

An Appraisal of International and Regional Institutions Supporting Nigeria's Counter-Terrorism Efforts

Mimiko M.O

Abstract

This paper appraises the international and regional institutional framework established to combat terrorism and assesses their impact on Nigeria's domestic counter-terrorism architecture. The aim of this paper is to critically examine the role of international and regional institutions in supporting Nigeria's counter-terrorism framework. It seeks to appraise the effectiveness, extent and nature of the legal and institutional framework through which support are rendered. It adopts the doctrinal research method and draws upon both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources includes United Nations Resolution 1363 (2001). Secondary sources consists of textbooks, journal articles, and reputable online materials. It concludes that terrorism in Nigeria could only be meaningfully addressed if these frameworks were implemented diligently, with improved coordination and accountability from the relevant authorities.

Keywords: international, regional, institution, counter-terrorism, efforts

1. INTRODUCTION

Terrorism has become a global pandemic, eliciting serious international concern due to its far-reaching and devastating impact. The world witnessed a turning point following the September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center in the United States.¹ In the aftermath, many countries intensified efforts to strengthen their institutional frameworks to confront the evolving threat of terrorism. Today, terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda, ISIS, ISIL, Al-Shabaab, Boko Haram, and Lukarawa continue to pose significant threats across multiple regions. Nigeria, in particular, has become one of the major theatres of terrorist activity in Sub-Saharan Africa.

At the international level, the United Nations Security Council has passed several resolutions and established specialized bodies to aid member States in combating terrorism. Regionally, institutions like the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have initiated frameworks to support the fight against terrorism across the continent. Nationally, Nigeria has responded through the establishment of various institutions, including the Office of the National Security

*LL.B, LL.M, MPIL, BL, Ph.D. Faculty of Law, Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko, Ondo State.
Email: Kaymimiko@gmail.com. Phone no: +2348034145366.

¹Peter B, 'September 11 Attack' (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11 September 2001)
<https://www.britannica.com/event/September-11-attacks> accessed 2 January 2025.

Adviser (ONSA), the Department of State Services (DSS), the Counter-Terrorism Unit (CTU), the Joint Task Force (JTF), and the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF), among others. Despite these multi-level efforts, terrorism persists in Nigeria, exposing critical weaknesses in the institutional security framework.

2. INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS FOR COMBATING TERRORISM IN NIGERIA

In response to the global call to combat terrorism, the international community has taken significant and coordinated steps to lead the charge against this growing threat. While these efforts are commendable, it is important to appraise and critically examine the institutional frameworks established at the international level for counter-terrorism, particularly in relation to their relevance and effectiveness within the Nigerian context. This section explores key international institutions involved in the fight against terrorism and evaluates the extent of their support, cooperation, and influence on Nigeria's counter-terrorism strategies.

2.1 The United Nations (UN)

The (UN) has played a significant role in the global fight against terrorism, operating through several key institutional mechanisms. Chief among these is the fifteen-member United Nations Security Council (UNSC), which is responsible for overseeing member states' adherence to international counter-terrorism measures. Through its resolutions, the Council has imposed travel bans, arms embargoes, and financial sanctions against terrorists and terrorist organisations.²

2.1.1 The Security Council

Following the end of the Cold War, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) began to engage more actively with transnational threats, including terrorism. It imposed sanctions on States such as Sudan, Libya, and the Taliban regime in Afghanistan in response to state-sponsored acts of terror.³ Terrorist attacks against United States interests such as the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, the 1998 attacks on US embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, and the 2000 attack on the USS Cole in Yemen highlighted the urgency of global cooperation.⁴

²E Kaponyi, 'Upholding Human Rights in the Fight Against Terrorism' (2007) 29(1) *Society and Economy* 1–41

³U Isa, 'Examination of the United Nations Security Council and Global State Terrorism' (2025) 8(1) *African Journal of Social Sciences, Department of International Relations and Diplomacy Abuja* 421–452.

