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PARTNERING WITH NIGERIA FOR A STABLE FUTURE: THE IMPORTANCE OF A PERSISTENT PRESENCE

by

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June 2011

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The purpose of this thesis is to examine how the spread of extremist groups can be curtailed throughout Northern Africa and, more specifically, how to stop Nigeria from becoming another Afghanistan. This thesis will focus on how to engage an African government, specifically Nigeria, in order to help it engage in and develop the population. This thesis will demonstrate that one way to ensure the stability of weak states is to persistently provide security force assistance to the local government prior to the need to establish control over a populace through direct tribal engagement.

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**PARTNERING WITH NIGERIA FOR A STABLE FUTURE:
THE IMPORTANCE OF A PERSISTENT PRESENCE**

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AOB	Advanced Operating Base
AQIM	al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
ESAF	El Salvador Armed Forces
FID	Foreign Internal Defense
FMLN	Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front
IMN	Islamic Movement in Nigeria
ISI	Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence
HN	Host Nation
JSOTF-TS	Joint Special Operations Task Forces – Trans Sahara
LNO	Liaison Officer
MEND	Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta
MIR	Movement for Islamic Revival
SFA	Security Force Assistance
SFODA	Special Forces Operational Detachment Alpha
SOCCE	Special Operations Command and Control Element
SOCAFR	Special Operations Command Africa
SOCEUR	Special Operations Command Europe
SOTF	Special Operations Task Force
SOTF-N	Special Operations Task Force – Nigeria

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I.   INTRODUCTION

A.   IDENTIFY THE PROBLEM

Nigeria is Africa's most populous country, boasts West Africa's most powerful military, and is a major oil exporter to the West, in general, and the U.S. in particular. Yet, it has a relatively dysfunctional central government.[1] Since independence, Nigeria has suffered from a significant gap between the state and society. Literacy has fallen, the country's ability to provide electric to the population has decreased, poverty has increased, and the divide between the rich and poor has widened. The ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic diversity of Nigeria's population, as well as its significance to the US economy, makes it a prime target for al Qaeda. Notably, in June and July of 2009, al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) sent its agents into Nigeria to assist the Boko Haram (Nigerian Taliban) group against Nigeria's security forces.[2]

Other external actors also seek to exacerbate on the state-society gap in attempts to further destabilize Nigeria's government. Two of the oldest Islamist movements in northern Nigeria receive outside support. The Jama'atul Izalatul Bid'ah Wa'Ikhamatul Sunnah (Izala), a Sunni organization founded by the anti-colonial critic Sheikh Abubakar Gummi, currently receives financial aid from Sunni organizations in Saudi Arabia. Likewise, the Shia organization, the Islamic Movement in Nigeria (IMN), founded by Malam Ibrahim al-Zakzaky, receives support from Iran. These Nigerian organizations utilize this external funding as a means to recruit people to their cause and undermine the authority of the government by highlighting the government's failure to maintain public social services. This further widens the state-society gap.[3]   These external forces,

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[1] Jonathan N. C. Hill, *Sufism in Northern Nigeria: Force for Counter-Radicalization?* (Strategic Studies Institute, 2010), 2.

[2] Ibid., 26.

[3] Ibid., 25.

working against Nigeria, distract the government's efforts to secure and improve Nigeria's southern ports and oil producing region, further degrading Nigeria's stability and productivity.[4]

Nigeria is a nation that desperately needs stability in order to ensure its productivity and establish itself as a leader on the African continent. There has been much discussion about the effectiveness of tribal engagement in both Iraq and Afghanistan. In each of these theaters, tribal engagement took place *after* the state failed. In the post-Cold War era, states have been abandoned due to the *realpolitik* policy of letting countries settle their own affairs. In Afghanistan, once the Soviets withdrew, Afghans fought with one another leading to the government being taken over by the Taliban, an oppressive extremist group.[5] With the end of the Cold War in sight, the need to stabilize Afghanistan seemed a waste of American time and assets. One consequence of U.S. neglect was the rise of the Taliban and a safe haven for al Qaeda.[6] Can the US, and the world, continue to afford to make similar mistakes going forward? History suggests that the wider the gap between a society and the state, the less to the state is able to ensure stability.[7]

B.   PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this thesis is to examine how the spread of extremist groups can be curtailed throughout Northern Africa and, more specifically, how to stop Nigeria from becoming another Afghanistan. This thesis will focus on how to engage an African government, specifically Nigeria, in order to help it engage in and develop of the population. This thesis will demonstrate that one way to ensure the stability of weak states is to persistently provide security force assistance to the local government *prior* to the need to establish control over a populace through direct tribal engagement.

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[4] Hill, *Sufism in Northern Nigeria: Force for Counter-Radicalization?* 12.

[5] Tamim Ansary, *West of Kabul, East of New York: An Afghan American Story* (Picador USA, 2003).

[6] Max Boot, "The Case for American Empire," *Weekly Standard* (October 15, 2001), 27–30.

[7] Raymond W. Copson, *Africa's Wars and Prospects for Peace* (Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc, 1994), 211.

C.   RESEARCH QUESTION

Given accepted views about nurturing civil-military ties through Security Force Assistance (SFA), we propose the following research questions: how can the U.S. help prevent Nigeria from becoming a failed state, and how can we help the government of Nigeria eliminate the ability of Islamist extremists, such as AQIM, to gain a foothold in Nigeria? Second, will developing a host-nation's ability to provide and sustain security, and establish and develop civic programs (schools, hospitals, etc.) through the training of military, police, and civic leaders help eliminate the spread of AQIM? In answering these questions we assume that if the government of Nigeria is able to better address its population's needs, AQIM will be limited in its ability to recruit Nigerians and/or conduct operations in Nigeria, and Nigeria will be able to secure its southern ports and oil-producing region.

D.   THESIS SCOPE

The gap that develops between the goals of the state and the needs of society is one explanation for breakdowns in governmental control. In order for Nigeria to ensure it does not become a failed state, it will need to close the state-society gap. To close this gap, the government will need to meet the basic needs of the people. Of the many alternatives that are available to the United States to help Nigeria meet its population's needs, there are two options: to work in direct contact with the population to establish schools, hospitals, and security (via tribal engagement or its equivalent) or to work with the government to establish the *government's* ability to provide for the civil needs of the population (via SFA).

Currently, Nigeria is unable to meet the basic security, civic, and social needs of its people, leaving room for al Qaeda and other outside actors to take advantage of governmental shortcomings. It is important that the U.S. work with countries to counter al Qaeda as it attempts to spread its influence into Africa. Nigeria is Africa's most populous country. It is diverse in languages, religions, ethnicities, and natural resources. It is vital that the United States continue to develop its partnership with Nigeria in order to not only help close its state-society gap, but counter attempts by al Qaeda and other

extremist groups to widen this gap and use Nigeria as a springboard. This thesis will highlight how Nigeria might be stabilized, with Nigeria's stability in turn leading to more stability on the African Continent.

1.   Close the State-Society Gap

While there is, and always will be, some gap between the state and its constituent society, levels of instability tend to reflect the degree to which portions of the population feel they are in disequilibrium with the policies of the state.[8]   Internal and external factors, both positive and negative, can influence the stability of a state. Internal factors, such as leadership and social values, can be directed and/or influenced by external events. Financial, humanitarian, military, and educational aids are all examples of external inputs that can be used intentionally to either widen or narrow the state-society gap.

2.   Partnership for Host Nation Development

U.S. Foreign Internal Defense (FID)/SFA efforts should be focused in order to more effectively develop Nigeria's military and civil authorities, consistent with Nigeria's existing structure, goals, and traditions. Both indirect and direct support for a host nation's development should focus on a strong national infrastructure.[9]

3.   Persistent Presence (FID/SFA)

If the U.S. pursued a policy of persistent presence while conducting FID/SFA in Nigeria we could better focus our efforts on the needs of the country. Persistent presence might, in some people's minds, lead to the view that the United States is acting imperialistic. But, even during the 18th and 19th centuries, the problem may not have been colonial rule per se, so much as the way in which the rule was conducted. England, and other European countries, never intended to relinquish control of their colonies; therefore, they did not think it necessary to plan for independence. The turmoil that

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[8] Chalmers A. Johnson, *Revolutionary Change* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1982).

[9] Department Of The Army, *FM 3-07.1, Security Force Assistance* (Washington DC: May 2009).

engulfs much of the third world today is, in part, a consequence of imperial selfishness followed by neglect; no one prepared Nigerians to take over and run their country effectively.

