



## DRIVEN TO THE MAINSTREAM: WOMEN AND GIRLS IN INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

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### Abstract:

International Terrorism in recent times has assumed a striking and dangerous dimension. Terror groups have taken advantage of the sophistication and advancement in technology especially Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and loopholes in national and international cyber space to recruit and activate new and unsuspecting members of the public to perpetuate their dastardly acts. More alarming is the increasing spate of women and girls' involvement in the act of terror. Although not a Twenty-First Century phenomenon, women and girl's involvement with terror-related activities has increased over time especially in the areas of marriage and execution of terror attacks. In response to the ugly trend, the world has gradually moved from preventive to more proactive approaches by formulating frameworks that prioritize women and girls' involvement in peace building, conflict resolution and counterterrorism activities. This is underscored by the adoption of the U.N Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 in year 2000; and other subsequent resolutions on women, peace and security. Despite these moves, the roles of women and girls in terror prevention and counterterrorism issues have remained less explored. Interestingly, the menace has attracted a higher level of media coverage and has equally posed a greater challenge at both the domestic and international fronts. In a view to explore its causes and consequences, the article examines the phenomenon of women and girls' involvement in terrorism. The article found-out that discriminating socio-cultural practices; neglect of women in the battle against terror and in the overall conflict resolution process; religious dogma and the *zombification* of women among other factors, have driven women and girls to the mainstream of international terrorism.

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## 1. Introduction

There is no doubt that terrorism has become a serious danger to the world because of its deep root among individuals, small groups, non-state actors and even state actors. Besides, the continuous strive and agitations for political and economic power have been a major catalyst for expanding rate of terrorism across the globe. Observably, since the event of the 9/11 terror attacks in the United States, no country has wholly been insulated from terror attacks (Henessy, 2007). This is evident in the incessant terrorist's attacks on Western countries believed to be 'invincible'. Even in recent times, International Terrorism (IT) has assumed a more striking and dangerous dimension as terror groups now take advantage of sophistication and advancement in technology especially Information and Communication Technology (ICT), besides loopholes in national and international cyber space to recruit and activate new and unsuspecting members of the public for marriage and to perpetuate their dastardly acts.

More alarming is the increasing involvement of women and girls in terrorism who according to Poloni-Staudinger and Ortals (2013) are considered as passive vessels. Women and girls' involvement in terrorism, as Gentry and Sjoberg (2011:58) have noted, is not a phenomenon exclusive to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, its increase and prominence has called for concern. As observed by Bloom (2008), between 1985 and 2006, an estimated 220 female suicide attacks occurred; a figure that represents about 15% of the total suicide attacks worldwide. In Iraq for example, there were eight occasion of a female suicide bombing in 2007; and as of August 2008, 27 female suicide bombers gave their lives in support of the insurgency (Niva, 2008). Countries that have experienced women in terrorist or militant organizations include Afghanistan, Angola, Burundi, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Guatemala, Iraq, Lebanon, Liberia, Macedonia, Nepal, Peru, Philippines, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Zimbabwe, and many others (Jordan and Denov, 2007). The case in Nigeria is seemingly new with the advent of the Boko Haram terrorist group; a terrorist group that has over time abducted and recruited women and girls both as suicide bombers and sex slaves. Amnesty International reported in 2015 that more than 200 women and girls were kidnapped in Nigeria between 2014 and 2015 by Boko Haram (Amnesty International, 2015).

In response to the ugly trend of women and girls' involvement in terrorism, the world has gradually moved from a preventive to a more proactive measure in the fight against terrorism by formulating frameworks that aim at mainstreaming women and girls into peace building, conflict resolution and counterterrorism activities. This effort is underscored by the adoption of the U.N Security Council Resolution 1325 in year 2000 and other subsequent resolution on women, peace and security issues. Despite this move, the roles of women and girls in terror prevention and counterterrorism activities

have remained less explored by governments, policy-makers and other international counterterrorism actors.

To this end, this article traces the history of women and girls' involvement in terrorism; examines its roots causes and consequences; considers global response to the menace and recommends ways of minimizing, if not totally eradicating the trend. To achieve the objectives of this work, the Greed and Grievance theory was adopted as the theoretical compass while an exploration on the history and development of women and girls' involvement in the act of terror was made.

