

# Fighting Terrorism with Rhetorics

[Jude Obuseh](#) / December 1, 2014

At the Eagle Square, Abuja, where he formally declared his ambition to contest the 2015 Presidential Elections, the incumbent President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, vowed to use all within his powers to “crush Boko Haram” – the fundamentalist Islamist group – and restore peace to the country’s troubled North-East, if re-elected as President during the forthcoming general polls. The President’s pronouncements came a day after a suicide bomb attack by suspected Boko Haram insurgents in a secondary school in Potiskum, Yobe State, claimed the lives of over 50 students and injured scores more.

The statement credited to Mr. President is the most recent in a long list of firm promises by the country’s number one citizen – together with those made by his security chiefs – to put an end to a conflict that has seemingly simmered out of control since its commencement in 2009; a promise that appears as hollow as those preceding it. If one may ask, what happened to the past promises made to Nigerians by the President to crush Boko Haram? How come Boko Haram has continued increasing the intensity of its campaigns against the Nigerian State, despite public statements credited to the government and its security chiefs that the situation is under control? Why haven’t the abducted Chibok girls been rescued and reunited with their families as promised by Jonathan months ago? What happened to the much trumpeted peace deal between the Federal Government and the insurgents? These are just a sprinkling of the several puzzling questions Jonathan and his security chiefs need to answer in the face of mounting tensions in the North-East and its environs.

Since the onset of the insurgency in the North-East, the Nigerian Government has developed the penchant for making empty promises to Nigerians. In conjunction with its security agencies, it has consistently woven complex webs of lies to create a false sense of security amongst the populace, all geared towards controlling the damage to its faltering image at home and abroad; a strategy that is driven by outright propaganda – a system of misinformation that is meant to misdirect the public and throw them off its shameful tracks of failure to secure its borders and protect those within them.

Propaganda constitutes a major strategy in warfare, especially during high intensity conflicts where conflicting parties exploit its power to gain strategic advantages over each other in order to win public support and gain some concessions. Be that as it may, the Nigerian government seems to have taken this time-tested, tried and highly effective war strategy to extreme levels in its counter-insurgency campaigns. In its desperate attempts to win public support, by creating the false impression that it is fully committed to ousting the Bokites from their strongholds in the North-East, the Nigerian Government and its military branch have adopted and mastered plethora of propaganda techniques ranging from: Marxists Propaganda techniques, the organization and methods of the Roman Catholic Church of the pre/post-reformation years, British propaganda of World War I, American Advertising and Freudian Psychology. These very effective propaganda styles constitute core weapons of the current war on terror. The goal of these lying techniques is not to ponder on what constitutes right or wrong, but to redefine and argue what is wrong into what is right in order to convince Nigerians and the watching world that all is well on the North-Eastern front, when hell is actually breaking loose; one that relies on mass suggestion, which concentrates

on as few points as possible and harps on these until the whole population is convinced of the sincerity of the intended messages.

The truth must be told that the contradictions between the government's past promises to end this crisis and the unfolding realities on ground have sown and germinated seeds of doubt in the minds of Nigerians as to the sincerity and commitment of this administration towards putting a full stop to the orgy of violence in the North-East; a constitutional duty it owes to every Nigerian citizen; one it has consistently failed to perform to the letter. Nigerians have grown tired of the whole charade; tired of the bag of lies that have constituted the ongoing war on terror; tired of being insulted on a daily basis by a government that expects them to acquiesce to all its insidious concoctions.

For a government that preaches transparency and accountability to be the same one misdirecting its people on the true steps it is taking to protect the lives and properties of their North-Eastern brethren in dire straits, is as absurd as it is nauseating. To think that this same government expects to be taken seriously by the watching public is as comical as it is bewildering. For the President to request for another four years to complete the unfinished business of restoring peace to a troubled part of the country – something it could not achieve after five years – is as shameful as it is laughable. It is the height of desperation to play politics with security. Why make promises to score cheap political points? Why so much ado about doing nothing about something?

The Nigerian Government, in conjunction with its military, is progressively losing the battle against Boko Haram; a fact that is not hidden from the public; a truth that is obviously too bitter for the presidency and the country's defence chiefs to swallow. It is the height of dereliction for those constitutionally charged with the sacred duty of securing all within the country's borders to be the same ones abdicating from performing their chief job descriptions; the height of treachery for supposed leaders to be playing Russian Roulette with the lives of fellow Nigerians, the popular sovereigns who supposedly gave them the mandates they enjoy; mandates that are being exercised to the detriment of the larger body politic.

President Jonathan and his security henchmen must go back to the drawing board, if they have any, to commence genuine processes of hashing out practical and effective strategies aimed at checking the spiraling inferno of violence in the North-East, and desist from further insulting the collective psyche of Nigerians. Wars are not won with mere words; they are won with constructive stratagems. Action, they say, speaks louder than voice. The time has come for government to stop talking the talk and start walking the walk. Nigerians are tired of empty assurances from their leaders to restore peace to the North-East. Words don't move mountains; only constructive action moves mountains. Boko Haram is a mountainous challenge that can only be tackled with a firm resolve by Nigerian leaders to start practicing what they preach. Enough of this war of words! God save Nigeria!