
THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF CRIMINALITY ALONG NIGERIA-BENIN REPUBLIC BORDERS AND WORSENING INSECURITY IN NIGERIA

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Abstract: *Most of the problems of African countries lie within the issue of boundary disputes. African states were at the eve of independence arbitrarily partitioned with artificial boundaries by the colonial masters. To say that an appreciable percentage of countries within the continent are faced with the challenge of porous borders, which allows different kinds of illegal trans-border activities to thrive, is to say the least. The aim of this article is to examine the political economy of cross border criminality between Nigeria and the Benin Republic. Hence, the objective of this article is to interrogate if there is any relationship between the Nigeria-Benin cross-border crimes, and the worsening security situation in Nigeria. The analysis was anchored on the political economy theory. This is because the production of material subsistence of the society determines its corresponding superstructure. Thus, as the capitalist mode of social production and distribution intensifies, crimes and insecurity, and other related issues deepen. The article relied extensively on secondary sources of data, using qualitative descriptive analysis. After a critical analysis of available data and evidence, the article revealed that there is a relationship between Nigeria-Benin Cross-border crimes, and the worsening security situation in Nigeria. In fact, the Boko Haram menace in Nigeria has been linked to several neighbouring African countries like Chad, Niger and Benin Republic. The article recommended, among other measures, that there is need for Nigeria to strengthen exiting joint border control commissions with the Benin Republic and, by extension, other neighbouring countries (i.e., Niger, Chad and Cameroon), to fight trans-border crimes. The Nigerian government should also guarantee appropriate national control measures, such as appropriate legislation and regulatory actions, upgrade skills in crime investigation, and enforcement techniques, and equip all law enforcement agencies adequately.*

Keywords: Insecurity, Political Economy, Trans-border Activities, Crime.

Reference to this paper should be made as follows: Ahmed, L.E. and Chilaka, F.C. (2013), The Political Economy of Criminality Along Nigeria-Benin Republic Borders and Worsening Insecurity in Nigeria. *J. of Social Sciences and Public Policy*, Vol. 5, Number 2, Pp. 56 – 78.

INTRODUCTION

Most of the problems of African countries lie within the issue of boundary disputes. African states were at the eve of independence arbitrarily partitioned with artificial boundaries by the colonial masters. To say that an appreciable percentage of countries

within the continent are faced with the challenge of porous borders, which allows different kinds of illegal trans-border activities to thrive, is to say the least. Media reports on this development have shown that, some criminally-minded citizens of some countries, especially, within the West African sub-region are daily, taking advantage of the situation to mount illegal roadblocks to carry out extortions, harassment and subject travelers to humiliation, among other unimaginable inhuman practices.

Nigeria has in many occasions become a victim of trans-border problems. According to Shagaya in Eke (2000:25) "The history of Nigeria... may be described as one of a continuous encounter with border problems". Nigeria shares borders with five African countries: Benin, Niger, Chad, Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea. Four of these are Franco-phone countries, which have not a clearly delineated and well-defined boundary with Nigeria. Nigeria has experienced a series of border disputes with her immediate neighbours, which resulted to the infiltration of unprecedented levels of problems from the Chad, Benin and Niger-Nigeria borders, illegal movements of goods and aliens coupled with armed banditry are no distant experiences. The illegal importation of weapons for armed robbers, religious sects, ethnic strife and the toxic wastes also constitute security problem in the country. In fact, *Tell* magazine of August, (2003) noted that:

Beyond the façade of the village's innocent looks is the stigma of the axis of evil, which has been conferred on the village by some settlers or immigrants. They are businessmen from Mali, Chad, Niger, Senegal, Burkina-Faso, Mauritania, Togo, and other African countries including a few Nigerians, who reside in the village. They do not live within the traditional setting of the village. Their palatial houses which exhibit modern-day architectural discoveries are flung and scattered on the outskirts of the village. Thus, Dirin is a border village in Benin Republic that wears two faces—one, the traditional rugged house and a sprinkling of modern bungalows; the other, a cosmopolitan modern city with well-laid houses that can compare with any structure in major cities of the world. Literally, Dirin is the headquarters of armed robbers operating between Nigeria and Benin Republic. It is a sanctuary for robbers, most of whom are of the underworld, daily converge on this village from every nook and cranny of the West African sub-region to plan and take off operations, which are mostly targeted at Nigeria and Nigerians. The robbers specialize in snatching jeeps, limousines and other expensive luxury cars in several parts of Nigeria. They do not limit their operations to Lagos alone. They are everywhere—Ibadan, Benin, Enugu, Abuja, Port Harcourt, Kano and Kaduna, to mention a few cities. These vehicles are then

driven to Dirin on weekends into the waiting hands of receivers who are the nouveaux riche Malians, Chadians, Burkinabe's, Mauritians, Senegalese, Togolese and others who pose as businessmen in Dirin. Whenever the robbers return to town with their loot, there are always wild celebrations: drinking, eating and general merriment. (TELL, August 25, 2003:15).

However, despite the concerted efforts of the Police at combating off the tide of cross-border banditry in recent times, the government seems not to have appreciated the full gravity of the situation. Thus a climate of fear, trepidation and hopelessness has gripped Nigerians as they watched helplessly while precious lives are being lost and valuables forcefully taken away from them" (Agekameh, Tell, August 25, 2003:22). It is therefore surprising to Nigerians that by Friday August 8, the Federal Government of Nigeria woke up from what seemed to be indifference to the plight of its citizens. "In one fell swoop, it put all the land borders with neighbouring Benin Republic under lock and Key. This way, Nigeria finally sent a signal to all its neighbours that enough is enough, and that the milk of human kindness hitherto extended to them had been variously abused. Nigeria was no longer prepared to turn the other cheek" (Tell, August 25, 2003:22).

The sudden announcement of the border closure created fear, anxiety and disbelief across the West African coast, especially Benin whose economic mainstay is tied to its international trade with Nigeria. This is hinged on the fact that Benin Republic seemed to benefit more from trans-border trade between her and her neighbour - Nigeria. The sea port of Cotonou is a major gateway for imported second hand cars (fairly used) to Nigeria. Experts in economics had alleged that trade in second hand cars is the highest revenue earner for the country.