## 2. Greed and Grievances Theory

The Greed and Grievance theory is adopted as the theoretical handle for this study. It is important to start by stating that the aims of terrorism are hinge on fundamental, historical, ideological, economic, political, religion and technological motives (Collier & Heoffler, 2000). These two aforementioned phrases (greed and grievance) refer to the two opposing but intertwined words that are capable of understanding the dynamics and nature of human beings in relation to wealth and resources. Armed conflicts scholars such as Paul Collier and Anke Heoffler popularized this theory. They posited that terrorism is caused by combatants' desire for self-enrichment, religious aggrandizement, economic gains, control of resources or the attainment and/or dominance of the grip of power. Also, poverty and underdevelopment are founding justification for the grouping and regrouping of terrorist groups in order to press for their demand and change.

Collier and Heoffler (2000) are of the opinion that the factors that increase the military or financial viability of terrorism correlated with more instances of conflict than factors leading to grievances. In the case of the women and international terrorism, absence of rule of law, unlawful seizure and refining of crude oil are source of financial wealth for the terrorist organizations in purchasing sophisticated weapons which thus has promoted the activities of terrorists, especially in Middle East. Collier and Heoffler attempted at distinguishing between the preference and constraints in terms of situation that propel terrorist acts, societies can be more prone to conflict because preferences for terrorism are unusually strong or because constraints on terrorism are unusually weak. The former being aligned with grievance while the latter with greed. These variables are important to establish because a potential terrorist group might have grievances that align with terrorism especially in a weaker States of the world.

The Greed and Grievance theory presents a lot of utilities to the study of women and girls' involvement in international terrorism, as major causes of the menace like discriminating socio-cultural practices; neglect of women in the battle against terror and in the overall conflict resolution process; religious dogma, attractive economic rewards; intention to protest perceived societal inequalities and human rights violations; and the *zombification* of women among other causes, can be situated within the purview of the theory.

### 3. International Terrorism Defined

Defining terrorism has become cumbersome simply because of the divergent perspective to the nature, causes and its continuous growth around the world. While some terrorists see terrorism as a justifiable means of fighting for nationalistic cause and self-determination for freedom, others sees it as a just cause since governments resorts to terrorism to achieve political ends. There is also the contention that some of the terrorists group believe they have just causes under political, social and economic intimidation to rise against any government. Again, the protection of national sovereignty by a nation against external imposition of offending ideology may likely justify resistance which may be mirrored through political undertone of terrorism by invaders. This can be seen from conflict between and among states of the world especially Israel and Palestine on the issue of Palestinian nationalism against the Israeli's infringement on its sovereignty. Also, the invasion of Iraq by the American led forces which later propagated the activities in the Middle East. The central question now is what terrorism is and who is a terrorist?

According to Woods (1983), terrorism is the weapon of those people that are not prepared to use legal means but violence to achieve a desired goal. Friedlander (1984) opined that terrorism is a threat or use of violence for political purposes by individuals or groups whether acting for or in opposition to established governmental authority, when such actions are intended to influence a target group other than the immediate victim or victims. For Apata (2011), international terrorism refers to coercive violence conducted with the support of a foreign government or organization and or directed against foreign nationals, institution or government. In another vein, Christopher (2008) defined terrorism as deliberate and systematic murder, maiming and menacing of the innocent to inspire fear for political end. The Federal Bureau of Intelligence defines terrorism as unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, civilian population or any segments thereof in furtherance of political or social objectives (Whittaker, 2007). Alex and Schmid (2007) posit that terrorism is an anxiety-inspiring method of repeated violent action, employed by (semi)clandestine individuals, group or state actors, for idiosyncratic, criminal or political reasons, whereby in contract to assassination, the direct targets are not the main targets.

