

Women and Terrorism in Nigeria: Policy Templates for Addressing Complex Challenges in a Changing Democratic State

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Abstract : One of the most devastating impacts of terrorism on the Nigerian state is the danger it has posed on women, children and other vulnerable groups. The complexity of terrorism in Nigeria, especially in most parts of Northern Nigeria has entrenched unprecedented security challenges such as refugee crisis, kidnapping, food shortages, increase in death tolls, malnutrition, fear, rape and several other psychological factors. Of particular interest in this paper as it relates to terrorism is the high rate of Internally Displaced Persons(IDPs), with women, children and the aged being the most affected. Empirical evidence arising from recent development in Nigeria's North-East geo-political zone shows that large numbers of refugees fleeing the Boko Haram attacks have doubled. The attendant consequences of this mass exodus of people in the affected areas are that the victims now suffer untold and unwarranted economic hardship. In another dimension, recent findings have it that most powerless women and young teenage girls have been forcefully conscripted into the Islamic extremist groups and used as shields. In some respect, these groups of people have been used as available tools for suicide bombing and other criminal tendencies, the result of which can be detrimental to social cohesion and integration. This work is a theoretical insight into terrorism discourses; hence, the paper relies on existing works of scholars in carrying out the research. The paper argues that the implications of terrorism on women gender have grounding effects on the moral psyche of women who are supposed to be home managers and custodians of morality in society. The burden of terrorism and all it tends to propagate has literally upturned social lives and hence, Nigeria is gradually being plunged into the Hobbesian state of nature. As a panacea to resolving this social malaise, the paper submits that government and indeed, all stakeholders in the nation's democratic project must expedite action to nip this trend in the bud. The paper sums up with conclusion and other alternative policy measures to mitigate the challenges of terrorism in Nigeria.

Keywords : changing democratic state, policy measures, terrorism, women

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