In Benin Republic, there are no prohibitions on the year of manufacture of a car, while tariffs are lower compared to what obtains in Nigeria. Vehicles above certain age limits are not allowed; that is, five years and above, is rightly prohibited. This made the use of Nigerian sea-port less attractive to importers. On the other hand, whenever, the government of Nigeria lowers its tariffs on imported cars, its counterpart in Benin Republic responds usually by further lowering its tariffs, thereby making its port still more attractive to importers.

To demonstrate the economic importance of Nigeria to her country and how the border closure is taking a serious toll on her economy, the president of Benin Republic Matthew Kerekou flew into Abuja, Nigeria to meet with his counterpart former President Obasanjo of Nigeria to harmonize positions towards the re-opening of the borders between the two countries. The president of Nigeria however, agreed to re-open the border at the end of the marathon discussion.

This sad development varies from one border to the other. The most notorious is the Nigeria-Seme border which according to reports has multiple illegal checkpoints mounted by security men and robbers. Both government of Nigeria, and Benin Republic had at different times, come out to complain bitterly on the increasing rates of crimes along the Nigeria-Seme border. Beside the bitter challenges of extortion, harassment, rape and intimidation that characterized most of these borders, courtesy of the porous border arrangements, the development has also slowed down international trade, economic and other activities between countries within the sub-region. (<http://www.peoplesdaily-online.com/news/special-report/5485-ecowas-and-the-moves-to-curb-border-crime-for-economic-prosperity>).

In fact, it has become almost an impossible task for travelers to embark on hitch free journey as they are faced with the twin challenges of robbery attack and multiple toll gates collection by customs agents and other illegal transport bodies. The menace of cross-border banditry, violent automobile thefts, and human trafficking has in recent years drawn public attention to the well known problems of policing Nigeria international boundaries.

This article examines the political economy of cross border criminality between Nigeria and the Benin Republic and the worsening insecurity in Nigeria.

THE PROBLEM

Trans-border crime can be defined as set of criminal acts whose perpetrators and repercussions go beyond territorial borders (Zeini, nd). Trans-border crime is a phenomenon that is currently generating a lot of concern globally, especially in countries like Nigeria, where it is highly prevalent. Added to this, the trans-border economic activities accentuated by the deterioratorialization, which globalization depicts is "not only on global scale but from the public to private space" (Aronowitz cited in Ninsin 2000:3).

The underpinnings are reflected in the increasing spread and sophistication of criminal networks and nefarious trans-border economic activities. Mustapha (2004:9) captured this more succinctly:

While the wave of economic globalization has given rise to increased internationalization of economic activities, it has equally opened the door for "global criminal economy" to flourish.

Nigeria's border communities play a central role in the smuggling activities. While virtually all the routes they are located predate present-day artificial boundaries created by colonialism, the desperation to de-link from a distrusted and disliked system which the Nigeria economy came to symbolize turned such border communities as Jibia in Kastina State, Kiisi in Oyo State, Idiroko in Ogun State, Bakassi in Cross-River State, Badagry in

Lagos State, and Bama in Borno State, into informal Centres for substitute exchange relations (Garuba, 2006). The neglect of these communities by various tiers of government over the year, which led to their underdevelopment has not only made them transcends international boundaries to boost what Bratton (1996:245), Chazan (1996:270), and Mackenzie (1992:6) dubbed as "second", "parallel", "informal," "underground," "black or irregular" economic centers, but it has also transformed them into sites for global criminal economic smuggling routes.

The neighbouring states surrounding the Republic of Benin had witnessed a modus operandi of shooting in and out in the escapade of robberies so much so that citizens have had a lot of sleepless nights (Balogun, 2003)

The current clamp down on entry of illegal aliens into the country is a logical response to claims that the dreaded religious sect, Boko Haram is recruiting aliens into its fold. The former Nigerian Immigration Service (NIS) Controller-General, Mrs. Rose Uzoma, underscored the seriousness with which the service views security threat from illegal aliens with a warning to its personnel that it would deal ruthlessly with any of them caught assisting foreigner into the country illegally.

Uzoma warned that all "businessmen in NIS uniform" would be dismissed from office to curb all acts of indiscipline and dereliction of duty, especially now that the security situation in the country is worsening (*The Sun*, Friday September 30). In addition to the above, the former Ministers of Foreign Affairs Mr. Olugbenga Ashiru had cautioned member states at the Council of Ministers of Economic Community of West African States Meeting of February 15, in Abuja to tighten their borders as Boko Haram had gone international. He noted that the terrorist group had affiliated itself to similar groups in the sub-region.

Similarly, trans-border robbers have been unleashing mayhem in Nigeria. For instance on Thursday August 11, trans-border robber's unleashed mayhem in Ilaro and Ifo area of Yewa south and Ifo local governments of Ogun state, killing an Assistant Superintendent of Police, ASP, identified as Peter, and three others after raiding some banks. The gang, numbering about 12 stormed the areas in four vehicles and were said to have carted away undisclosed sum of money (<http://www.vanguardngr.com/2011/08/trans-border-robbers-kill-asp-3-others-in-ogun-bank-raid/>). However, it was gathered that the 192 Battalion Army Owode Yewa released some of its men to go after the robbers, as it was earlier speculated that they were escaping through Idogo into the neighbouring Benin Republic. Also in 2003 Beninise and security agents of the Republic of Benin at Seme-border reportedly prevented Nigerian Mr. Sunday Bada led Nigeria Benin Anti-crime Joint Border Patrol from arresting suspected armed robbers of Benin origin at the area, and led to Nigeria closing the Seme-border (Eguono, 2003).

Highlighting on the activities of cross-borders crimes and banditry, the then senior special assistant to president Obasanjo on media, Remi Oyo stated that:

Over 2,000 vehicles were snatched by bandits from Benin Republic between 2000 and 2002. And as at August 2003 alone about 380 vehicles had been traced to the Franco phone country" (Tell, August 25, 2003:22).

The import of these revelations is that the activities of these cross-border criminals operating from the Benin Republic axis had almost rendered the nation -Nigeria's economy prostrate in financial cost, not to talk about the involvement of human capital wasted during their operational activities. Despite the concerted efforts by the Nigerian security in combating the menace of cross-border banditry, it is frustrating and irritating in their resolve to check trans-border crimes as their counterpart in the Benin Republic (the gendarmes) are not willing to assist.

