Can't…?

Or Won't?

The Nigerian Government

and the Boko Haram Conflict

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Nigeria is situated in West Africa and is with approximately 177 million inhabitants the most populous country in Africa, and the eight most populous country in the world. In 2014, it became clear that in 2013, Nigeria surpassed South Africa as Africa's largest economy, with oil being a major economic drive (CIA World Factbook 2015). It further has 80,000 active military personnel, compared to Uganda's 45,000 active military personnel, and South Africa's 62,100 (International Institute for Security Studies 2015a).

However, despite this at first sight seemingly positive picture, the country has been dealing with a rebellion in the north since 2009, which carries the name Boko Haram. Boko Haram has managed to enter its sixth year of existence and it does not seem to have reduced in strength since its start. It is arguably even gaining strength, as it began seizing territory, is generating a vastly increasing civilian death toll, and started attacking Nigeria's neighbouring countries (Sergie & Johnson 2015). The government, however, after postponing the elections scheduled on February 14th, 2015 for security reasons, claimed it would defeat Boko Haram before the new elections scheduled March 28h. And indeed they were able to make gains on Boko Haram they did not make in the years before, even recapturing Gwoza, where Boko Haram had its headquarters (Iroegbu & Andrews 2015). The question arises why the government has not managed to win the fight against Boko Haram for more than five years, but practically managed to do so in the weeks before the election.

The puzzle is translated into the following research question: "What explains Nigeria's persisting conflict with Boko Haram?" This research question is more neutral than the puzzle it proposes to investigate. The research question is less biased than the puzzle, which focuses from the outset more on the state's side. It takes a step back, so as to open up the question more to the wholeness of the conflict. A conflict in which two sides, the state and the rebel group, are in a contest with each other and the one tries to win from the other.

Or do they? And is this 'contest' paradigm a helpful, or even a correct one? David Keen, Professor of Complex Emergencies at the London School of Economics is sceptical. In

his book *Useful Enemies: When Waging Wars is More Important than Winning Them*, he states that "While there are frequently significant reasons to want to win a war [...], very often it is war itself - rather than winning - that is most useful" (Keen 2012, 92). According to him, while wars certainly can have winning as the primary priority, by no means should be assumed that this applies to every war. The reason that many wars do not seem to end is that "powerful actors (both local and international) do not want them to end" (Keen 2012, 8), because they have a "vested interest" in continuing the conflict (Keen 2012, 168). Throughout his book, Keen names a range of different interests, mechanisms and dynamics that are part of something he calls the "functions of war", which can be economic, political or psychological (Keen 2012, 10). The idea is that the war serves as an instrument to attain certain economic or political goals.

This angle might throw a different and maybe more revealing light on the Nigerian government's persisting conflict with Boko Haram. In addition, selecting the conflict between the Nigerian state and Boko Haram as a case has four other reasons. First, the case has not been studied in Keen's book. Second, a number of observations made by Keen in other cases are observed in this case, suggesting the theory might have some explanatory power. An example is the postponement of elections (Keen 2012, 238), which is what the Nigerian government did for the 2015 presidential elections. Third, the case is very recent, making it a challenge as well as contributing. Lastly, Nigeria's official language is English, which makes a range of national sources easily accessible.

Unfortunately, in his book Keen uses a relatively anecdotal approach. This is an attractive way to present the argument, but runs the risk of the precise theory remaining vague. Indeed, this is precisely what seems to be the case with this book. The theory is present throughout, but is never made exceptionally clear as a more abstract theoretical approach. Keen uses his angle as a mindset from which he writes on numerous cases, from which he then derives specific behaviour or interests that can be categorised in either economic, political or psychological functions of war. This makes it hard to take this approach and apply it to other cases, so as to test whether it can be used to explain these cases also. This is unfortunate, since the approach certainly has the potential of providing a better understanding of complex conflicts.

Thus, the research proposed aims at two goals with this case and approach. First, it seeks to provide some sense of understanding the conflict in Nigeria and create some explanatory power on this specific case; and second, it seeks to create a more structured and useable theoretical framework than provided in Keen's book.

To provide a counterweight against this proposed 'Keen-based' framework in this single case study, a second theoretical approach is required. This will give a better idea on the explanatory power of the theory proposed. Because the basis of Keen's theory is the idea that, particularly, the government (as will be explained in more detail in the theoretical framework) may not have winning as a first priority, this approach on the other hand will have to assume that the government indeed has winning as its first priority. To win a war, two elements are arguably needed, namely the ability to win and the willingness to win. Keen's theory focuses very much on the lack of the second element: the lack of a willingness to win. Therefore, the second theory needs to focus on the lack of ability to win. In other words, this second approach assumes that the government is willing to win the war, but lacks the ability: lacking the resources or the 'know-how'.

Thus, the two theoretical frameworks used to analyse this case can be expressed in that either the government is *unable* or the government is *unwilling* to win the war. These terms constitute the independent variables of this research. The dependent variable is the persisting conflict. In the following sections these concepts will be further explained, operationalised and indicators to test the operationalised concepts will be assigned. Furthermore, the methods used in the analyses will be explained and the data collection will be discussed. After that, the data will be analysed and discussed. Finally, conclusions will be drawn and it will be argued that while the unable theoretical framework provides a better explanation than the unwillingness framework, neither the unable nor the unwillingness theory is able to provide a fully satisfactory answer to the research question.

Theoretical framework

The structure of this theoretical framework is as follows. First, some preliminary remarks will be made concerning the choice of focusing on the government actor, what is meant

by 'the government actor', and how the armed conflict is qualified. This will serve as a justification and starting point for the rest of the theoretical framework. Following this, the two theoretical approaches will be discussed.

Armed conflicts come in different shapes and forms. They can be as clear as two individual actors opposing each other, with either or neither of them the government, or they can be more complex, with a multitude of actors fighting one actor or fighting each other. In the case discussed in this thesis, the first form is most applicable, as the Nigerian government and Boko Haram can be clearly identified as the two warring actors. This can be seen as a dynamic process between two individual actors. Generally, there are three approaches in studying this kind of conflict: focusing on the government actor, focusing on the rebelling actor, or studying both actors and the dynamics between them. As stated, this thesis will employ the first approach: the focus will be mainly on the government actor. For this, there are two reasons. First, Keen points out that much of the academic literature focuses on the rebel actor, and the government actor is largely kept outside of scope. He names the influential greed or grievance debate[1] as an example and states: "Political functions have also sometimes been overlooked in analyses that emphasise 'greed' (and especially 'rebel greed')" (Keen 2012, 95). Furthermore, he names "[…] Paul Collier's emphasis on 'rebel greed' as the key driver of civil wars. But what has routinely been ignored within the international community (and in Collier's influential work) is the

[1] The greed or grievance debate is a debate on whether major armed conflicts are caused by grievance or greed. According to Ramsbotham, Woodhouse & Miall (2010, 94), proponents for a grievance angle include Rasmussen, Lewis & Zartman, who argued that the failure of institutions in providing the perceived needs of a group can lead to armed conflicts (Ramsbotham et al. 2010, 94; Rasmussen, Lewis & Zartman 1997, 33), as the group has an incentive to rebel. Also named is Edward Azar, who arguably was one of the first to point at grievances as a cause (Ramsbotham et al. 2010, 79-80), and who argued that the critical factor in social conflicts was the "prolonged and often violent struggle by communal groups for [...] basic needs" (Azar 1991, 93; Ramsbotham et al. 2010, 84). In this view, armed groups seek to restore a grievance by force and are driven by the continuance of their grievance. Paul Collier, however, rejected grievance as the main cause for armed conflicts and looked at economic agendas, or 'greed', as the cause for conflict (Ramsbotham et al. 2010, 94), and attempted to estimate risk by using proxies such as the share of primary commodity exports in GDP, as these are easily lootable; the population of young males between 15 and 24, as young men constitute most of a rebel group; and the average number of years education, a proxy for employability, as less employable people have a higher risk of being unemployed (Collier 2000; Collier and Hoeffler 2004; Ramsbotham et al. 2010, 94). In this view, armed groups consist of men who are more focused on to acquiring personal gain from conflict, thus inciting conflict is in their interest. Both the greed and grievance angle focus largely on the armed groups and their origins.

role of greed within the counterinsurgency" (Keen 2012, 33)[2]. Therefore, to continue with Keen's angle[3], the government (and thus the counterinsurgency) will be the primary focus of the thesis. The second reason is more practical in nature and considers this specific case. There is at the moment not much known about the more in-depth details of the behaviour, the functioning and the motives of Boko Haram. While incorporating this rebel actor in the analysis is certainly of major interest and relevance, the risk of

[2] William Reno, arguably combining greed and grievance, proposed to focus more on the political system and particularly the political struggle that comes with it, specifically in African states. He argues that while "literature on political change in weak states that stresses state-society relations has been helpful for framing complex processes", it fails to include the possiblities of rulers outside formal institutions (Reno 1999, 9). Furthermore, other literature focuses solely on the performance of states and thereby "taking states as a given and rarely paying attention to the organizations of political authority" (Reno 1999, 9). Therefore, Reno proposes a framework which focuses more on "the ways strongmen utilize new techniques and resources to resist rulers' efforts to reassert central control" (Reno 1999,9). For this, he uses the notion of the 'warlord ruler'. This is a ruler who rejects "the persuit of a broader project of creating a state that serves a collective good" (Reno 1999, 1) and extracts resources from the state to either buy some people's loyalty or obtain guns to coerce others, to solidify his position (Reno 1999, 1). According to Reno, a warlord needs to use a patronage system, where he needs to make "informal deals with individuals who exercised power" (Reno 1999, 2) in order to establish sovereingty and keep control without the need of strong bureaucracies (Reno 1999, 2). This results in weak states, but to distinguish the ruler of a weak state (in which the weakness stems from factors other than warlord politics) from a warlord, in addition to positioning the state on a spectrum from informal to bureaucractic, Reno suggests to look at whether the ruler aims to provide a collective good or persues private gains (Reno 1999, 2-3). Last to note about Reno's angle is his inclusion of the global political economy in the theory, incorporating parts of world systems theory (1999, 10). He argues that "the global society accomodates new political authorities that stray considerably from conventional notions of what states should be" and that "global recognition of sovereignty is pivotal to explaining the politics of weak states permitting agencies such as the World Bank to deal with these new political authorities" (Reno 1999, 10). In other words, the global political economy arguably provides sovereignty to warlords. Reno's warlord politics and inclusion of the global political economy approach can be used to explain political systems and mechanisms of African states and arguably also the armed conflicts that arise in them.

[3] Keen's writing generally includes civil wars and armed conflict in a broader phenomenon that also includes famine, namely that of the 'emergency'. In his 2008 book *Complex Emergencies*, he attends to the greed/grievance debate and suggests a more holistic approach, focusing on "longer-term political, economic and social grievances, as well as the grievances that soldiers may acquire in the course of war" (Keen 2008, 215). In addition, Keen proposes emotional factors in violence should be incorporated (2008, 215). In this book, he makes two main points. First, describing actions, behaviour or events as 'failures' might be unhelpful, as one does not know what the actor intended. For example, counterproductive military operations could possibly aid continuing a war the military is benefiting from (Keen 2008, 216-217). This notion extends to a range of actors, from governments to rebel groups, from foreign countries to aid agencies (Keen 2008, 217-219). Second, language plays a role in what reality the involved actors accept. Keen argues that they can use it to create a reality according to their agenda and in which they ignore the real problems, resulting in them profiting from the continuance of the emergency, as the real problems are not addressed (Keen 2008, 219-221). In other words, while attending to an emergency, involved actors can use their actions and the framing of the reality to further an agenda that is possibly more in their own interest than in the interest of the victims and collective as a whole. As can be observed, several notions from this 2008 book have been further developed by Keen in his 2012 book, in the latter focusing more on the notion of perverse agenda's by involved actors, particularly the government and the counterinsurgency.

insufficient data available is too great. Data availability on the government's behaviour, however, is arguably better, since it is easier for international and national actors and media to cover. Therefore, considering the overemphasis on the rebel actor in academic literature and the questionability of data availability on the rebel actor, and considering this thesis needs to bear in mind a limited amount of space, this thesis will not focus on the rebel actor, and thus the latter two approaches –focusing on the rebel actor and studying both actors– will not be considered.

This means that the theoretical frameworks employed will also be solely focused on the government actor. Thus, the unable angle will concern itself with the inability of the government to fight the rebel group and win, and the unwilling angle will concern itself with the unwillingness of the government to fight the rebel group and win. 'The government', however, is not necessarily a single actor, since it constitutes of a number of different levels and branches. One of the most evident examples in this case is the distinction between the civil government and the military, both who are considered to be part of 'the government actor', but who in the theory can be separate entities with different interests. Therefore, this thesis will use the civil government or the military as 'the government actor', depending on what the theory is looking into. This will be made more clear in the discussion of the unwillingness angle.

Lastly, before the theoretical frameworks are outlined, the correct label for the armed conflict needs to be discussed. In the academic literature, there is extensive debate on what characteristics should be ascribed to a multitude of labels –most prominently to the labels 'terrorism', 'guerrilla', and 'insurgency'- and what label should be applied to a specific case. An example of this is shown in Duyvesteyn and Fumerton's discussion on the unclear use of the terms 'terrorism' and 'insurgency' (2009, 27-28). To avoid an extensive discussion of the differences between the labels and a subsequent labelling of the conflict at hand, this thesis will employ the more neutral label 'armed conflict' and 'armed group' to describe the conflict with Boko Haram.