E.   METHOD

Depending on the fit between external support and internal needs, four possibilities exist for outcomes: a strong state and weak society, a dysfunctional state ruling over an internally torn society, a pretense of democracy, or a representative government supported by a civil society.[10]   With each of these 'state-society' relationships, stability depends on the majority of the society accepting and internalizing that relationship as the norm.[11] It is fruitless to establish an authority that is patterned after a totally foreign form of government simply because that form has worked in other places. Care must be taken to establish governance that fits with the political culture that citizens want. While it is understood that the antecedent conditions of African states and conditions the US has dealt with in other areas are quite different, nevertheless, stability relies on the ability of the state to meet the needs of a heterogeneous society.

In order to demonstrate what we put forth in our thesis, we will conduct a survey of U.S. efforts that have been successful, Kosovo and El Salvador, as well as those that have not, Afghanistan (post-Soviet withdrawal).[12] Kosovo will be used as an example of high external involvement in the establishment of government post-instability. Afghanistan, post-Soviet withdrawal, offers an example of no external involvement by the U.S. The U.S. efforts in El Salvador exemplify instances of low cost involvement with a small, yet continuous, external support.

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[10] Mehran Kamrava, "Political Culture and a New Definition of the Third World," *Third World Quarterly* 16, no. 4 (1995), 691.

[11] Ibid., 692.

[12] Steven Van Evera, *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1997).

F.   CHAPTER REVIEW

The chapter outline has been designed to first establish the need for stabilization in Nigeria and why Nigeria is important to not only Africa, but also the rest of the world, in particular the United States. Secondly, we establish historical examples where the U.S. has both failed and succeeded in stabilization operations throughout the world. Third, recommendations are put forth for Nigeria, as well as why specific recommendations would work. The following is a breakdown of the chapters:

1.   Introduction

This chapter identifies the problem, discusses the purpose and objectives, and identifies research questions answered in the thesis. Chapter I discusses the scope of the thesis as well as the methodology.

2.   History and Importance of Nigeria

Chapter II discusses a brief history of Nigeria and identifies many Nigerian governmental challenges. These challenges include details about Nigerian military rule and the challenges of religion and politics. Specific security challenges of special interest to the United States include oil, foreign influences, and radicalization. Finally, Chapter II discusses the effects of prolonged instability on the Nigerian government and people.

3.   Case Studies

Chapter III is a discussion of three chase studies in which the U.S. provided, or failed to provide, proper SFA and FID. El Salvador provides an example of an extremely small U.S. advisory group who were able to impact the country positively. Kosovo is an example of a large, high cost, multi-national intervention that has, to date, positively affected the region. Finally, Afghanistan demonstrates what happens with a lack of assistance after a destabilizing event, such as the Soviet withdrawal.

4.   Recommendations for Nigeria

Chapter IV begins with a recap of the lessons learned from the case studies that apply to Nigeria. Next, the research questions are addressed along with the current

U.S./Nigerian relationship. Recommendations are made, based on both the lessons learned and the research questions, which are designed to ensure a persistent presence is maintained with the Nigerian government.

5. Conclusion

This chapter summarizes the entire thesis and reiterates the four main themes that were developed during the course of our analysis.

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II. HISTORY AND IMPORTANCE OF NIGERIA

A. NIGERIA GOVERNANCE CHALLENGES

Nigeria gained its independence from Britain in 1960, but little preparation or historical knowledge was used to establish the post-colonial government.[13] Prior to 1914 Nigeria was not even a country, but a collection of kingdoms and governments, independent of influence from Europe. The establishment of Nigeria did not mean very much to the millions of people whose lives focused mainly at the local and tribal level. The vast majority of Nigeria's problems, since independence, stem from the "National Question." What is Nigeria? Who are Nigerians? How does a country go about developing a meaningful national identity?[14]

In order to develop a plan for U.S. assistance to Nigeria, and to help it effectively deal with its security and trade issues, it is important to understand its history. There are at least 122 distinct tribes located within Nigeria, some of which are split by neighboring African countries. These tribes divide Nigeria into six major ethnic regions.[15] When Europeans arrived on the scene, Nigeria's tribes could be broken down into three broad categories according to their type of political control—large states, small states, and autonomous communities.[16] While small states and autonomous communities existed throughout Nigeria, three large states emerged in the northern and western parts of Nigeria prior to western involvement.

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[13] Howard W. French, *A Continent for the Taking: The Tragedy and Hope of Africa*, 1st ed. (New York: Vintage Books, 2005), 280.

[14] Toyin Falola and Matthew M. Heaton, *A History of Nigeria* (Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 158.

[15] George P Murdock, "The Traditional Socio-political Systems of Nigeria: An Introductory Survey," in *The Nigerian Political Scene*, ed. Robert O. Tilman and Taylor Cole (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 1962), 5.

[16] Ibid., 9.

Figure 1.   Nigerian Administrative Borders[17]

Nigeria has been rife with wars and power struggles throughout its history. Geographic location and environment enabled some societies to develop into large states, while others to village-based system of government. Prior to European involvement,

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[17] Blasselle, International Crisis Group (August 2010).

trade with North Africa introduced Islam and the idea of Koranic law, and Nigerians have periodically fought over religion in some form or another since.[18] The introduction of Christianity only added new dimensions to local religious tension.

Between years 1731 and 1743 in the northwest part of Nigeria, known as Hausaland, the Fulani began to heavily proselytize on behalf of Islam. Although locals had long been Muslims, the Hausa king established a series of anti-Muslim laws. Upset with the lack of strong Islamic leadership, a Fulani scholar named Usman dan Fodio initiated a holy war. By 1807, the Fulani army had brought most of Hausaland under its control.[19] Many Nigerian Islamic fundamentalist groups refer back to this time as a justification for jihad and sharia law today.

While European traders had been involved with the Niger Delta since the 15th century, direct contact and trade with the interior was practically none existent until the establishment of the British protectorate in 1885. Muslim armies had controlled the savannah and desert regions for centuries and so, when the British entered the interior they prohibited Christian missionaries from proselytizing in the Muslim areas. Without the ability to preach Christianity, missionaries did not provide any social or educational services to the areas either. Centuries of the slave trade, forced conversions from traditional religions to Islam and Christianity, as well as the segregation of Muslims and Christians—in terms of education, jobs, and political structures—all aided in creating inter-Nigerian frictions.[20]

With independence was on the horizon in 1950s, Nigeria was organized into three political regions. These regions were designed to give the northern Muslim population a region large enough to equal both southern regions combined, creating a north/south bipolarity. This exacerbated pre-existing fissures, as it lent the regions new political and economic significance. The set-up was such that it ensured that the more educated, more

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[18] Michael Crowder, *A Short History of Nigeria* (Plymouth, Great Britain: Latimer Trend and Co Ltd, 1962), 78.

[19] Ibid., 86.

[20] For more information on the pre-colonial political structure of Nigeria read Robert O Tilman and Taylor Cole, ed. *The Nigerian Political Scene* (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 1962).

affluent southerners could only beat the northern region politically if they worked together.[21] Not surprisingly, perhaps, Nigeria experienced a coup just six years after independence.

Nigeria's leaders were never prepared for self-rule. Worse, those leaders placed in charge by the British were either delegitimized thanks to their service to Britain, or were not recognized as the legitimate leaders by the people.[22] Hindsight gives us the ability to see that the process by which colonial powers ruled, and planned to continue their rule in Nigeria, helped set the stage for lingering turmoil.

However, not all of today's turmoil has its roots in colonial rule per se. Also worth considering is the way in which that rule was concluded. England, and other European countries, never intended to relinquish control of their African colonies; therefore, they did not deem it necessary to plan for independence.

1. Military Rule

After gaining its independence in 1960, Nigeria established itself as a republic in 1963. Then, in 1966, the military toppled the civilian regime in what was the first of many coups.[23] In fact, differences in religion, regional, and ethnicity, as well as corrupt and incompetent leadership, led to a string of seven coup d'états and a bloody civil war (1967–1970) in which Eastern Nigeria tried to secede from the republic.

In the 39 years between Nigerian independence and the restoration of Nigeria's 4th republic government in 1999, Nigeria had just over four years of civilian rule (between 1979 and 1984).[24] Only with the 1999 elections did Nigeria experience a transfer of power between two civilians for the first time in its history. This transfer

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[21] Hill, *Sufism in Northern Nigeria: Force for Counter-Radicalization?* 4–5.

[22] Ibid., 22.

[23] E. Ike Udogu, "Liberal Democracy and Federalism in Contemporary Politics" in *Nigeria In The Twentieth Century,"* ed. Toyin Falola (Durham NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2002), 333.

