

**US COUNTER-TERRORISM STRATEGIES AND THE
DECIMATION OF AL-QAEDA**

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Terrorism in military terms is a tactic, rather than an ideology, used by various groups as a means to force governments to change their policies. In history it may have had varying degrees of success. The word “terrorism” actually has its roots in the Reign of Terror (1793-1794) in France, when the Jacobins killed anyone suspected of opposing the revolution (Griset, et al 2003). It is a form of politically motivated violence used by dissident groups against authorities, and hence it is not any new phenomenon. Likewise, the approaches of authority to counter insurrection, insurgency, and revolts of a violent nature is equally not new. Political motivated violence for instance, is known to have existed since times before the Christian era, when Jewish groups like the Zealots in Palestine instigated a revolt against imperial Roman forces through a series of attacks on prominent Roman citizens. And measures were taken by Roman forces to counter such violent revolts at the time which include capture and imprisonment of members of the zealots, crucifixion of culprits, information gathering on their planning etc (Gerard, 2007).

In today’s world, the growing trend of politically motivated violence to achieve an objective is even more complex than ever. Today’s zealots or extremists or terrorists as they are called, engage in assassination, kidnapping and hostage taking, and suicide attacks even across territorial boundaries. Its increasing complexities is worrisome. Today’s extremists is worse than ever because they not only transcend national boundaries but constantly seek to use the most sophisticated means to terrorize and cause mass destruction (Guelke, 1995).. It is on this basis that ‘counter terrorism’ as a practice has become an essential part of strategic planning and policy making for many state governments who seek to uphold national security. Counter-terrorism is the practice, military strategies, tactics, and techniques that government,

military, law enforcement and intelligence agencies use to either combat or prevent terrorism. Counter-terrorism tactics may include attempts to detect terrorists location, counter financing of terrorism and all forms of sponsorship, attempts to dislodge terrorists from their safe havens, targeting their prime leaders, unseating regimes who's policies breeds terrorist groups, enacting laws that prohibits terrorist's acts etc. The practice of counter terrorism is relatively new and only became more pronounced in the 21st century after the 9th September attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in the US (9/11) (Hoffman, et al2015). This is so because terrorism has continually become more sophisticated than ever and used as a tactic in modern times by mostly dissident groups to coerce governments to alter their policies (Beland, 2007)..

One country that has suffered from international terrorist attacks more than any other nation in the world is the United States of America (Agba E, 2015). Prior to the last decade of the 20th century, the United States had had its problems with internal terrorism in the form of such groups as the Ku Klux Klan and the Molly Maguires, which were a group of Irish coal miners who targeted coal mine operations, but their actions never constituted a direct threat to America's national security interests. It was not until the humiliating disaster in April 1980 at Desert One, which killed eight men, left 53 hostages in Iran, and essentially ended Carter's Presidency, that the United States realized it was not ready to counter a new trend of threat to US national interests both home and abroad which was caused by states sponsoring terrorism across borders popularly known today as 'state sponsored terrorism'. Also, the May 1981 New York City bomb-blast at JF Kennedy Airport terminal is also one of consideration believed to have had a foreign influence (Gerard, 2007). These incidents began to pave the way for the gradual development of the US counter-terrorism strategies and policies. In April 1982, President Reagan re-defined responsibilities for US government security agencies' response to terrorist incidents: the Department of State was made lead-agent for terrorist

incidents outside US territory, the FBI became lead-agent for terrorist incidents inside US territory. In 1983 in Beirut, in the aftermath of the Syrian and Iranian-backed bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut which forced US withdrawal from Lebanon, experts concluded that the US still was still not capable of effectively countering state-sponsored international terrorism (Guelke, 1995). The US was thus, vulnerable to this evolving threat, and in the face of its incapacitation to challenge this new asymmetric war, it only paved the way for the worst. After the August 8th 1998 bombings of two of America's embassies in Africa, which was followed 3years later by the suicide flight attacks on America's world trade center and the pentagon which killed nearly 3000 persons, a counter-terrorism policy was no longer that to be whisked to the realm of debate, it was a necessity, and an urgent one that if not formulated, would leave the American state to the highest level of vulnerability as never seen before. Specifically, after the September 11 attacks in 2001, the American government along with its western allies made counterterrorism strategies a priority, and top of among these strategies was international cooperation and that which constituted a preventive approach (Galtung, 2002). All of these were officially documented in America's first publicized National Strategy for Combating Terrorism in February, 2003. The opening words of the introductory part of the document reads thus:

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, in Washington, D.C., New York City, and Pennsylvania were acts of war against the United States of America and its allies, and against the very idea of civilized society. No cause justifies terrorism. The world must respond and fight this evil that is intent on threatening and destroying our basic freedoms and our way of life. Freedom and fear are at war. The enemy is not one person. It is not a single political regime. Certainly it is not a religion. The enemy is terrorism—premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents (USD, 2003).

America's national security document on the war against terror also posits that while this war is asymmetric in nature, there are advantageous strategies for the US in this campaign.

Prominent amongst these are strong partnerships the US has been building across the globe, its economic strength that will be a base to help failing and weak states to get rid of terrorism, and its technological capacity that can identify and locate terrorist organizations so as to eliminate them where they hide. These counter-terrorism strategies and policies have continually expanded by not only the US but her allies in this 21st century with the perceived growing threat from anti-western extremists. Thus, many countries of the world today have also begun adopting counter terrorism policies and strategies for their own national security (Hoffman, et al, 2015).

The United Nations Security Council has also been at the forefront in the war against terror. The Security Council introduced the Counter-Terrorism Committee – established in 2001, based on Resolution 1373 which ensures the implementation of counter-terrorism policy. In 2005, the UN Secretary General proceeded to the introduction of the *Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task force for the combating of Terrorism*, an organ which oversees the involvement of all the services of the UN. In September 2005, Resolution 1624 was adopted by the Security Council, condemning every form of terrorist action, regardless of origin, and calling on states to take the necessary measures to prohibit any incitement that amounts to terrorism (ibid).

In September 2006, the General Assembly passed the *United Nations Global Counter Terrorism Strategy*. This strategy is the central political instrument of the UN and is the basis for shaping anti-terrorism policy on individual issues. The Strategy text has been revised four times, in 2008, 2010, 2012, and 2014. Under the auspices of the UN, the international community, continuing a process initiated prior to Security Council Resolution 1373 (2001), has adopted 16 international legal instruments on combatting terrorism. These instruments set out the obligations undertaken by states within the framework of terrorism, cover a broad range of actions characterized as terrorism, and contain the general guidelines and overall

policy outlook against terrorism. Many nations today have passed anti-terrorism laws and a means to suppress and eliminate the menace. The United States has been amongst the first of nations to pass anti-terrorism laws and policies (ibid). The *Patriot Act* of 2001 and the *National Strategy for Combatting Terrorism* in 2003 became law and policy respectively for the US in her war on terror in the years that followed the 9/11 attacks. Other laws were also passed in a bid to further curb the threats from within, especially those who did not have direct links with al-Qaeda, but were sympathetic to their cause. The crux of this research then, is to discover the extent to which US counterterrorism strategies is helping, or has helped to not only curb but resolve the problem of terrorism, and specifically the extent it has won the war on terror against the al-Qaeda threat.

1.2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Americans know that terrorism did not begin on September 11, 2001. Regrettably, its history is long and all too familiar. The first major terrorist attack on New York City's financial district, for instance, did not occur on September 11, or even with the 1993 truck bombing of the World Trade Center. It occurred September 16, 1920, when anarchists exploded a horse cart filled with dynamite near the intersections of Wall and Broad Streets, taking 40 lives and wounding about 300 others. Starting with the assassination of President William McKinley in 1901 and continuing with the bombings of the U.S. embassies in Tanzania and Kenya in 1998 and the attacks in Yemen in 2000, American history in the 20th century was no doubt punctuated by terrorism (Matusitz, 2013).

The United States had posited in her document on *National Strategy for Combatting Terrorism* that at the base of terrorism are underlying conditions such as poverty, corruption, religious conflict and ethnic strife which create opportunities for terrorists to exploit. Some of these conditions are real and some manufactured. Terrorists use these conditions to justify

their actions and expand their support. The belief that terror is a legitimate means to address such conditions and effect political change is a fundamental problem enabling terrorism to develop and grow (USD, 2003).

And Fighting terrorism has become the biggest challenge to the United States because of the growing sophistication. This is so because the enemy, the terrorist, does not fight a traditional kind of warfare, but one that is highly unconventional. Thus, the war on terrorism has an unconventional nature that makes it so challenging. Unlike a traditional war that takes place on a definite battlefield, with clearly defined armies, and where the enemy is visible, the war on terror is difficult due to its elusive nature. The 'enemy' can strike at any time, with any means, and through any venue. Even the weapons used by the terrorists could be non-traditional. Another reason that the war on terrorism is so difficult to fight is because a truly hard-core terrorist-bound organization is very secretive. And it takes a lot to track the doings of such a group. Also they have many hidden cells in different parts of the globe. Hence, in addition to being hidden they are spread all over the world and they exploit the very porous borders. This means that it is fairly easy for people to travel in and out of the countries due to increasing globalization. There are also groups of terrorists called 'sleeper cells' which means that they are dormant or on standby. One of the purposes of these kinds of groups is to simply blend in and remain undetected until they are told to carry out the terrorist attack. These people are also difficult to find (Poland, 2005).

As terrorists are diverse and spread out across the globe, so it is difficult for any government to pin down the core of the group or to cut off their powers. In other words, if they were all located in one region or one geographical space, then, it would have been a lot easier to fight them, but that is not the case. They usually abode themselves in more than one place. This fact alone makes fighting the terrorists almost impossible. In addition, many terrorists always live among civilian communities, so the act of discerning who is and who is not a terrorist is

very hard. Terrorism is not a country. Hence, it is not that easy to just take over all the land of country X and that means terrorism is defeated. In World War II (WWII), once the US had conquered Germany, the war in Europe was over. But there is no place that the US can just conquer once to end the war on terror.

Furthermore, terrorism by definition is the use of violence and threats to intimidate or coerce, especially for ideological purposes. Hence, people who engage in acts of terrorism believe in a cause they have been indoctrinated into, and changing that mentality and belief does not come any easy. It will take a period of time. It will involve strategies that change perception, change a people's way of life, and above all change their ideology. The war on terror is also hard to fight because instead of having one big enemy that we can name and find, we have many little ones. Additionally, the enemies are harboured in a number countries of countries especially in the Middle East and now Africa. They also attack in small groups or alone and are not afraid to die.

From the above, it is obvious that the war on terror is a daunting task for any nation. And the United States has grappled with these challenges since the 9/11 attacks (Singh, 2006). The clear challenges remain the task of locating the enemy; separating the enemy from the populace that provides support and sustenance; denial of enemy sanctuary and safe haven; elimination of enemy freedom of movement, denial of enemy resources and support; neutralization of the enemy and prevention of further recruitment; and finally creation of a secure environment (Beland, 2007).. And the focus of this research is on the strategies deployed by the US in the war against al-Qaeda since the 9/11 attacks. It is obvious certainly that a repeat of the terror act of 9/11 has not occurred again. The US has been doing all within its power to avoid another dark history that the event of 9/11 brought, where more than 2500 lives mostly US nationals were lost. Al-Qaeda's leader, Osama Bin Laden had claimed that

the event of 9/11 was a vengeful act to the US. He noted it was a response to Muslims who had been killed in America's wars in the Middle East. Bin Laden also claimed that his group wanted the US to vacate all Muslim dominated countries (Schmid, 2005).

