

Curbing Kidnapping in Nigeria: An Exploration of Strategic Peace Building Tools

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Abstract

The increasing growth of kidnapping in Nigeria has become a strong threat to national peace and security. It has affected the national image of the state and has eaten deep into every region and segment of the nation. This work unveils how identity fanaticism and political violence led to emergence of economy of violence referred as "kidnapping" in Nigeria. Upon this circumstance, the paper argues that peace building is a potent strategic tool that can eliminate kidnapping and other terror related crime from Nigeria by ensuring that violent actors and their sponsors embrace peace while exploring other non-violent mechanisms for resolving such differences that trigger kidnapping in the Nigerian state. It adds that adequate public information process, a behavioural change messages and actions that return the mindsets of architects of kidnapping into the life of rule of law and peaceful coexistence, eliminates the network of organized crime used by kidnappers to carry out its nefarious activities. Essentially eradication of kidnapping restores security climate for establishment of democratic culture, promotion of national development, and foreign direct investment.

Keywords: Kidnapping, Strategic Public Information, Management, Peace building, Nigeria

Introduction

The threats to national peace in Nigeria have numerous dimensions. There are ethnic-based conflict (Nwanaju & Ani, 2011:145-151); gender-based violence (Ani, 2012A:44-56 & Ani, 2012B:140-148); inter-communal conflict (Ani, 2010A:155-163; Dada & Ani, 2009A:101-112); religious conflicts (Ani, 2012C:189-202; Ani, 2012D:156-172; Ani, 2009:39-49); political violence (Okoro & Ani, 2011: 750-760; Ani, 2012E:140-158; Ani & Okoro, 2012: 50-58); oil-influenced environmental crisis in the Niger Delta (Ani & Ohagwu, 2012:149-172) and very recently the rise of full blown terrorism (Dada & Ani, 2010:317-333). Unfortunately, while the sectarian driven terror as championed by the Boko Haram sect (Ani & Nwanaju, 2011:1-12) is making so much national and international news, the horrors of kidnapping for ransom is going on a daily basis in Nigeria but largely uncovered by the print and electronic media.

Kidnapping is the act of taking a person or group of person into captivity in order to achieve a defined aim. The act places a victim on hostage for the purpose of using the abducted to attain a goal. Therefore, to kidnap, there must be two parties which include the living-prey on one hand and the heartless-predator who are there to manipulate terror, in order to attain an outlined objective.

The Guardian (Nigeria) of March 3, 2009 documented that Governor Rotimi Amechi of Rivers State, Nigeria explained kidnapping as "using force to take away human beings." There are many forms of kidnapping in Nigeria. They include, expatriate-oriented kidnapping. It was the militants who traditionally used this model of kidnapping to agitate for the economic and environmental rights of the Niger-Delta people. At that era of kidnapping in the Niger-Delta, the protagonists of this act of kidnapping used it to generate the interest and reaction of the Nigerian government and the world at large to the terrible environmental abuse meted on their society. Unfortunately, the manipulation of kidnapping (Ukpong & Esu, 2010: 244-251) to enhance environmental agitations, soon gave way to its use as a tool for financial exploitation. It was primarily targeted at the expatriate oil staff in the region. Akwa Ibom State Governor, Godswill Akpabio has stated that kidnapping "which started in the Niger-Delta region has spilled to other parts of the country" (*Thisday*, 2010:10). Many expatriates working in Nigerian companies have been continually kidnapped to an extent that many foreign countries like USA and Canada, at different times, had declared interest in contributing their

national resources towards the rescue of their citizenry that were trapped in kidnappers den. Soon, the kidnapping of expatriates in the Niger-Delta, gave way to the kidnapping of all and sundry, as long as it could be used to raise money, achieve political aim and unleash violence.