[24] Ibid., 334.

happened first in 2007 with the election of Umaru Yar'Adua, and again with the succession of power to Vice President Goodluck Jonathan in 2010.[25]

2. Religion and Politics

As mentioned previously, instability due to religious and ethnic divisions has plagued the region since pre-colonial times. The British continued and exacerbated these divides with their policies of separation of Muslims and non-Muslims in Nigeria.[26] British indirect rule relied on local authorities in each area to administer their own social system, rules, and laws. This, in turn, prevented missionaries from being able to spread Christianity in Nigeria's north, which left functions such as education, medicine and social leadership to the ill-equipped Muslim authorities already in place.[27]

As Muslim and non-Muslim communities began to compete for state resources, the earlier forced separation led to the politicization of both Islam and Christianity. For example, which laws applied (Islamic or secular) in cases where both Muslims and non-Muslims were involved?[28] In order to attempt to satisfy both Christians and Muslims, Nigeria was declared a secular state at independence. Yet, with the onset of political instability, Muslims who had accepted the secular state began to blame that same secularism for Nigeria's many problems. Soon after independence, more religious leaders, both Christian and Muslim, began to form religious/political parties to influence the government.[29]

Numerous Nigerian Muslims continue to believe that the secular nature of the state is the reason the government is corrupt and immoral. In their view, Islamic law would have never allowed for the military dictatorships that have all but ruined Nigeria.[30]

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[25] BBC News, "Obituary: President Yar'Adua" (BBC News, May 2010) Retrieved from http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/africa/6187249.stm 10 February 2011.

[26] Andrew E. Barnes, "Christianity and the Colonial State in Northern Nigeria 1900–1960," in *Nigeria In The Twentieth Century,"* ed. Toyin Falola (Durham NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2002), 281.

[27] Barnes, "Christianity and the Colonial State in Northern Nigeria 1900–1960," 281.

[28] Ibid., 287.

[29] April A. Gordon, "Ethnicity, Region, and Religion in Nigeria's Political Culture," *Nigeria's Diverse Peoples: A Reference Sourcebook.* ABC CLIO (2003), http://www.credoreference.com/entry/abcnigeria.

[30] Ibid.

In contrast, many Christian Nigerians believe that only a secular state can keep the country from again experiencing civil war, nearly destroying Nigeria. In their view religion as a basis for law would lead to an impossible system where every religion and minority could claim the precedence of its own local or traditional laws. In other words, why would Christians agree to be held to Islamic legal standards? Likewise, why would Muslims think they should abide by Christian preferences?[31]

Today, Muslims and Christians have created movements and organizations to promote and "protect" their interests. Many of these groups promote a "them vs. us" mentality that has spread violence across the north. Christians openly criticizing the Quran and utilizing converts in their efforts to proselytize have enraged Muslims. Similarly, Muslims openly denouncing the Bible, and pointing to errors in it's reasoning, have enflamed Christians.[32] Violence and protests by Muslims against Christians for establishing churches in areas that had been off-limits to missions since colonial times have been answered by Christian violence in response to the re-establishment of Sharia law in the 12 most northern states in 2000.[33]

B. SPECIFIC SECURITY CHALLENGES OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO THE U.S.

1. Oil

Arguably, Nigeria's most significant region vis-à-vis its international relations, is the southern Niger Delta. Oil was discovered in commercial quantities in the delta region in 1956. The region had been the center of trade in slaves, palm oil, and other exports since Europeans first arrived off the West African coast, but nothing transformed the region's importance, economy, and way of life the way oil has.[34] By the time of Nigeria's independence, the Shell-BP Oil Company had acquired over 46 mining leases in the

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[31] Gordon, "Ethnicity, Region, and Religion in Nigeria's Political Culture."

[32] International Crisis Group, "Northern Nigeria: Background to Conflict." December 20, 2010. http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/africa/west-africa/nigeria/168%20Northern%20Nigeria%20-%20Background%20to%20Conflict.ashx (accessed February 20, 2011).

[33] International Crisis Group, "Northern Nigeria: Background to Conflict."

[34] Michael Watts, ed., *Curse of The Black Gold: 50 Years of Oil in the Niger Delta* (Brooklyn, NY: Power House Books, 2008), 36.

region,[35] and oil accounted for 80% of Nigeria's revenue and 90% of its export earnings.[36] With Nigeria so reliant on multinational actors to supply technology and production, it was limited to essentially being a collector of rent from big oil companies.[37] That, along with the military takeover of the government in 1966, left the local landowners and traditional tribal authorities to feel robbed of any benefits from their oil-rich land.

Putting this perceived theft into perspective, in January 2010, Nigeria had an estimated 37.2 billion barrels of proven oil reserves.[38] In 2009, Nigeria produced 2.2 million barrels a day, of which approximately 1.9 million were exported. Almost 40% of Nigeria's exported oil was sent to the United States, making Nigeria the fifth largest foreign oil supplier to U.S. markets.[39] However, years of political maneuvering by the central government along with nationalization of oil revenues (Petroleum Act of 1969) have only resulted in greater problems in the Niger Delta.

The Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), which was established in 2005 with the merging of several Niger Delta resistance groups, seeks the right for the oil producing communities to take part in Nigeria's oil industry[40] Today, this full-blown insurgent organization is responsible for the "shutting-in" of almost 40% of Nigeria's oil industry through attacks, kidnappings, and terrorist activities.[41] Between 1999 and 2005, the Nigerian government claimed that loss of revenue due to attacks on the oil industry amounted to $6.8 billion. The Managing Director of Shell Nigeria has estimated losses to run as high as $61 million per day. In 2006, the Minister for

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[35] Watts, ed., *Curse of The Black Gold: 50 Years of Oil in the Niger Delta,* 36.

[36] Cyril I. Obi, "Ethnic Minority Agitation and the Specter of National Disintegration" in *Nigeria In The Twentieth Century,"* ed. Toyin Falola (Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2002), 535.

[37] Ibid.

[38] "U.S. Energy Information Administration: Independent Statistics and Analysis, Nigeria," Country Analysis Briefs (July 2010) http://www.eia.doe.gov/cabs/Nigeria/Oil.html.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Elias Corson, *Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND): Political Marginalization, Repression and Petro-Insurgency in the Niger Delta,* Discussion Paper 47 (Uppsala, Sweden, Nordiska Afrikainstitutet 2009).

[41] Watts, ed., *Curse of The Black Gold: 50 Years of Oil in the Niger Delta,* 25.

Petroleum Resources, Edmund Daukoru, estimated a loss of $16 billion a year.[42] No matter which estimate is most accurate, Nigeria, a poverty-stricken country, is losing billions of dollars in its primary source of income due to persistent instability.

The quality and quantity of oil being produced in Nigeria makes it an important oil supplier to the United States. Disruption of the oil flow from Nigeria directly affects refinery-buying practices, which, in turn, affects the world market.[43] Instability in the region reflects an ever-widening gap between the state, which controls oil production and reaps most of the benefits, and citizens (to include locals) who live in poverty in a land full of resources. In the Delta in particular, the loss of traditional ways of life through decreasing fishing stock, decreasing arable land due to pollution, and contaminated water due to oil spills has gave rise to groups like MEND. Because of the combustibility of this region, Nigeria will not be able to contend with its many other security, stability, and corruption issues until the Niger Delta is stable.

2.   Foreign Influences and Radicalization

Even if Christians had not moved into the northern Nigerian states, radical teachings from outside Nigeria would still pose a threat to Nigeria's stability. Among northern Muslims, differences between reformists, traditional Sufi, and Wahabis already create tension and turmoil. Movements such as the Izala Movement, the IMN, and the Muslim Brotherhood consider Sufi sectarianism to undermine Muslim unity and therefore wish to eliminate Sufism from Nigeria. One reason these groups want to do this is they consider Islamic unity an important precursor to the inevitable clash with non-Muslims.[44] Consequently, Nigerian Islamists are able to attract international radical Islamist organizations to aid them in their fight, not only against Sufism, but also to establish a separate Islamic state in Nigeria.

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[42] Watts, ed., *Curse of The Black Gold: 50 Years of Oil in the Niger Delta,* 38.

[43] "U.S. Energy Information Administration: Independent Statistics and Analysis, Nigeria."

[44] Ibid.