After the event of 9/11, the US government at the time along with successive governments have continued the 'war on terror', and this war has been taken to the enemy, implying that the enemy has been located and fought. This explains the suppression of al-Qaeda's threat to a great extent. Since 9/11, at least 40 Islamist-inspired terror plots aimed at the United States have been thwarted due to the use of its technology and intelligence gathering amongst other strategies. And all categories of successful terrorist attacks against U.S. targets both at home and overseas have been on a downward trend since 2005. Al-Qaeda has been substantially defeated in Iraq, flushed from Afghanistan, and hounded in Pakistan. A number of affiliated groups across Southeast Asia have through U.S. counterterrorism assistance and cooperation been rooted out. Terrorist networks have been dispersed and disaggregated. Progress against al-Qaeda's attempts to attack the U.S. was the result of taking the offensive in the war on terrorism. The successes after only a decade in post-9/11 were as a result of efforts to disrupt terrorist sanctuaries and safe havens; capture, maim, or kill the cadre of the terrorist leaders; pre-empt and disrupt planning and operations; disaggregate networks; thwart terrorist travel and communication; and disrupt fundraising and recruiting. Specifically, drone missile strikes in Pakistan's tribal areas have helped degrade al-Qaeda's operational capabilities, while also significantly contributing to the U.S. ability to place al-Qaeda on the defensive (Hoffman, et al, 2015).

The 9/11 terror attacks which happens to be the worst in US history had no doubt left the US to revolutionise its war on terror. With the above robust and intense strategies, the US had sought to reduce the al-Qaeda threat and prevent another 9/11 from ever occurring in US

history. And indeed, a considerable level of terrorist suppression have no doubt been achieved because there has never been another 9/11 afterwards, and this is not because the terrorists would not have wished for another and even something worse, but because the new war on terror since the gory event of 2001 has assumed a posture that has made it quite difficult for al-Qaeda or any other terror organization to have such a devastating attack on the US again. The 2011 capture and killing of al-Qaeda's prime leader, bin Laden by US Navy Seals, was also a watershed in the US war on terror against al-Qaeda. So is al-Qaeda finally crushed? Or is the war on al-Qaeda finally over? The answer is not a simple 'yes' because as Cornelia Beyer has posited in her work titled '*Why idealist Realism can't win the War on Terrorism*', US counter-terrorism strategies at best achieves conflict settlement rather than conflict resolution. In her position, she maintains that the United States Strategies in the war on terrorism is heavily influenced by realist thinking. This realist thinking about terrorism is an explanation for intervention. She further asserts that both realist thought and deed are misguided and problematic in countering terrorism as they do not respect the structural features of the phenomenon they are supposed to address. Secondly, Counterterrorism strategies of the United States do not regard nor address root causes of terrorism adequately but apply power politics in responding to the phenomenon. Many of the terrorist attacks against the United States over the past two decades have been carried out by Islamic extremists from impoverished countries run by tyrannically oppressive regimes. The quality of life for most people in these countries are miserable at best. As such, it should come as no surprise that people from these circumstances are prone to the indoctrination of violence. However, in the absence of such wretched circumstance, it is likely that they will be less inclined to act violently. Military might thus, can at best suppress terrorism, but the most effective way to resolve the conflict of terrorism is to address more fundamental problems.

So in the light of the above, the question which then arises is ‘how have the US counter-terrorism strategies impacted on this war on terror in terms of not only decimating al-Qaeda or blocking their support and sustenance, but securing the environment for the American people from further threats of al-Qaeda?’ And to what extent are the root causes of terrorism being addressed? To what extent can we say the US is more engaged in ‘terrorism suppression’ than ‘terrorism elimination’? What have been the challenges encountered by the US in the prosecution of this war on terror? And finally how can there be improved policies and strategies by the US to have a more efficacious and effective war on terror that will treat underlying causes of terrorism for a resolution to the conflict? These questions form the very core of the problem for this research study which will be thoroughly delved into in the succeeding chapters.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Summarily from the statement of problem above, the following would form the research questions for the research:

1. What has been the US strategic approach to the war on terror since the 9/11 attacks?
2. To what extent has the US through its counter-terrorism strategies secured the environment for the American people from present and future threats of al-Qaeda?
3. What have been the major challenges for the US in deploying its strategies in the war against al-Qaeda’s terror threat?
4. How can the US have a more improved counter-terrorism policy for a more effective war on terror aimed towards solution rather than mere suppression?

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To identify the US strategic approach to the war on terror since the 9/11 attacks;

2. To identify the impact of US counter-terrorism strategies in resolving the conflict of al-Qaeda's terror threat;
3. To identify the major challenges encountered by the US in the war against al-Qaeda's terror threat;
4. To proffer a more improved and proficient US counter-terrorism policy for a more effective war on terror.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research is significant in the following respects:

- The research would be an exposition of strategies the US has been deploying in the war on terror, especially in the fight against al-Qaeda which the US has suppressed to a large extent.
- The research would further present more insights into the reality of whether the US is really winning the war on terror or not. Hence, the research will be important to other nations engaging in fighting against sub-states that use asymmetric conflict, as this would give them more options in policy making for a more effective war in counter-insurgency.
- The recommendations that would be established at the end of the research study could be relevant in further enhancing an improved war on terror for the American nation, and other nations having some limitations in the fight against terrorism.

1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

America's global fight against terror today is beyond al-Qaeda. This is so because terrorist attacks in France, Belgium, Britain, Germany, Denmark etc and the sharp rise in terrorist activities in the countries of North and West Africa and the Middle East have shown the rise of several other transnational terrorists such as Islamic State (ISIS), Boko Haram, al-Shabaab

etc. Hence, this research will focus on the US efforts in fighting the terrorist activities of al-Qaeda. The time scope of the study covers the period from the 9/11 attacks in 2001 to 2017.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The method of research is primarily the qualitative method. Qualitative research is a type of social science *research* that collects and works with non-numerical data and that which seeks to interpret meaning from these data to present a better understanding of social life. To put it succinctly, the qualitative research is that research which investigates meaning and interpretations from other sources.

Method of Data Collection: The qualitative method of this research would make use of the secondary method of data collection. The research would derive information from expert views in scholarly publications of those who have been studying America's counter-terrorism strategies and policy in the Middle East region. This would comprise scholarly books and journals; also newspapers and magazine publications would equally be a useful source of data collection. The research would equally make use of media information from Cable Network News (CNN), British Broadcasting Corporation Reports (BBC), and Al-jazeera News (AJ). Information would also be derived from the internet.

Method of Data Analysis: The data is analyzed using the Method of Correlation which involves the qualitative measure of the degree of relationship between the variables of the study. Hence the research would investigate the extent to which one variable relates with the other. In this case it would seek to analyse the extent to which counter-terrorism strategies relates to resolving the conflict of global terrorism. This would be carried out through a process of text review and analysis.

1.8 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Terrorism: It is the use of violence and threats to intimidate or coerce, especially for political or other purposes. More broadly, *Terrorism* is violence or the threat of violence directed against civilians often referred to as ‘soft targets’, for the purpose of creating intense fear, which the *terrorist* hopes to exploit to attain political or ideological goals.

International Terrorism: It is also the use of violence and threats to intimidate or coerce governments through victims that cut across national boundaries all for political or other purposes. To put it succinctly, it is terrorism across borders or terrorism that involves more than one national or government.

Counter-Terrorism: Counter-terrorism is the practice, tactics, techniques, policy and strategy that government, military, law enforcement and intelligence agencies use to combat or prevent terrorism. In a nutshell, they are activities that are intended to prevent terrorist acts or to eradicate terrorist groups.

Counter-Terrorism Strategies: Generally, strategy is a method or plan chosen to bring about a desired result, such as achievement of a goal or solution to a problem. It is also the art and science of planning and marshalling resources for their most efficient and effective use. Strategy from the perspective of conflict, is the art of planning and directing overall military operations and movements in a war or battle. Counterterrorism strategies therefore are those grand designs, plans, and methods used for an effective war against terrorism. Such strategies could be military based such as the use of drones and other aerial bombardment on terrorists’ location, or it could be non-military based such as terrorists communication detections, disrupting their support base and causing blockade of their financial flow etc.

Terrorism Suppression: Terrorism suppression is not the same as counter-terrorism. ‘Counter terrorism’ is the war on terror while ‘terrorism suppression’ as used in this research is that stage in the war on terror that is characterized by reduction in the number and nature of

terrorist incidences and threats from a particular terrorist group or groups because their attempts are continually foiled through blockade of their support and denial of safe havens amongst other strategies.

Terrorism Elimination: This is the highest stage in the war against terror. It is that stage where underlying factors of terrorism are rooted out. Such factors include poverty, unemployment, lack of liberty, ideology, socialization and indoctrination etc.

1.9 ORGANIZATION OF THE RESEARCH

The organization of the research would consist of five (5) chapters. The first chapter would be a general introduction that will contain the background of the study, statement of problem, objectives among others. The second chapter would be the literature review and theoretical framework. Chapter three would consist generally of counterterrorism strategies especially from notable institutions in the fight against terror like the European Union (EU) and the United Nations (UN) amongst others as well. Chapter four would be solely devoted to the United States' counterterrorism strategies and the chapter will further establish an assessment of the impact of these strategies in resolving the problem of al-Qaeda's terrorism. The final chapter, would be a summary, and also would consist of a conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

Terrorism: A Conceptual Discourse

To first comprehend the concept and practice of counter-terrorism it is important to first understand broadly the meaning of terrorism. The term ‘terrorism’ comes from the French word *terrorisme*, which implies ‘great fear’, ‘dread’, related to the Latin verb *terrere*, which means ‘to frighten’ (Agba E, 2015). The word ‘terrorism’ was first recorded in English-language dictionaries in 1798 as meaning ‘systematic use of terror as a policy’. The period 1793–94 is referred to as *La Terreur* (Reign of Terror). Maximillian Robespierre, a leader in the French revolution proclaimed in 1794 that ‘Terror is nothing other than justice, prompt, severe, inflexible’. Over the years, there had been the problem of arriving at a single universal definition of terrorism. These difficulties arise from the fact that the term is politically and emotionally charged. However, some notable scholars as well as institutions and governments have given quite influential definitions.

Firstly, Bocskette (2008), argues that terrorism is political violence in an asymmetrical conflict that is designed to induce terror and psychic fear through the violent victimization and destruction of non-combatant targets. Bocskette (2008) further explains the use of the media by terrorists for publicity to garner attention so as to attain their objectives is an intrinsic factor to terrorism. He argues in this line that the purpose of terrorism is to exploit the media to achieve maximum attainable publicity as an amplifying force multiplier or catalyst in order to influence the targeted audience so as to reach short, middle or long term political objectives.

Schmid (1988) defined terrorism not based on the need for political change. He rather viewed it as a tool to bring about change in general state of affairs. He thus defines terrorism as a method of combat in which the victims serve as symbolic targets, and violent actors are able to produce a chronic state of fear by employing violence outside the realm of normative behaviour. Their goal is to reach in an audience beyond the immediate victim and bring about a change of general public attitudes and actions (Schmid, 1983). His view however, does not negate an intrinsic character of terrorism as a tool or means to viewed by the terrorists bring about a new dimension in the affairs of human life whether ideological or political, or social etc.