Unwilling

The unwillingness angle is more than the mere lack of will. Unwillingness in this sense describes a situation where 'winning' is not the first priority of the government actor, but interests beyond winning are. War is being used as an instrument by the government to pursue or further its own interests. For Keen, these interests can be categorised as the economic, political and psychological functions of war. For the purposes of this thesis, the theoretical framework and the analysis will focus on the first two, the economic and political functions, since adding the psychological functions might be too broad for this thesis.

Thus, unwillingness can be the consequence of economic or political reasons, or, in Keen's terminology: unwillingness can be the result of the war being used as an economic or political *function*. Keen names a large array of more specific manifestations of both functions. The following section will first discuss the economic functions and then the political functions.

Economic functions of war

For Keen, when war has an economic function, it means mainly that it creates an 'enabling context' for corruption and criminal behaviour (Keen 2012, 57). Keen calls this a *war economy* (2012, 21 and 53). War effects that certain options become available to the counterinsurgency: it allows 'greed' in the counterinsurgency (Keen 2012, 32, 33, 43, 71). Keen names different manifestations of this, of which three will be discussed: economic functions of war for the military, the control of natural resources, and the role of aid and corruption. For this section, it is useful to consider the military and the civilian government as different entities.

Economic functions of war for the military are manifold. It can manifest itself in relatively simple forms, such as the theft of army equipment and fuel, as happened in the Vietnam war (Keen 2012, 53), or the looting of villages, as happened in, for example, Sierra Leone (Keen 2012, 34) and again Vietnam (Keen 2012, 53). However, it can manifest itself also in more complex forms, for example the involvement of the military in the drug trade, as happens in Afghanistan with the Afghan and military and police (Keen 2012, 73-74).

Another example is the phenomenon of 'ghost soldiers', which describes a practice where officers report more soldiers in a certain united than actually present. The salaries for these 'ghost soldiers' get claimed by these officers. War creates a situation where they are able to misreport the number of casualties and have the chance of gaining an extra salary (Keen 2012, 72). These problems are particularly manifest when, in addition, the army is severely underpaid, effecting grievances with the soldiers and giving them ample incentive to employ these practices (Keen 2012, 14 and 34).

These forms of the economic functions of war, however, are relatively minor compared to one of the main economic functions of war: the control over natural resources. The idea is that the government and/or military uses the war to take control over areas with significant valuable natural resources, extract these, and sells them on the (black) market. For example, according to Keen, this economic function has been one of the main reasons behind the Rwandan war in the DRC in 1999, where, according to estimations, the army made a profit of at least 250 million US dollars over a period of eighteen months (2012, 25). He states it was also one of the main drivers of the war in Sudan, where the government wanted control over oil (Keen 2012, 24) and Sierra Leone, over control over its notorious blood diamonds (Keen 2012, 35). From a more operational level, when an army is poorly paid or rife with corruption, it are the soldiers themselves who have an incentive to mine and loot these resources (Keen 2012, 18-19). Either way, it can lead to a situation where the war attains the status of being 'self-funding', which means that the military does not need (at least partly) financial support from the government. This enables the government to keep the conflict going, while still performing economically relatively well. Keen states that this was the case in Sierra Leone, where the looting and mining of resources by the underpaid soldiers meant that the government did not need to pay them to continue to fight and thereby could avoid printing money, which would have raised inflation (Keen 2012, 34).

The last important economic function this thesis will consider is the role aid can play in a war economy. According to Keen, when a government is involved in a conflict against an armed group, it can possibly expect to receive foreign military aid, especially from Western countries if it's fighting a group that is branded as terrorist. Securing and keeping

these resources in itself create an incentive for the government to keep the conflict going, as a resolution of the conflict would mean an end to this aid (Keen 2012, 118 and 131). While the reception of aid in itself can be considered ample incentive to continue a conflict, this can be aggravated if the government in question is corrupt. The presence of corrupt officials creates an added incentive on a more personal level to keep the conflict from resolving (Keen 2012, 36, 53, and 69).

Political functions of war

As political functions of war, Keen names a list of manifestations that is even more numerous than that of the economic functions. Therefore, this thesis will discuss three of the major functions, namely: electoral advantage, impunity, and regime stability. These will be shortly discussed. Electoral advantage describes manifestations or actions in which the conflict is used to further the government's electoral popularity. This can take many forms. In the West, for example, "wars have long served as 'unifiers' and as means of […] gaining electoral advantage", one example is the boost in popularity Margaret Thatcher got during the Falklands War (Keen 2012, 92). Another form, more observed in developing countries, is the use of fear of the rebel group winning the conflict during elections, as Museveni did in 1996 (Keen 2012, 114). Furthermore, the government can use the conflict as a way to legitimise emergency powers to "suppress non-violent […] opposition" (Keen 2012, 156) or to delegitimize opposition politicians (Keen 2012, 114). The government can even step up its campaign against the armed group in the weeks before the elections.

Impunity describes a situation where a government does not have to be accountable for its behaviour. This can happen in two ways. First, the government gets foreign aid, and because of this, it does not have to be accountable to the population it governs, as happened with local warlords in Afghanistan (Keen 2012, 91), or because of this, it does not need to reform politically or economically, like for example Pakistan (Keen 2012, 131). Second, the government can join a set of countries in some 'global war' effort, for example the 'war on terror'. Behaviour conducted under that label is generally approved of by the coalition of countries. This gives the government of the country in question the possibility of taking undemocratic or unlawful actions, for example human rights abuses,

while escaping possible criticism of its allies, since these allies are glad it joined the fight, and as a result are willing to ignore those actions (Keen 2012, 134 and 137).

Lastly, government stability describes assets of different actions, namely the use of 'divide and rule', a tactic used by for example Khartoum in the Sudan civil war, where it encouraged one militia to attack the other, effectively absorbing discontent among the groups (because they were too busy fighting each other instead of troubling Khartoum), defusing social tensions and thereby suppressing dissent (Keen 2012, 97 and 98). Another tactic that can be employed by the government is the use of emergency powers under the justification of fighting the conflict, but meanwhile actually using them to quell dissent and opposition (Keen 2012, 144 and 155). An example named by Keen where this is observed is in Egypt before 2011, where "the state used emergency powers and military courts to suppress non-violent, as well as violent political opposition" (2012, 156).

Unable

For a state to be unable to fight an armed group and win, it needs to lack the capacity or capability to do so. This describes a situation where the government actor is structurally limited and is constrained in the options it has to win the conflict. This structural limitation is essential to the 'unable' theory, as structural limitations are difficult to overcome. Therefore, the theoretical framework that follows will focus on structural limitations, first on structural limitations on the military level, then on structural limitations on the governmental level. Because of some affinity of the 'unable' angle with the failed states' literature, as assessing state's capability is central to it, theoretical considerations and nuances will be drawn from 'When States Fail: Causes and Consequences' (2004), edited by Robert I. Rotberg, where applicable.

Assessing whether a state misses the capacity and capability to fight arguably starts with assessing its most important instrument to achieve this: the military. Therefore, the 'unable' theoretical framework will start by assessing whether the military is capable or not. The military's capability largely depends on two elements, namely sufficient equipment and an effective strategy. A military needs manpower and equipment to fight and win a conflict, and a lack thereof is a structural limitation, limiting the government's

chances. In addition to equipment, the military needs an effective strategy, countering the opponent's moves and making effective use of the equipment at its disposal. Without an effective strategy, there is a significant reduced chance the military will win, or if it does, at great cost. An effective strategy largely depends on an understanding of the conflict situation and in particular an understanding of the strategy of one's opponent. This understanding is arguably created through training and experience. A lack thereof constitutes a structural limitation and can be the result of, for example, the conflict being relatively new.

While on the military level a lack of equipment and a lack of understanding might be structural limitations and thus explained by the 'unable' angle, on the governmental level, it could potentially still be explained through an "unwillingness" angle. The level of equipment, for example, is depended on the budget the government allocates to the military. If the government is unwilling to win the conflict, it can simply allocate less funds to the military than the military needs, burdening it with structural limitations. Therefore, the theory also needs to include structural limitations on the governmental level, so that it can explain from an 'unable' angle why military might get less funds than it needs.

Viewing the allocation of funds from the military's point of view ("getting less funds than it needs") instead of viewing it from the government's point of view, which might be described as why the government allocates less funds to the military than the military needs, is not without reason. The reason is that the military getting less funds than it needs does not necessarily mean that the government allocates less funds than the military needs. The government might also allocate a high budget to the military, but it might well be that the funds do not arrive at their intended destination. Therefore, three structural limitations can be considered, two of which explain why a low budget is allocated and one which explains why a high budget might be allocated, but does not translate into adequate military funds.

The first possible structural limitation explaining a low budget being allocated to the military is that the country in question simply does not have the funds to fund its military.

There are two explanations to look at. First, the economic situation of the country. If a country has a negative economic outlook, this can be the government's structural limitation. Rotberg names several indicators of a failing economy, namely the decline of real national and per capita levels of annual GDP, low year-to-year growth rates, high inflation and high state deficits (Rotberg 2004, 8). Delving deeper into the economic indicators, Nicolas van de Walle distinguishes between economic structural factors and economic contingent factors for state failure, the former being of interest to this thesis. Structural factors are "deep-seated economic and sociological characteristics that are fixed in the short-to-medium term" (Van de Walle 2004, 99). For Van de Walle, fiscal capacity is central to assessing the government's economic situation, as this allows the government to generate resources. He names several indicators to determine a state's fiscal capacity and thus of the state's ability to raise revenue from taxes, namely: population density and the difficulty of terrain, as the presence of those elements makes taxing more difficult; low levels of development, as taxing poor people does not generate much revenue; and whether there is an capital-intensive mining industry (or something similar) present, as these are relatively easy to tax (Van de Walle 2004, 99-100).

The second possible structural limitation explaining a low budget is that the government is unable to allocate a higher budget due to political obstacles. The government can be restricted in its options and thus in its ability if it experiences political opposition within the political system (for example the lack of a majority in parliament), within society (unions or civil society), or within the international community (international pressure for certain policies).

The possible structural limitation explaining the presence of an incapable military but at the same time a high allocated budget is that corruption and/or general governmental incompetency to efficiently govern are present, resulting in parts of the funds being siphoned off or lost before they reach their intended destination. Assessing whether general government incompetency is present might be a somewhat elusive concept. Therefore, the theory will elaborate on some notions from Rotberg, to create greater conceptual understanding. According to Rotberg, nations-states ideally are able to provide political goods to its citizens (2004, 2), but states do not achieve this ideal state and can be

categorised according to their success into, from successful to unsuccessful: strong states, weak states, failed states and collapsed states (Rotberg 2004, 2). How well states are able to provide different political goods determines in which category they are placed (Rotberg 2004, 3). Rotberg names several political goods which determine in which category a state can be placed, amongst which security, health care, education, enforceable rule of law, physical and communications infrastructure, and the environment (Rotberg 2004, 3). If a state inadequately provides multiple of these political goods, the state can be deemed weak (Rotberg 2004, 4) and the government apparatus as generally incompetent. As such, this indicates a lack of effectiveness and efficiency, creating a structural limitation for the government to conduct its policy.

Operationalisation

Unwilling

'Unwilling' implies knowledge of an actor's motives. Unfortunately, this is, from a data collection point of view, very difficult in this case. It is not probable that there is enough, or even any, data available to be able to say something significant about the possible motives. It is not as if surveys are conducted within the government on what their true motives actually are or where their interests lie. This fact influences the scope in which a testable theory can be construed. Therefore, testing the theory needs to be largely based on observed behaviour, which means that the theory needs to look at situation at hand and the behaviour of the actor to identify possible interests.

To do this, a chain needs to be devised, leading from the abstract to the specific in this section, but in the analysis leading from the specific to the abstract. For example, as will be discussed in more detail below, unwillingness is divided in economic and political functions of war. Economic functions of war is divided in three elements, namely the military, natural resources, and the dynamic between aid and government corruption. The military, then, has three indicators. If one of these indicators is deemed present, this means that the economy of war is at least partly present, creating at least some unwillingness within the government. This mechanism is employed in the whole section that follows.

The theory leads to the following hypotheses for unwillingness: general hypothesis and two subhypotheses, so as to be able to be more nuanced and make the relationship clear. *H1: If the government is unwilling, the conflict with Boko Haram is more likely to persist; H1a: If there is a war economy, the conflict with Boko Haram is more likely to persist; H1b: If there are political functions of conflict present, the conflict with Boko Haram is more likely to persist.*

Economic Functions – War Economy

One of the simplest ways to answer the economic side of the unwillingness part is the question whether there is a war economy present in the conflict. There are three elements on which can be focused in determining this: the military, natural resources, and the dynamic between aid and government corruption.

To determine whether the military is part of a war economy, the theory suggests a number of 'symptoms' that can be observed. The research will focus on the presence and extend of three of these symptoms, thereby using them as a guide through the available data. The first and main symptom considers underpaid soldiers engaging in "simple" criminal activities such as theft of army equipment and the looting of the population. Following the theory, the presence of these two elements creates an incentive for the soldiers to keep the conflict going, since they do not have an income when the conflict stops. For higher ranking actors it creates also an incentive, namely to turn a blind eye and keep the conflict going. Discontinuance would mean that they will have to spend more money on the salaries of the soldiers to keep them satisfied, which, keeping the possibility of a coup in mind, is a major interest for the governing actor. The second symptom is of less importance than the first and focuses on the phenomenon of 'ghost soldiers'. The presence and extend of all elements element will be drawn from IO/NGO reports and international and national media reports.