The zero sum approach to politics in Nigeria that manifest in the form of machine politics and clientele-politics across the country, since the return of democracy to Nigeria in 1999, gave impetus to the kidnapping industry and its menace. This new phase launched kidnapping entrepreneurs operating the economy of violence. It is politically-motivated brand of kidnapping used by politicians to haunt their opponents. This form of kidnapping has grown as a tool in the hands of Nigerian politicians, with which they manipulated the means to their political end. This new political culture is practiced intermittently in different political constituencies across the country and was climaxed when then Governor of Anambra State, Chris Ngige, was kidnapped. Other politically induced kidnapping reflects on some prominent politicians, and their family members held hostage for ransoms. The abduction of Pa Simeon Soludo, father of Professor Chukwuma Soludo – former Governor of Central Bank of Nigerian and Governorship candidate of People's Democratic Party's (PDP) Governorship candidate for Anambra State is one of the several kidnap cases in point. Pa Soludo was abducted on the eve of the state election, in which Professor Soludo was nominated as the PDP flag-bearer. However, many members of the PDP argued that he did not merit the position he was vying for, and knowing that he has received the blessing of what has been popularized as the 'Abuja Connection' (strong support from the political god-fathers living in the Nigerian seat of power at the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja), the available option that could be used against him became the abduction of his aged father. The father's abductors were alleged to have requested his resignation from the governorship-race or deposit huge sums of money into their coffers. *The Guardian* (2010:4) wrote that the kidnappers "demanded a ransom of ₦5 billion to cover the 'political expenses' arising from the PDP primaries." Leo Chiegboka, spokesperson for Soludo Campaign Organization, opined that the Pa Soludo's abduction was a price to be paid by Professor

Soludo in order to “rescue Anambra State from the cabal that insist on holding the state hostage” (Orji, 2009:14). Similarly, there is the kidnapping of government-staff as a means to criminally eke-out a large chunk of meat from the national sacred cow called Nigeria. This group of people habitually kidnap highly placed civil servants across the country, from University Professors, to Chief Judges, Directors of Government Boards, Doctors across different government hospitals, *etc.* There is equally the kidnapping of financial-giants and their family members across different fields of the national life. The religious-oriented model of kidnapping targets church leaders and their faithful. However, the kidnapping of the innocent children and old women remains the most threatening on the future of the Nigerian nation. These typologies have been growing over the years.

Obijiofor (2009:51) documented that when people analyse the causes of growing cases of kidnapping in Nigeria, “they point to factors such as greed, poverty, high level of unemployment, social injustice, political apathy, to the basic needs of the poor as well as failed economic policies.” It is noteworthy that kidnapping has grown from the Niger-Delta region to the South-Eastern part of the country, where it graduated into the most powerful criminal industry in the state. From the Eastern Nigeria, it spread its tentacle to the South-West, North Central and North East. Today, no region is free from the menace of kidnapping as everybody is directly or indirectly affected by the wave of the crime and its sundry effects. Ikeje (2010:12) wrote that kidnapping; “a monster born and nurtured in Nigeria has so grown in stature and might that it is doubtful if you can find any weapons to shoot it down. It has found a fertile ground to multiply and dominate. Such a monster is what we are up against in the kidnap saga”. The impact of kidnapping in Nigeria has been felt in the economic, diplomatic, security, tourism, democratic, socio-cultural and worst still the national image of the country. This forced the Senate President, David Mark to state that “as it is now, everybody is a potential victim. The earlier we tackle the matter headlong and end it, the better for all of us” (Garba, Olise, Orie & Ogbodo, 2010:4). If a Deputy Superintendent of Police could be arrested for aiding kidnapping (Arubi, 2010) then depending on state security apparatus to curb kidnapping in Nigeria becomes precarious and a greater challenge in managing kidnapping. On the strength of this, the paper argues that peace building is a desirable

strategy to forestall increase in the menace of kidnapping that is continuously aborting the national peace and security of the country. Ibeanu (2006:11) showed that peace relates to existing social conditions, it is dynamic and is work in progress in relation to socio-economic and political conditions.

