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**Terrorism and Global Instability: A Theoretical Examination of the Extant  
Postulation on Its Causal Dynamics and Dimensions**

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***Introduction***

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“Terror and terrorism are related concepts. The use of terror by the state and non-state actors have deep historical illumination so much so that its contemporary transformation as almost the commanding instrument of force in the contemporary international order may not be separated from the nature of the transformation of the international system, its vision, philosophy and its new values... This allows for critical reflections on its reasons and consequences for global insecurity (Brian, 2010: 10)”

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Contemporary international politics has been contending with the rise, dimensions and sophistication in the use of terror by the terrorist networks whose number appeared

countless. Terrorism have increase remarkably in the past few years partly due to the anarchical structures and the nature of politics among states (Bremar, 1980 : 17), Sullivan, 1990 : 108), (Mongenthau, 1996 : 211), (Nazle and Robert, 1996 : 274), (Glenn and Paul, 1996 : 211) and ultimately, it has remained a potent threat to international peace and security (Gomwalk, 2004 : 102), (Zientell, 2005 : 101) and (Burgadoff, 2005 : 15). The rise of non-state actors commanding international attention and forcing states for inevitable recognition occupied the writings of Ruddock,( 2010: 11) and Bradley,( 2011: 17). The activity of the non-state terrorists-networks signifies the problem in its transformation in the conduct relations in international politics.

Several reasons have been advanced for the rise and the sophisticated dimensions the use of terror and the activities of the terrorists have assumed. This re-examines the extant postulations on the advent, causes, sophistication and dimensions of the impact of terrorism on global instability. These postulations have been located within the locus of the theories of terror and the range of terrorism but the contemporary realities and constant changes in power relations among states profoundly informs the need for the examination of this postulations. This however informs the significance of this paper. Terror and its use have both global and domestic realities. The relationship between the local and international terrorist networks must be underscored. The views of scholars on how terrorism constrained international peace must be examined.

This paper in however divided into five parts. The first is the introductions while the second aspect discusses the concept and dimensions of terrorism. The third aspect examines the extant postulations within the context of global instability. The fourth part is the conclusion. The fifth aspect contains the references.

### **The Concept and Dimension of Terrorism**

One of the fundamental problems of terrorism has been lack of consensus on what it is and how to define it. In fact it has no precise or widely agreed definition. The operationalization of this concept within strategic thought and how the use of terror has been embraced by both state and non-state actors may allow deeper comprehensions of this phenomenon giving the understanding of its use and utility within the content of both local and international politics. Scholars have contextualized terror and terrorism within their understanding of their social milieu. This situation appears necessary because it enables deeper understanding of its use, causes and dimensions in different social environment. It may simply be seen as a view – political concept which literarily refers to the use of violence or armed engagement against or by constituted authority for the extraction of certain political gains for the sustenance of an existing order locally or globally (Stiglitz,( 1986 : 17). David and Carlos (1975 : 116) have seen terrorism as:

“Murder, assassination, sabotage and subversion.  
The destruction of public records, the spread of  
rumour, the breakdown of criminal law enforcement,  
the prostitution of the court, the narcosis of the press-  
all these, as they contribute to common end, constitute  
terrorism”.

This position has not truly defined terrorism but articulates its fundamental effects and even not why it is an option of social intercourse in international or local politics of power relations. Williams (1989: 510) submitted that terrorism is:

- Illegal acts of violence
- Carried out against defenseless
- Or perceived targets
- In order to achieve political goals
- Perceived as “unaddressable in

any other fashion.

He concluded that terrorism is a form of social pathology arising in communities which found themselves under extreme pressure and the citizens decided to vent their displeasures using terror to address fundamental disagreements.

This position appears more illuminating. Besides the fact that it raises why terrorism, the attributes it advanced ensures broader categorization and rather more informing in its quest to see the use of terror beyond state actors. This position partly captures the realities of terrorism in contemporary international order. More importantly, it advances a strategic option embraced to address fundamental goals of terrorism within the structures of international politics.

Blair and Knoss (2004: 15) situate that position within the theory of political philosophy. Thus, terrorism is first an idea, then a process and an option or choice of political interaction. They argued that:

“Terrorism connotes a philosophy of force. Its dialectical manifestation as violence is produced by its dialectics. It is a great antithesis of the present order just as its process of engagement”.

This position is provocative. It opens another vista that is worth appraising. Its dialectical dimension raises questions that borders on the history and science of terrorism. Its relevance to this work is the desire of this option to create a changed order. This is an obstacle to global stability.

A critical discussion of force in international politics connotes the idea and violence on one hand, while its analysis is squarely within the context of strategic discourse. Robert

(1985:208) in its categorization, it observes carefully when force could be used. He argues that:

“States can employ force in one or two modes – physically or peacefully. The physical refers to the actual employment of terror while the peaceful in anticipation threat to employ terror”.