To determine whether natural resources are part of the war economy, three aspects need discussion. First, which of the by Keen identified natural resources – oil, diamonds, bauxite, gold, and coltan – are present in the country in question and where they are located. Second, what can be deemed the conflict zone and whether any of these resources is located in this zone. Third, if any of the resources are found to be located in

the conflict zone, it needs to be evaluated what happens with the extracted materials from these sites: who controls them and where does the revenue go to, for example, whether they are taxed or sold by the military. For all elements, data can be drawn from IO/NGO reports.

To determine whether there is a war economy based on foreign military aid, the primary element to be discussed is the presence and extend of different forms of foreign military aid. This will give some idea on whether the government has incentive to continue the conflict. Following the theory, as corruption might create an additional layer of incentive to continue the conflict, it will be a secondary element of which the presence and extend requires discussion. To create a concise picture of the two in the case, the presence and extend of different forms of foreign military aid will be grouped in two categories, based on their vulnerability to fraud and corruption. The first of these categories is labelled 'corruptible'-aid and, besides determining whether the government has an aid incentive, will also determine whether the additional incentive of corruption is present. The category consists of two forms of military foreign aid, namely financial support, because officials are able to take a share from the money that is allocated; and the procurement of military equipment, as officials are able to report a greater amount of costs for procuring hardware. The second of the categories is labelled 'less-corruptible'-aid, which is aid that is arguably harder to commit fraud with, and will consist of the following forms of foreign military aid: direct military support, providing intelligence, and providing training. Data for the aid element will be drawn from IO/NGO reports and news reports; data for the corruption element will be drawn from news reports and IO/NGO reports, particularly Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index 2014.

The theory names three elements – or 'functions' – of political unwillingness, namely electoral advantage, impunity, and government stability. Following the theory, there are two symptoms that might indicate that the conflict is persisted for electoral gain. First, the state's military campaign intensifies as elections draw near. To observe this, a timeline will be construed for both the 2011 and 2015 presidential elections, which will list the number of rebels the government reported as killed or captured, and any events that were reported, so as to give an idea of whether the military campaign was reported as

increasing as the elections drew near. As will be further argued in the analysis, data will be drawn primarily from the Nigerian newspaper *This Day*. The second symptom is the postponement of elections, which will also look at both presidential elections, and which will consider two elements. First, whether the elections were postponed and why, and second, whether the government party was expected to win before elections were postponed. Data will be drawn from IO/NGO reports and news reports.

Since the complexity of the theory might be too broad for this thesis, prioritising some elements above others might be in order at this stage. A preliminary study of the case at hand suggests that the electoral advantage element of the political unwillingness theory are of interest, because Nigeria had two presidential elections during the conflict. Also, considering the other two elements are of a more complex and possibly more indirect nature, it is proposed those elements are less important for the analysis of this case, when the practical limitations are considered. However, since there is a possibility these elements are of influence in this case, omitting them entirely might be too severe. Therefore, it is proposed that for both elements, a so called 'entry-indicator' needs to be present before the entirety of the element is considered in the analysis. In other words, the entry-indicator indicates whether the element "deserves" a deeper investigation.

Before fully considering impunity, an entry-indicator needs to be established. A relatively shallow but effective indicator is to look whether Amnesty International or Human Rights Watch have criticised Western countries for ignoring human rights abuses by the armed forces of the country in question. This can be tested relatively easy by looking at reports and press releases by these organisations. If this is the case, the analysis will look more in dept at the response of Western countries on reported human rights abuses after a country branded an armed group a terrorist group. Elements to be considered are: whether the country branded an armed group as terrorist; whether human rights abuses by the country's armed forces were reported; and whether Western countries seemed to be ignoring them. Data can be drawn from IO/NGO reports and media sources.

A relatively effective entry-indicator for government stability is whether there are reports that emergency powers were a) used and b) abused. If the data suggests this is the case,

government stability can be indicated by whether and how it suppresses discontent and dissent. Following the theory, the government can employ two tactics to do this and these tactics are therefore symptoms for this element. First, the government can employ the 'divide and rule' tactic, which is identified by looking at whether there is another anti-governmental armed group present within the country and whether this group is fighting the other anti-governmental group. Second, the government uses emergency powers to suppress dissent and opposition that are not directly related to the conflict they were employed on. Data for all elements can be drawn from IO/NGO reports and media sources.

An overview of the unwillingness operationalisation is given in table 1.

Table 1. Operationalisation Unwillingness in table form

Economic Functions – War economy			Political Functions		
Military	Natural Resources	Foreign aid	Electoral gain	Impunity	Government stability
1) Soldiers underpaid? 2a) Reports of looting? 2b) Ghost soldiers?	1) Located in country? 2) Located in conflict zone? 3) Who controls them?	1) Corruptible military aid 1a) Corruption? 2) Non-corruptible military aid	1) Increased military campaign before elections? 2) Postponed elections, citing security?	Entry-indicator: 1a) HRA present? 1b) HRS or AI criticising Western countries?	Entry-indicator: 1a) Emergency powers? 1b) HRA associated with emergency powers?
				1) Armed group branded terrorist? 2) HRA reported? 3) Ignored by Western countries?	1) Divide and rule? 2) Political misuse?

Unable

To test the presented 'unable' theory, the analysis will be conducted stagewise. What this means is that not every operationalised element will be analysed. Whether an element is taken into consideration, depends on the stage preceding it. This stagewise approach means that the testing of the hypotheses is conditional: not all hypotheses will be tested. How this works will be elaborated upon after the hypotheses. The theory leads to the following general hypothesis and four subhypotheses: *H2: If the government is unable, the conflict with Boko Haram is more likely to persist; H2a: If the military is unable, the conflict with Boko Haram is more likely to persist;* if the budget is deemed low: *H2b: If the government lacks resources, the conflict with Boko Haram is more likely to persist; H2c: If the government experiences political obstacles, the conflict with Boko Haram is more likely to persist;* if the budget is deemed high: *H2d: If the government apparatus is corrupt and/or incompetent, the conflict with Boko Haram is more likely to persist.*

The theory was divided into a military and governmental level, and as such, the first stage will consider the military level. In this first stage, it is assessed whether the military can be deemed capable. If the military is deemed as such, the analysis is finalised at that point and the governmental level will not be discussed. The reason for this is that if the government's most important instrument in winning the conflict is able, while the case shows its not, the theory of unableness is less capable of explaining the case than the theory of unwillingness. In other words, if the military is able, concluding which theory provides a better explanation is an 'open and shut case'. Following the theory, two elements need to be analyst to determine the military's capability, namely equipment and strategy. Assessing whether the military has the equipment, five indicators need to be discussed. First, the number of soldiers and soldiers as a percentage of the population compared to several other African countries. Second, the morale of the soldiers. Third, the numerical level of equipment compared to other African countries. Fourth, the quality and level of maintenance of the equipment. Fifth and last, these indicators need to be compared to the armed group's strength. Assessing whether the military has the capability to develop an effective strategy can be done by looking at the military's counterinsurgency capability. Data can be drawn from IO/NGO reports, such as the International Institute for Security Studies (IISS) Military Balance 2015 report, and news reports.

If during the first stage the military is deemed incapable, the analysis moves to the second stage, which will determine whether the budget allocated to the military can be deemed high or low. To do this, the budget is assessed in current USD, in percentage of government spending, in percentage of GDP, and in percentage of capita, after which it will be compared to the defence budgets of selected other African countries. Data will be drawn from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) Military Expenditure Database and the IISS Military Balance 2015 report.

If the budget is deemed low, the third stage will consist of two possible explanations to why this is so, namely whether the country lacks the funds to allocate a higher budget, or whether political obstacles prevent the government to do this. Whether funds are lacking will be determined by looking at the indicators suggested by Rotberg and Van de Walle. To determine whether the economic structure of the state limits the government in generating enough revenue, this thesis will look at the following indicators: GDP, GDP per capita, and growth rates. If these are low or declining, they indicate a weak economic structure. It will also look at inflation rates, the state deficit and state debt. If these are high, they indicate a weak economic structure. To closer assess the state's capacity to translate the economic structure into generating resources, indicators to be assessed are population density, the levels of development, and the presence of some capital-intensive resource industry. If these are low, they indicate a low fiscal capacity. Data can be drawn from, amongst others, World Bank and UNDP statistics, and IO/NGO reports and media sources. Whether the government was limited by political obstacles can be determined by looking at three symptoms. First, the presence and extend of opposition in parliament to policies aimed at fighting the armed group. Second, the presence and extend of opposition in society to policies aimed at fighting the armed group. Third, the presence and extend of international opposition to policies aimed at fighting the armed group. For all three indicators, data can be drawn from international and national news sources.

If the budget is deemed high, the third stage will consist of two possible possible explanations why the funds do not reach the military appropriately. First, the presence of corruption can be determined by looking at primarily IO/NGO reports on corruption,

for this case example the Corruption Perception Index 2014, or more extensive studies, for this case for example Daniel Jordan Smith's book on corruption in Nigeria (Smith 2007). Second, whether the government apparatus can be considered incompetent. Following the theory, this can be determined by assessing the government's performance on a range of political goods, namely the state of the infrastructure, the state of healthcare, and the state of education. One specific aspect that can be used to determine the state of the latter two is whether teachers and healthcare personnel are paid on time. Data will be drawn from IO/NGO reports and media sources, specifically the BTI Nigeria Country Report 2014 by the Bertelsmann Stiftung, which looks at different elements of country performance and more generally of interest are World Bank's good governance indicators.

Methods of analysis and data collection

This case will be analysed mainly through process tracing. Hypotheses and chains will be formed and tested. The period analysed is initially the 'start' of the Boko Haram conflict in 2009 until the 2015 presidential elections on March 28th. If necessary, the analysis will extend to the more historical domain of before 2009 (which is the year of the explicit rise of Boko Haram). The aim for this thesis is to heavily base the analysis on a single case, with as much relevant context taken into account. Further methods that will be used are content analysis in general and discourse analysis.

In general, data and information used will be drawn from academic literature, available statistics, international online media sources like the BBC, AP and the New York Times, and Nigerian online media sources. Since international interest in the Boko Haram conflict has risen since April 2014, more international data is available. For the Nigerian online media sources must be kept in mind, following Serrano and Pieri (2014, 193-196), that the national media comes with its shortcomings. Due to the politicised nature of the conflict and a economic, religious and political divide between the north and south, which will be elaborated on further in a later part of the thesis, the national news sources can be biased. Therefore, when using national sources, this thesis will keep the possible bias in mind at will focus on relatively objective and factual news reports. In addition to national sources, regional sources such as allafrica.com and the Institute for Security Studies, based

in Pretoria, will be considered. Further possible sources used reports by Amnesty and Human Right Watch, the World Bank, different United Nations organisations and different NGO's like the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), and the Bertelsmann Stiftung (which published country reports on Nigeria from 2001 to the end of 2013).

Case description

Before this thesis will elaborate on the theoretical frameworks and the research design, it is useful to first provide some context on the case. This will be done by looking at a chronological account of the events and some specific aspects of the case. Unfortunately, the thesis is too limited in size to be able to give a holistic account of the rise of Boko Haram. Therefore, the first two phases, the Kanama phase (Mohammed 2014, 10) and the dawah phase (Mohammed 2014, 13), will be left out and the description starts at the beginning of the third phase in the summer of 2009.

The third phase started around 11 and 12 June 2009, when military and police forces of Operation Flush shot several members of the group who were trying to attend a funeral at the time (Onuoha 2014, 169). According to Mohammed, to Boko Haram, this was a declaration of war, leading to an open confrontation with the Nigerian state from 26 – 31 July (2014, 9). During these days, there was an uprising in several Nigerian states, namely Borno, Bauchi, Yobe, Gombe, Kano, and Katsina, which the military quickly puts down, leaving 800 dead, mostly group members and civilians (Reinert & Garçon 2014, 238). Yusuf's headquarters was burned by the military, and Yusuf was arrested and handed over by the military to the police, who executed him without trial (Reinert & Garçon 2014, 238). The group went underground, rebuild, and in June 2010, Abubakar Shekau announces himself as leader of the group (Mohammed 2014, 9; Reinert & Garçon 2014, 239).

The rise of Shekau came with a change in Boko Haram's *modus operandi*. First, its focus was the enforcement of a strict form of Shariah law (Pérouse de Montclos 2014a, 2); its targets were mainly government related, namely village heads, security officials, politicians, and police and government buildings (Mohammed 2014, 28); and the methods used were

the targeted killing and attacks on these targets, mostly with hit-and-run attacks (Onuoha 2014, 169).

After Shekau's rise, the focus shifted from merely enforcing Shariah to violence against Christians (Pérouse de Montclos 2014a, 2). Boko Haram's focus in targets shifted from solely the government to also including the Christian community, the international community, and the civilian community. For the Christian community, this started in 2009 (Pérouse de Montclos 2014a, 2), for the international community, this started on 26 August 2011, when a suicide bomber drove into the United Nations building in Abuja and killed 25 people (Reinert & Garçon 2014, 240), and for the civilian community, this was the attacks on markets, journalists, and especially schools (Mohammed 2014, 28). Lastly, Boko Haram committed itself to asymmetric warfare in 2010 and tried to adopt the tactics and strategies of groups such as Al-Qaeda (Mohammed 2014, 10).

Meanwhile, in April 2011, Goodluck Jonathan, a Christian (Pérouse de Montclos 2014b, 140), won the 2011 presidential elections, which sparked post-electoral violence in areas in northern Nigeria (Reinert & Garçon 2014, 239). In July, the government announced it would try to negotiate with Boko Haram, but on August 3, it rejects the negotiations. (Reinert & Garçon 2014, 240). On 31 December 2011, President Jonathan "declares a state of emergency in parts of Borno, Niger, Plateau and Yobe states and announces the closing of all northern borders (Reinert & Garçon 2014, 241).