The Izala Movement was begun in the 1960s, not long after independence[45], and focused its efforts against local sultans and emirs who allowed pro-western ideas to creep into traditional Muslim portions of Nigeria. The founder of the Izala Movement, a Nigerian named Sheikh Abu-bakar Gummi, developed close ties to Saudi Arabia, ties that continue to provide significant material help to the organization today.[46]

Although most Nigerian Muslims are not Shiites, the IMN is predominantly a Shiite organization. Malam Ibrahim al-Zakzaky, the founder of the IMN,[47] was a key organizer in events that led to the implementation of Sharia law in 12 Nigerian states in year 2000, and has sought to bring about an Islamic revolution in Nigeria similar to Khomeini's Iranian revolution. His outspoken support of Islamic revolution has gained him monetary support form Tehran. In 1990, the IMN split, with some Shiite leaders and a Sunni lieutenant forming the Movement for Islamic Revival (MIR), in open support of al Qaeda and Usama Bin Laden. The two organizations nonetheless work together and are collectively referred to as the Muslim Brotherhood.[48]

The most radical of Nigeria's Islamist groups is the Boko Haram (Western Education Forbidden), or Nigerian Taliban, established in response to (and in support of) the installation of Sharia law.[49] In 2009, Boko Haram, along with AQIM fighters from northern Africa, engaged local police in the northern city of Bauchi. The battle finally ended when the Nigerian Army engaged the Boko Haram compound, leaving an estimated 700–800 dead.[50] In 2010, Boko Haram orchestrated a prison break in Bauchi in which it freed some 700 prisoners, with an estimated 150 of them being Boko Haram members. The group is also linked to a series of targeted killings in Maiduguri.[51].

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[45] Hill, *Sufism in Northern Nigeria*, 20.

[46] Ibid., 22.

[47] Ibid., 20.

[48] Ibid., 24.

[49] Ibid., 26.

[50] Ibid., 10 and 27.

[51] International Crisis Group, "Northern Nigeria: Background to Conflict."

C.   EFFECTS OF PROLONGED INSTABILITY

With the existence of these Islamist groups in northern Nigeria, to include Boko Haram's connection to AQIM, the stage is set for continued clashes with the Nigerian government, further adding to the potential for continued instability in the north as well as the Niger Delta. Thirty-six years of military rule, as well as persistent corruption in the government, has left many ordinary Nigerians (Muslims and Christians alike) convinced that protest and public disorder is the only way to be heard.[52]

Nigeria's dependence on oil exports as its single means of national revenue has led to a situation known as 'Dutch Disease,' in which its local currency is unrealistically overinflated, leading to lower demand for local agricultural products and commodities, since it is cheaper to import them.[53] Dutch Disease, along with rapid demographic growth, has led to overwhelming poverty for the majority of the population, with over 70% of the population living on just one dollar a day.[54]

Not only does this inequality help explain Groups such as MEND, but also enables Islamist extremists in the north to attract followers. Both problems present serious challenges for Nigeria's security forces.

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[52] Hill, *Sufism in Northern Nigeria*, 36.

[53] Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution, "Strategic Conflict Assessment of Nigeria: Consolidated and Zonal Reports (Abuja, Nigeria: Mashad Digital Resources Ltd, 2008).

[54] Hill, *Sufism in Northern Nigeria*, 36.

III. CASE STUDIES

A. INTRODUCTION

To better understand the important role that Security Force Assistance (SFA) can play in assisting foreign militaries and governments address issues of instability, it seems critical to examine recent U.S. experiences: what led to U.S. involvement, and how did that involvement impact the host nation (HN).

Throughout its history, U.S. Special Forces have spent the vast majority of their deployments conducting FID/SFA with a HN. This chapter will briefly examine SF's experiences in El Salvador, Kosovo and Afghanistan.

B. EL SALVADOR

El Salvador was a Spanish colony for over three centuries before El Salvadorans became disgruntled with Spain and declared their independence in 1821 along with five other Central American countries. To rule, the Spanish developed a centralized, hierarchal, and authoritarian government. [55]

Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries coffee production became El Salvador's primary export. The cultivation of this crop ultimately led to the alienation of communal lands, which were sold to private citizens and government officials. The vast majority of the population was left without land of their own.[56] The period between 1925–1932 was a time of civil unrest and protest throughout the country. This unrest culminated in the 1932 rebellion and massacres of tens of thousands of mostly rural peasants. General Hernandez Martinez took and remained in power until 1944. From 1944 to 1962, El Salvador was governed by the military, which ensured that the political system remained authoritarian.[57]

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[55] U.S. Department of State, *El Salvador, http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2033.htm#history* (accessed 2 December 2010).

[56] Monica Duffy Toft, *Securing the Peace: The Durable Settlement of Civil Wars* (New York: Princeton University Press, 2010), 72.

[57] Paul D. Almeida, *Waves of Protest: Popular Struggle in El Salvador 1925-2005* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 2008), 35–54.

The United States began its first significant involvement in El Salvador between 1962 and 1972, by supplying money and aid. This period saw liberalization of labor, education and religion; furthermore, El Salvador began to moderate politically. However, liberalization began to be reversed between 1972 and 1976 because institutional access and competitive elections began to be closed down.[58] Finally, in 1979, an unyielding group of junior military officers from the El Salvador Armed Forces (ESAF) conducted a coup, removing General Carlos Romero, and took over the government, thus forming a Revolutionary Governing Junta to deal with social, economic and political problems.[59] By late 1980, the coup had led to civil unrest and the formation of the Marxist Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN). Civil war between the FMLN and the El Salvadoran government soon followed.[60]

By 1981, the FMLN had developed a full-blown insurgency campaign throughout El Salvador. In January 1981, under the Reagan Administration, the U.S. began to send a small number of Special Forces Soldiers to assess the situation. Money, arms, and advisers were then sent to help support the El Salvadoran government; the footprint was limited to fifty-five Special Forces "trainers."[61] Additionally, the Ramon Belloso Immediate Reaction Battalion was trained at Ft. Bragg and a regional training center was opened in Honduras to supplement the advisors in El Salvador. Training ranged from the tactical level up to the development of a National Military Strategy.[62]

This partnership led to a persistent U.S. presence that lasted throughout the eight-year civil war, as well as for the peace that followed. The guiding principle for the overall mission was known as KISSSS, "keep it simple, sustainable, small and Salvadoran."[63] U.S. involvement was able to help the conflict with a very small U.S.

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[58] Almeida, *Waves of Protest,* 103.

[59] Robert D. Ramsey III, *Advising Indigenous Forces: American Advisors in Korea, Vietnam and El Salvador* (Ft. Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2006), 93–94.

[60] Toft, *Securing The Peace,* 75–76.

[61] Robert Kaplan, *Imperial Grunts: The American Military on the Ground* (New York: Random House, 2005), 45.

[62] Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces: El Salvador,* 95.

[63] Mark A. Meoni, *The Advisor: From Vietnam to El Salvador,* Master of Military Art and Science Thesis, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College (Ft. Leavenworth, KS: 1992), 155.

investment. Success is credited to several practices put in place early on. First, the U.S. stuck to its extremely small signature and did not make El Salvador a U.S. war. Second, the U.S. was committed to staying the course. Third, U.S. advisors were not micromanaged and were able to link the military and political aspects of assistance vertically throughout the El Salvadorian government.[64] This meant, among other things, teaching the military to subordinate itself to civilian leadership and changing the institutional climate in the military by rewarding competent officers. Although this was not completely successful, positive changes were made.

Serious peace negotiations began in the early 1990s, culminating in a final peace accord in January 1992.[65] U.S. advisors in El Salvador learned they needed to understand the strategic impact of their actions as well as continue to find an El Salvadoran answer to El Salvador's problem.[66] Since 1992 El Salvador has remained more or less at peace. There has been some violent crime, but it appears to be decreasing, and political violence is almost non-existent. The FMLN has been integrated into the government and, in 2009, the FMLN's candidate, Mauricio Funes, won the Presidency. Although there are still high levels of poverty, the country's economy has recovered from the civil war and has shown significant economic growth over the past decade and half.[67] Since the end of the civil war, U.S. Special Forces have maintained a fairly continual presence in El Salvador; El Salvadorian forces have even deployed alongside U.S. SF Soldiers in Operation Iraqi Freedom. In sum, El Salvador provides an excellent-arguably even a model for the importance of maintaining a *persistent* presence with a small footprint. Also noteworthy is the SF soldiers who served as advisors were mature, highly trained, and spoke the local language

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[64] Joe Andrade. "El Salvador: One Soldiers Perspective," Presentation during lecture in Anna Simon's Military Advisor Course, Fall 2010 Naval Postgraduate School.

[65] Almeida, Waves of Protest, 178.

[66] Andrade*, El Salvador: One Soldiers Perspective.*

[67] Toft, *Securing The Peace,* 92–93.