Conceptual Framework

This work is centred on the process view of peace. Akpuru-Aja (2007:1) notes that "peace is no fixation, but a process". Ibeanu (2006:10) showed that peace is a process involving activities that are directly or indirectly linked to increasing development and reducing conflict." The process of improving the conditions, in which the citizenry lives; naturally reduces the growth of conflict in that environment hence, reducing factors that promote kidnapping like unemployment, poverty, illiteracy, greed, poor security network, corrupt democracy and societal decay. It is this process-view of peace that would give birth to durable and sustainable peace, which would manage the spate of kidnapping in the Nigerian state.

Synoptic Note on Kidnapping in Nigeria

Ani (2010A:155-163) and Ali (2010) have shown that many groups have decried the level of insecurity in the country. In Nigeria, kidnapping has grown to a level that fathers abducts son (Adebayo, 2010). Successful sports men and administrators are scared to move around the country because, if they do not kidnap them they go for their parents like the case of Michel Obi and Lulu (Adeyemi & Jacob, 2010). Following the ruthless experience of some national journalists in the country (Awelewa, 2010; Garba, Olise, Orie and Ogbodo 2010:1-4; Garba, Daniel, Daka, Onyedika, Abdulsalami, Olise, Nwannekama, Aliu & Akpan-Nsoh 2010:1-4), some students are now scared to read journalism (Ajuwon, 2010). Ani (2010B: 1-14) and Umanah (2009) have shown that children have suffered untold plights due to the dehumanizing growth of kidnapping in Nigeria. Government workers are afraid to go to work because those at the helm of affairs like permanent secretaries are prime targets of the kidnap network (Alofetekun, 2009). The Nnewi business environment has been overtaken by those who kidnap priests and businessmen. (Collins, 2009; *Daily Champion*, 2009). A permanent secretaries, Coordinators of

Development centres and top public servants were at different times kidnapped in Ebonyi State. The Government of Ebonyi State has a law that makes kidnapping capital offence punishable by hanging (*Ebonyi Voice*, 2009:1). Even the life and administrative efficiency of a governor have been put under stress as gunmen kidnapped Akpabio's driver and demanded a ransom of over #200 million (Akpan-Nsoh, 2010; Ekponta, 2010). Many lives have been lost, due to the days, weeks and months of strike, engaged by doctors in solidarity over the kidnapping of their colleagues (Akpan-Nsoh & Akpan, 2010:5). They do not respect the traditional normative culture of the African man as they even go to the level of kidnapping a septuagenarian (Bello, 2010). To make matters worse, while a family was crying over the kidnap of their sixty-six year-old father and breadwinner, they found his body dead (Ezeizomor, 2009). Mothers, women, and church groups are worried over the terrible menace of kidnappers (Bisina, 2008) on the existential and spiritual lives of the masses. It is no longer news that people are kidnapped in the church. In worst cases scenarios, pastors and children of church leaders have even come together to aid such forms of kidnapping.

Concept of Peace Building

Boutros-Ghali (1995) has showed that before the early 1990s, peace building was generally viewed as series of activities intended to help countries to recover from violent conflict. Paris (2004:38) explained this form of peace building as action undertaken at the end of a civil conflict to consolidate peace and prevent a recurrence of fighting. This perception of peace building is simply reactive peace building because, the roadmap for peace is only created at the escalation of conflict, hence, until the societal peace is aborted or on the brink of collapse, reactive peace process is often not started.

The implication is that peace building allows the society to be ran-down by the manipulators of violence, conflict and terrorism before the consequent reaction to it;

- i. The psycho-healing process on the conflict victims is very difficult and often not fully realized in reactive peace building and
- ii. should justice come before reconciliation or reconciliation before justice.

However, the idea of strategic or reactive peace building has given way for the increasingly agitated idea of durable or proactive peace building. Boutros-Ghali (1995)

spoke of "peace building" as the "creation of a new environment" and not merely as the cessation of hostilities. It is this new environment of peace that is needed in the day-to-day nation building craft amongst sovereign states. When a new environment is consistently being created for peace by individuals and the leadership hierarchy of nations, then individual states, down to the global village would begin to march towards the existential El-Dorado of a peaceful country and globe at large. It is when peace has become a norm in the hearts of men that the culture of durable peace can be enshrined in our society. Saliba and Ani (2010:4) have shown that peace building is "the elimination of those structural factors that generate conflicts and create violent ideas in the minds of men. Moving towards this kind of peaceful environment goes beyond conflict-solving or conflict management to social-problem solving". Peace building is multi-dimensional, in form. Boutros-Ghali (1995) showed that peace building consists of a wide range of activities associated with capacity building, institutional building and societal transformation.