⁴The 1993 attack in the US, the 1998 attack on the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, and the 2000 attack in Yemen..In 1999, the UNSC adopted Resolution 1267, requiring the Taliban to impose aviation and financial sanctions for harbouring Osama bin Laden. A sanctions committee was established to monitor compliance. The measures were later extended to cover Al-Qaeda, the Taliban, and affiliated individuals and entities, including restrictions on arms, travel, and financial assets. A major task of the 1267 Sanctions Committee was to develop a consolidated list of sanctioned persons, based on information from UN member states. Once a name was added, all member States were obliged to report on measures taken to implement the resolution. Only current members of the Security Council could assess the justification for listings. Individuals who believe they were wrongly listed could request their home or resident State to file a delisting application on their behalf. Following the September 11, 2001

In addition, Resolution 1373 established the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) to monitor compliance and offer technical assistance. Nigeria, like other UN member States, is bound by these obligations and has incorporated many of them through domestic legislation.

2.1.2 Counter - Terrorism Committee (CTC)

The Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) was established pursuant to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1373 (2001) and is composed of all fifteen members of the Security Council. Its primary responsibility is to monitor State compliance with the resolution and request periodic reports from member States on legislative, administrative, and operational measures taken to combat terrorism.

In the initial reporting phase, all 191 UN member States submitted reports to the Committee. The CTC conducts follow-up by issuing confidential questions to States, reviewing the responses, and conducting in-depth meetings and official visits to assess levels of compliance. These reports remain with the individual States unless voluntarily disclosed.⁵ Both the 1267 Sanctions Committee and the 1373 Counter-Terrorism Committee share certain institutional similarities. Each is supported by expert groups with a degree of operational independence. These expert panels submit regular reports containing their findings and targeted recommendations. Furthermore, both Committees make decisions by consensus and are expected to operate transparently for instance, in listing and delisting individuals under Resolution 1267 or in approving state visits.⁶ Initially, the two Committees functioned separately. However, over time, they began collaborating more frequently and eventually coordinated efforts with the 1540 Committee responsible for non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by sharing information and jointly reporting to the Security Council plenary.

Despite these overlaps, the Committees differ significantly in scope and method. While Resolution 1267 targets specific individuals or entities identified as terrorists and imposes coercive sanctions to change their behaviour, Resolution 1373 adopts a broader preventive approach. The CTC under Resolution 1373 focuses on developing international legal and institutional standards, encouraging States to criminalise terrorism, strengthen border controls, freeze terrorist assets, and cooperate in investigations and extraditions.⁷ Unlike Resolution 1267, which is punitive in nature,

terrorist attacks, the number of listed individuals increased dramatically. This led to criticism of the Committee's limited oversight capacity. In response, the UN established a Monitoring Team through Resolution 1363, replacing the earlier ad hoc panel and providing a more robust compliance mechanism. The turning point came with the adoption of Resolution 1373 in September 2001, which imposed broad obligations on all UN member states under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. The resolution launched a campaign of non-military, law enforcement-based approaches to counter terrorism.³ States were required to: cooperate with other states in investigations and prosecutions; deny safe haven to terrorists; freeze assets of suspected terrorist; criminalise terrorist financing; strengthen border controls; and also prevent the movement of terrorists.

⁵ R Foot, 'The United Nations, Counter-Terrorism, and Human Rights: Institutional Adaptation and Embedded Ideas' (2007) 29 *Human Rights Quarterly* 495.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ UNSC Res 1373 (28 September 2001) UN Doc S/RES/1373.

Resolution 1373 is primarily regulatory and facilitative, designed to foster global legal harmonisation and rapid state action against terrorism.

The Terrorism (Prevention and Prohibition) Act 2022 and other anti-terrorism laws in Nigeria were enacted, in part, to conform to the international norms specified in Resolution 1373. To help Nigeria fulfill its international commitments, the CTC offered model legislation and technical advice. Nigeria has also improved coordination between agencies like the Department of State Services (DSS), the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA), and the Financial Intelligence Unit (NFIU) this can be credited to the CTC's reviews and expert assessments.

