpetrated by Boko Haram. They had lost love ones, saw their property and means of livelihood destroyed, their communities locked down and increased humanitarian challenges. However it is important to note that the power of the electorate in deciding who becomes leader is greatly subject to the robustness of democratic institutions in a particular country. The regime type also greatly determines the strength of the electorate. A democratic regime where there is an Independent Electoral Commission and overall good governance will place this important decision of choosing state leaders in the hands of the people. The table below categorizes states under review in the sub region and gives us an insight concerning the level of democracy in these states according to the Economist Intelligence Unit. Nigeria is considered a hybrid regime and the rest autocratic. The report presents among other things a score sheet relating to political participation, protest and

democracy in these countries. We note that Nigeria is the most performing country when compared to its counterparts in the LCBC. This will be extremely relevant in explaining why under similar circumstances Goodluck Jonathan lost the 2015 presidential elections in Nigeria whereas his counterparts maintained their grip on power.

AN EXTRACTION FROM THE DEMOCRACY INDEX 2018: POLITICAL PARTICIPATION, PROTEST AND DEMOCRACY

Sub-Saharan Africa 2018

	Overall score	Global Rank	Regional rank	I Electoral process and pluralism	II Functioning of government	III Political participation	IV Political culture	V Civil liberties	Regime type
Nigeria	4.44	108	20	6.08	4.64	3.33	3.75	4.41	Hybrid regime
Niger	3.76	120	25	5.25	1.14	3.33	4.38	4.71	Authoritarian
Cameroon	3.28	132	32	3.17	2.86	3.33	4.38	2.65	Authoritarian
Chad	1.61	163	42	0.00	0.00	1.67	3.75	2.65	Authoritarian

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In *Nigeria*, the 2015 presidential elections were held at the height of the counterterrorism operation against Boko Haram. Indeed elections were delayed by six weeks from the initial date in February to March 24th, 2015 because of security concerns. Though the MNJTF had largely subdued the activities of the terrorist group, the 2015 elections were held amid a dangerous territorial advancement in the northeast by the violent Islamic group. According to the Congressional Research Service (2015) report, the sect killed about tenthousand (10,000) people, with more than one million people internally displaced and hundreds of thousands as refugees in neighboring countries. President Goodluck Jona than thus found it hard to convince the electorate on the

gains made in the counterterrorism fight against Boko Haram. He was particularly blamed for failing to engage a process that will see the release of the Chibok school girls. Some considered his actions to be very weak and lame. The Nigerian media on their part were highly critical of him. Consequently, because of a relatively free and fair electoral process, he was challenged and defeated by the APC party of the incumbent, Muhamadu Buhari. The All Progressives Congress (APC) drew support in part from popular disaffection with government performance in the predominantly Muslim north and its response to Boko Haram. As a muslim and northerner with a military background, Buhari appealed more as he ran on the platform of totally defeating the terrorist group if given the chance to lead the country. The public had lost trust in Jonathan and hence he suffered a great audience cost and lost the presidency. The role of independent democratic institutions was crucial in bringing about this outcome. The Independent National Electoral Commission was particularly instrumental in organizing a free and fair election. Others argued that Jonathan's growing unpopularity gave Buhari the win, and that Boko Haram played a major role in the president's sinking support (Ewi 2015). The delegation from the National Democratic Institute noted that the March 28 elections highlighted strong and enthusiastic commitment of Nigerians to democratic processes and the possibility of determining the leadership of the country through peaceful, transparent and credible elections. In essence, Goodluck Jonathan lost office because of public distrust despite the relative gains made in the counterterrorism efforts through the MNJTF. The ability of the Nigerian electorate to effectively express this distrust through an electoral process is a democratic achievement that cannot be overemphasized.

In *Cameroon*, President Paul Biya, one of Africa's longest serving Head of state who has been in power for 37 years and counting, found it easier to communicate how effective his troops had been in defending the homeland and containing Boko Haram. In his campaign visit to the far north region in 2018 he declared to thunderous cheers that the military had successfully crushed Boko Haram and pushed it out of its territory. The National media, CRTV, followed the bid and reported how effective his administration was in combatting Boko Haram. They pricked on nationalistic and patriotic sentiments of electorates, calling on them to give the president another mandate to consolidate this victory. Indeed the clarion call was for Cameroonians to rally around the flag. Consequently the elections were held and Mr. Paul Biya was declared winner. This result however was greatly contested by other presidential candidates of the opposition who claimed the elections were rigged to Biya's favor. Also, elections were held at a time of serious armed conflict between government troops and separatist forces in the northwest and southwest regions of the country, making it almost impossible for credible elections to take place in these regions. As was alluded to earlier, Cameroon is considered by the 2018 Democracy Index as an autocratic regime. In any case, institutions are not very strong and the President will always have his way irrespective of public perception or support.