C.   KOSOVO

To better understand Kosovo, it is important to understand the sources of tensions between the Serbians and the Albanians. These tensions date back centuries: Thus, a brief overview history is in order.

Kosovo is located in the Balkans between Albania, Serbia, and Macedonia; all three have played a significant role in its history. The Kosovarian people trace their roots to the Illyrians, who at one time were under Roman control. From about the ninth to eleventh centuries, Christianity spread throughout the region. In 1389, The Battle of Kosovo was fought between the Serbs, the Albanians, and the Ottoman Turks for control of the area. Even though the battle was technically a draw, the Serbs have been able to use it as a moral victory, and it has factored into their national identity ever since. It was during this period too, too, Islam spread throughout the region thanks to the Ottomans. For most of the next five centuries, the Ottoman Empire exerted influence and control over the Balkans, to include Kosovo.[68]

In 1878, Serbia, along with Bulgaria, Romania, and Montenegro, became independent. In 1908, the Young Turks came to power in the Ottoman Empire and could count on the support of both Serbs and Albanians (Christians and Muslims alike), at least initially. However, this did not last long and instability led to the First Balkan War (1912–1913). With the Ottoman Empire collapsing, Albania gained its independence in 1912. [69] After the Second Balkan War (June 1913–July 1913), Kosovo was handed over to Serbia, not Albania, embittering the Kosovars.[70] Between 1914 and 1918 heightened tensions resulted in a war between Serbia and Albania. During this war over 100,000 Serbians died, most on their retreat through Kosovo. Later in the war, Serbia took

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[68] Miranda Vickers, *Between Serb and Albanian: A History of Kosovo* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 12–15.

[69] Vickers, *A History of Kosovo,* 66–79.

[70] Ibid., 81–85.

revenge on the Albanian population by destroying villages and massacring civilians throughout Kosovo. Finally, in 1918, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes was proclaimed.[71]

Having been split numerous times between the Serbs and Albanians, Kosovo became part of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in 1929. In 1941, the Axis powers invaded Yugoslavia, and, from 1941 until 1944, Italian fascists occupied Kosovo.[72] After WWII, Josip Broz, (also known as Tito) and his communist party took control of Yugoslavia. Knowing that there were significant ethnic and national conflicts throughout Yugoslavia, Tito ruled with an iron fist and suppressed national and ethnic identity. Over time, Tito gradually loosened his grip and, in 1974, Kosovo's status was upgraded to that of a constituent republic. Tito remained in power until his death in 1980.[73] Although the U.S. did not agree with Tito's communist affiliation he was considered a renegade to the Soviets and the U.S. saw him as a counter to Stalin, at least in the Balkans. After WWII and throughout the Cold War the U.S. supported Tito with military equipment and financial aid.[74]

During the 1980s, communist regimes began to show increasing signs of strain. Yugoslavia was still a melting pot, with ethnic rivalries alive and well just below the surface. In the late 1980s, Slobodan Milosevic came to power in Serbia, and in 1989 revoked Kosovo's autonomy. Milosevic's policies of preferential treatment for Serbs helped lead to the collapse of Yugoslavia and renewed tensions between Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo.

In 1990, Kosovar Albanians demanded secession from Serbia, but not from Yugoslavia. Before this could happen, however, Croatia and Slovenia declared their own independence from Yugoslavia in 1991. Heavy fighting broke out until a cease-fire was

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[71] Vickers, *A History of Kosovo,* 86–97.

[72] Tony Weymouth and Stanley Henig, *The Kosovo Crisis* (Great Britain: Pearson Education, 2001), 18.

[73] Ibid., 18–21.

[74] Jermey Azrael, and Emil Payin, ed. *U.S. and Russia Policy Making With Respect To The Use of Force: Yugoslavia 1989-1996* (Rand Corporation, 1996), http://www.rand.org/pubs/conf_proceedings/CF129/CF-129.chapter11.html, 185.

negotiated in November of 1991, and in 1992, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) sent in peacekeeping forces to Bosnia. In 1995, the Dayton Accords, which granted independence to Bosnia, did not include Kosovo. This meant tension was found to continue through the early and mid 1990s, eventually turning violent between 1996–1998. Over 250,000 Kosovo Albanians were forced out of their homes, their businesses were looted and many were illegally detained, raped or executed.[75]

In 1998, NATO was asked to begin planning for a resolution to the Kosovo situation. Milosevic was given several ultimatums, but all were broken, and in March 1999 NATO air strikes began, lasting until June. United States Special Forces entered Kosovo in spring 1999, followed by over 30,000 NATO forces, to include 5,500 American conventional forces to help maintain the peace. U.S. Special Forces teams were dispersed throughout the U.S. controlled sector of Kosovo and dealt directly with security and governmental problems. A Special Operations Command and Control Element (SOCCE), part of Task Force Falcon, was responsible for synchronization and dispersion of Operational Detachments. Additionally, the SOCCE worked in coordination with a Special Operations Command Europe Liaison (SOCEUR LNO) who was located at the NATO Headquarters element.[76] Although the numbers have dropped considerably since then, U.S. and NATO forces remain in Kosovo and have a persistent presence. Serbia continues to reject Kosovo's independence, but more than 60 countries now recognize Kosovo as a sovereign country.

In contrast to a very small number of advisors sent to El Salvador, the entire governing body in Kosovo was taken over by the U.N. and a new governmental framework was built. As a result, one can say it was an outside party that decided what was in the best interests of Kosovars, an outside party that controlled every aspect of Kosovo's day-to-day government.[77] Even though Kosovo is considered a nation building success story, the Kosovo war, and involvement by NATO forces, cost the international

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[75] Weymouth, *The Kosovo Crisis,* 22–27.

[76] Robert W. Schaefer, M. Davis, "The 10th Special Forces Group Keeps Kosovo Stable," *Special Warfare* (Fort Bragg, NC: 1 June, 2002).

[77] Roland Paris, *At War's End: Building Peace after Civil Conflict* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 213–214.

community billions of dollars and required sizeable numbers of resources and personal, to include both military and civilian personnel. However, some nations regard NATO's intervention an infringement on Serbia's sovereignty.[78] It also remains to be seen where the stability achieved in Kosovo will last after the total withdrawal of multi-national forces. While the Kosovo economy has improved, the country remains the poorest in Europe and unemployment remains high at nearly 40%.[79] In sum, Kosovo can be said to represent a positive outcome for persistent presence. However, the costs have also been extremely high with no clear exit in sight. The intervening power has remained a relatively large and ambiguously led multi-national conventional force.

D.   AFGHANISTAN

Afghanistan is a landlocked country that lies at the crossroads of many cultures and trade routes, connecting the Indian subcontinent with central Asia. Because of its geographical location, empires have sought control over Afghanistan, from Cyrus and Alexander the Great, to Chingus Khan and Babur. Because of these intrusions the people of Afghanistan can trace their lineage back to include the Persians, Greeks and Mongols. Today there are numerous ethnic groups in Afghanistan. Over this long history, charismatic tribal leaders would often expand their territory only to succumb to tribal solidarity.[80]

Afghanistan gained its independence from Britain in 1919, and was ruled by a series of monarchs between 1919 and 1973. Zahir Shah ruling from 1933 until 1973. Most of his rule was marked by economic and educational advancement and relative stability in the country. He achieved this by using his family members as prime ministers throughout the country.   From 1964-1973, Afghanistan saw a rise in the number of Marxist groups, and, in 1973, Sardar Muhammad Daoud Khan seized power. Between 1973 and 1978 Afghanistan tried to play both sides of the table with the United States and

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[78] John Cherian, "Kosovo Walks Out," *Frontline, Volume 25, Issue 6, March 15-28, 2008* (accessed 13 April 2011, http://www.hindu.com/fline/fl2506/stories/20080328250605700.htm.

[79] CIA World Factbook, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/kv.html (accessed 7 December 2010).

[80] Thomas Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Culture and Political History* (New York: Princeton University Press, 2010), 1.

the Soviet Union, accepting financial aid and construction projects from both.[81] This was one of the first significant interactions the United States had with Afghanistan. The U.S. involved itself more to counter Soviet influence then to help the Afghans, and little of substance resulted. In 1978, Daoud and his family were killed in a coup and the communist party took over the country.[82]

In December 1979, the Soviet Union launched a full-scale invasion of Afghanistan to support the fledgling communist government. Thus began a war that would tear the country apart and contribute to the downfall of the Soviet Union. Afghanistan was now caught in the Cold War battle between the Soviets and the United States. Since the Soviets had moved beyond their post-war boundaries, the United States along with Saudi Arabia (because Afghanistan was a Muslim country being invaded by non-Muslims) were willing to help finance the mujahedeen resistance.[83] Initially, this involvement was minimal. However, as early as 1980 Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) agents with the assistance of small numbers of Special Forces began to secretly train, equip, and support the mujahedeen. By 1984, this effort was showing significant success; mujahedeen controlled 62 percent of the countryside and were inflicting significant casualties and damage on the Soviets.[84] In 1986, the U.S. began supplying the mujahedeen through the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) with Stinger ground-to-air missiles, as well as funding cross-border humanitarian assistance.[85] Finally, in February 1989, the Soviet Union withdrew from Afghanistan.