Peace building attempts to encourage the development of the structural conditions, attitudes and modes of political behaviour that may permit peaceful, stable and ultimately prosperous social and economic development (Smith, 2004:19). It is an attempt to enthrone sustainable peace in an environment. Sustainable peace on its own is characterized by the absence of physical, structural conflict, and the elimination of discrimination (Luc 2001:12). Long-term peace building techniques are designed to fill social and institutional gaps that cause conflict. It is equally a means to address the underlying issues and factors that causes conflict. Cockell (2000:15-34), Cousens (2001:1-20), Doyle and Sambianis (2000:779-802); all believed that peace building is an act of addressing the causes of conflict. Hence, peace building as a counter-kidnapping measure is meant to attack the causes of kidnapping.

Dada and Ani (2009B:100) wrote that "peace building involves individual and collective efforts, through sound interaction that promotes peaceful existence." Lederach (1997:75) showed that peace building try to fix the core problems that underlie a conflict. Saliba and Ani (2010:5) wrote that peace building is a generic term that connotes peace-oriented efforts of all forms. Kombol (2009:46) wrote that peace-building attack the root causes of conflict. Again, Lederach (1997:75) defined it as "efforts to

transform potentially violent social relations into sustainable peace relations and outcomes." It is the causes of kidnapping and the imbalance in social relations that need to be curbed as a counter-kidnapping measure. Maise (2003) wrote that many Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) understand peace building as an umbrella concept that encompasses not only long-term transformative efforts but also peace interventions, peace movements and peacemaking. "It is note-worthy that any perspective from which peace is conceived, its destination is to attain proactive/ positive/ sustainable/ durable peace or reactive/ negative/ non-sustainable/ non-durable peace... The ultimate destination of both roads to peace is to create room for progressive peace building in any society" (Ani 2010:7). Sequel to the revelation of the fact that kidnapping is multi-dimensional in nature with several explanations as well as several approaches to curbing it, the paper discusses peace building measures required to bring kidnap to an end in Nigeria.

Multi-Dimensional Peace Building as Counter Kidnapping -Measure

As earlier noted, securing kidnap free society in Nigeria requires peace building strategies. The identified strategies, processes and applicability are examined as follows.

- A. Peace Education:** Ngada and Nseendi (2010:30) wrote that "peace education sets out to redress the culture of violence and aggression and to inculcate values of non-violent change among young persons and adults alike". Nwafor (2007:15) wrote that "peace education is consigned with respect for persons, personal relationships, conflict resolution, social justice, sharing the world's resources, cooperation and recognition that violence has to do with power". Through peace education, the violent mind set of kidnappers and other conflict actors could be transformed into a non-violent behaviour (see Ani, 2011A:230-238; Ani, 2011B:96-101; Ani, 2011C:223-237). It has been revealed by many victims of kidnapping in Nigeria that many of the errand boys for the kidnappers are children. Therefore, peace education needs to be integrated into families as found in some school curricula in Nigeria. It would help to positively transform the mind of such children in the apprentice of kidnappers to change behaviour while embrace other legitimate for sustainable livelihood.