Craig (2006) attempts to distinguish acts of terrorism from political violence. Although he admits that terrorism is a sub-classification of political violence, yet he argues that they both differ in their choice of targets and in the creation and exploitation of fear. He posits further that ‘while all terrorism is political violence, not all political violence is terrorism’. Terrorism he asserts, is the use or threat of violence on non-combatant populations to create and exploit fear in a larger population for political or ideological objectives; whereas political violence is the use or threat of violence on any target (Combatants and non-combatants) for political or ideological objectives. Their distinction, thus, he posits, emerges when taking cognizance of the targets and methods used. In his view the targets of terrorists are non-combatants (soft-targets), whereas that of political violence is more encompassing as it includes any target which of course may be combatants (hard-targets) such as the military as in cases of inter-state wars or guerrilla fighters against the state which are all illustrations of political violence. In his view, if the target of the attack were only combatant personnel, then, it would limit the scope of violence and the fear generated in the population is also inhibited. On their methods he argues further that while terrorists conduct their violence or threat of violence in order to create and exploit fear in a larger population; political violence on the

other hand such as wars are not necessarily to exploit fear, but where such is the case, he asserts that it translates to state terrorism (Craig 2006). He further views terrorism as consisting of four basic points. First is the threat or use of violence; secondly, the use of that violence on non-combatants; thirdly, the creation or exploitation of fear in a larger population than the specific target group; and fourthly, the political or ideological reasons for which this violence is being committed.

Okeke (2005) asserts that terrorism is an organized violent attack on a target audience with the aim of undermining a lawfully constituted authority and to instill fear in the populace in furtherance of some socio-political objectives. Hence, this view like the above also purports that terrorism is simply a channel or means to some end for the terrorists. He further posits that terrorism is pre-meditated and coercive, thus, implying that terrorism is not any spontaneous violence, but one that is motivated, calculated, and well organized as well as involving the use of force on innocent populations (*soft targets*) which connotes the violation of the rights of the victims.

Craig Knowles (2018) explains that terrorism is a controversial term with no internationally agreed single definition, but is commonly referred to as the use or threatened use of unlawful force or violence against people or property. It is also used to coerce or intimidate governments, societies, companies, etc. to achieve political, religious, or ideological goals. Terrorism is clearly a form of unconventional warfare and psychological warfare. The big thing about terrorism in the world today is that it involves a criminal act perpetrated on the most defenceless (*soft targets*); intended to influence an audience far beyond the immediate victims. Tactics used in terrorism include kidnapping, assassination, arson, bombing, hoaxes, hostage-taking, hijacking and skyjacking, seizure, raids or attacks on facilities, sabotage, potential use of special weapons, and environmental destruction.

According to Matusitz (2013), terrorism includes the following: It is the use of violence or threat of violence in the pursuit of political, religious, ideological or social objective; it can be committed by governments, non-state actors, or undercover personnel serving on the behalf of their respective governments; it reaches more than the immediate target victims and is also directed at targets consisting of a larger spectrum of society; it is both *mala prohibita* (i.e., crime that is made illegal by legislation) and *mala in se* (i.e., crime that is inherently immoral or wrong).

The Pakistan Anti-Terrorism (Amendment) Ordinance (1999) states that terrorism is when a person creates a sense of fear and insecurity in the people, or any section of the people, or does any act or thing by using bombs, dynamite or other explosive or inflammable substances, or such fire-arms or other lethal weapons as may be notified, or poisons or noxious gases or chemicals, in such a manner as to cause, or be likely to cause, the death of, or injury to, any person or persons, or damage to, or destruction of, property on a large scale, or a widespread disruption of supplies of services essential to the life of the community, or threatens with the use of force public servants in order to prevent them from discharging their lawful duties. Further, it is a terrorist act if he adversely affect harmony among different sections of the people; or commits an act of gang rape, child molestation, or robbery coupled with rape or commits an act of civil commotion.

United Nations Security Council (2004) in Resolution 1566 condemned terrorist acts as: criminal acts, including against civilians, committed with the intent to cause death or serious bodily injury, or taking of hostages, with the purpose to provoke a state of terror in the general public or in a group of persons or particular persons, intimidate a population or compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act, which constitute offences within the scope of and as defined in the international conventions

and protocols relating to terrorism, are under no circumstances justifiable by considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or other similar nature.

United Nations International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism (1999) defines the crime of terrorism linked to terrorist financing as the offence committed by 'any person' who 'by any means, directly or indirectly, unlawfully and wilfully, provides or collects funds with the intention that they should be used or in the knowledge that they are to be used, in full or in part, in order to carry out' an act 'intended to cause death or serious bodily injury to a civilian, or to any other person not taking an active part in the hostilities in a situation of armed conflict, when the purpose of such act, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population, or to compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act.' This view thus, proscribes the activities of terrorism sponsors as acts of terrorism.

The United Kingdom's Terrorism Act (2000) defined terrorism as follows: the use or threat of action where such use of threat is designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public or a section of the public. It is also when the use of such threat is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause. Terrorism also can involve serious violence against a person or serious damage to human property, or when an act endangers a person's life, other than that of the person committing the action. It is also terrorism when it creates a serious risk to the health or safety of the public or a section of the public. The United Kingdom's Terrorism Act (2000) defines terrorism so as to include not only violent offences against persons and physical damage to property, but also acts 'designed seriously to interfere with or to seriously disrupt an electronic system' if those acts are (a) designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public or a section of the public, and (b) be done for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

The *US PATRIOT Act* (2001) first defines domestic terrorism as ‘activities that (a) involve acts dangerous to human life that are a violation of the criminal laws of the U.S. or of any state; (b) appear to be intended (i) to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; (ii) to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or (iii) to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping; and (C) occur primarily within the territorial jurisdiction of the U.S.’. And it is international terrorism if more than one national is involved, or is carried out or planned outside US boundaries. Similarly, the U.S. National Counter-terrorism Center (2009) defines a terrorist act as a ‘premeditated; perpetrated by a sub-national or clandestine agent; politically motivated, potentially including religious, philosophical, or culturally symbolic motivations; violent; and perpetrated against a non-combatant target.’

Adeniran (1983:253) distinguishes between two kinds of terrorism. When it involves attacks on innocent citizens or the territory of more than one country it is called as “cross-border terrorism”, “extra-territorial terrorism” or “terrorism across international boundaries” to distinguish it from “domestic terrorism” which is terrorism that does not exceed a states’ frontiers and is meted out only on local populations. Brynjar (2005:877) uses the concept “global terrorism” and explains it as the phenomenon of terrorists operating in and against several nations simultaneously.

Hartmut Behr (2006) also explained terrorism from the concept of ‘global terrorism’. He analyzed forms of organization of transnational politics at the example of international terrorism especially al Qaeda. He posits that international terrorism is when a perpetrator and victim(s) are of at least two different nationalities. The term transnational terrorism refers to international terrorism, but describes the organizational structures. Transnational terrorism thus is characterized by: the trans-border coordination of attacks and their planning, the

erection of an internationally networked infrastructure, international fundraising and financing, international trade in weapons and materials, recruitment and training of terrorists on a global scale.

Most of the formal definitions of terrorism have some common characteristics: a fundamental motive to make political/societal changes; the use of violence or illegal force; attacks on civilian targets (soft targets) by ‘non-state’/‘Subnational actor’, and the goal of affecting society. This finding is reflected in Blee’s listing of three components of terrorism: acts or threats of violence; the communication of fear to an audience beyond the immediate victim, and; political, economic, or religious aims by the perpetrator

Counter-terrorism: A Conceptual Discourse

Peace (2017) explains that counter-terrorism refers to offensive strategies intended to prevent a belligerent, in a broader conflict, from successfully using the tactic of terrorism. This view was coined from the US military definition, which is compatible with the definitions used by NATO and many other military operations that include the offensive measures taken to prevent, deter, pre-empt, and respond to terrorism. In other words, counter-terrorism is a set of techniques for denying an opponent the use of terrorism-based tactics, just as counter-air is a set of techniques for denying the opponent the use of fighter-jets. Another concept similar is the concept of anti-terrorism which emerges from a thorough examining of the concept of terrorism as well as an attempt to understand and articulate what constitutes terrorism in Western terms. In military contexts, terrorism is a tactic, not an ideology. Terrorism may be a tactic in a war between nation-states, in a civil war, or in an insurgency. Anti-terrorism therefore is any tactic that is meant to negate or neutralize terrorism.

The Tactical Edge (2000) explains that in combating terrorism, two terms that are often used interchangeably, and incorrectly, and these are “anti-terrorism” and “counter-terrorism.” Anti-terrorism describes the efforts or strategies to prevent, dissuade or deter terrorist attacks and to diminish their adverse effects when they do occur. By definition then, anti-terrorism is defensive in nature and relies heavily on the intelligence function. Typical anti-terrorism activities are focused on instilling vigilance, identifying threats, hardening potential targets, forecasting probable attacks and neutralizing harmful effects. When specific terrorist threats can be identified anti-terrorism can be focused precisely and so has a tactical role. More often, however, anti-terrorism tends to be strategic in nature in that specificity is only gleaned from examinations of the entire realm of available information. Accordingly, strategies are contrived to separate relevant information from a huge volume of data.

Furtherstill, the *Tactical Edge* (2000) posits that in the most general terms, anti-terrorism strategies rely heavily on four factors. The first is trends. *Trends* are a combination of measurement and prediction used to identify a general tendency, inclination or predisposition. In the terrorism field, trends answer questions such as “Which terrorists or groups are the most active?” “What are their favorite methods of attack?” “What are the preferred targets?” and so forth. The second factor is by determining potentials. *Potentials* describe the ability or capacity of something and thus set limits on the possibilities. This procedure is especially critical in anti-terrorism efforts because the most commonly used terrorist weapon is a threat of some sort. For example, if a terrorist spends the cost of a phone call to make a threat and an agency spends \$10,000 responding to it there is an expectation that the threat was at least credible. *Capabilities* is the third factor and describes the ability of a specific opposing agent to successfully accomplish an action. In the terrorism arena, threats of nuclear bombs and weaponized biological agents abound but the advanced

knowledge, equipment and materials necessary to achieve such attacks make them extremely improbable to all but the most sophisticated terrorists. The fourth factor is intentions. *Intentions* describe the actual or potential activities of an opposing force. In forecasting a potential terrorist attack, for instance, a terrorist group oriented around the environment or climate change would understandably have different target objectives than one focused on ending a war, illegal immigration, resisting a another government's foreign policy etc.

In contrast with anti-terrorism is the term counter-terrorism. *Counter-terrorism* is used to describe the efforts or strategies used to counteract terrorists and actively thwart terrorist attacks. Accordingly, counter-terrorism is offensive in nature and relies heavily on the operations function. Typical counter-terrorism efforts are focused on identifying and capturing terrorists and/or actively defending a target from attack. Unlike anti-terrorism efforts, however, counter-terrorism efforts are seldom strategic but rather focused on specific groups and targets.

While anti-terrorism and counter-terrorism are distinctly different roles and require different skills and abilities, they are also interrelated. Gaining intelligence on known terrorists and probable targets (anti-terrorism) without acting on it would be meaningless. Conversely having an ability to act (counter-terrorism) without having a focus is pointless. Counter-terrorism rely nearly entirely upon intelligence provided by anti-terrorists and anti-terrorists gain intelligence from actions of counter-terrorists, especially in the form of reconnaissance, surveillance, crime scene analysis and captured terrorists. Summarily, according to the *Tactical Edge* (2000) every truly effective strategic-plan for dealing with terrorist attacks will require both anti-terrorism and counter-terrorism efforts.