With victory over the Soviets in Afghanistan, and the collapse of the Soviet Union, the U.S. no longer saw the need to continue spending large sums of money and allocating resources to Afghanistan. Although U.S. policy still supported Afghan "self-determination," and despite Afghans' continued need for humanitarian assistance, Congress drastically reduced its funding and the U.S. government as a whole no longer

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[81] Steve Croll, *Ghost Wars* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2004), 39.

[82] Magnus, *Afghanistan: Mullah, Marx and Mujahid,* 47–50.

[83] Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Culture and Political History,* 236.

[84] Croll, *Ghost Wars,* 89.

[85] Ibid., 149.

rated Afghanistan a national security threat. It abandoned the mujahedeen and Afghanistan shortly after the Soviet withdrawal.[86]

Several years of civil war then ensued, with the Taliban taking control of the country in 1996. Although Afghans had proved successful at being able to get rid of foreign occupiers over the previous century and a half by making the country ungovernable, this strategy would eventually contribute to their demise. Led by Afghan Pashtuns trained in madrasas in Pakistan, the Taliban was an ideological movement. While the Taliban initially brought peace and security, their rough mixture of Salafi Islam and Pashtunwali was considered by many Afghans to be harsh and unforgiving. The Taliban also allowed the terrorist group al Qaeda to operate within Afghanistan's borders. It was from Afghanistan where Usama bin Laden issued his "A Declaration of Jihad" in 1996.[87] The Taliban remained in control until the United States invaded in October 2001 following the attacks on September 11. The U.S. has remained in Afghanistan until the present and has increased its number of troops significantly since the initial invasion.

In sum, Afghanistan demonstrates a failure on the part of the United States to maintain a persistent presence. After successfully assisting and advising the mujahedeen to defeat the Soviets the U.S. ultimately abandoned Afghanistan. Afghanistan was taken over by ideological hardliners and plunged into even more chaos. After the attacks of September 11, the U.S. was forced to re-engage. Had the U.S. maintained a persistent presence with a small number of Special Forces soldiers and CIA operatives all along it is unlikely that the Taliban and thus al Qaeda would have had a sanctuary to train and plan for the attacks on the U.S. and the western world.

E.   ANALYSIS

While every situation is different and must be evaluated individually, each of the three cases discussed offers many lessons the U.S. government could use when implementing a FID/FSA program with a host nation. The most important lesson learned

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[86] CIA World Factbook, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/af.html (accessed 14 October 2010).

[87] Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Culture and Political History,* 255–267.

is the importance of a persistent presence. When the U.S. becomes involved in FID/FSA in another country either before or after hostilities have broken out it is incumbent on the U.S. to stay the course and maintain a presence in the country in order to help restore and preserve the peace and prevent the return of instability.

A second lesson learned is that it is critical to tailor the mission to the country. There is no "cookie cutter" solution to a country's problems. What is instead important is to provide sound advice and allow the host nation to solve its own problems. The U.S. should provide advisors and help set the conditions, but ultimately it is the host nation that should solve its own problems.

A third lesson to be learned is the importance of a small footprint. More times then not a small group of highly trained soldiers will be far more effective than a larger force at developing and maintaining a positive long term mission to restore a host nation's stability. The smaller force will be much more cost effective in the eyes of Congress and the American taxpayer. Additionally, the population will be less likely to regard the U.S. as an occupying force.

A final takeaway is how important it is to have a National Strategy for the country (tailored down to the tactical level), with all levels of the mission working off the same sheet of music. The strategic plan for the country not only has to benefit the U.S., but also the host nation and its people as well. Only this will contribute to local stability. While there is no guarantee of success even if each of these key lessons is learned and implemented, the chances for success go up exponentially if they are.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NIGERIA

A. LESSONS LEARNED RECAP

The case studies presented in this thesis offer numerous lessons learned for future SFA/FID missions. For our purposes, four lessons are significant. The first lesson learned is the importance of a plan that includes persistent presence once a commitment has been made to a host nation. Secondly, each mission must be tailored for the specific country. Third, for economic reasons, and for continued U.S. support, the mission must be conducted with the smallest footprint possible of specially trained soldiers. Finally, the plan for the mission must include a National Strategy that is filtered down to the tactical level and nested for the region of the world in which the country is located.

B. CURRENT OPERATIONS IN NIGERIA

The U.S. Secretary of State, on April 6, 2010, signed the "Framework for the Establishment of a Bilateral Commission Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Nigeria." The agreement between the two countries, reflected in this document, is to establish a high-level dialogue that promotes diplomatic, economic, and security cooperation.[88] This framework demonstrates that the U.S. and Nigerian governments both recognize that cooperation is needed in the areas of economics, military, technical, commercial, and social development. Although a framework has been established, very little has been done at the grass roots level. For example, the international community, and most Nigerians, recognized the 2011 presidential election as the most credible election since the end of military rule 1999.[89] This being said, violence and corruption remain part of the election system, as a handful of candidates and voters were killed in attempts to sway votes. Local

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[88] U.S. Department of State, "Framework for the Establishment of a Bilateral Commission Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Nigeria." (Washington DC: April, 2010) accessed 17 April, 2011 from http://www.state.gov/p/af/ci/ni/139598.htm.

[89] "Nigeria's Successful Election: Democracy 1, Vote-Rigging 0," *The Economist* 399, no. 8729 (London: April 16–22, 2011), 14.

security forces often do not have sufficient incentive to protect the democratic process, as police chiefs are part of the political elite and stand to gain kickbacks from corrupt politicians.[90]

Currently, military cooperation and training between the United States and Nigeria is limited to the occasional Nigerian officer attending military training and schools in the United States. U.S. Naval ships make port calls in Nigeria, as well as provide a presence in the Gulf of Guinea. With U.S. forces engaged in different parts of Africa, as well as the rest of the world, forces that might be utilized for military-to-military training are not currently prioritized for Nigeria.

C.   ADDRESSING RESEARCH QUESTIONS

How can the U.S. help prevent Nigeria from becoming a failed state? From the outset, and still today, a significant gap exists in Nigeria between the needs of society and the goals of the state. This is evidenced by the rapid succession of military coups, a civil war, and continued violence that is taking place in both the north and delta regions of the country.[91]

In the Niger Delta, greed, pollution, and the deflation of the Nigerian naira (local currency) have led to the development of insurgent organizations such as MEND. MEND, in turn, has caused significant damage to the petroleum industry, one of the only income producing industries left in Nigeria.[92] Agriculture, which holds great potential for Nigerian primacy in Africa,[93] has suffered from pollution and the effects of 'Dutch Disease' leading to over-urbanization and poverty throughout the rest of Nigeria.[94]

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[90] "Nigerian Elections: Ballots and Bullets," *The Economist* 399, no. 8729 (London: April 16–22, 2011), 52.

[91] Udogu, "Liberal Democracy and Federalism in Contemporary Politics," 333.

[92] Watts, *Curse of The Black Gold: 50 Years of Oil in the Niger Delta,* 25.

[93] Seye Adeniyi, "Nigeria Has Potential to Feed its Citizens and Others but… " *Nigerian Tribune*, 15 March 2011, Retrieved 21 April 2011, from http://www.tribune.com.ng/index.php/agriculture/18878-nigeria-has-potential-to-feed-its-citizens-and-others-but.

[94] Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution, "Strategic Conflict Assessment of Nigeria."

Urbanization and relocation, due to the search for employment, has led to greater contact between Muslim and Christian communities that were previously more rigidly contained.[95]

In Northern Nigeria, outside influences from Sunni and Shia countries, as well as AQIM, are exacerbating the existing fissures between Muslims and Christians.[96] Laws that are not respected or enforced equally across societies work well when those societies are segregated, but they are perceived as unfair and degrading when society is mixed.[97] Perceived unfair treatment and lack of governmental support has led both Muslims and Christians to take actions against one another.