- B. Peace Communications:** Wilson (2009:3) stated that peace building is associated with efforts aimed at conflict prevention, reconciliation, trans-national justice, education for peace, bridging the reality gap and communication of peace. Peace communication is vital in the enthronement of peace culture in Nigeria. Media programs on security behaviours, ethical behaviours, peace jingles, peace adverts and peace socialization programs can help parties to reach peace by influencing every member of the society including the kidnappers, their (former) victims and the larger society living under the phobia of kidnappers. Saliba and Ani (2010:12) showed that the media sets the agenda for peace and through the media; it will be easier to achieve peace building as public opinion would be shaped to support the peace process. The media can also help victims of abduction and their relatives to overcome grief, fear, and mistrust planted by the activities of kidnappers and enhance greater sense of security in them. Besides the media has the social responsibility to propagate non-violent programmes to assuage the mindset of crime economy.
- c. Information and Computer Technology Reinforced Peace Building:** Information and Communication Technology (ICT) reinforced peace building is vital in the counter-kidnapping peace process. Ronald and Crawford (2007) noted that information and communication technologies can be a huge aid in the effort to build lasting peace. Wilson and Nuhu (2009:51) wrote that "ICT hardware and software that help people communicate, understand data and learn, via tools such as computers, the internet, mobile phones and more- have proven to be a tremendous help in implementing peace building." ICT enhanced security measures through forensic science and again, hi-tech media system could track-down kidnappers at the blink of an eye. ICT packages like digital cameras and smart phones would help people communicate their views, expose information about kidnappers and help the security networks to make counter-kidnapping decisions etc. The security function of sites such as Facebook, Myspace, Google Groups and Twitter where people can link up with security agents could be used for peace building communication that will enhance human security.

Udo (2010:16) wrote that in Kwara State, the abductors of the son of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) Secretary were reportedly traced by the Kwara Commissioner of Police who applied the available GSM tracking system. Agbambu (2009:48) documented that the former Inspector General of Police, Ogbonnaya Onovo stated that the "bill for registration of SIM cards and other communication equipment will go a long way in eradicating the menace of kidnapping. Nwosu (2009:18) showed that "recently, the (former) Inspector General of Police, Ogbonnaya Onovo, disclosed that the police was in the process of acquiring portable electronic devices that intelligently gather and rapidly intercept phone calls from kidnappers. It was gathered that the device has the capability of tracking within minutes, the very spot from where suspicious telephone calls are made. The facility is said to be manufactured in Israel."

The former Minister of Police Affairs, Ibrahim Yakubu Lame, stated that "there were plans to set up six forensic laboratories in each of the six geopolitical zones in addition to mobile forensic laboratories" (Olaniyi, 2009:1). Unfortunately, four years after the statement was made, the country is yet to witness the rise of a forensic laboratory. It was just in April, 2013 that President Goodluck Jonathan inaugurated a committee to advise the Federal Government on modalities for the upgrading of existing laboratories as well as the establishment of a forensic and deoxyribonucleic (DNA) laboratory for the Nigerian police (*The Sun*, 2013). The President, who was represented by the current Minister of Police Affairs, Caleb Olubolade stated that the country cannot continue to depend on other countries for quality and acceptable forensic services (*Premium Times*, 2013). Similarly, the Lagos State Government stated recently that it has chosen Badagry town as the site for the proposed Nigeria's first world-class forensic laboratory. The state Commissioner for Science and Technology, Adebisi Mabadeje said the project was being proposed as a public-private-partnership initiative whereby government as the proponent, would bring in the expertise and funding for the construction of the landmark project. Mabadeje said the State Executive Council has given approval to the project. The features of the project will include purpose-built crime laboratory, purpose-built forensic laboratory and data centre for easy retrieval of collected

evidence or data. There is really no budget for the laboratory as it will be built in phases (Olufowobi, 2013). In many countries where forensic laboratories are available for the police, crime detection and investigation is less cumbersome and more professional.