According to Polanco (2017), counter-terrorism acts are normally performed by governments, militaries and law enforcement to neutralize terrorist organizations and render them incapable of conducting attacks. For example, law enforcement raids conducted on houses of suspected terrorists or freezing banks accounts are examples of counter-terrorism strategies. Anti-terrorism on the other hand are the “defensive measures used to reduce the vulnerability of individuals and property to terrorist acts.” Defensive measures include training, courses and education to understand and defeat terrorist acts before they occur. For example, an emergency response drill conducted at your workplace or attending a terrorism awareness course or workshop are both considered anti-terrorism. The vague international definitions are just one of many reasons why countries cannot agree on the proper procedures for eradicating terrorism.

Jescinta (2017) also made a similar distinction between anti-terrorism and counter-terrorism. In her view, anti-terrorism would refer to those that are against individuals and organisations that carry out terrorist acts, and/or live by such philosophies. Counter-terrorism refers to the practices, techniques, and strategies that governments, military, law enforcement, and intelligence agencies use to fight terrorist organisations, and prevent terrorist acts. This can be done by either a single agent (i.e. just the military, just intelligence services), a whole of government approach (multiple agencies and entities), or a coalition of governments.

The WordPress (2016) is an article that shows some basic differences between counter-terrorism and anti-terrorism. Counter-terrorism is classified as:

- Offensive measures taken to prevent, deny, and respond to terrorism. Hence, counter terrorism is the offensive understanding, pursuit, prosecution and negation of terrorist activity, sometimes by physical force.

- Counter-terrorism is a proactive set of techniques for denying an opponent the use of terrorism-based tactics.
- Counter-terrorism is the frontline; it is usually pre-emptive, long-term and strategic.
- An example might be the use of laws to prosecute those in possession of terrorist manuals or linked to cooperative activities such as drug manufacturing or money laundering for terrorists. These laws are usually made when a link is evident and clear between terrorism and those of which positively influence it.
- Another example would be a raid on a known and potential terrorist to offensively deny actions to be taken on their initiative – of course, after the appropriate evidence collection, legal procedure of gaining warrant, and on-site surveillance.
- Offensive actions are taken against the recognizable enemy at the initiative of governmental departments.

Whereas anti-terrorism is classified as:

- Defensive measures taken to reduce vulnerability to and effect of terrorist acts.
- Anti-terrorism is usually a reactive response to an opponent's use of terroristic actions.
- Anti-terrorism is a defensive approach to reduce the chance of an attack using terrorist tactics at specific points, or to reduce the vulnerability of possible targets to such tactics – reactive to events, preventative for the most part, which is usually short-term and operational.
- Anti-terrorism may be used to deter and delay terrorist activities, e.g. 'hardening' a target.
- An example might be a site survey of known terrorist targets such as embassies which allows anti-terrorism forces to react to an attack in a more efficient manner, knowing

the layout of the building and developing techniques around fighting within it. This is especially prominent when ‘Very Important Peoples’ are visiting such sites.

- Another example of anti-terrorism would be responding to a recent event with increased security, such as more police on patrol in neighbourhoods of interest, and more armed police ready to respond.
- Defensive does not mean passive but it may tend to lean away from the use of force unless pressured to.

Despite the differences that exist between counter-terrorism and anti-terrorism, both have some crossover. They both look at defeating terrorism. One can be just as effective as the other given the right circumstances; both are capable of responding to terrorism but in different formats: defensive versus offensive activities; both seek to understand and limit terrorist activities domestically; both have some amount of crossover in regards to tactics, techniques, and procedures, especially regarding armed resolution of conflicts. At times, they are hard to distinguish, but both have specific goals, training, and structures required to defeat terrorism. They work hand-in-hand. In short, anti-terrorism is waiting for terrorism to happen, taking measures to defend oneself, and countering it as it happens, and, counter-terrorism is gathering intelligence to pursue terrorists, and stopping terrorist attacks before they happen. Both are vital to national security and the associated structure apparatus. Both often work hand-in-hand to stop terrorism, and both often crossover in media, academic, tactics, and other areas.

According to Craig Knowles (2018), anti-terrorism is the holistic defensive approach to terrorism which seeks to understand the causes and drivers of terrorism and measures that can be taken to reduce vulnerability to terrorist (criminal) acts. Counter-terrorism on the other hand is the offensive pursuit to prevent, deter, and respond to terrorism, that is, to counteract:

act against (something) in order to reduce its force or neutralize it, followed by prosecution and negation of terrorist (criminal) activity.

The Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms-US Department of Defence (2005) explains that counter-terrorism refers to offensive measures taken to prevent, deter, pre-empt, and respond to terrorism; while anti-terrorism refers to defensive measures used to reduce vulnerability of individuals and properties to terrorist acts, and it also included response and containment by local military forces or police.

David Galula (1964), a French officer and veteran of conflicts in China, Indochina, Algeria, and Greece, earlier wrote what is perhaps the most comprehensive and seminal manual on counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism. He posits that counter-terrorism consists of actions or strategies aimed at preventing terrorism from escalating, controlling the damage from terrorist attacks that do occur, and ultimately seeking to eradicate terrorism in a given context. Counter-terrorism can be classified according to four theoretical models: *Defensive*, *Reconciliatory*, *Criminal-Justice*, and *War*. Generally speaking, each model contains differences in threat perception based on how to guard against that threat, how to frame terrorism in the law and constitution, and which agents effect counter-terrorism. A country's comprehensive counter-terrorist strategy is usually a combination of some or all of these models. Galula presents four general courses of action to the 'counterinsurgent:' Direct action against the insurgent leadership, Action against the conditions that precipitate insurgency, Infiltration of the insurgent movement with the intent to render it ineffectual, Reinforcement of the state political machine.

There is a clear similarity between the goals of an insurgent and the goals of a terrorist. Both the insurgent and the terrorist employ violent action not as a direct means to compel but as a method of ideological communication. Both the insurgent and the terrorist struggle to gain

legitimacy for their ideas in the minds of a target audience, and to detract from the legitimacy of a non-compliant government. Essentially, the difference between insurgency and terrorism is that the former is a situation of political grievance that escalates to violence while the latter is a violent strategy that those with political grievances may employ. Hence terrorism is one strategy available to those engaging in insurgency. Which means this view corroborates the views of terrorism in military contexts as stated in the view of Peace D (2017) that terrorism is a tactic, not an ideology. As terrorism is best understood as a strategy or tactic of insurgency, counter-terrorism is thus best understood as a component of counter-insurgency.

Paul Pillar (2001) a national intelligence officer for the Near East and South Asia with the National Intelligence Council posits that counterterrorism, which involves an array of activities that exceed the term ‘counterterrorism,’ includes effective use of diplomacy, law enforcement, financial controls, military power, and intelligence gathering. In his view using each of them well together is even more difficult. But using them all is critical in the fight against terrorism. Paul Pillar (2001) asserts further that diplomacy is critical to combating modern international terrorism, which, in many respects, knows no boundaries. Terrorist groups have increasingly spread their reach around the globe. Combating a terrorist network like the one that includes Osama bin Laden’s al-Qaida group requires the cooperative efforts of many countries because the network operates in many countries. In addition to diplomacy is the use of Criminal Justice. The prosecution of individual terrorists in criminal courts has been one of the most heavily relied upon counterterrorist tools. The United States has placed particular emphasis on it, with the bringing of terrorists to justice for their crimes being a longstanding tenet of U.S. counterterrorist policy. Non-U.S. courts have also played significant roles in this regard. Use of the criminal justice system can help reduce terrorism in several ways. Imprisoning a terrorist for life obviously prevents him from conducting any more attacks. The prospect of being caught and punished may deter other terrorists from

attacking in the first place. Even if not deterred, the movements of terrorists still at large can be impeded by the knowledge that they are wanted-men. Paul Pillar (2001) opines that financial control is another counter-terrorism strategy that is important in the war against terror. He explains that the funding that evidently made it possible for the perpetrators of the attacks in September 2001 to train and travel as they prepared for their operation has highlighted the need to interdict terrorist money. The United States uses two types of financial controls to combat terrorism: the freezing of assets belonging to individual terrorists, terrorist groups, and state sponsors; and the prohibition of material support to terrorists. Further still, he argues that use of force is the next option applied when necessary. He posits that a military strike is the most forceful possible counterterrorist action and thus the most dramatic demonstration of determination to defeat terrorists. Finally, intelligence gathering is another important counter-terrorism strategy in the opinion of Paul Pillar (2001). In his view, the collection and analysis of intelligence is the least visible but in some ways the most important counterterrorist tool, and is rightly thought of as the ‘first line of defense’ against terrorism.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Theory of Political Realism

Realism is a school of international relations theory that is based upon four assumptions, firstly that the international system is anarchic, because there is no actor that is above states that can successfully regulate them to common standards. Secondly that States are rational actors that pursue their own national interest. Thirdly, that the main concern of all states is survival. Realists believe that human nature is selfish and on a state that is anarchic all actors will behave in a way that benefits their selves the most (Donnelly, 2008).

Definition of Realism: Political realism is that theory that commonly holds that the international community is characterized by conflicting interests, since there is no overriding world government that enforces a common code of rules. Political realism assumes that interests are to be maintained through the exercise of power, and that the world is characterised by competing power bases.

Scholars of the Realist theory: The theory has a long history, being evident in Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War*. It was expanded on by Machiavelli in *The Prince*, and more insight in *The Social Contract* by Thomas Hobbes. Others who have contributed to the development of this theory include Spinoza, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Reinhold Niebuhr, Hans Morgenthau etc. Most of the theorists conclude that law or morality does not apply beyond the nation's boundaries. Arguably political realism supports Hobbes' view of the state of nature, namely that the relations between self-seeking political entities are necessarily a-moral. Hobbes asserts that without a presiding government to legislate codes of conduct, no morality or justice can exist. Morgenthau systematizes realism in international relations on the basis of six principles that he includes in the second edition of his *Politics among Nations*. The keystone of Morgenthau's realist theory is the *concept of power* or "of interest defined in terms of power," the assumption that political leaders "think and act in terms of interest defined by their power". The proposition here is that international actors can only advance their interests against the interests of others based on the power at their disposal; and this implies that the international environment is inherently unstable which could manifest as wars in its apex.

Basic Features of Realism: The first fundamental feature of Realism is *egoism*. Human nature is a starting point for classical political realism. Realists view human beings as inherently egoistic and self-interested to the extent that self-interest overcomes moral principles (Morgenthau, 1946). At the international level, states (which now includes sub-

state entities) are not abstract entities, but a collection of individuals with interest. This national or sub-national interest is pursued without consideration to ethical principles, but to the ends they seek. In other words, the desired consequence or outcome alone justifies the action taken by states and sub-state entities within the international system (Julian, 2006).

Secondly, realists believe that *morality* rarely has any relevance to international politics. The claim that there is no place for morality in international relations is based on the idea that states that try to exert influence across national boundaries have their own morality, thus making each state to create its own ethical or moral definitions which are largely aimed at justification of the state's conduct in international affairs (Machiavelli, 1531). Hence states would rarely cooperate at the expense of their national interest or capitulate to international law if it does not favour their national interest. Political realists thus, are often characterised as a-moralists, that any means should be used to uphold the national interest.

Thirdly, realists consider the absence of a world government to create universal laws or morality as tantamount to *anarchy*. The lack of a common rule-making and enforcing global authority implies that the international arena is essentially a free for all system. This is so because each state as an international actor believes it is responsible for its own survival and is free to define its own interests (Cozette, 2008). If conflict is permanent in the world according realists, then nothing, certainly not a bare minimum of international cooperation, can ever change that fundamentally. Wars will continue, despite the wisest attempts to prevent them (Okeke C and Agba E, 2016). That is a core position held by political realists, and behind it lies the moral assumption that human nature is inherently not benevolent or kind but highly self-centered and competitive. If so, then nation-states must always be prepared for war, and, indeed, history reveals that increasing military strength, if not superiority, is basic to political realists. For military might alone wins wars.