In *Niger*, after struggling with a history of coups d'états as recent as in 2010, presidential elections were finally held in 2011 which saw the incumbent, Mahamadou Issoutou of the Nigerien Party for Democracy and Socialism(NPDS) elected president. He was reelected in 2016 Nigerien elections which were generally acclaimed to have

been peaceful. Just like his Cameroonian counterpart, he benefitted from the weak democratic institutions and was able to maintain his grip on power. He also exploited and invoked nationalistic sentiments and called on the electorate to rally around the flag and support the government, so that they could consolidate the gains made in the fight against Boko Haram. This was appealing to most Nigeriens and they decided to reelect him as president. It also must be noted that the electoral process was not void of some challenges. For instance, President Mahamadou Issoufou's main challenger, former President of the National Assembly Hama Amadou, was forced to campaign from prison. His incarceration and subsequent evacuation paved the way for Issoufou's second round victory (BTI 2018). The incumbent, just like his counterparts in other autocratic states will always have their way irrespective of their result in the war on terrorism via the MNJTF.

In *Chad*, this was the similar story with President Idris Deby Itno who has been in power since 1990. In the recent 10th April, 2016 presidential election he brilliantly exploited the counterterrorism fight to his political advantage. Perceived as a strong leader by most of the Chadians, they felt he needed to rally around their president in order to permanently defeat the threat from Boko Haram. However it is important to note that a good section of the population was against him running for the fifth term. According to the Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index (BTI) 2018, which assesses the transformation toward democracy and a market economy as well as the quality of political management in 129 countries, the status index for Chad was very poor. Democratic indicators such as the rule of law,

political participation, stability of democratic institutions etc were still very poor in Chad. Universal suffrage, the right to run for public office and democratic election exist only on paper and not in practice according to BTI. Violations of free and fair elections as argued by the opposition and other civil society groups marred the presidential elections. As noted earlier on, these are some of the realities that characterize autocratic regimes and leaders of same are likely to have their way irrespective of the decision of the citizenry. Indeed in Chad, at some point public gatherings were banned and leaders of opposing political parties, civil societies and student rights activist were jailed before and after the election either because of their attempted or actual protest of the election process. Leaders ruled with the iron fist and will always have their way. In essence, though the perceived success in counterterrorism efforts via the MNJTF by some Chadians made them support and vote for the president, with or without their support, the president will still have his sway. Consequently, the National Independent Electoral Commission released results with President Idris Deby winning the 2016 presidential elections with 59.92% and his closest rival Saleh Kebzabo taking the second position with 12.77% of the vote.

It must be noted that all the states considered autocratic in this paper are former French colonies. Political participation, the rule of law and other democratic indicators are generally not as robust when compared to the hybrid system in Nigeria. In these autocratic states, most state institutions including electoral commissions are ever under the whims and caprices of the executive. This also notes that perceived preponderance in nationalistic sentiments in

former French colonies which works in favor of autocrats is a function of colonial experience. This nationalistic sentiment is however not so vibrant in former British Nigeria.

VI. Conclusion and policy recommendations

The main focus of this paper was to establish whether there was a relationship between regional counterterrorism efforts and leaders' tenure in office. We argued and found that, when faced with a common threat, countries in the sub-region work together to address the menace and this often has diverse effects on leaders' tenure in office. However we noted that the regime type greatly determines the political outcome for leaders. We developed a new Reactionary war hypothesis as corollary to the diversionary war theory, which in my opinion presents a new perspective in explaining the relationship between regional counterterrorism efforts and political survival in third world countries. The MNJTF has been greatly effective in its military approach in containing the surge of Boko Haram despite some of the challenges faced by this institution. Also, though President Goodluck Jonathan lost office in 2015 largely because of public perception of his response to the Boko Haram menace, it will also be misleading not to pay cognizance to other factors like corruption and internal squabbles within the PDP that accounted for Jonathan's loss. We also acknowledge the limitations to this work as it is not succinct enough and more research has to be carried out in establishing this relationship between regional counterterrorism efforts in third world countries and its effect on political survival. Particularly, the effect on political survival is an area where much empirical

research is needed to ascertain this relationship. On a policy note, the MNJTF has to intensify its nonmilitary strategies in containing Boko Haram. The problem with this group is not just their violent activities but their ideology. Governments in the region must also create stable and conducive economic environment that addresses the concerns of the population especially the youth, so they are not lured into joining these groups because of economic hardship. Broadening the membership of the MNJTF is also logical as it will improve on its capabilities.

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<Abstract>

Counterterrorism in the Lake Chad Basin Commission and Its Effects on Tenure

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This essay examines the relationship between counterterrorism within the Lake Chad Basin Commission hereinafter referred to as LCBC and its effects on leaders' tenure in office. The countries of the LCBC, an intergovernmental institution promoting regional integration in the sub-region, established the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) primarily to maintain peace and security. In April 2012 the mandate of this structure was reinvigorated and broadened to manage the ongoing menace perpetrated by the Islamist terrorist group, Boko Haram in the sub-region. The political consequences, however, has not been identical for leaders of the member states of the LCBC participating in this counterterrorism operation. This essay primarily relies on secondary data derived from available public data sets in explaining this phenomenon. The phenomenon of leaders in Nigeria, Cameroon, Niger and Chad between 2010 and 2018 is used to examine the relationship between counterterrorism in the Lake Chad Basin Commission and its effects on political survival. Results suggest that leaders of highly democratic countries are more likely to lose office and held accountable for either perceived inaction or failure in the counterterrorism operation than their counterparts in autocratic states.

Keywords : MNJTF, Counterterrorism, Boko Haram, LCBC, Democracy, Tenure, Security, Regional Integration