2.1.3 United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT)

In response to member States' mounting concerns regarding the disjointed and redundant nature of the UN's counterterrorism framework, the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) was founded in 2017. The Office's establishment signaled a structural change in the UN's counterterrorism initiatives, with the main goal being to increase efficiency, coherence, and coordination. The Office has operations and partnerships in all of the major UN member States, with its headquarters located in New York. Prior to its establishment, the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) had oversight of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) and the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT). However, following intergovernmental consultations, it was agreed that these functions would be transferred to the UNOCT, which would assume the role of lead coordinating body under the direct authority of the UN Secretary-General.⁸

The integration of various counter-terrorism bodies under the UNOCT was intended to streamline mandates and foster synergy among agencies. Today, the CTITF and UNCCT continue to operate under the strategic leadership of the UNOCT and serve as its operational arms, particularly in capacity building and international cooperation. Despite its intended coordination role, the UNOCT has attracted criticism for being largely ceremonial and lacking operational authority. Concerns have been raised about the Office's limited field engagement, bureaucratic complexity, and insufficient impact in high-risk regions such as West Africa, where Nigeria faces persistent terrorist threats.⁹ Nonetheless, Nigeria has benefited from the Office's training programmes, particularly in the areas of counter-radicalisation, preventing violent extremism (PVE), and community-based resilience initiatives in the North-East.

2.2 The United Nation Development Programme

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), though not a security body in the strict sense, plays a critical supporting role in global counter-terrorism through development-focused, peace-building, and stabilisation efforts. UNDP's work targets the

⁸United Nations, 'Bureaucracy, Political Influence and Civil Liberties' <www.fidh.org> (accessed 10th February, 2025).

⁹*Ibid*

root causes of violent extremism, including poverty, social exclusion, and weak governance, thereby complementing the work of enforcement-driven institutions such as the Security Council and the Counter-Terrorism Committee. In Nigeria, UNDP has provided extensive support to counter-terrorism efforts, particularly in the conflict-affected North-East. One of its most notable contributions is its involvement in the De-radicalisation, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration (DRR) Programme, which is designed to disengage former Boko Haram fighters from violent extremism and reintegrate them into civilian life. This programme focuses not only on ideological rehabilitation but also on vocational training, psychosocial support, and community reconciliation. Significant challenges remain in convincing hostile communities to accept repentant members and managing expectations, indicating that effectiveness is limited by systemic issues and the scale of the problem.

In order to improve Nigeria's preventive and responsive capabilities, UNDP has also partnered with important Nigerian organizations, such as the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) and the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA).¹⁰ As part of these collaborations, law enforcement officers have received training on preventing violent extremism (PVE), community policing, and civil-security communication. Furthermore, UNDP has carried out gender-sensitive interventions, supporting terrorism victims, especially widows and internally displaced persons (IDPs), and empowering women as peace-builders. In line with the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, specifically Sustainable Development Goal 16 on peace, justice, and strong institutions, these programs support resilience and long-term peace-building. Although the UNDP does not impose legally binding counter-terrorism obligations on States, its strategic interventions have been helpful in Nigeria's efforts to address the socioeconomic and structural factors that foster the growth of violent extremism and terrorism.¹¹

3. REGIONAL INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK ON TERRORISM IN NIGERIA

The paper further appraised the regional constitutional frameworks in combating terrorism. Below are the frameworks.

3.1 African Union (AU)

The African Union (AU) has developed a comprehensive normative framework to prevent and combat terrorism across the continent. Central to this framework is the 1999 OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, which was further strengthened by the 2004 Protocol. These legal instruments place primary

¹⁰UNDP 'UNDP, ONSA Partner to Activate Community Based Platforms for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism'. Available online at: <https://www.undp.org/nigeria/news/undp-onsa-partner-activate-community-based-platforms-preventing-and-countering-violent-extremism>. (accessed 10th, February, 2025)

¹¹*Ibid*

responsibility on the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the AU to coordinate and harmonise continental counter-terrorism efforts.¹²

To enhance research, policy formulation, and strategic coordination, the AU established the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT) in Algiers, Algeria. The ACSRT serves as a regional think tank and clearinghouse, providing technical assistance, intelligence support, and training to member States. It also maintains databases on terrorist activities and facilitates best practice exchange between African countries. In furtherance of its counter-terrorism objectives, the AU has taken steps to institutionalise its efforts through key mechanisms such as the appointment of a Special Representative for Counter-Terrorism and the adoption of the African Model Law on Counter-Terrorism in 2010 and 2011.¹³ The Model Law provides guidance to member states such as Nigeria on structuring their domestic anti-terrorism laws in line with continental standards, including definitions of terrorism, due process guarantees, and frameworks for inter-agency cooperation. The AU's framework also emphasizes respect for human rights, the rule of law, and the need for regional solidarity in counter-terrorism. For Nigeria, these AU initiatives serve as both a benchmark and a support system in aligning its domestic legal and institutional responses to terrorism with continental best practices.