Trans-border violent crimes with special reference to armed automobile theft in the Southwestern states of Lagos, Ogun and Oyo become so prevalent that the Federal Government was compelled in 2003 to officially close the border with the Republic of Benin to compel the neighbouring foreign jurisdiction to effectively co-operate in arresting the trend through the apprehension of culprits who have for so long taken advantage of the asylum provided by their own side of the inter-sovereignty boundary. In Nigeria's Northeast, the problem of armed banditry is similarly known to have occasioned a special resolution of the Senate, sponsored by Senators from the affected constituencies, calling on the president to mount diplomatic presences on Cameroon, Chad and Niger, identical to measures taken in respect of the Republic of Benin, to deal with unbearable problem of armed bandits operating from bases widely believed to be located in the adjacent border areas of the neighbouring countries (Anthony, 2005).

More recently, the exposure of the phenomenon of illegal importation of Beninoise children into Ogun State has added to the issue of human trafficking to the already congested security situation beclouding the Nigeria border areas (Anthony, 2005). Add these to waves of violent crime to the new global concerns about terrorism and the more familiar older issue of contraband business transaction, including those in narcotics and small arms to appreciate the special complexity of the challenges posed to policing along and across our international boundaries.

To stem the tide of insecurity along Nigeria-Benin border line, Nigeria and Benin Republic in 17 October, 2011 launched a joint border security patrol, code-named fire-for-fire with the aim of wiping out all manners of insecurity at the border (<http://nationalacordnewspaper.com/index/php?option=com-content&view=articles&id=2130:nigeria-benin-launch-fire-for-fire-security-networks&catid=35:national-news&itemed=63>).

Further, in January 2011, Nigeria and the ECOWAS Commission and the European Union delegation to Nigeria, signed a contract for the construction of three, Joint Border Posts (JBP), along borders of some countries within the West African sub-region. President of the ECOWAS Commission, Ambassador James Victor Gbeho said the project, when completed would enhance trade and economic activities as well as solve problems related to other trans-border challenges (<http://www.peopledaily-online.com/news/special-report/5485-ecowas-and-the-moves-to-curb-border-crimes-for-economic-prosperity>).

Similarly, to curtail the excesses of the deadly group, Boko Haram, the Federal Government on November 2011, ordered the immediate re-activation of 22 border security posts across its four contiguous neighbours (<http://234next.com/esp/cms/sites/next/home/5747731-146/story.esp>). The move which received the endorsement of President Goodluck Jonathan, came as part of stringent measures to tackle recent threats to national peace and security particularly from the Boko Haram Islamic sect.

However, recently *The Punch*, February 13, 2012 alerted the Nigerian customs service to pay special attention to the unmanned border line at Seme-border namely pillar "C", "7" and "10". It observed that they have become spots for smuggling.

At these points, there is an organized empire of smugglers comprising a chairman, assistant chairman, secretary and thugs control. Items such as cartons/packages, apples, frozen poultry and second hand clothing are smuggled into the country in dozens of auxiliary propelled jeeps that easily bypass Baba-Papa Road, where there is usually a few customs officers, down to river side. From there, the smuggled goods are taken to different destinations, mostly at night (*The Punch*, February 13, 2012:13).

Arising from the foregoing, the article seeks to answer the following question: Is there any relationship between the Nigeria-Benin cross-border crimes, and the worsening security situation in Nigeria?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Admittedly, the task confronting this article is a very broad one intrinsically connecting several crucial socio-economic and political factors.

This article therefore, is predicted on the stringent tenets and critical intellectual tradition associated with the Marxist Political Economy. It is true that Marxist model of social reality is undergoing a hard test of practical validity and utility, especially following current events in the then Eastern Bloc led by the former Soviet Union. On this basis

alone, some with dim view of the paradigm have already consigned the Marxist approach to the garbage dump of history. However, we cannot, and never will dismiss Newtonian physics as invalid, just because a bridge collapsed somewhere.

Therefore, Marxism is a widely respected social science paradigm amply occupying a prestigious space in western scholarship even now. As such, its tenets, praxis and propositions are testable. Occasional failures of its practical application as a result of various intervening factors, do not, however, fundamentally vitiate its relevance in critical social analysis.

Hence, dialectical materialism, as its defining method is characterized by:

- Dynamic character of social reality
- Inter relatedness of different levels of structure and,
- Primacy of material condition

This defining feature of political economy conditions the process for the production of the material basis of society and its corresponding relations of production. According to Nnoli (1981), the social production and distribution give character to other human values. Social activities is in part of fully related to pains, and pleasure, security and insecurity, violence, development, underdevelopment, crimes etc. is based on a combination of the quality of labour, non-human physical resources and interpersonal relations.

Thus, in our dominant capitalist mode of production and distribution that have all the features noted above, we see conflicts, crimes and poverty because a few people control the means of production. It must be noted that capitalism has generated enormous wealth and knowledge unparallel to man; it has also engendered great disparity, poverty, human suffering, misery and securitized state institutions because it want to protect the few that controls the means of production.

Thus, as the capitalist mode of social production and distribution process intensifies, crimes and insecurity, and other related issues deepen. Individuals want to find a way to escape poverty and therefore, turn to all sources of crime including trans-border crimes. This explains why crime has no borders and has a network of connectivity in its impact. More fundamentally, the worsening effects of crime and insecurity in Nigeria cannot be explained outside the capitalist mode of production and distribution process. It is within this context that we can explain the political economy of cross-border crimes and the worsening security situation in Nigeria.

Marxist political economy provides a particular view of crimes in society. It presents a constellation of phenomena within this society as the logical outcome of specific contending forces. It is, therefore, typical to state that trans-border criminality along Nigeria-Benin Republic border is a product of contradictions, conflict and crises rooted

mainly in people's relationship to the means of production, class and related inequalities, exploitative relationships between and among the few powerful rich and the powerless poor masses, as well as people's disparate efforts to produce or get their means of subsistence no matter the means.

The perspective is thus appropriated for this article, largely because of its comparative appropriateness and adequacy for analyzing, explaining, predicting and understanding the context in which criminality abound in society.