This position articulates the reality of force within the framework of terrorism / terror. Force and threat are terrorist stock-in-trade (Adeniji and Adeyemi-Suenu, (2005: 127). Terrorism could be states’ sponsored, a direct state agenda, and a non-state actor’s responses to a perceived inimical state agenda or a counter force to an existing international order as contemporary

experiences have shown. No wonder Herbert (1998: 504 – 505) says that:

“Terrorism has another potential meaning; the use of violence by sub-state actors against civilians and political figures for the purpose of ending a regime’s rule, and establishing a new government. terrorism is a form of unconventional war ... It may be used for a regime change in a foreign land”.

The use of terror as an option by states in international relations has been a recurrent decimal. It is either used for political stability and power maintenance so at, it has been used as a strategic option to achieve strategic policy objectives. Historical examples reinforced the above position. Few of these examples are French “Reign of Terror”, the 1930’s to early 1940’s Hitler and Mussolini reigns of terror. The Irish Republic Army, the Black September Movement, the Red Brigade appears to be a few examples between April 6<sup>th</sup>, 1975 to August

8<sup>th</sup>, eight terrorist attack were launched against Cuba. These crimes were carried out by a VS based terrorist group CDRV which has a great support and assistance of the CIA.

#### Terrorism and Global Instability: The Extant Postulations

Several reasons have been advanced as the fundamental effects of the acts of terrorism on global stability. The postulated positions reflect the ideological and intellectual persuasion of the different scholars that have made varied submissions on the problems of terror and terrorism in relation to global stability.

The colourations of their positions underscore the articulated effects of terrorism on global peace and stability. More pointedly, those views amplify possibly policy responses to the menace of terror and terrorism. Stropolovsky (2009:14), a military theorist, argues that terror is a universal tactics which appears in several forms depending on the dimensions and methods of its applications. The adoption of this option by the terrorist organizations reveals the understanding of its availability and potency as alternative method of achieving their international and local objectives. This option, accordingly, facilitates most potently, the contemporarily perceived and actual instability and the contrived peace which characterized contemporary international space. This position was further reflected on by Ayoob (2011:23-34). Terror and terrorism according to him has historical foundation both as tactics, option of rebellion and state policy. This policy "disturbs global peace and stability especially where it is an option in the hands of non-state actors"

While the above positions articulate principle, option and method of achieving international objectives which ultimately becomes a menace to international peace and stability, they were quick to realize that it is a potent alternative that is also easily available.

While this appears correct, the issues of availability and potency were stated as given but they are concepts subjected to certain variables. At what point does the adoption of an

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option become potent? Are there subjective variables underpinning the potency of an option? Availability is also subject to both objective and subjective conditions which the two views above evaded. However, the potency of adopted strategic options or tactics appears to be functions of determinations and other factors. While Stugham (2013) represents the former, Ruamllet (2013) represents the later.

Goddam (2014:31) argues that terrorism is the potent factor and source of contemporary global instability. While this position is partly correct, it is however significant to state that the sources of contemporary global instability are numerous. Other reasons are global economic insecurity (Steffano, 2016), depletion and scarcity of development resources, arms proliferation and clash of civilization ( Guvchy, 2016:17) among others. Terrorism and its associated force and violent options are concomitant but inclusive policy of either states-craft or adopted positions of non- state actors in their quest for hegemony or as alternative method of rejecting the existing status-quo.

## **CONCLUSION**

This paper examines terror and its uses within the context of international politics and the vortex of extant postulation. It articulates the conditions for the adoption of force and violent policy options in the conduct of relations among states. This work also argues that the gradual elevation of the use of force is excercebated by the nature of man, its conducts, shrinking development resources etc. It however argues that the use of force option is not synonymous with a particular state but rather, a policy associated with both state and non-state actors. States adopted this policy when it is most convenient to do so.

Critical examination of the extant postulation reveals that the use of this policy option will continue as long as pathological hegemonic and domination instinct of states persist. The

frustration of rising expectation among states continue to be a catalyst for the adoption of this

policy option, since the dimensions of the contemporary international politics continue to see the use of this option, as the ultimate ratio in the conduct of State relations to mention a few.

Revolutions in military technology and availability of sophisticated military weapons such as Precision, Jaystar, and Cybernetics etc. make the use of this option less costly and time saving. It also makes the weapons available to non-State actors, easily, through the politics and principles of Globalization. Thus, the idealist postulation has not resolved or diminishes the importance and the use of this option. Even, scholars of global co-operation and inter-dependence have not found solution(s) to the growing use of this policy option.

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