3.1.1 African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT)

Following the adoption of the 1999 OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, the African Union (AU) established the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT) in Algiers, Algeria. The Centre was designed to serve as a focal point for cooperation among member States, promote coordination of counter-terrorism strategies, and serve as a repository for research and analysis on terrorism-related trends across the continent.¹⁴ The ACSRT works in conjunction with 53 National Focal Points (NFPs) from AU member States and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs). Its establishment built upon earlier AU efforts such as Resolution 213, adopted in Dakar in 1992, which called for regional coordination to combat emerging signs of extremism.¹⁵ This was in response to increasing incidents of terrorism particularly following the Afghan-Soviet conflict which had ripple effects in countries like Tunisia, Algeria, and Egypt. The 1998 bombings of the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam significantly altered African states' perception of international terrorism. These attacks spurred the adoption of more comprehensive mechanisms, including the ACSRT, whose primary aim is to strengthen the AU's capacity to prevent and combat terrorism via the Peace and Security Council (PSC)¹⁶.

¹²United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU), 'Counter Terrorism' <www.unoau.org> accessed 20 July 2024.

¹³African Union, *African Model Law on Counter Terrorism* (2011), available at: UNOAU, 'Counter Terrorism' <www.unoau.org> accessed 20 February 2025. <https://www.peaceau.org> accessed 20 January 2025.

¹⁴A Botha, 'African Union Initiatives to Counter Terrorism and Develop Deradicalisation Strategies' in *Counter-Terrorism and State Responses*,

¹⁵*Ibid*

¹⁶*Ibid*.

The ACSRT engages in activities such as: Hosting conferences; seminars; training workshops for counter-terrorism capacity building; gathering and centralizing data and intelligence on terrorist activities; publishing a regional counter-terrorism journal since 2009 to enhance awareness and policy discourse;¹⁷ faces financial and human resource constraints that hinder its capacity to carry out thorough research and outreach. conducting technical programs on bomb disposal; infrastructure protection, and terrorist threat assessments. The centre frequently

Despite these initiatives, the Centre has been limited by persistent funding constraints and human resource shortages, which have impaired its ability to fulfill its mandate effectively.¹⁸ The African Union's broader financial and political limitations have also undermined its commitment to sustained regional counter-terrorism operations. This was evident in the AU's unfulfilled pledge to deploy 7,500 troops to combat Boko Haram in Nigeria, a failure that has drawn criticism over the AU's lack of political will and operational capability.¹⁹ Moreover, the AU's efforts have been challenged by concerns about poor governance among member states—a root cause of extremism across the continent. Socioeconomic inequality, political marginalisation, and state-led repression continue to create the enabling environment for radicalisation. The AU's inability to enforce good governance through the PSC or ACSRT remains a critical gap in Africa's counter-terrorism framework. In addition, the AU has struggled to strike a balance between counter-terrorism and human rights, as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and other international human rights instruments are frequently sidelined in security-focused responses.²⁰

4. Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has demonstrated a regional commitment to combating terrorism and transnational organised crime. As terrorism increasingly threatens regional peace and stability particularly in the Sahel and Lake Chad Basin ECOWAS has adopted both legal instruments and institutional mechanisms to support member states' counter-terrorism efforts. One of its key instruments is the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Other Related Materials, adopted in 2006. This treaty aims to control the proliferation of illicit arms, which significantly fuels terrorism in the region.²¹ The Convention obliges member States, including Nigeria, to strengthen border controls, disarm non-state actors, and enhance arms monitoring frameworks. In response to the growing threat posed by Boko Haram and similar insurgent groups; ECOWAS

¹⁷C Okpala, *A Re-Assessment of the Effectiveness of OAU (AU) Conventions of Preventing and Combating Terrorism*, PhD Dissertation, Golden Gate University School of Law, San Francisco (2014) p.32

¹⁸Polaine et al., *Counter Terrorism: International Law and Practice* (Oxford University Press, 2009) p.1001

¹⁹S Ehiane, 'Strengthening the African Union (AU) Counterterrorism Strategy in Africa: A Re-Awakened Order' (2018) 17 *Journal of African Union Studies* 121.