TRANS-BORDER CRIMINALITY ALONG NIGERAI-BENIN REPUBLIC BORDERS AND INSECURITY IN NIGERIA

The level of criminality along the Nigeria-Benin Republic border cannot be over emphasized. For instance, Nigerian drug traffickers operate with impunity in Benin so also Beninise in Nigeria through the Nigeria – Benin border. Traffickers use legitimate business to camouflage drug operation. Proceeds are often invested in property (Real Estate) and this enables them to launder illicit profits (Barbara, 2007). In Nigeria, which is the most populous country in Africa and one of its dominant economic players and where there is significant problem of organized crime, the police and other agencies appear to have only limited capacity to analyze the structures of organized crime, tending to regard all those whom they apprehend as individuals, the problem with drugs shows that actors both supplier and users are internationally linked (Muna, 2002).

A striking tendency in Nigeria is its continuous emerging role as a zone of transit. Just within West Africa Drugs are trafficked from Ghana through Togo, Benin cutting across the Nigeria-Benin border into Nigeria to Southern Africa. According to Agbu (2008) The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, NDLEA, with the cooperation of other international agencies has relatively fought the war against drug trafficking but the porous border of Nigeria – Benin has limited the effects which the Agency must have made.

On child trafficking, UNDOC (2006) painted a picture of the countries that traffic children to Nigeria. The organization observed that foreign children trafficked to Nigeria come mainly from Benin and Togo (an estimated 96%, with 90% of that figure coming from Benin alone), Cote d'Ivoire and Niger. Children as young as five and six years trafficked from Benin have been found working in exploitive conditions in Nigeria mines in the Western part of the country. Trafficked girls are used for domestic services or street trading as well as commercial sexual exploitation while boys are generally forced to work on plantations or in commercial farming, construction, quarries and mines or engaged in petty crimes and drug trade.

The smuggling of other commodities such as oil and cars has become rampant and constantly reported across the Nigeria-Benin border. In fact, in 2011, 380 cars were stolen in Nigeria but have been traced to Benin Republic. Lately, Dirin has been reported to be the headquarters of armed robbers operating between Nigeria-Benin Republic. It is a sanctuary, most of whom are on the wanted list of the Nigerian police. The robbers

according to Agekameh (2003) specialize in snatching jeeps, Limousines and other expensive cars in several parts of Nigeria. They do not limit the operations in Lagos alone. They are everywhere-Ibadan, Benin, Enugu, Abuja, Kano and Kaduna, to mention a few cities. These vehicles are then driven to Dirin into the waiting hands of receivers who are rich Malians, Chadians, Burkinabes, Mauritians, Senegalese business men in Dirin. The robbers, noted Agekameh (2003:16):

Engage in all kinds of robbery. Though they concentrate more on snatching exotic cars, which are then sold for a paltry sum, when they do not get vehicles to snatch, they descend on banks. If they go on operation and become frustrated, they transfer their anger on policemen at roadblocks by killing them and dispossessing them of their service weapons, which they add to their cache of arms.

Oil bunkering in Nigeria has also continued to occur at an alarming rate due to the easy smuggling of the stolen oil via the Seme border. According to the Federal Government, some 300,000 barrels are illegally exported per day with the Nigeria-Benin border acting as a major transit zone. Efforts have been made to reduce smuggling activities to its minimum at Seme border due to its economic consequence which is a vital part of our national security. Between 1999 and January 2010, Nigeria Custom Service (NICS), Badagry Area Command says it made a massive seizure. The head of the command, comptroller Aliu Barbriel Toba, put the value of goods seized at N573.3 million. Among the seizure were (Tokunbo) vehicles, bags of rice, wines, textile material and vegetable oil as well as pharmaceutical products topping the list of the seizures. The command according to Aliu recorded huge revenue of N3.8billion in 2009 as against N3.5 billion recorded in 2008. He also disclosed that his command recorded N443.6 million as revenue in January, 2011 as against 238.6 million in January 2009, a comparative difference of N205 million.

Below are some cars owned by Nigerians but recovered in Benin Republic:

- M/Benz S500 Kompressor 2000 model. Colour-silver
- M/Benz 320 Kompressor Elegance auto convertible. Colour- navy blue
- Grand Cherokee Laredo 2000 model 4x4 automatic jeep. Colour- metallic blue.
- BMW Saloon car manual, 5 series 2000 model. Colour-Mettalic grey.
- Ford GT Probe manual Sports- Colour-suspected to have been changed to red.
- Nissan Sunny Ex Saloon. Colour- Silver, Reg. No. FV 873 KJA.
- M/Benz S/Class. Colour-navy blue
- M/Benz 190. Colour- Metallic ash.
- Toyota Land Cruiser V8 Reg. No. DF 531 LSR. Colour black.
- Toyota Supra. Reg. No AQ 487 PHC. Colour –red
- Mitsubishi Pajero Jeep. Reg. No EV. 360 KJA Colour- blue
- Lincoln Navigator Jeep Chassis No. F75B14A206JA. Colour-Formerly black, now ox blood.

- Honda Civic 4 doors. Likely to be ash colour, now painted navy blue. Chassis. No. JT3HJO9J7x00113396.
- Peugeot 406 new model S/car repainted navy blue.
- Toyota Land Cruiser most likely to be ash colour. Now painted navy blue. Chassis No. JT2HJO9JX0013396.
- Toyota Starlet with Regd. No. Katsina AG196 FTA. Chassis No. KP6OV001260/2k082400.
- Toyota carina, Plateau AP 872 JJN. Chassis No. TA14007018/271794403.
- Toyota Corolla, Kano AG 932 FGE. Chassis No. JTILOAE 8200020525/10276461.
- Toyota L/Ace Bus, Kaduna AG 61GKW. Chassis No. JVFM3OV0006303/SKD362327.
- Toyota Starlet, Kano. AE 343 RAN. Chassis No. JTIHOEP700045845/8C5Y C813720150.
- Toyota Corolla, Abuja XA 981 KUJ. Chassis No. JTIEOAE8000046970/2A5083190.
- Toyota Starlet Chassis No JTYCOP7000069634/504202E.
- Toyota L/Ace Bus, Kaduna XA 700 ZAR. Chassis No. 2T545446.