Finally then, for the realists, *Power and Security* are the primary end of all political actions in the international arena. They view this on the basis that the global system is anarchic and amoral, hence, international actors like the state or other transnational actors would constantly seek to increase the pursuit of their security by increasing their power militarily, engage in power-balancing for the purpose of deterring potential aggressors, fight wars to prevent other competing states or transnational actors from becoming threats or carrying out threats (Donnelly, 2000).

Relevance of Realism to the research:

Realist thought on international relations fit comfortably within the context of the great wars of the twentieth century. Powerful nations possessing massive military forces took aim at one another to affect the hierarchical structure of the international system for the good of their own security and power. These wars, however, differ greatly from today's unconventional war on terrorism. Therefore, the realist theories of yesterday, while still useful, require at least some adjustments to fit the present situation.

One area in which realism is valuable to the war on terror is with regard to the notion that military might is one of the best, if not the best way for nations to ensure their security and prosperity. While it is quite difficult to assume that conventional military forces will be able to effectively combat acts of terrorism that are unconventional, it is reasonable to assume that military forces can be used to suppress it at least to a great extent. The war on terror specifically refers to the ongoing military campaign led by the United States and other Western allies is a response to the 9/11 attacks. The US are the most powerful global power in an anarchic global system, with a primary goal of survival and prosperity for their people. When looking at the war on terror from a realist perspective one can view the conflict as a just war, because a state will do whatever is necessary to protect the interests of its citizens no matter the consequences, and we have already ascertained that a realist thinks it would be

unwise to be moral. So from a true realist perspective, if there is any threat to a nation's people, the state is within its rights to do whatever it takes to squash that threat.

CHAPTER THREE

AL-QAEDA'S HISTORY AND MISSION AGAINST UNITED STATES' FOREIGN POLICIES

3.1 THE OBJECTIVE OF AL-QAEDA

According to Brandiff (2011) al-Qaeda is labeled as the most dangerous and hunted terrorist group by the United States. The group was formed in August 1988 by Osama bin Laden after he had helped Afghanistan to dispel Soviet invasion. The group was later to expand its operations to assist arab and Islamic struggles in other parts of the world where there were similar foreign invasions or external influence.

Bin Laden's original argument with other jihadist groups in the 1990s was that taking on the local rulers had consistently failed because those rulers were propped up by a puppet master, the United States. Only when the "greater unbelief [kufr]" had been forcibly removed from "Muslim lands" would the mujahideen have a free hand to take on and defeat their sinful leaders one by one in a prolonged military struggle. Musharbash (2005) observed that in 1996, al-Qaeda had declared a global jihad so as to empower the Muslim world to not only resist U.S influences on them, but to also drive out all non-believers from Islamic lands as it hopes to unite all Muslim nations and establish an Islamic Caliphate worldwide to oppose individualism and secularism. This declaration had come in the wake of the intensified Middle East crisis with U.S continued support of Arab adversaries especially Israel, and also as a result U.S military presence in the Arabian peninsula as well as the continuous sanctions on Iran.

According to the Frontline Education Report in 2011 (FER 2011), in al-Qaeda's extensive manual handbook that was seized upon during a British military raid on one of its cells at Manchester, it is clearly stated that it aims to overthrow the godless regimes and replace them with Islamic regime. Amongst other missions it also states that it seeks to assassinate the

personnel of the enemy as well as foreign tourists. Bin Laden, the al-Qaeda founder had issued a number of fatwahas stating that the US forces stationed in Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and Somalia should be attacked. Hence the reports posits that a major goal of al-Qaeda has been to drive out U.S forces out of the Arabian Peninsula with violence.

Biddle (2003) summed up al-Qaeda's mission as an attempt aimed at preserving a puritanical, strictly fundamentalist Islam by isolating it from destructive influences of modern and especially western culture. And the belief is that it is only by eliminating the western practices and ideas that the faithful Muslim can properly serve Allah. Biddle (2008) explains further that the above implies a mandatory expulsion of all western presence from the Arabian peninsula and also the need to cleanse all Islam of western influences. He also posits that al-Qaeda's mission is not to separate from any government, but to separate Islam from western influence that bother on political, cultural, and religious influence.

In December 1998, al-Qaeda's founder had issued a statement that said, "hostility towards America is a religious duty, and we hope to be rewarded for it by God" (Lacy 2002). This was a revelation of the group's ideology that implied that terrorism is good because it is against America. And Lacy (2002) explains that the purpose of the statement in al-Qaeda's view is to defeat the perceived oppression of the United States, part of which will result to America's halt of aiding Israel which al-Qaeda claims is responsible for the deaths of many Arab children especially Palestinians because of continued U.S support for Israel. Hence, Lacy (2002) posits that statements from al-Qaeda had revealed that the west in general and America it describes as "head of the infidels" bear nothing but hatred and grudge for Islam. This explains the reason why al-Qaeda had declared that the ruling for Muslims to kill Americans and their allies, whether civilians or military, is the individual duty of every Muslim.

In bin Laden's view, al-Qaeda's terrorism on the US can be viewed as reprisal, as can be found in his Letter to America, published in 2002 after the 9/11 attacks. In his letter, bin Laden claims that al-Qaeda's attacks on American civilians was justified on the basis that the American people had elected a government who was, allegedly, guilty of killing and torture of Palestinians and other people in the Islamic world. Even the paying of taxes should be seen as economically supporting the war. Furthermore, because the American army consists of combatants recruited among the American people, the whole American population is attacking the Islamic society and is hence not immune from any violent countermeasures. bin Laden concluded by stating that "whoever has killed our civilians, then we have the right to kill theirs."

3.2 THE RISE OF AL-QAEDA AFFILIATES

To carry out its mission al-Qaeda has established links with several other jihadists groups fighting a similar cause to globally fight US presence or interest, or US westernized culture anywhere in the world especially in Muslim dominated regions (Zunes, 2002). A quick overview of the current situation shows a worrisome trend. Just before bin Laden's death, al-Qaeda was held in check in the vast majority of the greater Middle East. Most countries faced only a minor terrorist threat from al-Qaeda and affiliated groups, with perhaps a few incidents and dozens of people arrested annually. Five countries—Iraq, Yemen, Algeria, Chechnya, and Nigeria—faced a moderate-to-severe terrorist threat, with hundreds to thousands killed each year in bombings, assassinations, and other terrorist attacks by groups linked to al-Qaeda.

Today, the situation has dramatically worsened. As figure 1 shows, a number of countries that once experienced only a minor threat from al-Qaeda-linked groups are now confronting a

much more serious terrorism problem. In Tunisia, Libya, Niger, and Kenya, groups like al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and an affiliate of al Shabaab are carrying out assassinations, bombings, assaults on prisons and police, and other deadly attacks at an increasing tempo. Meanwhile, the security situations in Chechnya, Algeria, and Nigeria, despite capable counterterrorism efforts by central governments, have not improved. Even more disturbing, the number of countries that now face an insurgency rather than a terrorism problem has risen from three to nine, as shown in figure 2. In addition to Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Somalia, where the organizational linkages with al Qaeda are less disputed, there are now serious insurgencies in Syria,

Mali, Yemen, and Iraq that have open ties with the organization and two further guerrilla wars in Myanmar and the Sinai that involve al Qaeda–linked groups

These affiliates have shown adaptability and strong resilience, as well as proven capability to conduct regional and transnational attacks. And according to CNN world News in 20-2-2011, the rise of al-Qaeda affiliates has generated another threatening dimension on US security especially in new regions of the globe. Some of such groups and their base of operations are the Armed Islamic Group (Algeria), Egyptian Islamic jihad (Egypt), Hezbollah (Lebanon), and AQIM (Maghreb, Algeria) the most dangerous of al-Qaeda’s affiliates (Tilford 2011). Others are Asbat al Ansar (Algeria, Palestine, The Sahel, and Europe), Jumiat-ul-Ulema-e-Pakistan (Pakistan), Abu Sayyaf Group (Malaysia and Philippines), al-Shabaab (Somalia), Al-Ittihad Al Islamiya (Somalia), Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (Uzbekistan), Islamic Army of Aden (Yemen), Hamas (Palestine), The Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (Libya), Bayt al-Iman (Jordan), Lashkar-e-Taliba and Jaish-e-Muhammad (Kashmir, India), Boko Haram (Nigeria).

3.3 AL-QAEDA’S ATTACK AGAINST THE UNITED STATES

According to the Global Focus Organization's Open Intelligence Report (2011), Islamist extremist attacks on the U.S does not come as a surprise because recent opinion polls unveil that not less than 75 percent of citizens in all Arab states have an unfavorable image about the U.S including Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, and Turkey whose governments have had cordial relations with the U.S in recent time. Hence the report posits that most Arab citizens perceive the U.S as their common enemy. He further asserts that the enemy is portrayed as the western culture of democracy that is vehemently scorned as un-Islamic because it advances capitalism- an avenue for imperialist exploitation, and individualism- that negates the communal life of Islam. Hence to establish that new caliphate of worldwide community of Muslim faithfuls, Musharbash (2005) argued that Arab extremist groups have taken it upon themselves to act on behalf of their imperialized communities with the backing of some Arab governments. And these has been the bane of the al-Qaeda's attack on the U.S foreign policies from pre-9/11, to the 9/11 attacks, and now the present post 9/11 era. Below therefore, are some of the al-Qaeda's attacks on the U.S:

Select Pre-9/11 al-Qaeda attacks: According to the Frontline Education Report in 2011 (FER 2011), al-Qaeda had provided military training and assistance to Somali tribes opposed to United Nations intervention in the Somalia crisis. On the 3rd and 4th of October, 1993, these persons trained by al-Qaeda participated in the killing of 18 United States' military personnel serving under the United Nations in Mogadishu, Somalia. Similarly, on August 7th 1998, bin Laden spearheaded an al-Qaeda attack alongside Atef, Fazul Abdullah Muhammed detonating explosive devices that destroyed the United states' embassy in Kenya and Tanzania killing close to 300 persons including American citizens. These attacks became a prelude of the worst to come.

The 9/11 al-Qaeda Suicide Flight Attacks: According to the statistics of worst terrorist strikes worldwide, compiled by Johnston (2010) for U.S State Department in her annual

Country Reports on terrorism, the worst international terrorist incident in recent years by al-Qaeda or its associates was the 9/11 crashing of hijacked planes into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center, New York, and the site in Pennsylvania, U.S.A. with over 2,933 deaths reported. And Okeke (2005) explains that although the 9th September 2001 al-Qaeda suicide flight attacks on the U.S twin towers marked the apex of terrorist aircraft hijacking, it however, ushered in a new era of terrorist strategy that now involved suicide missions to cause mass destruction rather than the traditional bargaining that was involved with hijacking and hostage taking. The attack was carried out by 19 hijackers of the al-Qaeda group. The motive of the attack were bore out of grievances generated by the US continuous support for Israel, and the presence of US military in Saudi Arabia, as well as the US sanctions against Iran. These motives were stated before and after the attacks in numerous sources such as the fatawa of Osama bin Laden, the videos of Aymanal-Zawahiri, videos and interviews of Osama bin Laden etc. But despite the attack, the US did not heed to the terrorist demands. However, several other incidences have either been linked directly or indirectly to the 9/11 hijacked suicide flight incidence which have ranged from suicide bombings to kidnappings, and to assassinations.