²⁰*Ibid*

²¹ECOWAS, *Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Other Related Materials* (2006) <https://www.ecowas.int> accessed January, 7 October 2024.

supported the establishment of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) in collaboration with the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC). The MNJTF comprises troops from Nigeria, Niger, Chad, Cameroon, and Benin and is tasked with conducting coordinated military operations against Boko Haram and other violent extremist groups operating across porous regional borders.²² Further reinforcing its commitment, ECOWAS adopted the Political Declaration and Common Position against Terrorism in 2013, which culminated in the development of the ECOWAS Counter-Terrorism Strategy and Implementation Plan (2013–2020). This strategy outlines a three-pillar approach: preventive measures, law enforcement and prosecution, and institutional capacity building, and encourages intelligence sharing and cross-border collaboration among member states.²³

Despite these achievements, ECOWAS continues to face serious operational and structural challenges. Chief among them are funding constraints, limited technical capacity, and inadequate intelligence infrastructure, which hamper the effectiveness of both its legal and military responses.²⁴ These deficiencies, compounded by overlapping mandates with other regional bodies such as the African Union and LCBC, have diluted the region's collective response to terrorism. Nevertheless, ECOWAS remains a key partner in Nigeria's counter-terrorism architecture, especially through the MNJTF's field operations and joint initiatives on intelligence and security sector reform.

5. MULTINATIONAL JOINT TASK FORCE (MNJTF)

The Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) was formally established in 2012 by the Lake Chad Basin countries; Nigeria, Chad, Niger, and Cameroon as a regional military response to the intensifying threat posed by Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria.²⁵ The need for a coordinated military strategy became urgent when it became apparent that terrorism in the Lake Chad Basin was not just a Nigerian problem, but a regional security crisis with continental implications. The origins of regional military cooperation trace back to 1994, under the Sani Abacha administration, when Nigeria initiated border patrol operations to curb the influx of weapons and armed groups following the Chadian conflict. At the time, these efforts were limited to Nigerian territory and focused primarily on border security.²⁶ However, by 1998, the mission expanded, evolving into a collaborative security mechanism involving Nigeria, Chad, and Niger. By 2012, the MNJTF was restructured and officially given a counter-terrorism mandate, specifically targeting Boko Haram. The Force was placed under the leadership of a Nigerian Brigadier General, and its structure was integrated with the efforts of the Joint Task Force (JTF), which had been operating in North-East Nigeria since 2011.²⁷

²²F Onuoha, 'A Danger Not to Nigeria Alone: Boko Haram's Transnational Reach and Regional Responses' https://www.academia.edu/9605960/A_Danger_not accessed 7 October 2024.

²³ECOWAS, *Counter-Terrorism Strategy and Implementation Plan (2013–2020)* <https://www.ecowas.int> accessed 7 January, 2025.

²⁴*Ibid*

²⁵I Albert, 'Rethinking the Functionality of Multi-National Joint Task Force in Managing the Boko Haram Crisis in the Lake Chad Basin' <www.academia.edu.org> accessed 10 January 2025.

²⁶*Ibid*

²⁷*Ibid*

At a 2014 summit of the Armed Forces of Lake Chad Basin countries in Cameroon, it was agreed that a more unified and better-coordinated regional force was necessary to confront Boko Haram head-on. The summit designated Nigeria as the headquarters of the MNJTF. The task force was empowered to take decisive actions, including intercepting arms traffickers and conducting cross-border counter-terrorism operations.²⁸ While Boko Haram continues to pose a threat, the MNJTF has been credited with significantly degrading the group's operational capabilities. Boko Haram has lost access to major supply routes, and some of its fighters have reportedly sought surrender or negotiation. The MNJTF has also been involved in humanitarian actions, including facilitating the release of the Chibok girls and other captives through coordination with Chadian authorities.²⁹

However, the MNJTF's operations have not been without controversy. Allegations of human rights violations have emerged, including claims that Chadian forces attacked non-combatants suspected of terrorist affiliations.³⁰ The Task Force has also faced accusations of extrajudicial killings during raids and offensives.