Vehicles Parts Recovered in Benin Republic

- Vehicle Reg. No. CQ 327 LND-Engraved on windscreen
- DM 242 AAA- Daewoo- Engraved on Windscreen
- AG 916 FFF- Engraved on windscreen
- FG 949- S O3 – Engraved on windscreen
- FG 456 B- Engraved on headlight
- AX 923 BDG – Engraved on back windscreen of Toyota Hilux
- CU 389 EKY – Engraved on headlight of 306 car
- FN 374 KJA – M/Benz 200 Emblem. E-Class
- FP 640 AAA- Engraved on chrome and headlight of the B/Benz E-Class
- AT 444 AGL – Engraved on headlight of old Land Cruiser.
- NLC 01 HQ- Engraved on head lamp of Toyota Land Cruiser.
- FG 269 D17 – Engraved on a Toyota Glass likely to be of a jeep.
- FG 335 Q41 Toyota glass likely to be of a jeep
- BS -388 GGE – Glass likely to be of a Toyota Jeep
- BV 448 AAA – Glass likely to be of a Toyota jeep
- LA 2266 AG – in photo negative.
- CP 147 EKY – V/W Golf New Model Jack
- FJ 922 KJ – Peugeot 406 SR Ac, Chassis No. VF38BL6A28118862.
- Peugeot 406 SR, Chassis No VF38BRFN281415998.
- Two Rims of Peugeot 406 Salon Car.
- Three tyres of M/Ben ML Jeep.
- Madunk Motors Limited, No. G27 Nda Road. Kanawa, Kaduna (Booklet)
- Peugeot 406 head lamp without number

- Three tyres of Toyota Land Cruiser Jeep
- Three tyres of M/Benz 200 E-Class
- One Alloy Rim of M/Benz S/Class.

Vehicles Traced To Benin Republic, Now With Altered Registration Numbers.

- PE O416 RB- BMW 5 Series
- PE O4117 RB – M/Benz 500 SEL (Belonging to Chief F. Ayegbeni, a Nigerian)
- PE O742 RB- Toyota Hilux
- PO 9829 RB – KIA RIO
- U. 7614 RB – SLODA
- RT 2500 R – BMW JEEP
- CA 125 LSR – JAGUAR

Arrested Suspects

- Bankole Herbert, a.k.a Segun Olawale
- Djide Afolabi Oladele, a.k.a Tunde Aluwo
- Isiaka (shot dead during an operation)
- Latifou okpelengue, a.k.a Waliu
- Tehueton Techegun, a.k.a Segun Konhoungo Appoluuus, a.k.a Popo
- Ladjide Agba Nicolas, a.k.a Nicolas
- Wasiu Olowo Lekuma a.k.a. Alh , Lokuma
- Adekunle Olabanji
- Taju Orji alias No smoking
- Fagbuhin Olaomo alias Kaka
- Kehinde Ori-oku
- Rasaki Wasiu
- Moses Umoke Ogbaja a.k.a. Chukwuma

Wanted Suspects

- Adamson at Dirin, Benin Republic
- Lege at Dirin, Benin Republic
- Eja at Dirin, Benin Republic
- Bulala at Dirin, Benin Republic
- Bola at Dirin, Benin Republic
- Gbajue at Dirin, Benin Republic
- Azeez Gbaagori at Dirin, Bennin Republic
- Dusu Salake at Dirin, Benin Republic
- Afisu Onibode at Ajase, Benin Republic
- Peter Olaifa at Itako, Benin Republic
- Kabiru Manumanu at Poobe Benin Republic
- Tutu at Towe, Benin Republic
- Tunji at Banigbe, Benin Republic
- Saidu at Banigbe, Benin
- Demola at Banigbe, Benin Republic
- Baba Limota at Banigbe, Benin Republic
- Kabiru Ifo at Pobe, Benin Republic

- Segun Agba at Pobe, Benin Republic
- Baba Shina at Itako, Benin Republic
- Nofiu at Pobe, Benin Republic
- Liadi at Pobe, Benin Republic
- Solomon at Ajase, Benin Republic
- Lukeman Ayeserue at Dirin, Benin Republic
- Sunday Olota at Ajase, Benin Republic

Source: Agekameh .D. Tell, August 25, 2003. pp 16-17

It is now accepted that sustainable development is seriously threatened by recurrent violent armed conflict. The constant supply of smuggled arms into the country especially through the porous Nigeria – Benin border is a major cause for concern because of its disastrous effect on our national security. A significant number of weapons enter Nigeria from neighbouring West African States like Sierra Leone and Liberia through the Nigeria – Benin border aided by dealers and members of the Nigerian Military who extend their military positions into these neighbouring states to collect weapons and ship them to Nigeria for resale. As a result of inadequate resources and expertise to effectively patrol and manage the Nigeria – Benin border which is about 1000 kilometres, it has been made a major route used to smuggle arms into the country (Ngboawaji, 2011). Thus, the neighbouring states (like Nigeria) surrounding the Republic of Benin had witnessed a modus operandi of shooting in and out in the escapade of robberies so much so that citizens have had a lot of sleepless nights (Balogun, 2003, in <http://news.biatranigeriaworld.com/archive/2003/sep/26/01/15.htm/>). The current clamp down on entry of illegal aliens into the country is a logical response to claims that the dreaded religious sect, Boko Haram, is recruiting aliens into its fold. The former Nigerian Immigration Service, NIS Controller-General, Mrs. Rose Uzoma, underscores the seriousness with which the service views security threat from illegal aliens with a warning to its personnel that it would deal ruthlessly with any of them caught assisting foreigner into the country illegally.

The threat by the NIS to dismiss Immigration Officers that are not faithfully discharging their responsibilities is in order. The wave of bombings in the country and the intelligence reports on involvement of non-Nigerians in the dastardly activities call for services measures to contain the influx of illegal aliens.

What is however, surprising is that it has taken intelligence reports in the country on criminal activities of illegal aliens for the Immigration Boss to threaten to deal with misfits in the NIS. There is no gainsaying the fact that Nigeria needs Immigration Officers that are disciplined, focused and proactive at all times.