Attacks continue throughout 2012 (Reinert & Garçon 2014, 241), but on 7 October 2012, soldiers of the JTF declare they killed Abubakar Shekau (Reinert & Garçon 2014, 243). Skirmishes between the military and Boko Haram continue and on 14 May 2013, president Jonathan again declares a state of emergency, this time in the states of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa. The largest amount of military personnel since the Civil War is mobilised to combat the group (Reinert & Garçon 2014, 244-245). From June to October, the JTF and Boko Haram clash multiple times, "resulting in hundreds of deaths" (Reinert & Garçon 2014, 245). On 25 September 2013, Shekau appears in a video referencing recent developments and appears to be alive (Reinert & Garçon 2014, 245).

Confrontations between the JTF and Boko Haram continued until on April 14 more than 200 Nigerian schoolgirls were abducted by Boko Haram from the village of Chibok, Borno. Shekau threatened to sell them as slaves and sex slaves, which caused international outcry and international attention to the armed conflict in Nigeria (Reuters 2014a). Throughout 2014, Boko Haram increased its presence in Cameroon, for example through several kidnappings, amongst which the kidnapping of the wife of Cameroon's Vice Prime Minister (The Associated Press 2014a).

On 25 August 2014, Boko Haram captured the northeastern city of Gwoza and Shekau announced an Islamic Caliphate in Nigeria (The Associated Press 2014b). This is the first time Boko Haram claims territory since 2009 (Reuters 2014b) and can arguably be seen as a fourth phase. Over the rest of 2014, Boko Haram continued gaining territory (Reuters 2014c), with on 28 October 2014 the capture of Mubi, which was subsequently recaptured by the Nigerian army on 13 November (Reuters 2014d). During November, 786 people, mostly civilians, were killed in relation to the conflict (BBC News 2014a).

On 3 January 2015, the town of Baga came under attack from Boko Haram and was largely destroyed. Late January, Human Rights Watch estimated that the number of towns under the control of Boko Haram went from 11 to 17 compared to the previous fall (The Editorial Board 2015). On February 7th, it was announced that the 2015 presidential elections to be held February 14th would be postponed. A multinational force of West-African countries, namely Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, Benin, and Niger started a counter-insurgency campaign against Boko Haram (Faul 2015).

On 21 March, it was reported that Nigerian troops had driven Boko Haram from Bama, an important town in Borno State, after a month of successes against the group (Ewokor 2015). Six days later, on 27 March, a day before the elections, the Nigerian army recaptured Gwoza, long deemed the headquarters of Boko Haram (BBC News 2015b).

The Analysis

Unwilling

The analysis of the case through the unwillingness framework will first consider whether the case shows elements of a war economy, and second whether the case shows elements of a political function for the conflict.

Economic functions of war – War Economy

Elements of the war economy are divided in the following categories: military, which looks for indicators that the military has an interest in the war economy; natural resources, which looks for indicators that natural resources play a role; and aid and corruption, which looks for indicators that elements of the government have an interest in continuing aid to be able to siphon off funds.

The Military

For the military to be part of the war economy, there are two main elements to look at. First, whether there is an incentive for soldiers to involve themselves in criminal activity and second whether they show criminal behaviour. For the former, the analysis will look at whether there is dissatisfaction amongst soldiers about their salary; for the latter, the analysis will look at whether there are reports of theft, looting, ghost soldiers or security payments.

While Transparency International UK's Government Defence Anti-Corruption Index 2013 deems the payment of salaries quite reasonable, giving it a 3 out of 4 score and stating that "personnel receive the correct pay on time and the system of payment is well established and largely routine" (Transparency International UK 2013, 14-15), some incidents concerning the payments have occurred over the years. The first type of incidents concerns the non-payment of salaries to active personnel. This is most important to the analysis, since this gives soldiers a direct incentive to draw funds from other sources. In October 2011, *Vanguard* reported tension within the Nigerian security agencies after rumours of non-payment of salaries of the armed forces and police over the month October. The problem was reported as being of a technical nature, and it would be paid as soon as possible (Omonobi 2011b). In May 2014, the BBC reported that there had

been complaints over non-payment of salaries to soldiers fighting Boko Haram (Ross 2014). In July, *Bloomberg* reported that soldiers fighting the armed group claimed their monthly pay had been cut in half to N15,000 (92 US dollars) without explanation. This strengthened their belief that officials in Abuja were siphoning off from funds. The spokesman for the Nigerian Defense Ministry attributed the temporary cut to a delay in the release of the Finance Ministry's funds (Mbachu 2014).

The following types of incidents are less important to the analysis than the first, since they do not concern active military personnel as direct as their salaries. They might, however, give an indication of how well the payment system works. The second type concerns military pensions. In 2009, it was reported that thousands of military pensioners threatened to go back to protests if the Nigerian government kept avoiding addressing the issue of partly unpaid pensions (Omonobi 2009). Reports in 2014 began in June, when 100 retired soldiers from the Coalition of Aggrieved Nigerian Military Veterans gathered in front of the National Judicial Institute (NJI) to demand that the 53.37 percent Federal Government salary increase of 2009/2010 and subsequent three years of arrears be paid to them (Umoru, Nwabughiogu & Erunke 2014). In September, the same group was reported by *Vanguard* as hinting that eventually as a last resort, they might consider a more violent approach (Ebegbulem 2014; Onah 2014).

The third type of incidents concerns the structure of payment. While the problems mentioned above might paint a picture, two things should also be taken into account, namely that in 2010, president Jonathan extended the pay rise given to public servants to the military and the police, increasing their wage with 53.37% (Soniyi & Emejo 2010), and that in 2011, the military reformed the payment system by decentralising it, hoping it would increase the effectiveness and efficiency of salary payment (Omonobi 2011a).

Thus, while not greatly prevalent, the amount of incidents at least indicates some possible dissatisfaction of the soldiers with their salary.

Media reports on looting in north-eastern Nigeria generally attribute the looting to Boko Haram[4] or criminal groups that make use of the relative lawlessness in the area. However, there have been some allegations that soldiers have looted from civilians. For example, Kyari Mohammed cites Talatu, who said that soldiers killed her husband Adamu Fulani and stole N250,000 from his room (Mohammed 2014, 26). Another example is the report by *Daily Trust* that in a press statement, the chairman of the Borno Elder's Forum, Dr. Shettima Ali Monguno, stated in June 2012 that "The recent upheaval that followed burning, looting and destruction of several houses and shops by soldiers resulted in forced or voluntary social dislocation for fear of insecurity by several thousands of people in some wards of the state capital. The people totally became refuges in their own town" (Ibrahim 2012). However, on the other hand, there is also the instance where the military returned livestock stolen by a criminal gang to the rightful owners. This was reported by *This Day* (Iroegbu 2014a), a relatively pro-military newspaper, and also by *Blueprint* (2014) and *Leadership* (Oladeji 2014), two northern newspapers. The heaviest accusations of looting come from a report by Amnesty International in 2012, which states that after an area has been attacked by suspected members of Boko Haram, the security forces generally "carry out house to house searches, making arrests and seizing property" (Amnesty International 2012, 29). According to the report, many residents "complained that money was stolen from their houses" (Amnesty International 2012, 29).

While the reports of looting in the north-eastern region are not numerous, reports on other abuses are. Amnesty International's The State of the World Report 2014 noted several kinds of abuses by security forces in the north-eastern region, namely arbitrary arrests, denying detainees to speak to their lawyer, and subjecting detainees to torture and ill-treatment. The government did not investigate the deaths of detainees in custody and they refused to grant the National Human Rights Commission access to military detention facilities. Furthermore, Amnesty notes a particularly gruesome incident on 14 March 2014, when Boko Haram members attacked the military barracks in the town of Maiduguri. They freed hundreds of people detained there. The military regained control

[4] For example, a New York Times article from 9 January 2015, which reports on the latest in Boko Haram's progression at that moment, saying "Boko Haram has now captured or sacked many of the small towns in Maiduguri's orbit" (Nossiter 2015).

over the barracks and extra-judicially executed more than 640 people, most of them escaped detainees (Amnesty International 2015, 275). In Human Rights Watch's World Report 2015, the picture Amnesty International's report paints is largely confirmed. The report stated that suspects are abused, tortured, are not allowed to see a lawyer, and are ill-treated, while they are not charged or trialled. The HRW's report also mentions the March 2014 incident in Maiduguri and states that the government has not investigated it yet. Additionally, they stated that local vigilante groups assisted Nigerian security forces, and that they are rumoured to use child soldiers, and also ill-treat and extra-judicially kill suspected members of Boko Haram (Human Rights Watch 2015, 402-403). In a special report from 2012 on the conflict in north-eastern Nigeria, Amnesty International also noted several abuses, amongst which extra-judicial executions and the destruction of homes by burning them (Amnesty International 2012, 19, 30 and 31).

If looting and theft was systematically done by the military in north-eastern Nigeria, arguably more reports of looting and theft in this region should have been observed, since reports on other abuses, such as the burning of houses and the extra-judicial killings, were comparatively much more prevalent. Therefore, while it cannot be ruled out, this thesis deems that there is not enough reason to assume that the Nigerian armed forces have been systematically looting and thieving in north-eastern Nigeria.

To identify ghost soldiers, this thesis looked at media reports and reports by international organisations, but not much was found. While Transparency International UK's report scored Nigeria a one out of four and stated that it is a challenge for the Ministry of Defense to accurately calculate the number of military personnel (Transparency International UK 2013, 16), this thesis found no concrete reports of ghost soldiers in Nigeria, suggesting that there is no reason to assume there is a systematic use of ghost soldiers in the conflict.

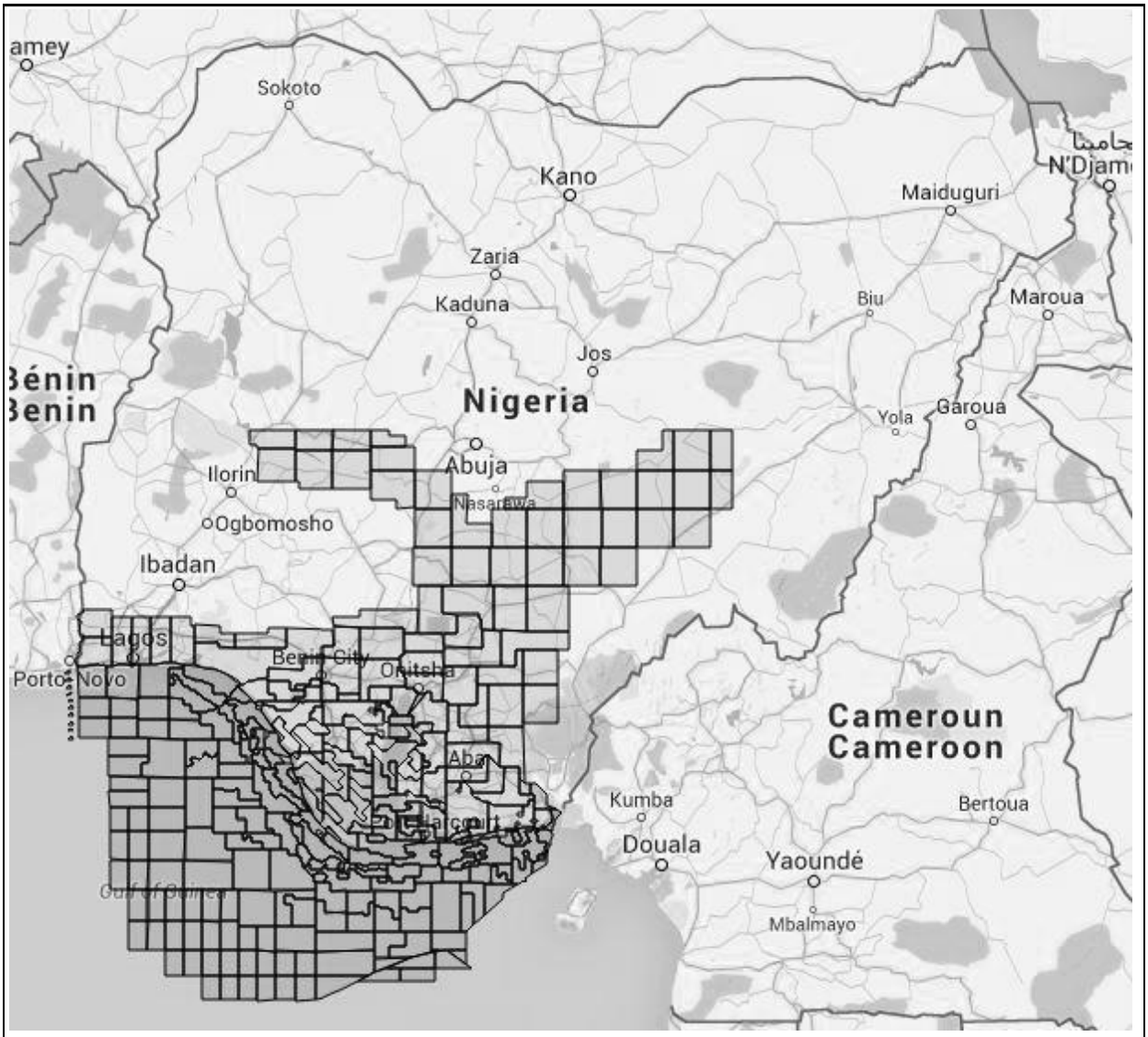
Assessing whether the military has part in the war economy, this thesis found some indication that soldier's payment lacks, but it could not determine whether the military is underpaid. It also found a general absence of reports of looting, while reports on other abuses by the military were prevalent. Lastly, it found no evidence of the existence of

ghost soldiers. Therefore, this thesis concludes that, based on these indicators, there is no reason to assume the military has part in the war economy.