Select Post 9/11 al-Qaeda attacks: After the 9/11 attacks, the U.S president George W bush declared war on afghan Taliban government that was believed to be harbouring al-Qaeda leaders and members. U.S troops invaded afghan and begun a raid on the Taliban in 2001 which ousted the Talibans from power in the region and led to the U.S imposing a new government. But while there were series of anti-U.S protest in Afghanistan following the U.S invasion, attentions drifted to the Iraqi president of the time, Saddam Hussein, whom U.S officials had accused of also harbouring and supporting al-Qaeda, as well as developing weapons of mass destruction which the U.S argued posed a serious security risk to the American people. Hence, the U.S government alongside her British counterpart on the 16th of

march 2003 conducted a surprise raid on Iraq that captured president Saddam (Nelson 2004). The U.S justified its pre-emptive strike on Iraq on grounds of averting another 9/11 disaster. However, the raid on Iraq, like Afghanistan, was followed by mass violent anti-U.S demonstrations and suicide attacks by pro-Saddam forces with al-Qaeda elements according to Hersh (2003). Hence Hoffman (2006) explained that suicide bombings have become the most complex of the terrorist strategy in launching its own attacks on perceived enemies. He maintained that several instances of this has occurred since the 9/11 attacks, and they are directed against the U.S invasion of the Middle east. But he posited that several of them are al-Qaeda or pro-Taliban anti- U.S protests meant to express their open revolt of U.S raid on Iraq and Afghanistan. Amongst the casualties are some American soldiers or officials, but also including local populations some of which are seen as U.S collaborators while others are simply casualties of bystanders. A few of the several post 9/11 incidences targeted at U.S nationals which are mainly suicide bombings, kidnappings or assassinations include;

- I. the May 2003 suicide bombing by suspected al-Qaeda members at a housing compound for westerners in Riyadh Saudi Arabia which killed 34 including 8 Americans;
- II. The June 2004 al-Qaeda kidnapping and executing of American Paul Johnson Jr. in Riyadh Saudi Arabia;
- III. A Nigerian man, abdulmutallab umar farouk having claimed he received instructions from al-Qaeda in Yemen attempts suicide explosion on U.S airliner carrying U.S passengers from Amsterdam to Detroit on Christmas day 2009;
- IV. Another suicide bomber kills eight American civilians, seven of which were CIA agents in Afghanistan in December 2009 which is reported as the deadliest attack on the agency since 9/11;

- V. On October 2010, two separate packages of 300-400g of detonative explosives that were bound from Yemen to the United States were discovered en-route stop-overs in England and Dubai through the assistance of the Saudi intelligence security chief;
- VI. On the 24th of May, 2010, two American tourists were kidnapped in Yemen by suspected Islamic extremists that identifies with the cause of al-Qaeda.

Other suicide attacks in the Middle East have been aimed at destabilizing the U.S installed governments in Iraq and the afghan region leading to several casualty figures. Some of these are:

- I. the 29th August 2003 car bombings outside the mosque in the town of Najaf, Iraq which killed 125 and wounded 500;
- II. the multiple suicide bombings in shrines in Kadhimiya and Karbala, Iraq on the 2nd of March 2004 which killed over 200 persons with more than 400 severely injured;
- III. the 14th September 2005 multiple suicide bombings and shooting attacks in Baghdad, Iraq which caused the death of 182 persons and 679 injured persons;
- IV. the multiple car suicide bombings in Baghdad, Iraq which had 202 casualties and 250 injured victims which occurred on the 23rd of November, 2006;
- V. the two suicide bombings which killed 137 and caused the injuries of 310 Shiite pilgrims in Hilla, Iraq on the 6th of March 2007;
- VI. the series of bomb explosions which killed over 200 people and injured 251 in Baghdad, Iraq on the 18th of April 2007;
- VII. the 7th of July 2007 multiple truck bombings in Armili, Iraq with over 182 casualties and 270 wounded persons;

VIII. the 14th August 2007 multiple car bombings in the Iraqi cities of Al-Qataniyah and Adniyah which caused the death of 520 persons with over 1500 injuries;

IX. the suicide bombing at the dog-fighting festival, Kandahar, Afghanistan on the 17th of February 2008 which cost the lives of 105 persons and the injuries of 65 persons;

XI. the October 25th 2009 two suicide vehicle bombings at government houses in the Iraqi capital of Bagdad which left 155 persons dead and 540 persons injured;

XII. the 10th May 2010 multiple bombings in Hilla, Basra, al-Suwayra, and other cities in Iraq causing 102 lives and leaving 350 persons injured;

XIII. the 20th June 2011 killing of the former Afghan President and leader of Jamial-e Islami Burhanuddin Rabbani by two Taliban members who approached him before one of them eventually blew him up. He was a Taliban opponent and had been engaged in a peace deal negotiations between the insurgents and other forces that had made Afghan a zone of bloodshed. Reports from Afghan local televisions (cited in Aljazeera News, Retrieved 29-10-2011) also indicated that his deputy and four other people were dastardly injured. To be a Taliban opponent would amount to be pro-U.S and as such the same terror was unleashed to such persons as would be on U.S nationals;

XIV. the 25th June 2011 suicide car bomber who attacked a hospital in the Azra District of Afghanistan killing more than 35 persons;

XV. the 23rd September 2011 road-side bombings next to a minibus in the Miwand district of Kadahar, Afghanistan which left over seven persons dead and four injured (Report from the Institute for the Analysis of Global Security in 2003).

The above incidences of terrorism are only a few acts of al-Qaeda and their associates mentioned but are amongst the most dastardly to have occurred in last the decade. But despite

the current withdrawal of American troops from the afghan region and Iraq as well, attacks by al-Qaeda and pro-Taliban has not been on the low. Attempts are still made to destabilize the U.S imposed non-Taliban government in afghan and U.S installed Iraqi government.

Figure 1: Al Qaeda–linked terrorism, January 2011



Figure 2: Al Qaeda–linked terrorism, January 2014



*Note: Black lines indicate terrorism; red lines indicate insurgency.
Source: Map from University of Texas Libraries, modified by author.*

CHAPTER FOUR

U.S.' COUNTER-TERROR STRATEGIES ON AL-QAEDA SINCE 9/11

4.1 THE EVOLUTION OF U.S. COUNTERTERRORISM STRATEGY SINCE 9/11

The counterterrorism strategy of the United States has evolved throughout the latter half of the 20th century. In the 1960s extremist Islamist terrorist acts rarely affected Americans directly. When they did, death tolls were small and the historical, policy, and political consequences were usually slight. (Naftali 2005, 45). By the 1970s and '80s, however, threats from terrorists at home and abroad had inspired the development of Counterterrorism working groups and task forces in several bureaus of government.

The evolution of U.S. counterterrorism policy thus, pre-dates war against al-qaeda following the 9/11 attacks on the Pentagon and World Trade Center. It was during the Clinton administration precisely that key decisions were made which paved the way for Bush's declaration of war on terrorists. In 1996, the U.S. Congress under President Bill Clinton passed legislation that imposed economic sanctions on designated terrorist organizations. The ponderously named "Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996" contained an assortment of counterterrorism measures, one portion of which was directed against extremists considered obstacles to the Middle East peace process. It changed the framework of U.S. policy from combating terrorist tactics to punishing designated terrorist groups. Following the terrorist bombings of U.S. embassies in Africa in 1998, the United States directly attacked al Qaeda. As the first military attack on a terrorist group rather than a state sponsor of terrorism, this set an important precedent. The Clinton administration, which had initially viewed terrorism as a law enforcement problem, also approved efforts to kill Osama bin Laden. This would have been considered a violation of the long-standing executive order prohibiting assassination unless the United States regarded itself as being at war with al Qaeda, in which case bin Laden could be viewed as an enemy

military commander. Targeting bin Laden was thus a further step toward putting terrorism into a framework of war three years before Bush declared the Global War on Terror (or GWOT, as it came to be called).

Furthermore, Presidents and Congresses prior to the 9/11 attacks hewed closely to a strategy of denying terrorist the attention they needed to grow their movements (See Naftali 2005, Chapters 2 and 4). But to many, the attention and coverage of the events of 9/11 seemed to repudiate a strategy of starving terrorists of the attention they sought. But this was so because there was no ignoring or downplaying the atrocities of 9/11. The state's legitimacy and reputation as a protector of its population had been frontally attacked. And hence, within days, nearly every commentator inside and outside U.S security establishments declared that Al Qaeda must be denied a safe haven from which it could plot, train for, and spread its ideology and seek international support, leading the US to air and ground campaign into Afghanistan to root out Al Qaeda and their Taliban hosts with a number of what has come to be known as the US counter terrorism strategies since 9/11.

Though initially, coalition forces were not able to capture Qaeda and Taliban leadership who crossed into Pakistan, they however destroyed much of the middle tier of Al Qaeda's central organization, crippling the group and successfully denying it uncontested safe haven before the leader of al-Qaeda was eventually captured and killed in Pakistan in 2011. Many security experts also agreed that terrorism could be combated by denying violent groups the resources they need to be successful. Taking advantage of an international mood favouring cooperation, the U.S. led global efforts to secure and monitor money and weapons that could be used by violent anti-government groups amongst other strategies.

4.2 THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR

The 9/11 attacks occurred less than nine months after Bush took office and would define his presidency. This was the deadliest attack in the annals of terrorism and the greatest loss of life on American soil since the Civil War. Intelligence had failed. No one knew what might happen next—9/11 fundamentally altered perceptions of plausibility.

The Bush era: Bush's Global War on Terror did not begin with a clearly articulated strategy but was, rather, a desperate effort to prevent another attack of equal or greater magnitude. *Prevent* was the key word. The worst terrorist attacks in the 1970s killed tens of people. Escalating terrorist attacks in the 1980s raised this to the hundreds; by the 1990s, attacks of this scale were not uncommon. On 9/11, terrorists killed thousands. Extrapolation suggested that future terrorists would escalate to weapons of mass destruction to kill tens or even hundreds of thousands. The terrorist threat was seen as existential. Hence, there was a need for urgency and to act very fast Counterterrorism immediately became the Bush administration's highest priority. The war on terrorism signalled national mobilization and decisive action, without further questioning. Congress backed the war effort with a formal expression of support, authorizing the use of military force against those responsible for the 9/11 attacks. It was tantamount to a declaration of war. However, the goal was not simply to punish the terrorists, as Clinton had done, but to disrupt, disable, and destroy al Qaeda: it was to be a fight to the finish.

The Bush administration has focused its efforts on denying al Qaeda sanctuaries overseas—by destroying or deterring regimes that shelter al Qaeda—and on rolling up al Qaeda's global organization through intelligence and police work. The center-piece of this offensive was the

2001 invasion of Afghanistan and the ousting of its radical Taliban regime, which had sheltered al Qaeda in exchange for millions of dollars. The ouster of the Taliban was an important success. It denied al Qaeda secure access to large training bases and destroyed the capacity of al Qaeda's leaders to communicate with their worldwide network by putting these leaders on the run.

Al Qaeda's Afghan training bases fueled its vast growth in the late 1990s by allowing the group to produce thousands of highly motivated jihadis. The loss of these bases was a heavy blow to al Qaeda. Likewise, al Qaeda's ability to conduct intercontinental operations was much reduced by its leaders' isolation. Thus, the destruction of the Taliban regime was a major gain for the United States.