Structural and financial challenges further hinder the MNJTF's sustainability. Limited funding, poor logistics, and inconsistent political commitment among member states remain major obstacles.³¹ For ECOWAS to maintain a robust counter-terrorism front, it must strengthen its commitment to financing regional initiatives and ensure greater institutional accountability and operational oversight.

6. LAKE CHAD BASIN COMMISSION (LCBC)

The Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) was established on 22 May 1964 by four riparian states Cameroon, Niger, Nigeria, and Chad with Central African Republic joining in 1996 and Libya in 2008. The Commission, headquartered in N'Djamena, Chad, is mandated to manage the Lake Chad and its shared water resources, safeguard its ecosystems, and promote regional integration, peace, security, and development across the Lake Chad Basin. In recent years, the LCBC has become a key player in regional security efforts, particularly in the fight against Boko Haram and other violent extremist groups. Working in collaboration with the African Union (AU) and the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), the LCBC supports joint military operations, resource mobilisation, and coordination among Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) namely Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Nigeria.³²

²⁸*Ibid*

²⁹F Onuoha, 'A Danger Not to Nigeria Alone: Boko Haram's Transnational Reach and Regional Responses' (2014) p.11 https://www.academia.edu/9605960/A_Danger_not accessed 7 October 2021.

³⁰Amnesty International, 'Nigeria: More than 1,500 Killed in Armed Conflict in North-Eastern Nigeria in Early 2014' <www.amnesty.org> accessed 21 September 2021.

³¹F Onuoha, op. cit. p.13

³² African Union, 'Boko Haram and Other Terrorist Groups Activities in Lake Chad Basin Region Suppressed in Joint Forces Operations' <https://au.int/en/pressreleases/20240808/boko-haram-and-other-terrorist-groups-activities-lake-chad-basin-region> accessed 10 February 2025.

According to an African Union report, the collaborative efforts of the LCBC, AU, and MNJTF have significantly degraded the operational capacity of Boko Haram and similar insurgent groups in areas under MNJTF control.³³ Notably, the 14th Joint Steering Committee (JSC) Meeting, held from 6–7 August 2024 in N'Djamena, Chad, commended the success of Operation Lake Sanity II for its effective disruption of terrorist networks and compliance with the African Union Compliance and Accountability Framework (AUCAF). This framework ensures conformity with international humanitarian law and regional human rights standards.³⁴ While challenges persist particularly in terms of logistics, intelligence, and sustainable funding, the LCBC remains an indispensable platform for both coordinated military responses and post-conflict reconstruction across one of Africa's most volatile sub-regions.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the findings in this paper, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance the effectiveness of international and regional frameworks in supporting Nigeria's counter-terrorism efforts:

7.1 Strengthen Cooperation between Nigeria and International/Regional Institutions

There is an urgent need for improved cooperation and strategic alignment between Nigeria and the international community. This collaboration should focus on intelligence gathering, data sharing, joint training exercises, and coordinated responses to emerging threats. In an increasingly interconnected world, no nation can effectively combat terrorism in isolation. A relevant case study is the October 2023 Hamas-Israel conflict. Reports indicate that the Israeli government was warned by the Egypt about a potential terrorist attack days before Hamas Struck. Failure to act on this intelligence reportedly contributed to the scale of the attack highlighting the importance of timely information exchange and intergovernmental trust.³⁵

In the Nigerian context, the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) provides a positive example of how regional cooperation can yield practical results. The MNJTF has significantly contributed to reducing Boko Haram's operational capacity, limiting its reach, and easing the burden on Nigerian security forces. Through shared intelligence and joint operations, the task force has prevented Nigeria from fighting on multiple fronts alone. Accordingly, Nigeria must not relent in fostering strong bilateral and multilateral relationships, particularly with organisations such as the United Nations Office of Counterterrorism (UNOCT), the African Union's ACSRT, ECOWAS, and the Lake Chad Basin Commission. Continuous engagement, diplomatic commitment, and operational integration are crucial to sustaining momentum in the fight against terrorism.

7.2 Increase Funding for Counter-Terrorism Institutions

³³*Ibid*

³⁴*Ibid*

³⁵ BBC. 'Egypt Warned Israel Days Before Hamas Struck, Us Committee Chairman Says'.(Accessed 10th, March, 2025).