Natural Resources

To determine whether natural resources play part in a war economy in the conflict with Boko Haram, three aspects need to be discussed. First, which of the by the theory specified natural resources – oil, diamonds, bauxite, gold, and coltan – are present in Nigeria and where they are located. Second, whether any of these resources are located in the conflict zone. Third, what happens to the extracted materials from the resources present in the conflict zone.

According to the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, Nigeria's oil and gas sector accounts for 35% of GDP and "petroleum exports revenue represents over 90 percent of total exports revenue", with the petroleum export valued at 95 billion USD (OPEC 2014). The oil sector is of vast importance to Nigeria, as the Nigerian government estimates in its Nigerian Industrial Revolution Plan (NIRP) that it accounts for 60 to 70 percent of total government revenue (Nigerian Investment Promotion Commission 2014, 48), while the World Bank estimates that the oil sector accounts for 75% of the country's budgetary revenue (World Bank 2015f). Most of Nigeria's oil production is concentrated in the Niger delta, which is mainly located in the so called "South South" region (International Crisis Group 2014, 5), but extraction facilities extend over most of the south of the country, as visualised in map 1.



Map 1: Oil and gas fields in Nigeria in 2015 (screenshot from OilMapNG's interactive map of the Nigerian oil fields) (OilMapNG 2015)

While Nigeria's oil resources are abundant, its diamond resources are less so. The United States Geological Survey does list some diamonds being produced (U.S. Geological Survey 2014, 34.4) and the *Daily Independent* cited a preliminary survey as finding a significant quantity of diamonds in Katsina State in 2010 (Daily Independent 2010), but the lack of reports on diamond mining in Nigeria arguably indicates the resource is not a significant factor for the country's economy. For example, Corporate Nigeria only mentions granting a diamond exploration license to an Australian company in its Business, Trade and Investment Guide 2010 (Corporate Nigeria 2010, 203) and a 126 page economic analysis on the sustainability of natural resources for the mining sector mentions the presence of diamonds once (Wardell Armstrong International 2007, 59).

The state of Nigeria's bauxite mining industry is unclear, as there is a lack of verifiable information. However, as the mining industry in general is known to be underdeveloped, since most of the government's attention is focused on the oil sector (Amuda, Esezobor & Lawal 2007, 69; Corporate Nigeria 2010, 200), this lack of information might be indicative that this is also the case for this particular sector in the mining industry. There is some information available, though, as Wardell Armstrong lists a bauxite deposit in the Taraba state (Wardell Armstrong International 2007,, 40) and a study by Talabi, Ademilua, Ajayi, and Ogunniyi finds a possibly commercially viable bauxite deposit in Ekiti state (Talabi, Ademilua, Ajayi, & Ogunniyi 2013, 432).

Whereas the operations around diamonds and bauxite are minor, gold production is more significant and increased from 2,890 kilograms in 2008 to 4,000 kilograms in 2012 (U.S. Geological Survey 2014, 34.4). According to the U.S. Geological Survey, gold in Nigeria was recently primarily produced by small-scale operations, but in 2012 the Australian company Australian Mines Ltd. invested in three gold mines, namely the Kasele, the Tegina, and the Yargarma gold mines (U.S. Geological Survey 2014, 34.1), all three mines are located in the northwest of the country (African Mining n.d.). According to Wardell Armstrong, states containing gold deposits are Ekiti, Jigawa, Kaduna, Katsina, Kebbi, Kogi, Niger, Osun, Sokotu, and Zamfara (Wardell Armstrong International 2007,, 40).

Lastly, coltan is present in Nigeria. According to the Tantalum-Niobium International Study Center, 'coltan' is "an abbreviation used only in parts of Africa for 'columbo-tantalite'", and refers to either columbite (or columbium/niobium) or tantalite (tantalum) (Tantalum-Niobium International Study Center n.d.a).), two precious metals, the last of which is for example used in mobile phones (Tantalum-Niobium International Study Center n.d.b). According to the U.S. Geological Survey, Nigeria produced 22 metric tons of niobium and 63 tons of tantalum in 2012 (U.S. Geological Survey 2014, 34.4). According to Wardell Armstrong, columbite and/or tantalite can be found in Abuja, Bauchi, Benue, Ekiti, Gombe, Kaduna, Kano, Kogi, Nasarawa and Ondo (Wardell Armstrong International 2007, 40).

To determine whether any of these resources are located in the conflict zone, the conflict zone needs to be defined. A simple but reliable indicator for this is to evaluate which states were in a state of emergency, since a state of emergency not only might indicate that the government perceives the states (and territory) as insecure, but it also gives the government more powers within these states in terms of violence that can be used. For Nigeria, the best period to look at is the period that saw Boko Haram entering a new phase, where it sought territorial control. As argued in the case description, the capture of Gwoza can arguably be seen as the start of this new phase. Therefore, the state of emergency in this period is relevant. In 2014, three states in the far north-eastern part of the country were in a state of emergency, namely Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa (Reuters 2014h). As can be observed, none of the listed resources are located in these states. Therefore, the third aspect does not need any consideration, as there are no resources that need to be discussed further.

In short, the absence of the resources defined by the theory in the conflict zone means that there is no reason to assume a war economy build around the extraction of natural resources is present, and thus no incentive in this respect for the government to continue the conflict.

Foreign military aid and corruption

To determine primarily whether there is reason to assume aid is part of the war economy, and secondarily whether corruption is present, possibly aggravating the incentive, this section is divided in three parts: first, a short discussion on the presence and extend of corruption in Nigeria; second, the level and extend of corruptible aid provided to the Nigerian government; and third, the level and extend of less-corruptible aid provided to the Nigerian government.

According to Smith, Nigeria has been known internationally for its corruption and some have even dubbed corruption "the Nigerian factor", it is such a common phenomenon in the nation (2007, 230). According to Smith, corruption is a significant part of the system of everyday life in Nigeria (2007, 222-223). The 2014 BTI Country Report, Egwemi, and Agbiboa confirm this view of endemic corruption (Agbiboa 2012, 329-330; Bertelsmann

Stiftung 2014, 19; Egwemi 2012, 78-79). Transparency International's 2014 Corruption Perceptions Index, which evaluates public sector corruption, scores Nigeria 27 out of 100, which ranks Nigeria 136th among the 175 countries included in the index (Transparency International 2014), making it the 39th most corrupt country in the world and possibly its most positive ranking since the start of the index (Chima 2014).

According to Chuckwuemeka, Ugwuanyi and Ewuim, 70% of all corruption cases are found in the public sector (Chukwuemeka, Ugwuanyi & Ewuim 2012, 339) and Transparency International's 2013 Global Corruption Barometer, which measures public perceptions of corruption in a country, found that 69% of the surveyed perceived public officials and servants as corrupt (Transparency International 2013). Arguably, central to public sector corruption in Nigeria is corruption in public procurement. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), "the head of the Nigerian Bureau of Public Procurement claimed in 2009 that 90 percent of bribes in the Nigerian Government came through the procurement system" (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute n.d.). Furthermore, an organisation providing corruption prevention software and which is associated with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime stated that in 1999, out of 1 Naira spent by the government, 60 kobos was lost to corruption. This resulted in several hundred billion Naira lost to public procurement corruption, an amount greater than the total development assistance funds the country received between 1960 and 2011 (GoPRS n.d.). Lastly, in accordance with the general perception of corruption in the Nigerian governmental apparatus, Alice Friend, the Pentagon's director for African affairs, stated that much of the funds allocated to the Nigerian military is "skimmed of the top" (Schmitt & Knowlton 2014). In short, corruption seems to be rife throughout Nigerian society, government, and military.

The most apparent form of 'corruptible' military aid is direct financial support, since officials are able to take a share from the money that they receive from a foreign country. The United States have been supporting Nigeria through its Foreign Military Financing (FMF) instrument, which provides target countries with grants to buy defence equipment from the United States (U.S. Department of State 2008) and which can be seen as a form of direct financial support. According to the U.S. Department of State, the United States

have been providing Nigeria with FMF over at least the last couple of years (U.S. Department of State 2014). Shown in table 2 is the amounts Nigeria received (or is expected to receive) between 2009 and 2015. To provide some context, three other West-African countries are also included.

Table 2. United States FMF in USD (thousands) (U.S. Department of State 2014)				
Year	**Nigeria**	**Chad**	**Ghana**	**Liberia**
2009	1,350	-	300	1,500
2010	1,850	500	550	6,000
2011	1,212	399	449	7,173
2012	1,000	200	350	6,500
2013	949	-	332	4,421
2014 (estimate)	1,000	-	350	4,000
2015 (request)	600	-	300	2,500

While Nigeria did receive funds during the years of the conflict, especially compared to Chad, who in 2009, 2013 and 2014 did not receive any FMF, it does not seem to have been a positive influence in terms of funds allocated. As the United States arguably only began to see Boko Haram as a threat after the bombing of a United Nations building in August 2011 (Meehan & Speier 2011, 2), it can be argued that the United States did not allocate the budgets of 2009, 2010, and 2011 with the Nigerian government's fight against Boko Haram particularly in mind. This is important, since as the budget after 2010 began to decrease, this might indicate that the United States government did not increase funds based on the Boko Haram conflict.

As procurement corruption is a widespread form of corruption in Nigeria, the amount of procured and received military equipment since the conflict is of interest. Overall, Nigeria has not been able to procure or receive much military equipment from the United States during the period of the conflict. In 2014, while some equipment was provided, mainly in the form of non-lethal transportation, communication equipment, and force protection equipment (Ibeh 2014), Nigeria saw its request for lethal military equipment, amongst which its request for fighter aircraft and AH-1 Cobra attack helicopters (Harding 2015), denied by the United States (O'Grady 2014). According to the United States, this was because the Leahy Law limits the extend of military equipment it can provide to foreign militaries who are suspected of committing human-rights violations (Hosenball 2015).

Vanguard even reported that the United States blocked Nigeria's purchase of CH-47 Chinooks from Israel in January 2015 (Mamah 2015). Unable to procure weapons from the United States, the Nigerian government turned to Russia and Belarus, agreeing to buy several Russian Mi-35 assault helicopters and Mi-17 transport helicopters (DeCapua 2014), and twelve attack helicopters from Belarus (Campbell 2014).

Less corruptible aid has been provided by the United Kingdom, the United States, Russia, Chad, Niger, and Cameroon. Particularly after the kidnapping of the Chibok schoolgirls in April 2014, the United Kingdom and the United States offered and provided intelligence support in the form of intelligence support, by deploying manned surveillance aircraft and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV), and sharing satellite images (BBC News 2014c; BBC News 2014d; Reuters 2014f). In addition, they provided teams of experts to help to analyse and interpret the available intelligence (Schmitt & Knowlton; Sherwood 2014).

The United States, the United Kingdom and Russia were supporting the Nigerian military through training. The United States spent 712,000 USD on training in 2013 and an estimated 730,000 USD in 2014 (Ibekwe 2014). Training on a new army battalion began in May 2014 (Ibekwe 2014) and was meant to consist of 850 rangers for Nigeria's new special forces command (Schmitt 2014). As for the United Kingdom, William Hague stated in June 2014 that it would provide Nigeria's military with extra training in counterinsurgency (BBC News 2014b). Lastly, Campbell found in October 2014, *Vanguard* reported that 1,200 Nigerian soldiers, policemen and members of the Department of State Services (DSS) were being trained by Russian special forces (Campbell 2014).

While especially the United States and the United Kingdom provided several forms of aid, they did not provide direct military support, meaning that they did not provide troops to combat Boko Haram directly. Chad, Niger and Cameroon, however, are providing this kind of support at least as of February 2015, when they agreed to participate in a West African task force and fight the armed group directly on Nigerian soil (BBC News 2015a; Institute for Security Studies 2015). The fact, however, that it took several years before these neighbouring countries to do this, is arguably not the fault of these three countries.

It seems that prior to the January 2015 attack on Baga, Nigeria was reluctant to accept this kind of aid, presumably because the government did not want external interference by foreign countries (Pérouse de Montclos 2014c, 21). One of the best incidents exemplifying this is the government's behaviour towards the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) during the conflict. The MNJTF was established by Chad, Niger and Nigeria in 1998 to suppress border related crime, but after increasing attacks by Boko Haram in Borno, the state the task force was deployed in, it got the mandate to conduct counterterrorism operations against the armed group (International Crisis Group 2014, 25). However, according to Théroux-Bénoni, the government tried to marginalise the effect the task force had by manoeuvring it in ineffective positions (Institute for Security Studies 2015).

While Western countries have provided the Nigerian government with some military support in its war on a labelled terrorist organisation, it does not seem to reach the levels of support expected by the theory. The provision of intelligence by the United States and the United Kingdom and the training they and Russia provide are largely merely supportive forms of support. Furthermore, while corruption is rife in the Nigerian governmental apparatus, military financial support was minimal and decreasing, and the government's go to ally to buy weapons from, the United States, denied its requests. Lastly, the Nigerian government only allowed foreign troops on its soil after mounting international and regional pressure in January 2015. In short, since the United States government actually decreased the FMF while the conflict was increasing in intensity and was getting more international attention, since the United States was reluctant to provide or sell the Nigerian army the weapons it requested and the Nigerian government in response actually cancelled the American-Nigerian training programme for the ranger battalion mentioned above (O'Grady 2014), and since it was reluctant to allow foreign troops on its soil, there is not enough reason to assume that the Nigerian government had incentive to continue the conflict to reap the benefits of provided military aid in a war economy.