- D. Security Consciousness Revolution:** The kind of security revolution agitated in this regards is the form that would include everybody being agent for secured society. It is a form of consciousness in which the civilian citizenry would not only assist the police with vital security information but also would join in tracking-down the kidnappers by knowing the activities of neighbours and movements within the environment. However, such revolutionary security comes with a patriotic police with institutionalized command structure that engage in proactive security. This essential given that Nigerian Police Force is an agency responsible for the detection of crime and maintenance of public order as well as the apprehension of criminals. "In maintaining security, the police in Nigeria, under the Police Act, the Criminal Code, the Criminal Procedure Act and the Electoral Act is also given powers of arrest, detention, search, detection and prosecution" (Idowu, 2010:45). Again, the idea of state police and community oriented policing have remained a hotly debated issue in Nigeria, there is the need to enhance intelligence collection, especially from the numerous Nigerian villages, as many of them are used as hide-out by the kidnappers to ensure that the larger society would not discover the abductees and the criminal actors involved.
- E. Peaceful Democratisation and improved social condition:** The increasing growth in unemployment, poverty and inequality in is attributed politics without ethics orchestrated by elite capture. This prevalent parochial political culture promotes crime economy tendencies among the actors in kidnapping. "There is a hideous form of corruption at the epicentre of the nation's system that has pervaded every facet of life, which dulls the edges of reason. Those who perpetuate this corruption must also be sent along with the kidnappers to the hangman" (Anyagou 2009:79). Ejiogu and Onyene (2008:15) wrote that "if freely elected governments are the root of peace and if education is the root to

intelligent elections, then the whole solution may be seen as one of the world wide mass education". The culture of keeping millions of Nigerian youths as perpetually unemployed political thugs, easily pushes them into the kidnapping market, whenever, their political lords that employed them lose their political position.

Cultural transformation in our society is vital for peace building. It would start through the continuous changing of all negative value systems that had overtaken the Nigerian State. The Nigerian society is increasingly sold to the philistine public, in which all that matters is the amount of money that a person is worth and not how the money had been made. Hence, many Nigerians are increasingly joining the gang of kidnappers in order to make unaccounted-for money. Unfortunately, they throw around this ill-gotten money at every available person in order to win social recognition and societal titles. It is this culture of make-quick money that should be changed in the masses everyday world-view in Nigeria. Such societal change would give birth to a new culture, where Nigerians would become conscious of how the citizenry made their money, before they could respect them. This form of cultural transformation could be achieved through a consistent approach, which would ensure that the government and the governed subscribe to ethical forms of cultural and political behaviour in order to promote societal stability.

- F. Strengthening Judiciary for rule of law regime:** Since the earliest time of human history, law, whether written or unwritten had remained a powerful instrument of ensuring effective administration of justice (Paton, 1964: 84). The safety of lives and properties in this era of kidnapping across the Nigerian states could be checked through the progressive strengthening of the judiciary to ensure that rule of law to harness the anti-kidnapping laws. The national anti-kidnap law could be found within the Nigerian *Terrorism (Prevention) Act, 2011*, which is meant to promote "the protection of persons and their properties from abuse" (Reid, 1976:55) as well as enhance "freedom of others in the same society" (Pound, 1974: 26). The Nigerian *Terrorism (Prevention) Act, 2011* has it in Part 1, Section 2 (c) that 'act of terrorism' involves as the cases may be- (i) an attack upon a person's life, which may cause serious bodily harm or death and

(ii) kidnapping of a person. Part 1, Section 11 presented hostage taking in Sub-section (1) as a person who knowingly, (a) seizes, detains or attempts to seize or detain; or (b) threatens to kill, injure or continue to detain another person in order to compel a third party to do, abstain from doing any act or gives an explicit or implicit condition for the release of the hostage, commits an offence under this Act and shall on conviction be liable to imprisonment for a maximum term of 10 years.

Many state Governments have come-up with their own anti-kidnapping laws. The Section 3 of the *Ebonyi State Internal Security Enforcement and Related Matters Law (CAP 55)* which came into force on 9th October, 2009 stated that hostage means any person held captive by another who threatens to kill, harm or continue to detain that person if one or more demands are not met and includes a volunteer hostage. Anyone found guilty of kidnapping in the state shall on conviction be liable to be sentenced to death. In Chapter 31, Section 364 of the *Abia State of Nigeria Criminal Code (Amendment) (No. 1) Law* (2008) kidnapping was explained as "any person who:

- 1) unlawfully imprisons any person and takes him out of Nigeria, without his consent; or
- 2) unlawfully imprisons any person within Nigeria in such a manner as to prevent him from applying to a court for his release.