Effective counter-terrorism efforts require substantial and sustained financial investment. As terrorist organisations become increasingly sophisticated—adopting new technologies such as drones, encrypted communication systems, and improvised explosive devices (IEDs), Nigeria must be equally agile in upgrading their own capacities. Combating terrorism is not only manpower-intensive but also resource-dependent, involving the acquisition of advanced equipment, surveillance tools, warplanes, and specialized vehicles. Equally important is the need for continuous training and capacity building for security operatives, including the police, military, and intelligence agencies. A major limitation confronting institutions such as the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) is inadequate funding. Poor financial support has severely hindered their operational effectiveness, research capacity, and deployment capabilities. This weakness not only undermines their credibility but also reduces the strategic impact of their interventions.

Therefore, this paper advocates for a significant increase in national defence budgets specifically earmarked for counter-terrorism. Additionally, member states of regional and sub-regional bodies must fulfill their financial obligations and explore sustainable funding models, including international partnerships, donor support, and the establishment of special anti-terrorism trust funds. Without adequate funding, institutional frameworks, no matter how well-designed, will remain ineffective in addressing the complex and evolving threat of terrorism.

7.3 Upholding the values of Human Rights

The core value of human right is to ensure people legal rights are not been abused. There have been reports of human right violations by institutional frameworks set by both regional and international community set to protect and prevent the less venerable. For instance, the Nigeria military has been alleged to blatantly disregard the rules governing war. Many other African countries have also spoken out about it. Once the institution cannot be trusted, it then becomes a problem as terrorist might seize the opportunity to recruit citizens and to also perpetuate attack.

7.4 Upholding Human Rights and the Rule of Law

A core objective of any legitimate counter-terrorism framework is to safeguard national security while upholding fundamental human rights. However, there have been consistent reports of human rights violations by security forces, including those operating under frameworks intended to protect vulnerable populations. In the Nigerian context, the military has faced serious allegations of extrajudicial killings, torture, arbitrary detention, and other abuses, particularly in the North-East theatre of operations. Similar patterns have been reported across other African states involved in joint security operations. Such violations undermine the moral authority and credibility of state and regional institutions. More critically, they create a climate of mistrust between security forces and the civilian population. When institutions entrusted with public safety

are perceived as abusive or oppressive, extremist groups often exploit this gap to radicalize, recruit, and justify their actions. This dynamic erodes public support for counter-terrorism initiatives and hampers intelligence-gathering efforts, which are heavily dependent on local cooperation.

To reverse this trend, Nigeria and its partners must strengthen human rights oversight mechanisms and ensure that security forces comply with international humanitarian law and human rights obligations. This includes robust training on the rules of engagement, effective accountability systems for misconduct, independent monitoring, and increased transparency in military operations. The African Union and ECOWAS must also ensure that all troops operating under their mandates are vetted, trained, and held accountable for any breaches of international law. Ultimately, a counter-terrorism strategy that violates the rights of the people it seeks to protect is self-defeating. Upholding human rights is not merely a moral obligation it is a strategic necessity in the fight against terrorism.

8. CONCLUSION

This paper has appraised the international and regional institutional frameworks established to combat terrorism and assessed their relevance and effectiveness in supporting Nigeria's counter-terrorism efforts. It examined key initiatives such as the United Nations Security Council's counter-terrorism resolutions, the African Union's peace and security mechanisms, ECOWAS interventions, and the role of bodies like the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF).

The study found that there is no shortage of frameworks on both international and regional that Nigeria can leverage in its anti-terrorism campaign. However, the core challenge lies not in the absence of such structures, but in the failure to effectively implement them. For instance, while Nigeria has ratified important instruments such as the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), implementation remains weak due to factors such as limited technical and technological capacity, corruption within relevant agencies, and poor inter-agency coordination.

The paper concludes that for Nigeria to make meaningful progress in the war against terrorism, it must move beyond ratification and political rhetoric to actualise the institutional commitments it has made. Strengthening operational capacity, increase funding for counterterrorism, and ensuring the diligent application of international and regional obligations will be critical to building a sustainable and effective counter-terrorism strategy.