Political functions of war

Symptoms of the use of conflict for political functions are divided in the following categories: electoral advantage, which looks for indicators that the government uses the conflict for electoral gains; the role of the military, which looks for indicators that the military has political influence; impunity, which looks for indicators that the conflict is used to justify human rights abuses; and government stability, which looks for indicators that the conflict is used to suppress non-conflict related opposition groups or minorities.

Electoral advantage

There are two symptoms the analysis will look at to determine whether the conflict has been used for electoral advantage by the government. First, whether the military campaign increased as the elections drew near, for which the analysis will look at the number of rebel casualties and at special victories or defeats reported, weekly from 30 weeks before the election day. Second, it will look at whether the elections were postponed and why, and whether the government party was expected to win.

To analyse the military campaign, this thesis will solely use articles from the website of the newspaper *This Day*. According to Serrano and Pieri, *This Day* "has the best access to the military elite" and is therefore "tied […] into the political and military elite", which means that *This Day's* reporting "must be understood to that prism" (2014, 194). This means that it is an excellent source to draw data from, as it is expected to provide a pro-military bias – in other words, the most positive picture of the army's achievements – which, according to the theory, is exactly what the government wants to convey, especially before elections. Table 3 projects the number of Boko Haram members deaths and captures, and significant events, weekly from 30 weeks before the 2011 presidential elections. These are not the actual numbers, but merely the numbers the military, government or other sources have communicated to *This Day*.

Table 3. Deaths and captures of Boko Haram members by Nigerian security forces 30 weeks before the 2011 election day as reported by *This Day*.				
NA = no attacks / ANN = attacks, but no numbers				
Week	**Dates**	**Reported Boko Haram Deaths**	**Reported Boko Haram Captures**	**Event**
38 - 39 (2010)	20 Sept – 26 Sept	NA	NA	
39	27 Sept – 3 Oct	NA	NA	
40	4 Oct – 10 Oct	ANN	ANN	Borno ANPP Chairman killed in suspected Boko Haram attack (Olugbode 2010)
41 (2010) – 3 (2011)	11 Oct 2010 – 23 Jan 2011	NA	NA	
4	24 Jan – 30 Jan	ANN	ANN	27 Jan: ANPP Guber candidate shot dead (Olugbode 2011b)
5 – 12	31 Jan – 27 Mar	NA	NA	
13	28 Mar – 3 Apr	0	4 (Isiguzo & Olugbode 2011)	1 April: Boko Haram attacks police station, light injuries (This Day 2011).
14	4 Apr – 10 Apr	ANN	ANN	7 April: 800-1000 unidentified well armed attackers attack Bar Arewa, ten civilians killed (Awofadeji 2011)
15	11 Apr – 17 Apr	ANN	ANN	**16 April: Presidential elections** 16 April: bombs in Borno, no casualties (Olugbode 2011a)

As can be observed, reports by *This Day* on Boko Haram and casualties were not frequent before the elections in April 2011. Boko Haram becomes active in the three weeks before the elections, but the government only shows decisive action in week 13, when it arrested four Boko Haram members. Boko Haram's rather quiet period before week 13 can be explained by the fact that the armed group had just resurfaced after the summer of 2010. The analysis that was conducted on reports by *This Day* in the 30 weeks before the 2015 presidential elections, however, showed a different picture.

During the 30 weeks, not a single week reported no attacks, and in every week at least one significant event was reported. However, to present the full data set and sourced

newspaper articles would be too extensive for the size of this thesis. Therefore, the thesis will present the main findings. As stated, during the 30 weeks before the 2015 presidential elections, the conflict was extensively present in the *This Day* reporting. The number of Boko Haram deaths reported was unreliable, as some weeks saw detailed reporting on the number of deaths, while most did not specify the exact number. But, the analysis was able to identify two events which could be identified as an increase in the military campaign. First was the launch of Operation No Mercy on 9 November 2014, 14 weeks before the initial election day, which aimed at retaking occupied territories (Iroegbu & Olugbode 2014). However, the army seemingly failed to hold the initiative, and on 1 February 2015, 8 weeks before the new election day, a new major military operation was launched, which included troops from Nigeria, Chad and Cameroon and saw immediate result, as several towns were recaptured (Iroegbu 2015a).

The 2011 presidential elections were postponed twice, first it was moved from January to 9 April, then to 16 April. The reason for the postponement was not attributed to the conflict with Boko Haram, as Al Jazeera reported that it was due to logistical problems with voting materials (AlJazeera 2011). As Goodluck Jonathan was expected to win (Nossiter 2011), he had no real incentive to use the conflict to win the election.

Nigeria postponed the 2015 presidential election once, from 14 February to 28 March, citing security concerns over the election in the north due to Boko Haram's presence there (Mark 2015). According to Afrobarometer, voter attitudes in December 2014 showed that the presidential race was too close to call, citing 39% intending to vote PDP and 38% All Progressives Congress (APC) (Afrobarometer 2015). Additionally, NOI Polls recorded the President's job performance dropping from an average of 60% over May 2014 to November 2014 (excluding a 74% outlier rating in September), to 55% over both December and January, and showing the President's security area performance rating as consistently the lowest of all performance areas (NOI Polls 2015).

In short, the 2011 presidential elections were postponed twice, but the conflict with Boko Haram was not cited as a reason for this and President Jonathan was expected to win. Additionally, no increased military campaign was observed, which means that there is no

reason to assume that Jonathan used or persisted the conflict with Boko Haram for electoral gain. The 2015 presidential elections, however, were postponed because of security concerns due to the conflict with Boko Haram and it was unsure whether Jonathan would win. Additionally, two increased military campaigns were observed, one 14 weeks before the initial election day, the second 8 weeks before the set election day, which means that there is ample reason to assume that president Jonathan used or persisted the conflict with Boko Haram for electoral gain.

Impunity

Another political function that can make a government unwilling is impunity. As stated in the operationalisation, before analysing this political function, an 'entry indicator' is tested, namely whether military abuse was present in the conflict and either Human Rights Watch (HRW) or Amnesty International criticised Western governments of turning a blind eye.

As already noted in the section on looting by the military, human rights abuses by the military have been prevalent in the conflict with Boko Haram. Amnesty International states in its 2014/2015 State of the World's Human Rights report that "crimes under international law and serious human rights violations and abuses were committed by both sides in the conflict between the Nigerian military and the armed group Boko Haram" and that "torture by the police and security forces was widespread" (Amnesty International 2015, 274). According to HRW in its 2015 World Report, "government security forces continued to respond to the Boko Haram violence in a heavy-handed manner, leading to serious human rights violations" (Human Rights Watch 2015, 402).

Criticism or condemnation by HRW or Amnesty International on the response of Western countries has not been observed in either of the two mentioned reports, nor in the form of press statements. On the contrary, HRW seems to be relatively positive to the response of Western nations on the abuses by the Nigerian military. They noted that the criticism of international actors did not seem to have much effect (Human Rights Watch 2015, 401), but observed that after the kidnapping of the Chibok schoolgirls and the subsequent international pressure, the Nigerian government's international assistance

request raised an opportunity for the actors to "exert pressure" (Human Rights Watch 2015, 405). They noted the United States encouraging initiatives to "improve the transparency, governance, and effectiveness of the security sector" and its urging to adopt "a comprehensive approach to protect its citizens" (Human Rights Watch 2015, 405). Furthermore, HRW also noted the aforementioned denial by the United States to the Nigerian request of attack helicopters and they noted a resolution passed by the European Union that urged the Nigerian government to carry out the counterinsurgency within the boundaries of international law (Human Rights Watch 2015, 405-406).

In short, since both HRW and Amnesty International do not criticise Western nations in this respect, the impunity element needs no further analysis, as the 'entry-indicator' is not met.

Government Stability

The last political function that can make a government unwilling is government stability. Just as the previous function, an entry indicator is tested before the function is fully analysed. This entry indicator will test whether emergency powers were used and whether there are reports that these powers were abused.

The Nigerian government has used emergency powers during the conflict with Boko Haram. On 31 December 2011, in response to several people killed in attacks by Boko Haram on Christmas Day, Goodluck Jonathan declared a partial state of emergency in parts of Yobe and Borno in the north-east, Plateau in central Nigeria and Niger in the west. In addition, international borders in these parts were closed temporarily and a counter-terrorism force was to be created (BBC News 2012). Since this declaration was fairly partial, this thesis is interested more in the declaration of a full state of emergency in May 2013, when Jonathan declared such a state in the states of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa, in response to increased violence from Boko Haram in this region (Brock & Onuah 2013). In his statement, Jonathan referred to the Nigerian constitution's section 305 (Vanguard 2013), which, among other provisions, allows the president to proclaim a state of national or state emergency when the country is at war, a breakdown or a threat

of breakdown of public order, or when the president receives a request from the governor of a state (Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999).

However, as stated before, there have been many reports on government human rights abuse in these regions. Therefore, while a direct link between the abuse of emergency powers by the government and these abuses by security forces is not proven, the presence of human rights abuse does justify a closer investigation into the element of government stability. In other words, this thesis deems the 'entry-indicator' for this element as sufficiently met and will look into the two indicators accompanying it, namely the presence of a 'divide and rule' tactic and/or political misuse of these emergency powers.

For there to be a reasonable suspicion that a 'divide and rule' tactic is used by the government, two factors are needed. First, there must be armed anti-government group other than Boko Haram present in the country, and second, there need to be reports on one of these groups fighting with Boko Haram. With respect to the first factor, according to the International Crisis Group, there are many militias in the Niger Delta, in the south of the country. Best known is the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), which wants the federal government to give more resource control to the region (International Crisis Group 2014, 5) and was in 2009 estimated to consist of 12,000 to 15,000 rebels (International Institute for Security Studies 2010, 287). While no reports on attacks by MEND on Boko Haram were found in the analysis, the International Crisis group did note that continued Boko Haram attacks on religious targets deepened "religious and regional fault lines" (International Crisis Group 2014, 40), which eventually led to the MEND issuing a threat in April 2013 that mosques and Islamic who preached hate messages against Christians, would be attacked. However, after an appeal by the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria, the group withdrew the threat in May (International Crisis Group 2014, 41). In short, it seems the MEND did not initiate attacks against Boko Haram.

Furthermore, two other known militia in the Niger Delta are the Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), who wants an independent republic for the Igbo ethnic group, and the Odu'a Peoples Congress (OPC) fights to

battle a perceived marginalisation of the Yoruba ethnic group (International Crisis Group 2014, 5 and 6). In addition to MASSOB rejecting armed struggle (International Crisis Group 2014, 5), no reports of MASSOB attacks on Boko Haram were found. The OPC, while they demanded in December 2011 that the government should arm them to fight Boko Haram, since they did not find the police up to the task (Ezeobi & Oyeyipo 2011), and threatened Boko Haram in June 2012 that they would fight the group if they came too close to Yorubaland (Balogun 2012), no reports of attacks by the OPC on the group were found. In short, it seems that none of the groups were fighting Boko Haram, and thus it seems that the 'divide and rule' tactic is not present.

During the state of emergency declared in May 2013, security forces "are given special powers to detain suspects, take possession of property, enter and search buildings, compensate affected civilians and impose curfews" (International Institute for Security Studies 2013). Of most interest to the federal government, however, is that state governments are effectively suspended and the federal government can take control over the state's funds (International Institute for Security Studies 2013). This is most sensitive to political misuse, especially if the state governor is of an opposing party. In May 2013, the governors of Borno and Yobe were members of an opposition party, so the removal of especially either of these two might indicate political misuse of emergency powers. However, according to the International Crisis Group, the governors of all three states were allowed to stay and the federal government did not suspend them (International Institute for Security Studies 2013). In short, it seems that there is little reason to assume that the state of emergency is being politically misused.

With neither the 'divide and rule', nor the political misuse of emergency powers deemed present, there is not enough reason to assume that the conflict has been used and persisted to create government stability.

Unable

The analysis of the case through the unable framework will will follow a stagewise analysis. The first stage considers whether the military is capable or not. If it is not, the second stage will look at the budget allocated to the military by the government and

categorised either low or high. Depending on this categorisation, the third stage will look at either a lack of resources and/or the presence of political obstacles, or at government corruption and an incompetent government apparatus.

The first stage – A capable military?

The operationalisation identified two elements that need to be studied to assess whether the military is capable or incapable in winning the conflict at hand, namely equipment and strategy. The first indicator to look at when it comes to the first element is the number of soldiers Nigeria has compared to the following other African countries: South Africa, because of its comparable GDP and land mass; Uganda, because of its past problems with the Lord's Resistance Army; Mali, because of its location and perceived inability to battle the insurgency in the North; Ethiopia, because of it having the second largest population in Africa; and Niger and Chad, who both have bigger land masses, because of their own problems with Boko Haram. The IISS 2015 report provides information on the number of active military personnel (International Institute for Security Studies 2015b, 489-490). The data is shown in table 4.

Table 4. Military personnel, population, and military personnel as a percentage of population in 2015 (International Institute for Security Studies 2015b)

	Active Military Personnel	**Population**	**Percentage of population**
Chad	25,000	11,412,107	0.22%
Ethiopia	138,000	93,633,458	0.14%
Mali	4,000	16,455,903	0.02%
Niger	5,000	17,466,172	0.03%
Nigeria	80,000	177,155,754	0.05%
South Africa	62,000	48,375,645	0.12%
Uganda	45,000	35,918,915	0.13%

Compared to the other countries, numerically speaking Nigeria has a decent military, especially compared to South Africa, which is comparable in terms of GDP and size. However, when viewed as a percentage of the population, Nigeria severely lags behind relatively stable countries like Chad, South Africa, and Uganda, and approaches Niger and Mali. It can be argued that population-wise, Nigeria should have a larger military. It can even be argued that purely numerically, if the conflict with Boko Haram is taken into account, Nigeria's military should be larger than it is. Reuters reported in May 2014 that

according to a security source, with violence across north and central Nigeria, oil theft in the south, commitments to peacekeeping missions, and only 25,000 soldiers in the northeast, the military is overstretched (Reuters 2014g). In other words: it might be too small to carry out all the duties expected from it.