Odiegwu (2013) has shown that in Imo State, the former Governor, Ikedi Ohakim signed the anti-kidnapping bill into law in 2009, vowing that defaulters will pay with their lives. Governor Godswill Akpabi signed the Internal Security and Enforcement Bill, 2009 into law on May 15, 2009. The law among other things prescribes death penalty for offenders and empowers the governor to choose the venue and mode of execution of such condemned persons, while a person who abetted the escape of a kidnapper would face a 21-year jail term. Governor Seriake Dickson has recently signed the Bayelsa State Kidnapping and Allied Offences Bill 2013 that was swiftly passed by the Kombowei Benson-led House of Assembly, which prescribed death penalty for kidnappers (Pointblanknews.com, 2013). Already in Rivers State and Enugu State, their respective

House of Assembly has passed the law prohibiting kidnapping, making it an offence punishable by death sentence (Ezugwu, 2013). Akowa (2009) has revealed that life jail awaits kidnappers in Kaduna. In Delta State, the House of Assembly passed the Anti-Kidnapping and Terrorism Bill without the governor's assent. Emma Okoro, the Chief Adviser to the Governor on legislative matters stated that the House of Assembly in their own judgement considered the harsh and wicked activities of kidnappers and other terrorist acts, too overwhelming to Deltans and therefore decided to apply Section 100 Sub-section 5 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, which gives them power to veto the governor. Many state Governments have come-up with anti-kidnapping laws. The law is now passed for law enforcement agents to enforce and for Deltans to comply or challenge in a constitutional court, he concluded (Oyibo and Egbo, 2013).

The violation of every law is often backed by sanctions or punishment (Fitzgerald, 1966: 15-23). For instance, Chapter 30, Section 362 of the *Abia State of Nigeria Criminal Code (Amendment) (No. 1) Law* (2008) has it that any person who unlawfully takes an unmarried girl under the age of sixteen years out of the custody or protection of her father or mother or other person having the lawful care or charge of her and against the will of such father or mother or other person, is guilty of a misdemeanour and is liable to imprisonment for two years. "Once a lawful arrest has been made, the police may search the area within the suspects' immediate control, sometimes known in police lingo as the 'grabbable' area or the 'grab' area" (Carmen, 2010: 173). Sometimes to the alleged kidnappers "litigation may be a matter of life or death" (Tobi, 2009:5). Tijani (2010: 82) wrote that "although a police officer, whether a legal practitioner or not can initiate and prosecute criminal proceedings in the Magistrate Court, the right to initiate and prosecute in superior courts is subject to the High Court Laws of the States or relevant specific status". Given these considerations, it is emphasised that without a strengthened judiciary that restores the confidence and hope of citizens in the justice system, kidnap will soar.

Conclusion

This paper notes that kidnapping and related terror activities which evolved to be a security challenge in Nigeria developed from Niger-Delta region agitation to South-

Eastern Nigeria, where it was turned into an economic industry. In the same vein, every other region in Nigeria is witnessing the menace of kidnappers being used either as political weapon to outwit opponent or religious strategy as found in the Northern Nigeria by the Boko Haram. While kidnap ravage across Nigeria, it is traced to political parochialism that promote political violence, electoral fraud, bad governance and religious intolerance. All these culminate to denigrate the social conditions of Nigerians citizens especially the young people that are increasingly experiencing unemployment and by extension susceptible to associate in crime economy.

As a way out of kidnap debacle it is argued peace building will stem the increasing wave violent crime and hostage taking through Peace education to instil a culture of peace in citizens; Peace communications through the mass media and ICT to reinforce peace building; Strategic management of information to assist police to deal with the crime; Strengthening of the Judiciary to deal perpetrators of kidnapping; and, peaceful democratisation and societal transformations that will would lead to an effective check on kidnapping in Nigeria.

Finally, this work maintains the kidnapping that is driven by deteriorating social condition and elite capture of governance system must transformed to restore peaceful coexistence and prospect for economy prosperity to guarantee national security ,human security and sustainable livelihood in Nigeria.

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