Agwu (2000) asserts that terrorism is a weapon which appears to be unavoidably political, for it is the use of threat or violence by an individual or group whether acting for or in opposition to established authority when such action is designed to create extreme anxiety to fear-inducing effects in a largest and with the purpose of coercing some into acceding to the political demands of the perpetrators. He also explains further that terrorism possesses some characteristics such that it is not a phrase or the work of a few criminals to which governments have overreacted but a phenomenon that is here to stay, requiring a similarly long term response from government. Again, it is international in scope, facilitated by globalization and self-evident that not something

any country can deal with by national strategy alone. On the prevalence of terror in the global arena, Agara (2015) narrates:

*“For contemporary terrorism, four years stood out as watershed. These are 1968, 1979, 1983 and 2001. For instance, it was first in 1968 that Latin American insurgents launched their guerrilla warfare and Palestinians initiated the tactics of terrorism as part of drawing public attention to their cause. It was in 1979 that the Iranian revolution marked the striking success of radical Shi’ite Islamism facilitating the rise of suicide bombings by the traditional glorification of martyrdom, a tradition that had inspired radical Sunni Islamists of Hamas, Al Qaeda and other jihadists and perhaps most recently, the Nigerian Boko Haram. The 1983 suicide bombings in Beirut, especially the two that killed 241 American Marines and 53 French paratroopers, marked a significant development in international terrorism. Of more recent, is the 9/11 (2001), which marked the final evolutionary stage of classical terrorism and which subsequently, gave rise to the most significant counterterrorism operation aimed at evicting the terrorists from their safe haven in Afghanistan”.*

Apart from the terror incident of 9/11, other shocking occurrences include but not limited to the 2004 train bombings in Madrid, Spain that was allegedly carried out by a Moroccan Islamic terrorist organization; the 2005 train and bus bombings in London, during which an Al Qaeda-like faction allegedly claimed responsibility; the United Nations Headquarters bombing by Boko Haram terrorist group in Abuja, Nigeria in August, 2011 (and other series of bombings in Nigeria, particularly the North Eastern Region); the Paris attack in August 2015; the Brussels’ Airport terrorist attack in April 2016 and recently, the London attack of March, 2017. Consequently, the world is paranoid and overwhelmed by the incessant acts of terror.

Reflecting on the impacts of terrorism on the international community, Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, the Prime Minister of Malaysia, at the 13<sup>th</sup> Summit of the Non-Alignment Movement, held in Kuala Lumpur between 20<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of February, 2013, expressed that:

*“We live in challenging times... The world is in a state of terror. We are quite paranoid. We are afraid of flying, of going to certain countries, fearful of certain people. We are afraid of white powder, shoes, metal cutlery on aircraft... We are afraid of Muslims, of Arabs, of bearded people. We are afraid of war, of disruption it can cause and the uncertainties... We do not know how long we will remain in this state of terror. Fighting a conventional war against a country, you can defeat a country and get it to surrender, sign a treaty and bring the war to an end. But global terrorists belong to no country. Even if their leaders surrender there is no guarantee that others leaders will not emerge, that the followers and new recruits will not continue their terror attacks”.* (An excerpt from the maiden departmental lecture of the Department of Political Science, University of Ibadan that was delivered by Dr. Pogoson. 2013; pg 1).

#### 4. Women and Girls as Key Players in International Terrorism

The first well-documented case of women's involvement in terrorism was the assassination of Russia's Tsar Alexander II on March 13, 1881 while traveling from the Michaelovsky Palace to his Winter Palace in St. Petersburg. His carriage was attacked by multiple bombs at the instance of Sophia Perovskaya (a member of the executive committee of the organization, which consisted of revolutionary professionals that supported social and democratic reforms for Russia) who signaled her fellow members of the radical revolutionary group commonly referred to as *Narodnaya Volya*, or the People's Will (Knight, 1979). Women involved with the People's Will as further stressed by Knight were devoted to violence and extremist behavior and saw — terror and their own heroic self-sacrifice as an end in itself and believed the ultimate test of their commitment and devotion to the revolution was their willingness to die.

Another notable case was the involvement of women in Black September, a terrorist organization whose members supported the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) (Sutten, 2009). Eager (2–8) observed that the PFLP terrorists hijacked four airliners in September 1970 and demanded the release of several members of a Palestinian Liberation unit that were being held in Israel. Interestingly, a Palestinian woman- Leila Khaled, was in charge of the fourth hijacking and was arrested when the plane landed in London.