The second indicator indicates the morale of the soldiers. There are widespread reports over the years that morale was low among the military, especially in the conflict region. One soldier reported bad food, rough sleeping conditions, the illegal revoking of leaves, and the constant threat of attacks by Boko Haram (Reuters 2014g). The combination of Boko Haram attacks and a lack of pay resulted in deserting soldiers was reported in 2012 (Meehan & Speier 2011, 24) as well as in 2014 (Lattus 2014). According to Pérouse de Montclos, awareness of being situated in a worsening crisis and reports of a lack of resources and broken equipment contributed to low morale, desertions and mutinies in 2014 (Pérouse de Montclos 2014c, 17). In addition, according to Downie, "accusations of collusion between poorly paid, under-equipped soldiers and members of Boko Haram have dented morale" (Downie 2014).

The third indicator looks at the numerical level of equipment compared to the African countries used for the first indicator. Specifically, the amount of main battle tanks (MBT), light tanks (LT TK), reconnaissance vehicles (RECCE), armoured fighting vehicles (AIFV), armoured personnel carriers (APC), attack helicopters (AT Heli), multi-role helicopters (MR Heli) and transport helicopters (TP Heli). The reason three categories of helicopters are included is because helicopters arguably offer a relatively swift strike and transportation capability over large areas. Data is drawn from the IISS 2015 report and is shown in table 5 (International Institute for Security Studies 2015a).

Table 5. 2015 Numerical overview of military equipment African Countries (International Institute for Security Studies 2015a, 438-476)								
	MBT	**LT TK**	**RECCE**	**AIFV**	**APC**	**AT Heli**	**MR Heli**	**TP Heli**
Chad	60	-	309	92	85	3	11	2
Ethiopia	446+	-	450[5]			18	7	12
Mali	-	-	1	-	19+	2	1	1
Niger	-	-	132	-	24	-	5	-
Nigeria	276	157	452	-	484+	8	6	3
South Africa	34	82	82	534	810	11	4	75
Uganda	239	20	46	31	121	1	5	3

In terms of numbers, the Nigerian army forces are arguably up to par with South Africa, having a comparable number of light to medium armoured fighting vehicles. Combining the numbers of RECCE, AIFV and APC, South Africa counts 1426 vehicles and Nigeria more than 936, which gives South Africa a higher number. However, Nigeria counts a total of 433 tanks (when MBT and LT TK are combined), while South Africa counts 116. Comparably in size and more comparable in population than South Africa, Ethiopia counts more than 446 MBT and 450 light to medium armoured fighting vehicles. Nigeria, however, does seem to lack helicopters compared to South Africa and Ethiopia, which might indicate a lack in equipment, as the countries are relatively comparable in size and helicopters are very useful when it comes to large areas.

The fourth indicator considers the state of equipment. There have been numeral reports on the equipment not being up to par. According to Pérouse de Montclos, soldiers in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa are under-equipped (2014c, 24) and have to deal with malfunctioning equipment (Pérouse de Montclos 2014c, 17). *Deutsche Welle* reported that a lack of equipment "has always been a challenge for the Nigerian military" (Lattus 2014) and according to Femi Falana, there is a lack and general neglect of weapons (BBC News 2014e). In February 2015, group of military officers sent an anonymous letter to President Jonathan to complain about the lack of equipment to fight Boko Haram (HIS Jane's Country Risk Daily Report 2015), while Jonathan in September 2014 already requested the approval of the Nigerian senate to borrow 1 billion USD to upgrade the military's

[5] (RECCE/AIFV/APC combined)

equipment, thereby recognising the need for this (Premium Times 2014). Lastly, in May 2014, Reuters reported that over the last period, the military had failed to maintain equipment, which was showcased in the intervention in Mali, when the Nigerian troops lacked the equipment and training that was needed to fight the rebel forces. For example, they had to buy pick-up trucks and the armour they brought kept breaking down. According to Reuters, army spokesman Olajide Laleye recognised some of the military's problems with equipment and said that the army would undertake an equipment audit (Reuters 2014g).

The fifth indicator seeks to provide a short comparison of these indicators between Boko Haram and the Nigerian military. While the number of soldiers in the Nigerian military is relatively clear, estimates on the number of Boko Haram fighters vary wildly. According to Peter Dörrie, experts' estimates vary between 5,000 and 50,000, himself estimating Boko Haram's numbers being between the 7,000 and 10,000 (Dörrie 2015). However, according to the Clarion Project, there are no credible public estimates on the group's strength (Mauro n.d.), and considering reliable data on Boko Haram in general is difficult to come by (Pérouse de Montclos 2014a, 3), this thesis will not define Boko Haram's strength. But, considering that Reuters reported that deploying 25,000 troops in the north-eastern region might be overstretching them and considering the high morale amongst the fighters of Boko Haram (Reuters 2014g), the soldiers might be up against a capable foe. In addition, while Nigeria's amount of armoured vehicles is considerable, the quality and maintenance level of these vehicles and the army's weapons in general are reportedly lacking. At the same time, Joseph Dempsey, researcher at the IISS, reported that there is some evidence that Boko Haram obtained new weapons in 2014, namely a number of armoured fighting vehicles, ranging from light armoured patrol vehicles to possibly some main battle tanks. These were probably captured by the group from the Nigerian military. The quantity of these vehicles operated by Boko Haram, however, he deemed limited (Dempsey 2015).

In short, the number of soldiers seems to be too few, their morale is low, their equipment is lacking, and their adversary is unknown in strength, is highly motivated, and is relatively

well equipped. Therefore, in terms of equipment the military can be deemed as lacking and incapable to win the conflict.

Assessing the military's capability to develop and implement an effective strategy can be done by looking at its initial counterinsurgency/counterterrorism capability. First, it appears that prior to the 2012 state of emergency, the Nigerian army did not have a dedicated counterinsurgency-counterterrorism capability, as with the state of emergency, Jonathan also declared the creation of a special counterterrorism force (BBC News). Furthermore, Reuters reported that the Nigerian defence headquarters argued that counterinsurgency was "something new that they are slowly learning to take on" (Reuters 2014g), which might certainly be the case, as Nigeria's counterinsurgency operations have been perceived as counter effective and worsening the situation (Reeve 2014) and its forces have been receiving training from foreign militaries. Lastly, not only the military's counterinsurgency/counterterrorism capabilities can be deemed lacking, it is also reported that training in general has been neglected (Reuters 2014g), with soldiers not receiving proper training (Ateboh 2014; BBC News 2014e). In short, there is reason to assume that the military lacks the proper training to be able to develop and implement an effective strategy to counter insurgency or terrorism.

As the military seems to lack in terms of equipment, and in terms of counterinsurgency/counterterrorism capability in particular and military training in general, there is reason to assume that the military has been incapable to win the conflict with Boko Haram.

The second stage – low budget or high budget?

Since the military has been determined incapable to win the conflict in the previous stage, now needs to be determined whether the budget allocated to the military by the government is low or high. Table 6 shows Nigerian military expenditure from 2008 to 2014. As can be observed, from 2010 on, the expenditure in terms of share of GDP has been relatively the same, and from 2008 on, in terms of share of government spending it also has been relatively constant.

Table 6. Nigerian military expenditure 2008-2014 (SIPRI database) (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute 2015)							
	2008	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**
Constant (2011) USD	1740	1825	2143	2385	2101	2020	1833
Share of GDP	0.8%	0.9%	0.5%	0.6%	0.5%	0.5%	0.4%
Per capita	10.7	9.7	12.5	14.5	13.7	13.9	12.7
Share of government spending	3.0%	3.3%	3.2%	3.4%	3.6%	3.5%	3.3%

As there is no data for Chad and Niger over 2014, the military expenditure of the different African countries is shown over the year 2011 in table 7. From this table, it becomes clear that compared to the selected other countries, Nigeria spends the least on its military in terms of share of GDP and share of government spending. According to the data drawn from the SIPRI database, there are only four European countries that spend less on their militaries than Nigeria in terms of share of GDP, namely Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg and Moldova (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute 2015, 387). In short, for its economy, Nigeria does not spend high levels of funds on its military.

Table 7. Military expenditure 2011 (SIPRI database) (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute 2015, 387)				
	Current (2011) USD (million)	**Share of GDP**	**Per capita**	**Share of government spending**
Chad	610	6.6%	50.5	22.4%
Ethiopia	332	0.9%	3.7	6.9%
Mali	161	1.5%	11.2	6.1%
Niger	84	1.3%	5.1	6.7%
Nigeria	2385	0.6%	14.5	3.4%
South Africa	4594	1.1%	89.1	3.7%
Uganda	607	3.9%	17.3	10.9%

The information provided by the IISS 2014 report calculates defence spending differently than the SIPRI database, but as can be observed in table 8, it paints a relatively comparable picture: Nigeria spends a relatively low amount of funds to its military over the year 2012 in terms of share of GDP.

Table 8. Defence spending 2011 (IISS) (International Institute for Security Studies 2014 , 489-490)			
	Current USD (million)	**Share of GDP**	**Per capita**
Chad	177	1.89%	16
Ethiopia	273	0.86%	3
Mali	226	2.13%	15
Niger	63	1.04%	4
Nigeria	2249	0.92%	14
South Africa	5290	1.29%	108
Uganda	243	1.40%	7

Therefore, Nigeria's military budget is deemed low.

Stage three – lack of resources and political obstacles

Since it has been determined that the budget allocating funds to the military is low, two possible explanations will be discussed that constitute a structural limitation. The first considers lacking funds/resources, making it difficult to raise the budget; the second considers political obstacles that make it difficult to raise the budget.

A lack of resources

Assessing whether the government is structurally limited by a lack of resources can be done by looking at the economic situation and at the government's potential fiscal capacity. In terms of GDP, Nigeria is the biggest economy in Africa, worth 510 billion USD, which overtook South Africa's 370 billion USD economy in 2013 (The Economist 2014). Nigeria's economy had an annually average growth rate of 4.9% percent over the years 2011-2013, a slight decline compared to the years 2008-2010, that saw an annual average of 6.9% (World Bank 2015c). Its GDP per capita has been consistently rising from 2,311 USD in 2010 to 3,006 USD in 2013, but is still low compared to South Africa's GDP per capita, which was 6,886 USD in 2013 (World Bank 2015d). Table 9 shows Nigeria's inflation rates compared to South Africa's over the years 2009-2014. As can be observed, Nigeria's inflation rate, while having declined the last two years, has been consistently high.

Table 9. Inflation, consumer prices (annual %) (World Bank 2015e)						
	2009	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**
Nigeria	11.5%	13.7%	10.8%	12.2%	8.5%	8.1%
South Africa	7.1%	4.3%	10.9%	2.2%	3.3%	5.6%

Nigeria has shown a constantly declining cash deficit in percentage of GDP over the last years, ranging from 3.2% of GDP in 2009, to 1.3% in 2012, which is relatively low compared to South Africa's 4.5% deficit in 2012 (World Bank 2015a). Nigeria showed an average central government debt in percentage of GDP of 11.3% over the years 2009-2012, which is low compared to the government debt of some Western countries, with for example an average of 60.3% for the Netherlands and 85.4% for the United Kingdom over the same time period (World Bank 2015b). In short, while its GDP per capita is low and its inflation high, Nigeria does perform relatively well on other indicators: its GDP is high, its growth rate cannot be deemed low, its cash deficit is relatively low, as is its government debt. This paints a relatively positive picture of Nigeria's economic situation.

However, revisiting table 7, while Nigeria spends roughly the same share of its government spending on military expenditure as South Africa does, it spends only half the share of GDP and current USD as South Africa does. This might indicate that Nigeria is less able than South Africa in translating its GDP into government revenue. Following the theory, three indicators to further assess this will be discussed, in which Nigeria will be compared to selected African countries. First, Nigeria's population density (people per square kilometre of land area) was 191 in 2013, compared to South Africa's 44, Chad's 10, and Kenya's 78, and thus can be considered high (World Bank 2015g). Second, whether Nigeria's level of development is low or high will be determined by its Human Development Index (HDI) score and its GINI coefficient. The United Nations Development Programme places Nigeria in the low human development category, scoring it 0.504 on the HDI, which places it at rank 152 amongst 187 countries (United Nations Development Programme 2014). According to Adegoke, Nigeria has a GINI index ratio between 0.50 and 0.70, while countries with distributions levels that are deemed equitable range between 0.20 and 0.35 (Adegoke 2013, 16), making Nigeria comparatively inequitable. Thus, based on the HDI score and GINI index ratio, Nigeria has low levels of development. Lastly, capital-intensive resource industry, which is easily

taxable, is certainly present in Nigeria in the form of its large petroleum industry. However, while the Nigerian government is able to draw considerable revenue from this industry, the government budget's dependency on oil is also a weakness, as it makes it vulnerable to dropping oil prices. According to the World Bank, the decline of oil prices in 2014 "has posed major challenges to the country's external balance and public finances", with the federal government forced to cut spending by 60 percent (World Bank 2015f). In short, while Nigeria's population density is high, its development levels are low and while the presence of an easily taxable resource industry can generate considerable revenues, it also makes the government structurally vulnerable to a drop in resource prices.