The Bush administration was committed to the spread of democracy and the re-engineering of Arab society. At the same time, Bush was determined to avoid turning counterterrorism into a war on Islam. The campaign to scatter al Qaeda and hunt down its operational leaders succeeded in degrading the organization's operational capabilities, but it did not dent their determination to continue the struggle. Ironically, the Bush administration benefited from al Qaeda's continuing terrorist campaign, which included major terrorist attacks in Kenya, Tunisia, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Egypt, Pakistan, and India. The direct threat to their own security persuaded governments of these states, some of which might have remained passive, to undertake efforts to destroy local jihadist networks while actively cooperating with international intelligence efforts. The terrorists' operating environment became a lot more hostile.

The new level of international cooperation was rocked by the U.S. invasion of Iraq and by subsequent revelations that detained prisoners were being subjected to abuse and torture. Nonetheless, improved U.S. intelligence and intelligence cooperation worldwide

remain undeniable achievements. At home, the Bush administration rounded up suspects, obliged non-citizen, military-age males from Muslim countries to register, and initiated electronic surveillance that bypassed the rules established in the 1970s.

The Obama era: President Obama entered the White House skeptical of the efficacy of U.S. military power as the primary counterterrorist tool, as evidenced by his order to replace the term “Global War on Terror” with “Countering Violent Extremism.” Obama’s goal of ending U.S. participation in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan while avoiding outright defeat proved impossible. When the military situation in Afghanistan appeared to be worsening, Obama ultimately opted to send reinforcements, although he accompanied the decision with a schedule for the eventual departure of all American troops, which he was later forced to abandon. While most other nations withdrew their forces from Afghanistan, American forces remained and, in 2017, had to again be reinforced. Iraq had prior to this time refused to sign a status-of-forces agreement that would protect U.S. troops in Iraq against local prosecution and this gave Obama the opportunity to bring US troops home. But the United States had departed prematurely, and disengagement from Iraq only proved to be temporary.

Two years into his administration, Obama had to deal with rapidly evolving events resulting from the tumult that began with the so-called Arab Spring in 2011. In the following months, protests and armed uprisings occurred across the Arab world. Governments fell or were toppled, as in the U.S.-backed bombing of Libya, which led to Qaddafi’s overthrow and spread chaos throughout the adjacent countries of Africa. Protests in Syria turned violent and soon escalated into a complex civil war that led to a schism in al Qaeda and the emergence of the Islamic State (ISIS), followed by its dramatic expansion across eastern Syria and northern Iraq. Confronting this situation, Obama sought to avoid new military commitments, especially of American ground forces. In an effort to limit U.S. casualties, share costs, ensure

local ownership of responses to terrorism, and reduce perceptions of American unilateralism, Obama sought to assemble coalitions and lead from behind. But while the Obama administration was consistently wary of committing ground forces, it was not reluctant to take out terrorist leaders. Obama risked the raid that killed Osama bin Laden. He also oversaw a tenfold increase in the targeted killings of terrorist leaders and cadre that Bush had initiated. Special operations and drone-strikes became the principal expression of America's counterterrorist strategy.

While continuing the wars, the Obama administration sought to reverse some of what it viewed as the excesses of the Bush administration. Obama banned the use of brutal interrogation techniques and sought the closure of the Guantanamo Bay detention camp as one of his first executive orders. However, both Bush and Obama had a common ground. They both recognized the need to work with partner nations that did not share American values but promoted political reforms. Obama renewed the idea of tackling the root causes of terrorism—poverty, corruption, and oppression. His policy pronouncements reflected the view that terrorism in the Middle East could be reduced only by eliminating a major cause of grievance—the existence of dictatorial regimes, hence, the Obama administration supported the Arab Spring, the invasion of Libya, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, and initial efforts to unseat the Assad regime in Syria, or at least oblige it to become less dictatorial. Like Bush, Obama considered it America's mission to deliver democracy to the world, although Obama placed greater emphasis on expanding human rights. As determined as Bush to avoid counterterrorism becoming a war on Islam, Obama sided with those he viewed as progressive Muslims, including the Muslim Brotherhood, against Arab dictators.

The Bush era: President Trump has reduced his predecessor's emphasis on soft power and human rights. During his campaign and as president-elect, Trump said that, in contrast to

Obama, he would fill the military prison in Guantanamo with “some bad dudes.” He also stated that he would bring back torture because “torture works” and that he backed waterboarding and “much worse.” Also Trump repeatedly assailed Obama’s unwillingness to even utter the term “radical Islamic terrorism”.

It must be cautioned that the public face of Trump’s counterterrorism policy may not accurately reflect a more fluid situation inside the administration. There are internal differences. A draft of Trump’s new counterterrorist strategy being prepared by the National Security Council reportedly says that the United States needs “to intensify operations against global jihadist groups,” but it makes no mention of “radical Islamic terrorism.” It argues that the United States must reduce the costs of American “blood and treasure” in pursuit of its counterterrorism goals, rely on allies and partners, and avoid large-scale interventions and open-ended military commitments. The draft reportedly concedes that ending terrorism once and for all is impossible.

4.3 POST 9/11 STRATEGIES

Amongst the counterterrorism strategies the US has employed in its war on al-Qaeda since 9/11 are: global cooperation of states; intelligence sharing; denying terrorists safe haven by conducting offensive military operations; deny terrorists access to financial networks; deny terrorists access to weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) or the materials for their production; establish multiple layers of security screening for people and objects entering the country; undermine terrorists’ recruitment capability. This section would discuss a select few below:

International Cooperation: Lack of international cooperation from amongst states within the international system is primarily responsible for the failure of tackling the problem of global terrorism. Strictly speaking, no nation alone can successfully fight international terrorism

devoid of the cooperation of other states. International cooperation therefore is one of the most paramount and crucial strategies in the way forward to a terrorist-free global environment. Hence, it is also of dire necessity that all states should be in cordial diplomatic ties so as to lessen the possibilities of frictions between states that may result to some states involving themselves in providing a safe haven for terrorists, or sponsoring or funding terrorism to the detriment or danger of an enemy state. Thus, at all levels, globally, regionally, and sub-regionally, states must cooperate and share vital information on perceived terrorists movements, strategies, profiles, records, plans, and other necessary information so as to counter their act before execution.

According to the US National Strategy for Combating terrorism that was first published in 2003, it explained that ‘the United States will constantly strive to enlist the support of the international community in this fight against a common foe’. However, it also posited that where necessary, the US will not hesitate to act alone, to exercise our right to self-defense, including acting pre-emptively against terrorists to prevent them from doing harm to our people and our country.

Defeating terrorism is our nation’s primary and immediate priority. It is “our calling,” as President Bush has said. But it is not our challenge alone. Unlike the Cold War, where two opposing camps led by superpower states vied for power, we are now engaged in a war between the civilized world and those that would destroy it. Success will not come by always acting alone, but through a powerful coalition of nations maintaining a strong, united international front against terrorism. Already military forces representing a broad coalition of countries from North America, Europe, the Middle East and Oceania have participated in vital operations in Afghanistan.

Compelling Unwilling States: The unwilling states are those that sponsor or actively provide sanctuary to terrorists. Those states that continue to sponsor terrorist organizations will

always be held accountable for their actions. Some irresponsible governments—or extremist factions within them—seeking to further their own agenda may provide terrorists access to WMD.

Following the 9/11 attacks, the Bush administration’s definition of the enemy was broadened to include states identified as the “Axis of Evil,” comprising Iran, Iraq, and North Korea. The administration saw terrorism as primarily state-driven and thus its determination to act preemptively against those states. This opened the way for the invasion of Iraq. It was on this basis thus, that the US on suspicion that the then Iraqi government in 2003 alleged to have links with al-Qaeda was equally alleged to be engaged in nuclear weapons build-up leading to the military invasion of coalition troops from the US and the UK.

Liquidation of Terrorist Funding: It is equally important to cut off the avenues through which terrorists derive their money to execute their dastardly operations. The U.S has taken the lead alongside her western allies to seize or liquidate funds and assets stored in banks of terrorist funding organizations and states. This goes a long way to aggravate much limitations for terrorists because they rely heavily on finance to successfully carry out their attacks which involve training, purchase of arms, movement, derivation of information, execution of planned attack etc. The Department of the Treasury partnered with Belgium’s Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT) to track and disrupt a significant portion of Al Qaeda’s funding network. And recent reports suggest that Al Qaeda’s Afghanistan/Pakistan organization is experiencing financial difficulties (Levitt 2008, 8; Asharq Al-Awsat 2010).

Surveillance and Plot Detection: According to America’s FBI investigation reports, and recent studies on foiled terrorist plots, most of these foiled attempts were due to the

combination of well-deployed undercover agents, information from citizen or undercover informants, and tips from foreign intelligence agencies.

Enhanced Border Security: The US has also raised security levels at its borders and other points of entry into the country. The formalization of airport screening by the Transportation Security Agency (TSA) raised barriers to more weapons and explosives. And recent improvements to the passenger pre-screening system demonstrate its continual evolution with the terrorist threat. America's Homeland security also secured international cooperation with ports around the world to increase screening of nearly 86% of the cargo that eventually enters the U.S. (DeFlem2010, 51). Other agencies, like the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Customs and Border Protection round out a multi-layered defense of American borders that includes the securing of trade routes abroad and ports of entry at home. The Patriot Act of 2001 enabled federal investigators to surveil people, or search or seize their property irrespective of race, religion, or ethnicity. This created the platform for the FBI to interview several muslims and arab Americans in the search for links or sympathizers with al-qaeda.

Communications Detection: A few weeks after the 9/11 attacks it became apparent that many of the hijackers had lived and trained in the United States, President Bush signed an Executive Order making it easier for the National Security Agency (NSA) to listen in on communications between U.S. citizens and foreign callers whom the NSA "reasonably suspected" of terrorist involvement. And, the executive order allowed the NSA to operate these wiretaps without warrants or judicial oversight.

In response, the NSA developed computer algorithms to query data for transactions and communications that set off "red flags" as defined by human analysts. Emails containing suspicious words and phrases like "bomb" and "convention center" might trigger a red flag.

If enough red flags were associated with a single person, the NSA will single out that person for additional surveillance.

Profiling Behaviour: Following 9/11 authorities employed many profiling tactics— like the FBI’s “Interview Project,” Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s “Special Registration” program, and the Transportation Security Administration’s Computer Assisted Passenger pre-screening system and behavioral profiling system tactics – in their attempts to home in on those individuals most likely to carry out terrorist attacks. The FBI’s “Interview Project” screened tens of thousands of American citizens identified as Muslim and/or Arab.

TSA also employs behavioural profiling whereby agents seek to discover passenger nervousness, irritability, or other suspicious signs that might indicate their intentions to commit terrorism.

Conversion of Detainees to Informants: Putting detainees through a psychological ordeal might, in theory, “soften up” terrorists so that they can more easily be “broken.” But there is no evidence that “breaking” detainees produces helpful intelligence anyway. The best intelligence appears to come from suspects who have been “turned” into informants through skillful interrogations relying on a rapport between interrogators and detainees (B’Tselem, 2000, 51). It is a highly effective strategy that has been aimed at generating large amounts of valuable information about terrorist networks. Despite the common misperception that terrorists are too ‘hardened’ to respond to anything but violence, many still have connections to family and friends that they care about, ambitions they wish to fulfill, and egos that can lead them to speak more openly than they intend when they are in the hands of a skilled interrogator.

Rapport-based approaches seeks to uncover and leverage detainee's internal motivations to glory, recognition, power, and survival, without emphasizing and exacerbating an adversarial relationship. Skilled interrogators empathize with their subject and appeal to his vanity, his self-interest, and his love of his family. They sometimes use deception to trick him to believe that talking will help him.