Subsequently, the Black Widows, a female terrorist organization emerged in the struggle for Chechen independence from Russia. The organization developed its unique paraphernalia to distinguish members from conventional Chechen rebel units that includes being completely dressed in black with a martyr's belt filled with explosives as a unique accessory (Chilcote, 2004; Sutten, 2009). Remarkably, according to Speckhard and Akhmedova (2008), *“the Chechen Rebels used females in terrorist roles to a great extent throughout the struggle against Russia and it is estimated that 42 percent of Chechen suicide bombers were women”*.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) is another terrorist organization that massive explored the untapped virtues of women to perform terrorist acts and in furtherance of its objectives. Chief among the objectives of the group included *“the establishment of a separate Tamil state on the island of Sri Lanka, thereby ensuring an end to human rights violations and equality for the Tamil people”* (Sutten, 2009). Jane's Intelligence Review (2003) reveals that between 1980 and 2000, the LTTE executed 168 suicide attacks in which about 30 percent used women cadres. Mahan (2008) estimated that female terrorists in the LTTE killed and wounded thousands and cost the Government of Sri Lanka and private businesses millions of dollars in damages. It is also on record that the LTTE advanced more suicide attacks with women than any other terrorist organization worldwide (Srivastava, 2003). Srivastava reported further that *“the most significant suicide bombing performed by a woman in the LTTE was the assassination of former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1991.44 after Dhanu blew herself up while standing next to Gandhi in the southern state of Tamil Nadu”*.

Contemporary cases of women' participation in terror-related abounds with Al-Qaeda and the Taliban forming female suicide cells in Afghanistan and Pakistan. There were eight female suicide bombers in 2007, but drastically increased to 27 by the middle of August, 2008 (Niva, 2008). Also, Nihat (2007) explained that since the inception of the Kurdistan Workers' Party terrorist group in Turkey, it has been proven that women are responsible for about 76% of suicide bombings carried out with an approximately 1,100 of 4,500–5,000 total members were women.

Of more currency is the emergence of ISIS (now known as IS), Al Shabaab in Somalia and Kenya; and Boko Haram in Nigeria have constituted a major menace to global peace and security. These groups particularly ISIS and Boko Haram have recruited women and girls for their activities. In the case of the latter, since the abduction of the over 200 Chibok school girls in April, 2004, the menace of female suicide bombings have heightened.

## 5. Causes of Women and Girls' Involvement in Terrorism

Events in human history have shown that women and girls can play multiple roles in terror-related activities: either as supporters of terror groups; activate members of terrorist organizations; or as preventers or instruments of counter-terrorism. As observed by Fink, Barakat and Shetret (2013), women (and girls) may play the role of supporters or participants in terror groups for a variety of reasons, some of which may have little to do with their gender. Although causes of women's involvement in terror is still relatively unexplored, studies shows that some of those factors which are responsible for men's involvement are at the same responsible for that of women (Fink, Barakat and Shetret 2013). Suttan (2009) opined that: grief or revenge for loss, ideology, financial hardship, personal or familial shame and the need for protection of self and family are salient factors responsible for women's participation in terrorism.

From the foregoing, it can be deduced that factors responsible for women and girls' involvement in terrorism can be described as a response to the frustration of various political, economic and personal needs or objectives. At times these women terrorist do not have choice in the face of coercive treatments. Commenting on massive involvement of women in the Chechen struggle for independence, Maria Zhikova, a reporter for a Russian newspaper in the work of Groskop (2008) expressed that:

*"Women are undergoing — zombification to include drugging them or enslavement. Rape is a big issue; if a woman is raped and it is filmed, she can be blackmailed into doing anything because it is regarded as a dishonor to her entire family and they are as much victims as the people they set out to kill."*

Also, another impetus that drives women into carrying out suicide attacks could be as a result of sexual violations against women and girls in conflict situations. This is because of the fact that women and children are the most vulnerable to wars and terrorism, thereby making some girls to lose their feminine dignity and honour as a

result of rape and molestation. The idea of the female body as a symbol of honour is a longstanding notion in many societies, especially as it relate to women's perceived sexual purity. While this female virginity has lost its relevance or importance in some parts of the world, there are some places, particularly in the Middle Eastern and Southern Asian societies that continue to take to take female purity very seriously. These victims often see their participation in terror acts as the only way of redeeming their honour.

