

West African Insurgents and Religious Conflict(s), Causes, Crimes and Control: An Evaluation of the Role of Economics Community of West African States

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Abstract : Religious conflict and insurgency are staying as growing phenomena globally especially within the West African region: this 'new wars' in this part of the globe has brought many of its economies to the brink of collapse, creating humanitarian casualties and concerns for the visitors and international community. This 'ugly' trend has also affected the social, economic and political life of the West African region. Over the years, various religious and insurgency groups have raised arms against civilians and the government, the most recent extremist group, Boko Haram continues to expand and commit violent acts, such as sporadic suicide bombings and killing of innocent citizens and foreigners within the West African region especially in countries like Nigeria, Cameroon and Chad etc. It would have been expected that academic research focus on investigating the West African region; this is not the situation as most of the research on religious conflict and insurgencies have focused more on other parts of the World. Insurgencies and Religious Conflict studies in West Africa have fallen short of literature and very limited literature covers the activities of Boko Haram arm struggle. This research therefore, aims to fill the gap by investigating the role of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in managing the growing trend of religious conflicts and insurgency in West African States, by using Boko Haram as a case to review. This research adopted the critical theory paradigm using aspects of qualitative research techniques in carrying out its investigation. The findings of this research will help develop a framework that will aid the (ECOWAS) amongst other stakeholders in managing religious and insurgency motivated conflict.

Keywords : religious conflict, insurgencies, Boko haram, ECOWAS (economics community of West African states), peace building, conflict resolution

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