While its economic situation is relatively positive, Nigeria's fiscal capacity has two weaknesses. As such, a slight lack of resources can be deemed present, creating a partial structural limitation that could serve as a partial explanation to Nigeria's low defence budget.

Political obstacles

The second possible structural limitation the government is constrained by is the presence of political obstacles. Central is the presence of opposition to policies aimed at fighting the armed group in three categories, namely parliament, society, and the international community. Central to any consideration of political obstacles is the country's political context, most notably the geopolitical division between a majority-Muslim north and a majority-Christian south (Thurston 2015, 3). Jonathan, a Christian, hails from the south, and therefore can expect some opposition from the north, which is politically more Muslim oriented. This general outset was arguably aggravated by the by many northerners perceived disregard Jonathan showed for the 'zoning' system informally in place in the country. According to Tayo, 'zoning' in Nigeria is an informal agreement within the PDP that the presidency should rotate between the north and south. In 2010, the president was the northerner Umaru Yar'Adua, who died before completing his first term as president, resulting in vice-president Jonathan assuming the presidency. Jonathan's decision to announce himself candidate for the 2011 presidential elections was thus bitterly received by the northerners (Tayo 2011, 3).

The Nigerian parliament, the National Assembly, consists of a number of parties. Two, however, are most notable for this thesis, namely the People's Democratic Party (PDP), from which Jonathan hails, and a coalition of opposition parties, calling themselves the All Progressives Congress (APC) (Thurston 2015, 7). Since the 2011 elections, the PDP has been the largest party in the Senate (Senate Nigeria 2015). The largest party in the Senate has been the PDP since its instalment in 2011. Since 2011 the PDP controlled the House, but after several defections in December 2013, control switched to the APC until February 2014, when control switched back to the PDP until the 2015 elections (Thurston 2015, 9). As both the Senate and the House have in general been under control of the governing party, an obstacle in this category is not to be expected. However, as defections from the PDP to the APC and back seem relatively common (Thurston 2015, 9), some unrest in the PDP can be assumed. Nevertheless, news reports on the response of the House, the Senate, and the APC on some of Jonathan's anti-Boko Haram policies suggest that they in general do not obstruct him in this regard and even complain the President should do more. This is exemplified by the House's praise for the President after the renewed military campaign in February 2015 yielded results, while the APC praised the troops but blamed the President for not doing it sooner (This Day 2015). One of the most obstructive incidents in parliament observed is arguably the Senate's seemingly bi-polar behaviour after Jonathan's request to take a 1 billion USD loan to attend to the "urgent need" to upgrade equipment in order to fight Boko Haram. The request was done on 15 July 2014, after which the Senate first went on its scheduled two month recess, postponing discussions (Sobowale 2014). Only after reconvening in September 2014 did they discuss the request, after which, possibly due to increased attacks by Boko Haram, they asked the Federal Government to declare total war against Boko Haram. A motion condemning the insurgency and calling for action was supported by 107 of the 109 senators (Ogunmade 2014).

As the divide between the mainly Muslim north and the mainly Christian south is a significant factor in Nigerian politics, and as both Muslims and Christians each constitute roughly 50 percent of the population, political obstacles in society could arguably come from the national leaders of these groups. Sultan Abubakar is generally seen as a central

figure for Nigerian Muslims and is, as Sultan of Sokoto, seen as their spiritual leader (The Muslim 500 n.d.). Since 2011, he has called upon the Federal Government to take its responsibility of providing security in the areas where the Boko Haram crisis takes place and has called for a peaceful solution (Abubakar 2011). Furthermore, he has called on traditional rulers to express concern over the insurgency (Ogwuda 2014) and stated in 2014 that Boko Haram has hurt Nigeria and Nigerians (Daniel 2014). Pastor Ayo Oritsejafor, National President of the Christian Association of Nigeria stated that starting an amnesty programme with Boko Haram would be futile and called upon the military to persist in fighting Boko Haram (Eyoboka 2014). In short, both religious leaders condemned Boko Haram, and seemed to have supported the government in providing security for it citizens and ending the conflict with Boko Haram.

Concerning the international category, one of the most apparent political obstacles is the inability of the United States to provide Nigeria with higher levels of military financing and with more advanced military hardware because of the earlier discussed Leahy Law, which bars the United States providing military aid to foreign militaries that are suspected of committing human-rights violations. Fortunately for the Nigerian government, this obstacle could partly be resolved by turning to non-Western countries for military hardware. This leaves, however, the problem of the lack of funds to finance the army. On the other hand, as discussed earlier, the government has refused some forms of aid, has marginalised the role of the MNJTF, cancelled a US-Nigeria joint training of a specialised counterinsurgency battalion in response to the US not providing it with certain military hardware, and has not been forthcoming in reducing human rights abuses by its military. Therefore, it can be argued that the Nigerian government has created or persisted at least some of its international political obstacles, and cannot be deemed a total victim to structural circumstances.

As no clear political obstacles to anti-Boko Haram policies were identified in parliament or in society, and as at least part of the international obstructions faced by the Nigerian government are arguably self-inflicted, it seems that political obstacles cannot be deemed a structural limitation that is present, and as such arguably offers no explanation for explanation for the low defence budget.

Discussion

Ending the analysis, and leaving the more elaborate consideration over the results of the analysis to the conclusion, the discussion will first very shortly assess which elements were deemed possibly present and will provide some commentary

For the unwillingness theoretical framework, no war economy could be identified, as neither of the possible war economies, namely military looting, natural resources, and foreign military aid, could be reasonably assumed present. Amongst many reports of abuses by the soldiers, looting, save for some incidents, was not one of them. For foreign aid, at no point did Western countries jump at the opportunity to contribute significant amounts of aid and the Nigerian government even showed reluctance towards the presence of foreign military on its soil. However, while natural resources also were not deemed present and thus not of influence, this assessment of this element did create some dissonance. The problem is that the focus of this element lies primarily on the government creating chaos to be able to control certain resources. Thus the presence of certain resources in a conflict zone and controlling them, creates an incentive to maintain the chaos around you, so that no one pays attention to what you are doing. This assumes that for natural resources, the main incentive is to instigate chaos when resources are present, to ultimately control these resources. This creates a problem for the way the argument is structured, as the absence of resources and the governments non-control over it can be explained in two ways, either as that there is no interest for the government to continue the conflict, or as that precisely because the government has no interest in the region, it allows the conflict to persist. Taking this one step further, one can even argue that if natural resources would be present, the government had more incentive to win the conflict. It is unclear whether the fault lies with Keen or with this thesis, but either way it might be of interest to further research the theoretical and empirical mechanisms.

For the political functions, the impunity element was not further analysed, since it tested negative on its entry-indicator. The government stability element, however, did tested positive on its entry-indicator and was further analysed, revealing that there was not enough reason to assume this political function was of influence in this conflict. The most

important political function, however, was electoral advantage. While the conflict did not seem to fulfil a political function in the 2011 presidential elections, possibly because Boko Haram just recently re-emerged, it could well be assumed that it was fulfilling such a function in the 2015 presidential elections. However, here too, some question marks were raised. The government might well use a conflict for electoral advantage, but that does not necessarily mean that the conflict persists because of it. It might well be that the conflict persists on its own anyhow, and that the government simply makes smart use of the conflict during election time by giving it a political function (in other words: they 'give the conflict something useful to do'). In that case, it is not some grand scheme in which the conflict is persisted to serve as a political function, it is simply the government being opportunistic. In other words, in some way the electoral advantage suffers from the same problem as natural resources: a phenomenon can be explained in two different ways, undermining the original theoretical explanation, the indicators, the analysis, and the eventual conclusion. Just as the natural resources element, this problem for the electoral advantage element deserves further theoretical and empirical consideration in future research.

The unableness framework started with assessing the military's capability, resulting in the conclusion that it seemed that the military neither had the equipment nor the training and strategy to win the conflict. After having assessed the military budget was comparatively low, a partially structurally limiting was deemed present, possibly negatively influencing the budget. While some minor international obstacles were present, national political obstacles were not, which marks the element as not present and not explaining the low military budget. While the unable framework with its structural limitations is clear, the downside of this theoretical approach is that it is heavily focused on the military. This makes it difficult to include a other possible structural limitation, for example that of culture or a particular perception of one's own country, making some options not an option in the minds of the government and of the people in the country.

In short, it seems that neither of the theories was able to fully explain the case.

Conclusion

Concluding, answering the research question "What explains Nigeria's persisting conflict with Boko Haram?" will be done by assessing whether any of the two main hypothesis can be deemed reasonably probable.

The first hypothesis concerned the unwilling framework, *H1: If the government is unwilling, the conflict with Boko Haram is more likely to persist.* It was subdivided in two subhypothesis. The first being, *H1a: If there is a war economy, the conflict with Boko Haram is more likely to persist*, of which three elements where tested, namely whether the military had an economic interest in the conflict, whether natural resources played a role, and whether foreign aid and corruption played a role. In case of the first element, this thesis concluded that while there was some evidence of some incidents concerning soldier's salaries, it was not deemed significant enough. Furthermore, the prevalence of reports of abuse and the comparatively few reports of looting, and the absence of reports on ghost soldiers, indicated that there is not enough reason to believe the military is engaged in systematic looting and theft in the conflict. The element is deemed absent.

In case of the second element, it was found that while several of the by the theory defined natural resources – oil, diamonds, bauxite, gold, and coltan – were present in Nigeria, none were located in the conflict zone. Therefore, there is no reason to assume that a war economy build around the extraction of natural resources was present. The element is deemed absent.

As for the third element, while government corruption was assessed as rife in Nigerian society and the Nigerian government apparatus, Nigeria did not receive large amounts of corruptible military aid such as military finance or procurement opportunities. Furthermore, while Nigeria did receive less-corruptible foreign military aid in the form of direct military support, intelligence and training, this was also not overly significant and Nigeria even seemed somewhat reluctant to receive some forms of aid. Therefore, there is not enough reason to assume that a war economy was build around foreign military aid and the element is deemed relatively absent.

Therefore, as none of the elements is deemed present, hypothesis H1a is deemed unsupported and the persisted conflict is not explained by a war economy.

The second hypothesis, *H1b: If there are political functions of conflict present, the conflict with Boko Haram is more likely to persist,* saw three elements tested, namely whether the government used the conflict for electoral gain, whether the government used the conflict to achieve impunity, and whether the government used the conflict to create government stability. In case of the first element, the 2011 elections saw no evidence of the government using the conflict for electoral gain. The 2015 elections, however, did, with the government postponing the elections citing the conflict and initiating two major military operations before the elections. The first 14 weeks before the initial election day, the second 8 weeks before the rescheduled election day. Therefore, there is enough reason to assume that the government used the conflict for electoral gain and the element is deemed present.

The second element would consider impunity, but its entry-indicator, namely whether the Nigerian army committed human rights abuses and HRW or Amnesty International accused Western governments of keeping silent, tested negative for the latter condition. Therefore, there is not enough reason to assume that the government used the conflict to achieve impunity and the element is deemed absent.

As for the third element, it considered two tactics the government could use to achieve greater government stability after passing its entry-indicator. First, whether the tactic of 'divide and rule' was used, which needed a different armed group and reports of that group fighting Boko Haram. Analysis suggested that, while armed groups were present, there were no reports of any of them fighting Boko Haram, indicating that the 'divide and rule' tactic was not present. The second tactic was the use of emergency powers, but after declaring the first state of emergency, the government hold back on some of the political powers, keeping the governors of the states under emergency rule in power. As such, this indicated that the tactic could not be deemed present. Since there was not enough reason to assume that either of the tactics was present, the element is deemed absent.

Therefore, as only one of the elements is deemed present, hypothesis H1b is deemed partially supported and the persisted conflict is possibly explained by a political function.

The second hypothesis concerned the unable framework, *H2: If the government is unable, the conflict with Boko Haram is more likely to persist,* which started with the hypothesis *H2a: If the military is unable, the conflict with Boko Haram is more likely to persist*. If this hypothesis could be reasonably assumed, the other hypotheses would be considered depending on the level of the military budget. Two elements were discussed. First, the level of equipment was deemed low on the accounts of numbers, morale, helicopters, equipment maintenance, and compared to Boko Haram. Second, the level of training was also deemed low, counterinsurgency capacity in particular, but also military training in general. As such, there is enough reason to assume that the military is incapable, supporting hypothesis H2a.

As the budget is deemed low, H2b and H2c will be taken into consideration. H2d will be discarded. It was found with *H2b: If the government lacks resources, the conflict with Boko Haram is more likely to persist*, that while the country's economy was relatively well situated, the fiscal capacity of the government was found largely lacking. Therefore, hypothesis H2b is deemed partially supported and the persisted conflict is possibly explained by a structural limitation on the generation of funds.

When *H2c: If the government experiences political obstacles, the conflict with Boko Haram is more likely to persist* was considered, it was found that while there were some international political obstacles, there was not enough reason to assume that there were political obstacles in the national setting. Therefore, hypothesis H2c is deemed unsupported and the persisted conflict is not explained by a political structural limitation.

Lastly, two important points were made in reflection of the unwillingness theoretical framework, namely that both natural resources and electoral gain could well be given an opposite explanation, rendering them less useful for the theory and subsequent analysis.

In short, taking the point made on electoral gain in the discussion also in consideration, hypothesis H1 is found unsupported. On the military level (H2a), hypothesis H2 finds considerable support, but at the governmental level, it finds less support, as H2b only finds partial support and H2c finds a bare minimum. As such, while H2 seems to provide a slightly better explanation for the persisted conflict than H1, both explanations are insufficiently supported to be deemed an actual answer to the research question. Thus, the research question remains, unsatisfactory as it is, largely unanswered.

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