Closely related to the foregoing is the effect of hostilities between and among states of the world, the resultant effects of which paved way for terrorist groups to emanate and thrive. For instance, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad and Female Suicide Bombers sprung as a result of the incessant conflict occasioned by the purported Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands.

In the case of the Tamil Tiger Eelam in Sri Lanka, members were enticed with the idea of gender equality and transformation of the gender status quo (Erin, 2014). This served as catalyst for women in Sri Lanka as they contributed immensely to the terrorist struggle against the state where they were used as instrument of terrorism in order to achieve political cause of liberation. Erin (2014) explained that the objectives of the women's front of Tamil Tiger were to secure the right of self-determination of "Tamililan", abolish oppressive cases of discrimination and division, abolishment of feudal customs such as dowry system, eliminate all discrimination, secure social, political and economic equality. On the part of terror groups, Suttan (2009) observed that the increased attention from international media on attacks carried out by women and girls; and the need to increase personnel strength are two primary reasons women are being recruited into terrorism.

## **6. Global Response to the Involvement of Women and Girls in Terrorism**

Events in human history have shown that global response to terrorism is conventionally law enforcement-centric rather than really tackling its root causes. This position was underscored during the 2006 United Nations Global Terrorism Strategy, where member-states were enjoined not only to address the tactical and law enforcement dimensions of counterterrorism, but also to consider conditions that facilitate the spread of terrorism (Fink, Barakat and Shetret, 2013). The offshoot of such resolution was the institution of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF); a body responsible for supporting member-states in strategy implementation particularly in thematic areas like development, education and peace operations (Fink, Barakat and Shetret, 2013). Subsequently, the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 in year 2000 and the establishment of the U.N Women in 2010; an initiative designed to promote gender equality and empower women are other resolutions on women, peace and security issues.

Furthermore, as observed by Fink, Barakat and Shetret (2013), appreciable investment in addressing women, peace and security issues have been made by the United Nations, particularly UN Women and the Department of Peacekeeping



operations; government and Civil Society Organizations; such as NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security; the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict; and the Global Network on Women Peace-builders.

In particular, the adoption of resolution 1325 was the watershed in the recognition of the efforts of armed conflict on women and the important roles of women in addressing peace and security issues and encouraging their active involvement in all levels of decision-making in the conflict prevention, armed conflict and post-conflict phases. Besides the Resolution 1325 of year 2000, the UNSC had adopted subsequent resolutions which are: Resolutions 1829 of 2008 that recognizes sexual violence as weapon of war; Resolutions 1888 of 2009 that reiterates the threat of sexual violence and call for deployment of experts to areas where sexual violence is occurring; Resolution 1889 (also of 2009) that focuses on the importance of women as peace-builders at all stages of peace process.

Expressing his views on the rationale behind the UNSCR Resolution 1325, the Deputy Director-in-charge of Women Affairs at the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development (in Nigeria), expressed that:

*“Actually, women suffer more all over the world. This came to the notice of the United Nations that women suffer most in conflict and are least represented in decision making processes and committees. In 2000, they came up with a solution to this that women need to be involved in peace processes. Also, government of the world should ensure participation of women in conflict resolution as well as their protection of women and girls. That was the genesis of the UNSCR 1325”.* (In-depth Interview, 2017)

Others resolutions are: Resolution 1960 of 2010 that reiterates the importance of ending sexual violence in conflict; Resolution 2106 of 2013 that addresses the operational details for combating sexual violence; Resolution 2122 (also of 2013) that focused on stronger measures and monitoring mechanism to allow women engage in conflict resolution and recovery; and Resolution 2242 of 2015 that refocused on 1325 and its obstacles, including incorporation of 1325 in the UN itself.

In the same vein Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) enacted General Recommendation 30 of 2015 which links the women, peace and security agenda to CEDAW including measures to ensure protection of women during and after conflict and promote reporting on progress. As observed by the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development (2017; and A.U, 2016), Resolution 2272 of 2016 of the UN provided measures to address sexual exploitation and abuse in peace operations while Resolution 2349 of March 2017 emphasizes peace and security in Africa.