The NIS is responsible for policing the nation's 84 land borders, six international airports and seven seaports. Effective monitoring of entry into the country through these borders

is important and the nation cannot afford to have it treated with the laxity with which it has been handled by NIS officials so far, as obvious from Uzoma's statement.

The task of monitoring the nation's borders requires vigilance and alertness. As it is said eternal vigilance is the price for security. Nigeria relies on men and women of the NIS to monitor movement of aliens into the country with every sense of responsibility to keep criminal-minded foreigners out of the country. Various reports have traced the incessant bombing in the country to collusion of Boko Haram with foreign elements, especially members of Al Qaeda and Al Shabab.

It is apparent that people from Nigeria's neighbouring countries enter the country at will. They are mostly un-documented and their activities often undermine security and economy of the country.

To curtail the terrorism acts of the violent Islamic sect Boko Haram, the Federal Government deported a total of 7,000 illegal immigrants. Those deported, were mainly from neighbouring Chad, Niger and Benin Republics. Government Officials had recently said the activities of the sect had been aided by illegal immigrants from these neighbouring countries. <http://africansportlight.com/2012/02/nigeria-fg-deports-7000-overboko-haram-bombing/>). The Nigerian Immigration Service confirmed the deportation and threatened to prosecute the employers of illegal aliens.

Nigeria had at the Council of Ministers of Economic Community of West African States meeting of February 15, in Abuja, cautioned member states to tighten their borders as Boko Haram had gone international. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Olugbenga Ashiru, who stated this, had noted that the terrorist group had affiliated itself to similar groups in the sub-region. Ashiru had said.

The need to strengthen our border controls to curtail the inflow of small arms, drug trafficking and terrorist infiltrations has become imperative. This is exemplified by the affiliations of Nigerian domestic terrorist group with like-mind groups in the neighbouring countries and beyond. In short, Nigeria's local terrorists are going international. Nigeria quite appreciates the fact that this is of serious concern and challenges to our sub-region. It is our responsibility, as member states, to deny these terrorist safe havens in our respective states in order to nip them in the bud. We must all collectively work together to defeat terrorism within our sub-region so that we can better face the daunting tasks of economic development and migration, for the advantage of our people (<http://africansportlight.com/2012/02/nigeria-fg-deports-7000-over-boko-haram-bombings>).

As Nigerians groan under the yoke of incessant attacks from Boko Haram, a cross section of Nigerians and sources in intelligence and security operations insisted the lackluster approach of the Federal Government in tackling the Boko Haram terror attacks has crippled social life and the economy and what account for this is the sects strong sub-regional network and alignment with other international terrorist groups.

As for Okereocha (2012), the decimation of Kano by the Boko Haramists, the once vibrant commercial nerve centre of not only the North, but also neighbouring countries like Chad, Republic of Niger and Northern Cameroon has created fear in the minds of traders and businessmen in the ancient city nearly desolate. Boko Haram crisis has taken a heavy toll on business in the city as traders no longer visit the city as they used to. However, this sad development is not restricted to Kano City alone. It is the same experience in the other states in the North that are strongholds of the militant sect he noted.

Okereocha posits that criminal activities of Boko Haram has not only instilled fear in the minds of prospective foreign and local investors, but maintains that national economy is in a state of comatose. His views are captured thus:

Losses incurred by traders and businessmen are only an aspect of the incalculable damage the activities of the terrorists are causing the economy generally. Now, this has a spiral effect on the national economy, because apart from southerners who are forced to return home, some northern youths who are uncomfortable with the spate of insecurity there are also part of the influx to the south (Okereocha, 2012:46).

Expatriating further, he stresses that, the menace of Boko Haram has greatly affected economic development of the nation between 2009 and 2012 claiming that, apart from the estimated loss of more than 935 of the country's human capital development alone, according to a report by the Human Right Watch, HRW, and Nigeria's foreign direct investments. FDIs have also shrunk significantly.

Also, World Investment Report of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development UNCTAD estimated that the domestic economy has so far lost a whopping ₦1.33 trillion FDI to the activities of Boko Haram. When the loss of human capital is added, the figure is indeed mind boggling and far more than what is currently bandied by some people, argue some experts.

Arising from the foregoing, the huge loss by the economy is a fall out of the fears created in the minds of prospective foreign and local investors by the incessant bombing campaign of Boko Haram. Consequent upon this, no serious investors, foreign or local

would risk his life or funds by investing in the country especially in the North, and this is dragging the economy down the drain.

It is also gathered that the sect members do take refuge in neighbouring countries (that is Benin Republic, Chad and Republic of Niger etc) when there is heat from Nigerian security agents. Indeed, Nigerian borders are porous. Thus, while this makes it easy for criminals to move in and out freely, it is difficult to effectively monitor movements of the sect members by security operatives. There are numerous unmanned bush paths in the Nigerian borders, that the task policing the nation's borders is a very difficult one. Members of the Boko Haram sect appeared to have good training in warfare and combat. This appears to give credence to the claims by leaders of the sect and security findings that some of its members had gone for training in some countries. (Suleiman, 2011:45). The table below aptly chronicles Boko Haram attacks in the northern part of the country.

Table 1: Shows Boko Haram Attacks in the Northern Part of Nigeria Between 2009 and 2012; A Demonstration that the Porous Nature of Nigeria – Benin Republic Borders, Increases Insecurity in Nigeria, since 2000.