In order to close the state/society gap, the Nigerian government must start addressing each of the significant social fissures that has been discussed thus far. Helping Nigeria develop the ability to provide and sustain security, in addition to establishing and developing civic programs through the training of military, police, and civic leaders, will assist with improving governance. Good governance, in turn, will assist Nigeria in eliminating the ability of AQIM, Boka Harim and MEND to gain a foothold with the Nigerian people. Once outside influences, corruption, and major pollution issues are corrected, Nigeria stands to become Africa's strongest and most influential country, economically and politically.

Nigeria must address what it means to be Nigerian currently. From the local level up to the top, in both the government and civilian sectors, Nigeria must go through a rebranding of its national psyche. Today there are many groups inside the borders of Nigeria, but very few Nigerians. Instead, residents of the country identify themselves as Christians or Muslims, or as members of one of the 122 different tribes, but not necessarily as Nigerians. For stability to endure, Nigerians must develop a common identity that all Nigerians can rally behind.

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[95] Barnes, "Christianity and the Colonial State in Northern Nigeria 1900–1960, 281.

[96] Jonathan N. C. Hill, *Sufism in Northern Nigeria.*

[97] Barnes, "Christianity and the Colonial State in Northern Nigeria 1900–1960."

Presently, Nigeria is unable to unilaterally address the issues that are keeping it from being a successful African state, let alone a model state. Given security issues throughout Africa, the presence of Islamic extremist groups, and threats to vital natural resources, the U.S. must engage Nigeria in order to enable the Nigerian government to fix its problems. The "Framework for the Establishment of a Bilateral Commission Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Nigeria," while a good start, is being executed at a level that is too high to be of real impact in the daily life of Nigerians.

As we have learned from El Salvador, the impact of a few, highly coordinated and well-placed, advisors could have a significant impact in Nigeria on a national and international level. Understanding that Nigeria is significantly larger than Kosovo and El Salvador, lessons learned by the international community in Kosovo and El Salvador suggest that persistent and highly focused training and advising, over a long period of time, may help Nigeria be able to eliminate most of its problems. It is safe to assume that persistent presence in Nigeria must be a long-term commitment by the United States. With that being said, the following recommendations are made for the establishment of a long term, persistent plan that would enable U.S. planners and decision makers to assist Nigeria to become a leader in Africa.

D.   TSOC PLAN FOR NIGERIA

One frustration for many inside U.S. Special Forces, and for the U.S. military in general, is a feeling of continually spinning our wheels and not gaining traction within countries where we are conducting mil-to-mil training. Training guidance usually comes in the form of some overarching generalization about a desired end state, such as 'foster a stable environment' or 'develop partner forces.' The country team usually interprets this guidance as, 'conduct small unit tactics' with the country's more elite forces. Without any real guidance, or historical knowledge of past training, teams (different teams every iteration) usually conduct the same basic training, with the same partner force, year after year. In countries like Nigeria, where it is in the U.S.'s vital interest to develop stability, there should be a structure that helps do that by providing continuity not just in terms of

guidance and oversight but of personnel as well. Given the plan we have developed, we recognize that many branches of the U.S. government, as well as non-government organizations, must participate in the effort in order to increase the likelihood of success, but for the sake of this thesis we will discuss the military aspect only.

As a basis for the TSOC plan for Nigeria it is important to address several questions. At each level: what are the individuals or units trying to accomplish, and why are they trying to accomplish it? This must be assessed from both the U.S. and Nigerian perspectives. At each level, advisors must convey the same overall message to their counterparts. As mentioned above, the importance of Nigerian nationalism is a key theme that must be reinforced. Nigerians at all levels must understand that they are working for the same country, with the same goals, and that the overriding goal is Nigerian stability. In addition to addressing the 'what' and 'why,' the plan must be built to withstand (or last over) multiple rotations. We have attached a sample rotation calendar with some key tasks to be met. We have started with a 3-year rotation calendar that, once implemented, will become a living document, and can be expected to evolve as time progresses and conditions on the ground change.

A Special Forces Colonel—specifically Special Operations Command Africa Liaison Officer (SOCAFR LNO)—should be assigned to work directly with Nigerian and U.S. officials to develop a national strategy and a campaign plan for Nigeria that addresses issues based on Nigeria's needs, and that are not biased toward the region from which senior officials hail. The SF Colonel would be the senior ranking officer in Nigeria. His role will be to work with the Ambassador, the Ambassador's staff, the (already established) Defense Attaché Office, the Nigerian government, SOCAFR/Joint Special Operations Task Forces (JSOTF-TS), and the (newly developed) Special Operations Task Force-Nigeria (SOTF-N). He will not, however, be in the chain of command for SOTF-N. The relationship between this LNO and SOTF-N will be one of mutual support that consists of coordination and working together to fulfill the mission objectives.

Although this mission overall will be driven form the bottom-up, the SOCAFR LNO must help develop a campaign plan that includes key messages and themes, such as

the promotion of Nigerian nationalism. He must allow the Nigerians to develop their own messaging that U.S. personnel can emphasize when working with Nigerians at all levels. Ensuring that the campaign plan is disseminated down to the ODA level will ensure the Nigerian security forces receive the same message across the board. Continued communication up and down, and down and up, is paramount for success. Without a solid plan that is reinforced at all levels, making true progress will be difficult.

A Special Forces Battalion will act as SOTF-N headquarters and have responsibility for Nigerian SFA/FID on a two-year rotational basis that includes, as needed, National Guard Battalions. An Advanced Operating Base (AOB) and at least three Special Forces Operational Detachment Alphas (SFODAs) and one SEAL platoon (PLT) will maintain a persistent presence; the AOB will conduct a one-year rotation. The AOB will be supported, as necessary, from SOTF-N personnel who will also perform a 1-year rotation. Initially, SFODAs/SEAL Platoons will conduct six-month rotations.

The mission of SOTF-N will be to conduct SFA/FID in order to promote the long-term stability of Nigeria. SOTF-N will help set the conditions whereby the Nigerian security forces can train and gain experience at military and civilian security operations by helping them build their capacity. The increased training and resourcing will help to deter further aggression from hostile organizations toward the Nigerian government. The end-state will be to eliminate the threat of hostile organizations and set the conditions for long-term stability in Nigeria, and the region, by increasing security and the legitimacy of the Nigerian government.

To achieve success, it is important that the teams are spread throughout the entire country starting with the first rotation. ODAs and/or SEAL PLTs should be evenly dispersed to different regions of Nigeria. As with the Kosovo model, each team would split into two or three-man teams to cover their region to the fullest extent possible. Team leaders would be responsible for making sure that each two or three-man split team conducts training, evaluation, and advising of Nigerian battalions based on the national plan. By doing this, the Nigerian forces would receive equal training throughout the country, dispensing with any myth that more support was focused on one particular region or one particular group. An example would be two ODAs in the Muslim north and

one ODA and one SEAL PLT in the Christian south and the Niger Delta. This will minimize any perception of one tribe, religion, or geographic location being more important than another. Furthermore, splitting the teams into two or three-man teams will ensure training and capabilities are spread to maximize results, as well as disseminate the National Plan to the lowest level. Nigerian battalions from the south could conduct training and operations with those from the north, building unity and a sense of 'Nigeria.' New teams would replace ODAs/SEAL PLTs on a six-month cycle with an overlap to ensure continuity. The ODAs/SEAL PLTs would report to the AOB who would coordinate the training effort throughout each region.

The AOB would act as the Special Operations Command and Control Element (SOCCE) and would ensure that ODAs/SEAL PLTs were dispersed for maximum effectiveness. The AOB would be able to shift focus from one area to another based on the needs of the Nigerian forces as a whole. The AOB would be responsible for maintaining the institutional knowledge that facilitates sustaining training levels as ODAs/SEAL PLTs replace each other. The AOB would conduct a one-year mission and the continuity and turnover would be controlled by the SOTF-N. The AOB would also be responsible for conducting training and assessment of the regional and brigade level staffs, ensuring the national plan is the focus of their training.