Stemming from the above, it can observe that the 2017 UNSCR was devoted to Africa: an observation that raises a question on Africa’s commitment to ending violence and crime against women and girls. It is thus important to bring to bear that the African Continent under the umbrella of the African Union (AU) has enacted legislative instruments in response to women involvement in terror-related events. These

instruments include (but not limited to) the Gender Parity Principle of 2002; Common African Defence and Security Policy of 2004; Framework of Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development of 2006; African Gender Policy of 2009; and African Women Decade – 2010 – 2020 (A.U, 2016).

At the West African sub-region, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in an attempt to promote the ideals of UNSCR 1325 and end women involvement in terrorism, established in 2008, ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework, Women, Peace and Security Action Plan; the Plan of Action (PoA) on the implementation of the UNSCT 1325 and 1829 in 2010; and the ECOWAS Parliament Gender Strategy 2010-2020 in 2011 (A.U, 2016).

Despite efforts by the UN, AU and other global agencies and institutions at engendering women and girls' involvement in terror prevention and counterterrorism, the idea remains less explored by policy-makers (particularly at national levels) and other international counterterrorism actors. At the national level, especially among developing countries where religious dogma, socio-cultural sentiments and lack of political expediency are lacking, the laudable idea could be frustrated.

In the case of Nigeria, the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development launched the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Action Plan for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions on women, peace and security in Nigeria on 9<sup>th</sup> May, 2017 in the country's capital-Abuja. The 2<sup>nd</sup> NAP was a follow-up to the UNSCR of March 2017; an initiative which became necessary in the wake of heightened insurgency and militancy in the country, which have adversely affected women and girls (Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, 2017:01). It is important to bring to bear that one major flaw of the 1<sup>st</sup> NAP in Nigeria was the ridiculous absence of gender responsive budgeting arrangement; an omission which crippled the attainment of its laudable goals (Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development. 2017: 09). This ironically reveals Nigeria's level of commitment towards achieving Resolution 1325 and resolving issues around women involvement in terrorism.

Agara (2015) has opined that women are still viewed and seen through stereotype gender lenses as the weaker sex; a perspective that has motivated terrorist organizations to continue to wreak havoc on the society through using women suicide bombers. Hence as observed by Fink, Barakat and Shetret (2013) and Mahan and Griset (2008), there is the need to establish more nuanced considerations on when, how and why women could play more active roles as preventers, sympathizers, spies, warriors, supporters, perpetuators and security actors in terrorism and counterterrorism activities.

## **7. Conclusion/Recommendations**

The active involvement of women in terrorism is on the increase and the situation may not abate if deliberate and concerted efforts are not geared towards arresting it. Firstly, it must be expressed that the notion of masculine intelligence that supposes that the modern woman is fighting because she wants to be a man should be totally jettisoned as

studies have shown that factors that are responsible for men involvement in terrorism are almost the similar to those factors that galvanize women. Hence, women involvement with terrorists' activities should be viewed with a broader and objective lens.

Secondly, it is not just enough to enact beautiful and well-articulated resolutions at the level of the UN, continental and national levels, such initiatives should be well domesticated especially at the grassroots. In this wise, deliberate efforts should be made to mainstream such tenets into the developmental plans and educational curriculum of countries and at all levels.

Importantly, women and girls should be engaged in the overall process of conflict resolution, peace-building and counterterrorism activities. This no doubt would give them a sense of belonging and duty. Besides, the instances where women are sympathizers to the terrorists' organizations will be reduced if not totally abolished.

Finally, factors related to inequality, injustice, adverse and extreme socio-cultural and religious norms that handicap women and reduce them to slaves should be address. Studies have revealed that women and girls participate in terrorism as a means to revenge social and political injustices. Besides, inequality in the distribution of wealth may spur a woman to accept a role in terrorist organization. Therefore, all discrimination against women should be further and sincerely addressed with a view of eliminating such inequalities.

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### **Interview**

Interview with the Deputy Director-in-charge of Women Affairs at the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development during the Consultative Forum on Women, Peace and Security held in Gombe state, Nigeria between 28 and 29 September, 2017.

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