Date of Attack	Place of Attack	Number of Persons Killed
July 27, 2009	Attack on Potiskum, Yobe State. Divisional police headquarters	Three policemen and one fire service officer died.
March 13, 2010	Another sect operation in the northern part of Jos, plateau State,	Led to the death of 300 people.
September 8, 2010	Bauchi central prison was set ablaze	Members of the sect freed.
October 1, 2010	Explosions near the Eagle square, Abuja,	Claimed 12 lives, leaving many Injured.
December 24, 2010	A bomb attack in Barkin Ladi, Jos, Plateau State.	Killed 8 people.
December 31, 2010	Explosion at Mogadishu Mammy Market, Abuja,	Claimed about 10 lives.
January 21, 2011	The Borno state governorship Candidate of All Nigeria peoples party, ANPP, for the 2011 election, Alhaji Modu Gubio, brother Borno state.	Alhaji modu Sheriff, Killed by sect members alongside six others in Maiduguri, Borno State.
March 2, 2011	Mustapha Sandamu, at Rigasa area of Kaduna State	Boko Haram killed two policemen Attached to the residence of the Divisional Police Officer,
March 30, 2011	Bomb planted by Boko Haram in Damaturu, yobe state exploded	And injured a police officer.
April 8, 2011	Bomb at INEC office in Suleja, Niger State, claimed lives of	Eight corps members and a suicide bomber
April 9, 2011	Bomb explosion occurred at a polling Unit in Unguguwar Doki, Maiduguri, Borno state	Killing the suicide bomber
April 26, 2011		Three people killed and scores injured in bomb attack.
April 29, 2011	Army Barracks in Bauchi Bombed	Number of persons Killed not disclosed by the military authority
May 19, 2011	In bomb attack	Three policemen killed and two soldiers injured
May 29, 2011	Explosion at mammy market in shandawanka barracks in Bauchi state.	Claimed lives and left many injured
May 30, 2011	Bombs exploded early morning on Baga road in Maiduguri, Borno State, Borno state,	13 dead and 40 injured.
June 7, 2011	Series of bomb blasts occurred in Maiduguri,	Claiming five lives and leaving several others injured.
June 16, 2011	Bomb blast at Damboa twon, Maiduguri, Borno state	4 children killed
June 16, 2011	Nigerian police headquarters Abuja, bombed by a	Three killed and many vehicles damaged.

	suspected suicide bomber,	
June 20, 2011	Boko Haram stormed Kankara police station in Katsina State.	Seven policemen killed and two of the security men guarding a bank opposite the station were also killed.
July 9, 2011	A clash between Boko Haram and the military in Maiduguri. Also in Suleja, Niger State. A bomb targeted at a church.	35 people dead and many others injured.
July 11, 2011	Tragic explosion at a relaxation joint in Fokados Street, Kaduna	No casualty recorded.
July 12, 2011	Boko Haram threw an explosive device on a moving military patrol vehicle,	Claimed five lives.
July, 15, 2011	Explosion in Maiduguri	Injured 5 people.
July 23, 2011	An explosion close to the palace of the Shehu of Borno, Abubakar Garbai Elkanem,	Injured 3 soldier
July 25, 2011	Bomb explosion near the palace of a traditional ruler	Claimed 8 lives
August 25, 2011	A bank robbed by the sect members	4 policemen, 1 soldier killed and civilians and carted away undisclosed sum of money
August 26, 2011	A suicide bomber drove into the United Nations building in Abuja,	23 killed and 60 injured.
September 12, 2011	Attack on a police station in Misau Bauchi state.	Seven people, including four policemen, killed during the bombing
September 13, 2011	Sect members shot in an attack in Maiduguri, Shortly after the arrest of 15 sect members during military raids on Boko Haram hideouts in Bauchi State	4 Soldiers injured
September 17, 2011	Brother-in-law of Mohammed Yusuf, the slain leader of Boko Haram, Babakura Fugu, Shot in Maiduguri by two member of the sect two days after he was visited by former president, Olusegun Obasanjo.	Babakura Fugu, killed
October 3, 2011	Boko Haram attacked Baga market in Maiduguri	Killed 3 people
November 4, 2011	Boko Haram attack in Damaturu, Yobe State.	About 150 people killed
November 27, 2011	Attack in Geidam, Yobe State.	7 people
December 18, 2011	Bomb detonated in Shuwari, Maiduguri, Borno State	3 members of Boko Haram were killed
December 22, 2011	Explosives and gunshots	4 people killed and left several others injured.
December 24, 2011	Bombing in Jos, Plateau State	About 80 people killed
December 25, 2011	Christmas Day Bombing in Madalla, Niger State	About 50 people died
December 30, 2011	Bomb attack in Borno State	Seven people killed in Maiduguri
January 5, 2012	A church Attack by Boko Haram members in Gombe State	About 6 people died
January 6, 2012	Attack in the Christ Apostolic church, Yola, Adamawa state	17 people died and 20 Igbo people were also killed in Mubi in the same State.
January 20, 2012	Multiple attacks in Kano.	About 250 people killed
January 22, 2012	Two churches destroyed in Bauchi State; The headquarters of Tafawa Balewa Local Government Area in the state.	2 military personal, a DPO and 8 civilian also killed
January 26, 2012	The Sabon-Gari area of Kano state witnessed another explosion, which caused another pandemonium in the state	Many inured and some luxury buses were damaged in the explosion.
February 26, 2012	Headquarters Church of Christ in Nigeria COCIN in Jos	3 female worshippers killed and 50 others wounded including Yijap Abraham state Commissioner for information.
February 28, 2012	Boko Haram Bombed primary schools at night, both Muslims and Christians attend the schools. In Gomari Costain primary school and three others in kulagumna, Budum and Abbaganaram are affected in the attack.	Not fewer than 5,000 primary school pupils and their teachers have been forced to stay at home. No casualty recorded as the attack took place in the night.
May 2012	Christian Worshippers at the Old Campus of Bayero University Kano	20 Persons Killed, including 2 Professors.

Source: Suleiman, T, (Tell, February, 6, 2012:44-45)

After the Mandalla Bomb attacks in Niger state and in Kano city, police sources claimed that no fewer than 200 suspects, including 160 Chadians, had been arrested in connection with the attacks (<http://www.punchng.com/news/bombings-police-arrest-160-chadians-mercenaries-in-kano/>). The same goes for the trafficking of illicit arms and light weapons manufactured locally or imported from other parts of the world, drugs or narcotics and human trafficking. The table below illustrates the predominant cross-border or trans-national crimes and security problem in West African.

Table 2: Below Illustrates the Predominance of Cross-Border Crimes and Security Problems in West Africa, Since 2000.