SOTF-N would be centrally located with the Nigerian general staff, and have overall responsibility to ensure that training conducted by the ODAs/SEAL PLTs, AOB and SOTF-N have the same national focus. SOTF-N would ensure that the focus is based on a Nigerian developed plan and would be responsible for advice about that plan based on the guidance from Nigerian national decision makers. A Special Forces Battalion would be responsible for SOTF-N on a two-year rotation, and would deploy and staff the SOTF-N as needed to ensure continuity of focus and training. SOTF-N would have overall responsibility for the U.S.'s persistent presence throughout Nigeria.
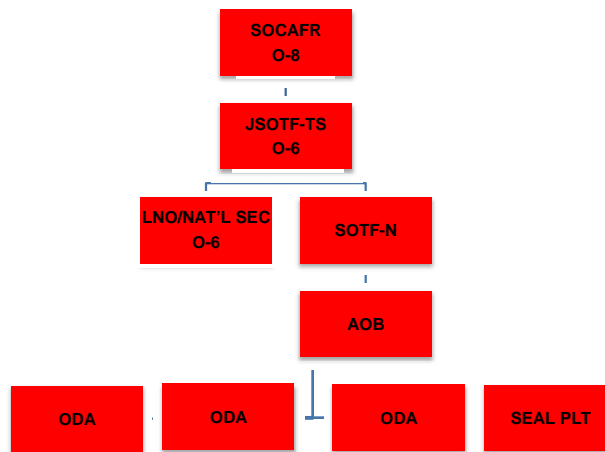
Nigeria FSA/FID Organization

Figure 2. Proposed Nigeria FSA/FID Organization Chart

The mission of SOTF-N will be to conduct SFA/FID in order to promote the long-term stability of Nigeria. Long-term stability for Nigeria is in the best interests of the U.S. In order to achieve this, the needs and the goals of the state must begin to align with the needs of society. Currently, Nigeria is a conglomeration of many tribes and the incentive to participate in public service is too often to further oneself or one's tribe. Long-term partnership between U.S. Special Forces and the Nigerian forces will develop a national focus at all levels, from the local battalion to the national decision makers. This can be done through a variety of means, such as instilling the importance of Nigerian nationalism and the rule of law. With less focus on what individuals might be doing to promote themselves or their tribes, the military can focus on anti-corruption and security threats, enabling Nigeria to develop to its full potential. A less corrupt, more productive Nigeria is vital to the rest of Africa and the world economy.

To conduct this mission the plan will have multiple phases. During *Phase I,* which includes the initial deployments, assessments, and refinement of a long-term engagement plan, the SOCAFR-LNO will make initial assessments and work in conjunction with the U.S. Embassy staff and Nigerian commanding generals to develop a national theme and plan. SOTF-N and the AOB will conduct initial assessments of their

respective Nigerian command levels, as well as make initial assessments as to the location of ODA/SEAL PLTs. During this phase, the ODA/SEAL PLTs will conduct detailed assessments of local military battalions to determine their level of training, training shortfalls, local focus, and logistics needs in order to provide long-term advising. They will also determine the split team plan to ensure two or three-man teams are paired with the correct Nigerian battalions.

Phase II will begin upon completion of the *Phase I* assessments, after the plan has been refined to set realistic expectations, and after the rotation cycle is updated. The SOCAFR-LNO will continue to encourage and focus development of the Nigerian national plan and ensure that this focus is spread to the lowest level of the Nigerian security forces by means of U.S. advisors at each level. SOTF-N and the AOB will continue to advise the Nigerian leadership and develop staff functions to ensure the national plan is met. ODA/SEAL PLTs will conduct detailed training based on the needs and levels of competence for their respective Nigerian battalions. Each ODA/SEAL PLT leadership will monitor training plans and ensure the two–three man split teams are promoting the National Plan. During *Phase II* SOTF-N will be responsible for developing a rotation cycle for the AOB and ODA/SEAL PLTs that ensures persistent presence and continued progressive training.

Phase III will begin when a second SOTF-N takes over from the initial SOTF-N, continuing to maintain a persistent presence in Nigeria, building on the previous rotation's successes. This is critical to ensuring a persistent presence is maintained. See Figure 3 for key tasks.

To help ensure success, as mentioned above, the entire Nigerian strategy must be synchronized and resourced from the bottom-up by both the U.S. government and the Nigerian government. Members of the country team must work with the SOCAFR LNO and SOTF-N to develop a comprehensive national strategy. SOTF-N would also be responsible for advising the Nigerian military at the national staff level. The AOB would advise the military staff at the Ministerial/Brigade levels, and the SFODAs and SEAL PLTs would be responsible for advising at the tactical level. Many smaller nations' militaries have difficulty sharing information up and down the chain of command, from

the local level to the national level. It is important that every level, from the SOCAFR LNO to the ODA, is working with the same information and strategy; this includes encouraging the Nigerians to do the same. At the end of the day, Nigeria being able to stabilize itself and its sub-region is a Nigerian issue, and must be solved by Nigerians, but the United States has a vested interest in helping set the conditions for the Nigerians to accomplish this.

Unit	1st Year Key Tasks	2nd Year Key Tasks	3rd Year Key Tasks
SOCAFR LNO	Campaign Planning National Level Advisor Theme Development	Campaign Planning National Level Advisor Theme Development	National Level Advisor
SOTF-N	Campaign Planning National Level Military Advising Senior Staff Advising	Campaign Planning National Level Military Advising Senior Staff Advising	Campaign Planning National Level Military Advising Senior Staff Advising
AOB	Minister/Brigade Level Assessments Minister/Brigade Level Advisor Coordination of ODAs/SEAL PLTs	Minister/Brigade Level Advisor Minister/Brigade Staff Level Planning Development Coordination of ODAs/SEAL PLTs	Minister/Brigade Level Advisor Minister/Brigade Staff Level Planning Development Coordination of ODAs/SEAL PLTs
ODA/SEAL PLT	Unit Assessments Small Unit Tactical Training Unit Level Advising Local Gov't Advising	Battalion Level Staff Planning Small Unit Tactical Training Unit Level Advising Local Gov't Advising Leadership (Officers & NCOs) Development	Battalion Level Staff Planning Small Unit Tactical Training Unit Level Advising Local Gov't Advising Leadership (Officers & NCOs) Development

Figure 3.   Three-Year Rotation Calendar – Key Tasks

V.   CONCLUSION

Nigeria's stability is not simply a Nigerian matter. The U.S. must look at the role that Nigeria plays in Africa and the effects that it has on the continent, as well as the rest of the world. Nigeria is potentially the influential country in Africa; one of every six Africans lives in Nigeria; one out of every four Africans is a Nigerian.[98] The only limit on Nigeria's ability to develop its natural resources, to include natural gas, oil and its diverse population are the limits it places on itself. Yet, the consequences of a non-stable Nigeria can affect the entire globe. In addition to fuel, Nigeria's natural resources of land and water enable it to potentially provide food to the rest of the continent. Located centrally in Africa, on the fringe between the northern Sahel and the vast Sub-Saharan region, Nigeria is positioned to influence the entire continent. It is this combination of diversity and geographical positioning that situates Nigeria as a central power of influence in Africa.

For Nigeria to succeed there must be stability. As mentioned earlier, there are many factors contributing to concerns about Nigeria. The existence of Islamist groups in northern Nigeria, to include Boko Haram's connection to AQIM, MEND in the Niger Delta, 36 years of military rule, as well as persistent corruption in the government, has left many ordinary Nigerians (Muslim and Christian alike) convinced that protest and public disorder are the only way to be heard. In addition, the manner in which Nigeria was developed into a country has not left it a firm national identity. This lack of national identity has enabled significant tensions to flourish, and has also contributed to a lack of trust in government throughout the country.

With all that is transpiring throughout northern Africa, it is incumbent that the U.S. makes Nigeria a priority to help prevent it from succumbing to destabilization. One solution to Nigeria's stability problem is to support a persistent U.S. presence in the country. This presence could be focused to help Nigeria develop a national identity. Nigeria has shown a willingness to fix its problems; the persistent presence of advisors

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[98] Kenny Okey Iwunna, "Peace Through Development in Nigeria and Rest of Africa" USAfrica Online, accessed 6 May 2011, http://usafricaonline.com/peacedev.keniwunwa.html.

would enable the country to develop answers to its own problems, but under an interested, yet impartial cadre. The case studies examined in this thesis offered examples of both success and failure in U.S. efforts at stabilization. The most cost-efficient and effective means to develop and help sustain a stable nation is through small, well-organized teams of long-term advisors who can encourage the host nation to develop its own methods.

The results of our analysis revealed four major themes to consider when developing a strategy for Nigeria. 1) The plan must include a long-term, persistent presence once a commitment has been made. 2) The mission must be tailored for Nigeria. 3) For economic reasons, and to facilitate continued U.S. support, the mission must be conducted with a reasonably small footprint of specially trained soldiers. 4) The plan for the mission must include a National Strategy that is filtered down to the tactical level and nested within a broader plan to support stability in that region of the world in which the country is located. We have proposed a plan for Nigeria that, if implemented, will go a long way in instituting stability in Nigeria.

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