Detention and Prosecution of Suspected Terrorists: Two months after 9/11, President George W. Bush issued an executive order asserting his power to detain certain terrorism suspects as 'unlawful combatants' who, as neither criminals nor prisoners of war, were not subject to the detention and prosecution standards defined for either. Instead, these "combatants" would be

tried in the first U.S. Military Tribunals since World War II. They could be detained preventatively and indefinitely without rights to full due process.

These were some of the most controversial Counter Terrorism measures of the post-9/11 period.

First instituted by President Bush's Executive Order of 2002 and then ratified by Congress in the 2005 Military Commissions Act, military tribunals also permitted the use of hearsay evidence and testimony acquired under enhanced interrogation — evidence civilian courts suppress (though these evidentiary standards for military commissions were revised to align more closely with Article III courts in 2009).

Drone Strikes: This was the peak in the American strategies deployed in the fight against al-Qaeda that saw their eventual decimation. A drone strike is typically where an unmanned combat aerial vehicle fires a missile at a target. The drone may be equipped with such weapons as an air-to-surface missile, air-to-air missile, or other types of precision-guided

munitions. Since the turn of the century, most drone strikes have been carried out by the US military in such countries as Pakistan and Yemen using air-to-surface missiles to degrade al-Qaeda. It was indeed the most successful of all US counter-terrorism strategies.

4.4 DECIMATION OF AL-QAEDA

Daniel Byman suggests several indicators to measure a successful counter policy against a terrorist group which include the reduced freedom of terrorists to operate (achieved via the elimination of safe havens) and the disruption of terrorist recruitment. Similarly, Michael T. McCaul in 2016, explains that the most notable indices to measure the decimation of a terrorist group against the US include (1) thwart attacks and protect our communities; (2) stop recruitment and radicalization at home; (3) keep terrorists out of America; (4) take the fight to the enemy; (5) combat terrorist travel and cut off financial resources; (6) deny jihadists access to weapons of mass destruction; (7) block terrorists from returning to the battlefield; (8) prevent the emergence of new networks and safe havens; and (9) win the battle of ideas (McCaul, 2016).

For ten years, the United States has pounded on al Qaeda's operational capabilities, which clearly have been reduced. The organization's Taliban protectors were toppled in Afghanistan. The architects of 9/11 have been captured or killed. Al Qaeda's founder and titular leader is dead. Its remaining leadership has been decimated. Cooperation among security services and law enforcement organizations worldwide has made its operating environment increasingly hostile. Al Qaeda has not been able to carry out a significant terrorist operation in the West since 2005, although it is still capable of mounting plausible, worrisome threats.

In 2012, Peter Bergen argued Al Qaeda is defeated because CIA drone policy in Afghanistan (Al Qaeda Central's stronghold for long time), successfully eliminated 28 Al Qaeda key members especially those on the Shura council revealed by Jamal al fadhli, a former Al Qaeda member. Hence, we had stated earlier that the 'Drone Strike' was the most fierce but successful US strategy in terms of degrading al-Qaeda's resolve to continually target the American state.

Between 2008 to 2011, the Al Qaeda network the suffered its greatest losses since the United States and its allies evicted the terrorist organization from Afghanistan in 2001. During this time, President Barack Obama ordered a daring and risky Navy SEAL raid that killed Osama bin Laden in May 2011, and dozens of other senior Al Qaeda leaders have met their demise after President Obama took office. Also in the summer of 2011, U.S. drones killed Ilyas Kashmiri, commander of Al Qaeda's Pakistan operation, and Atiyah Abd al-Rahman, Al Qaeda's top operational planner who became the organization's number two after bin Laden's death. Anwar al-Awlaki, a key member of Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula believed to be responsible for organizing a number of attempted attacks against the United States, was killed in another drone strike in Yemen at the end of September. Hardly did a week go by without some key figure in the Al Qaeda network and its affiliates being targeted in a range of actions, including drone strikes as well as other actions by U.S. intelligence and law enforcement agencies to prevent attacks and degrade the Al Qaeda network. The damage done to Al Qaeda by the Obama administration represents America's greatest national security success since the fall of the Soviet Union and the peaceful integration of Eastern European countries in the 1990s.

Bergen said as a result, Al Qaeda only has one senior leader left, al Zawahiri, who lacks charisma, and who took over the group after the death of Osama bin Laden. According to Bergen, Al Qaeda Central has never launched a successful terrorist attack in the West since 9/11 except for the 7/7 London bombing that killed 52 commuters. Even the so-called affiliates and lone wolves inspired by Al Qaeda have only killed 17 people in the United States since 9/11 (Bergen, 2012).

CHAPTER FIVE

GENERAL CONCLUSION

5.1 SUMMARY

On August 23, 1996, Osama bin Laden declared war on the United States. At the time, few people paid much attention. But it was the start of what's now the Twenty Years' War between the United States and al-Qaeda—a conflict that both sides have ultimately lost. His central lament was the presence of U.S. forces in Saudi Arabia, or “the occupation of the land of the two holiest sites.” Following the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990, bin Laden had offered to defend Saudi Arabia with his Arab legion. But the Saudi royals decided that the U.S. military would be a better bet. Six years later, American soldiers were still in Saudi Arabia in a bid to contain Saddam Hussein. Bin Laden saw the United States as the power behind the throne: the “far enemy” that propped up apostate regimes in the Middle East. Muslims, he wrote, should abandon their petty local fights and unite to drive the Americans out of Saudi Arabia: “destroying, fighting and killing the enemy until, by the Grace of Allah, it is completely defeated.”

America has been at war with bin Laden's transnational terrorist movement fueled by his radical ideology of hatred, oppression, and murder. This has had a history but only became unprecedented during the 9/11 attacks on the US Pentagon and World Trade Center in 2001. The war on terror thus, involved more than simply finding and bringing to justice those who had planned and executed the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. US strategy involved destroying the larger al-Qaida network and also confronting the radical ideology that inspired others to join or support the terrorist movement. Since 9/11, the US have made substantial progress in degrading the al-Qaida network, killing or capturing key lieutenants, eliminating safehavens, and disrupting existing lines of support. Through the freedom agenda, the US

have promoted the best long-term answer to al-Qaida's agenda: the freedom and dignity that comes when human liberty is protected by effective democratic institutions.

The first chapter of the study was a general introduction which highlighted the background of the study, the problem, the objectives, scope, and methodology. Basically, the study sought to comprehend the strategies employed by the US in decimating al-Qaeda in view of the fact that winning the war on terrorism is no less a daunting task due to its unconventional nature. The second chapter provided a clear understanding of the concept of terrorism and counterterrorism, and a framework of analysis which centered on the realist theory. Al-Qaeda's declaration of war on the US, and the US subsequent war on terror is a manifestation of realism which emphasizes that entities in the global space are competing for varying interests and may resort to war. The third chapter is an exposition of the rise of al-Qaeda, its mission and objectives, and its attacks against the US. While its mission is to disrupt America's growing influence in Muslim countries, the group through their former leader Bin Laden, had argued that their mission was equally a vengeful one, to take lives from the US because of those Muslims especially Palestinians who had been killed by US. Chapter four focuses proper on the US response to the al-Qaeda war. It is a war against a war. The US war which is the war against terror is explained in this chapter with the strategies deployed by the US in decimating the al-Qaeda threat unveiled. Some of the strategies include: denying terrorists their safe haven, blocking further recruitment and thwarting their financial support, detecting terrorist communications and enhancing border control measures amongst many others. This last chapter shows the summary, conclusion, and recommendations.

5.2 CONCLUSION

The American war on al-Qaeda was a multidimensional campaign of almost limitless scope. Its military dimension involved major wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, covert operations in

Yemen and elsewhere, large-scale military-assistance programs for cooperative regimes, and major increases in military spending. Its intelligence dimension comprised institutional reorganization and considerable increases in the funding of America's intelligence-gathering capabilities, a global program of capturing terrorist suspects and interning them at Guantánamo Bay, expanded cooperation with foreign intelligence agencies, and the tracking and interception of terrorist financing. Its diplomatic dimension included continuing efforts to construct and maintain a global coalition of partner states and organizations and an extensive public diplomacy campaign to counter anti-Americanism in the Middle East. The domestic dimension of the U.S. war on terrorism entailed new antiterrorism legislation, such as the USA PATRIOT Act; new security institutions, such as the Department of Homeland Security; the preventive detainment of thousands of suspects; surveillance and intelligence-gathering programs by the National Security Agency (NSA), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and local authorities; the strengthening of emergency-response procedures; and increased security measures for airports, borders, and public events.

The successes of the first years of the war on terrorism included the arrest of hundreds of terrorist suspects around the world, the prevention of further large-scale terrorist attacks on the American mainland, the toppling of the Taliban regime and subsequent closure of terrorist-training camps in Afghanistan, the capture or elimination of many of al-Qaeda's senior members, and increased levels of international cooperation in global counterterrorism efforts. The Obama administration, greatly expanded the campaign of targeted killings carried out with drones, even eliminating several U.S. citizens abroad whom it deemed threatening. Special operations forces were greatly expanded and increasingly deployed to conduct low-profile military interventions in countries outside of acknowledged war zones. And U.S. security agencies continued to exercise the wide-ranging surveillance powers that they had accumulated during the Bush administration

Despite the successes, there have been some contentious issues of concern. Is America simply to go back and sleep believing that the enemy is finally defeated? Certainly no. Scholars have contended that the war in Afghanistan had effectively scattered the al-Qaeda network, thereby making it even harder to counteract, and that the attacks in Afghanistan and Iraq had increased anti-Americanism among the world's Muslims, thereby amplifying the message of militant Islam and uniting disparate groups in a common cause. On the other hand, the fall of al-Qaeda has seen the rise of another violent Islamic terror group, the Islamic state of Iraq and Syria, ISIS.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The US must ensure that she does not relax in her attempt to eliminate global terrorism. The country has been at the receiving end many a times, and so must do all it can to sustain the fight. Hence, the following are the recommendations of this study:

Continued International Cooperation: Lack of international cooperation from amongst states within the international system was primarily responsible for the failure of tackling the problem al-Qaeda's terror attacks. No one nation can successfully fight global terrorism. America must therefore continue to foster mutual and cordial relations with other nations especially the those zones that are prone to breed terrorists.

Blocking Financial Support: It is equally important to maintain the cut off of the avenues through which terrorist derive their money to execute their dastardly operations. Hence, the U.S should continue take the lead alongside her western allies to seize or liquidate funds and assets stored in banks of terrorist funding organizations and states.

Create Employment in terrorist regions: This is part of what is known as the war of ideas. Many terrorists are youth who have not been empowered in society. They are the most vulnerable and fall for the deception to launch suicide attacks. America in pursuing in interest

in the middle east region should ensure more empowerment opportunities for the vulnerable citizens.

Install Good Governments: Bad governments have been one of the major cause of terrorism. As part of the war of ideas, America needs to ensure that credible governments that would create jobs, promote fairness and justice should be installed.

Nuclear Weapons check: Since terrorists like al-qaeda sought to destroy US citizens and properties as far as possible, possession of far more dangerous weapons such as nuclear arsenals would mean the most devastating threat. Hence, the US must ensure it continually strike agreements with tyrant states where nuclear weapons are produced such as Iran. Such deals should ensure nuclear arsenals are destroyed, no new production, and no access of such weapons to terrorists.

Increased Border Security: America must continually ensure that her national borders are restrained from the excesses of inflow of persons and illicit commodities.

Adequate Funding of Counter Terrorism: Adequate funding of research centers on terrorism, as well as the proper funding of special intelligence agencies and units, may need more need to be inflated in view of the fleeing remnants of al-qaeda members, and also the rise of ISIS.

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