Predominant Border Crimes	Country/Border Zones of Activity	Groups/Actors Involved	Transit States	Recipient States
Narcotics/ Drug trafficking	Cape Verde, Ghana, Nigeria And Togo	Narcotics/drug dealers	Ghana/ Togo/ Benin / Niger	Spain, Portugal UK, USA and South African
Internet crime (advance fee fraud) / money laundering	Nigeria, Ghana, Cote D'Ivoire and Sierra Leone	Advance fee fraud gangs or syndicate/ wealthy businessmen	Syndicates commute from the western part of West Africa (Senegal) to the eastern part (Benin/ Nigeria).	Nigeria and their countries were the "419" fraud stars are resident
Fire arms/trafficking	Ghana/Togo/ Benin/ Nigeria/Sierra-Leone/ Liberia/ Guinea/ Cote D'Ivoire/ Senegal	Rebels, local manufacturers of small/ middlemen	Togo/Benin/ Guinea Bissau and Gambia	Nigeria, Liberia, Sierra Leone Guinea and Cote D'Ivoire
Recruitment of child soldiers, mercenaries	Mano River Union States including Liberia, Sierra Leone Guinea and Cote D'Ivoire	Rebel groups (including LURD, MODEL, RUF, NEW FORCES, MPJ, MPCJ and MPIGO)	Some countries depending on the where the conflict spill over.	Mano River states and Cote D'Ivoire
Smuggling of illegal goods, minerals and natural resources and cash crops	Ghana/Togo/ Benin/ Nigeria/ Sierra Leone/ Guinea/ Cote D'Ivoire	Individuals, businessmen and women, warlords/ civil wars combatants	Mainly Ghana, Liberia Sierra Leone and Cote D'Ivoire	In Europe and North America.

Sources: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, UNODC, cited in Addo (2006:5)

Trans-border crimes also account for too much illegal oil bunkering in Nigeria. The table below shows estimated value of Nigeria's oil stolen and short-in oil production between 2000/2008.

Table 3: Shows Estimated Value of Nigeria Oil Stolen and Short-In Oil Production Between 2000/2008

Year	Average Price of Bonny Light Per Barrel	Volume of Oil Stolen Per Day (Per Barrels)	Value of Oil Stolen Per Annum (in Barrels)	Volume of Oil Shut-In Per Day (in Barrels)	Value of Oil Shut-In Per Annum (in USD)	Total Value of Stolen Oil or Shut-In Per Annum (in USD)
2000	28.49	140,000	1.5 Billion	250,000	2.6 Billion	4.1 Billion
2001	24.50	724.171	6.5 Billion	200,000	1.8 Billion	8.3 Billion
2002	25.15	699.763	6.5 Billion	370,000	3.4 billion	9.9 Billion
2003	28.78	300,000	3.2 Billion	350,000	3.7 Billion	6.9 Billion
2004	38.27	300,000	4.2 Billion	230,000	3.2 Billion	6.4 Billion
2005	55.67	250,000	5.1 Billion	180,000	3.7 Billion	8.8 Billion
2006	66.84	100,000	2.4 Billion	600,000	14.6 Billion	17.0 Billion
2007	75.14	100,000	2.7 Billion	600,000	16.5 Billion	19.2 Billion
2008	115.81	150,000	6.3 Billion	650,000	27.5 Billion	33.8 Billion

Sources: Judith B.A. (2009) "Blood oil in the Niger Delta", special report 229, United States Institute for Peace Washington, D.C.

A more recent account puts the loss of Nigeria government to illegal oil bunkering at \$7.7 billion daily. This is calculated based on estimated U.S \$7.7 million on every 100,000 barrels loss per day (Opera, 2010). From the above, it is obvious there is the challenge or arriving at agreeable figures or what is the real monetary cost of bunkering.

However, with all regard to the remarks by former presidential adviser on petroleum and energy matters, Dr. Desmond Daukoru, that crude oil theft is one of the two ways (the other being, communal unrest) by which Nigeria has lost \$30 billion between 1999 and 2003, what this loss meant, indirectly, is reduction in the financial ability of the government to meet people oriented programmes, including funding of peace initiatives in the crisis – prone Niger Delta region.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The link between political economy of trans-border crimes and insecurity in Nigeria is the focus of this study. The study is designed to examine the correlation between trans-border crimes, its unbridled effects that manifest itself most times in worsening insecurity in Nigeria using the Nigeria – Benin borderline as case study. Our central objective is to examine them relationship between cross – border crime and the worsening insecurity situation in Nigeria. After critical analysis of available data and literature, the article reveals as follows:

Nigeria's porous borders have led to numerous cases of crimes and criminality which often times manifest itself in insecurity in the country.

A basic causal mechanism links trans-border crimes to worsening insecurity in Nigeria. This is underscored by the fact that Nigeria has at the Council of Ministers of Economic

Community of West Africa States meeting on February 15, in Abuja, caution, member states to tighten their borders as Boko Haram had gone international.

The current clamp down on entry of illegal aliens into the country is a logical response to claims that the dreaded religious sect, Boko Haram is recruiting aliens into its fold from neighbouring countries.

Our central theme in this study is that trans–borders crimes in Nigeria, especially the Nigeria – Benin Republic borderline have led to worsening insecurity in Nigeria. Ipso facto, the Boko Haram menace in Nigeria has been linked to several neighbouring African countries like Chad, Niger and Benin Republic. Nigeria has consistently stated that Boko Haram gets support from groups in neighbouring African countries sympathetic to their cause.

It is therefore our firm believes that the clamp down on illegal aliens by the Federal Government should be sustained and taken to the latter, in order to dissuade potential and real threats to Nigeria's national security from entering the country. Deriving from this, the study recommends as follows:

1. There is a need to strengthen exiting joint border control commissions with the Benin Republic and by extension other neighbouring countries (i.e., Niger, Chad, and Cameroon) to fight trans-border crimes.
2. The Nigerian government should also guarantee appropriate national control measures such as appropriate legislative and regulatory actions, upgrade skills in crime investigation and enforcement techniques and equip all law enforcement agencies adequately.
3. As corollary to the above, government as a matter of national priority should acquire modern equipment and training for its naval personnel to guarantee their effective policing of Nigeria's 84,000 square nautical miles water.
4. There should be concerted efforts at the sub-regional level involving governmental and non- governmental agencies to combat cross border crimes. Here cooperation and coordination is required through having adequate information, training and knowledge of the nature and traits of cross border crimes.
5. Sub regional structures like the West African Police Chiefs Committee, WAPCCO need to be reoriented and realigned to address the transnational organized crime situation in the sub region.

6. Serious efforts should be made to address the problem of corruption within government and security agencies in order to avoid complicit acts by government and security officials.

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