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**Emmanuel Jabea Eluke**

Postgraduate Student at the Department of International Relations  
Oles Honchar Dnepropetrovsk National University  
(Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine)  
E-mail: emmanueljabs@hotmail.com

**US-CAMEROON COOPERATION IN THE FIGHT AGAINST BOKO HARAM**

***Abstract.** Article describes cooperation between the US and Cameroon in Central Africa in fighting Islamic extremist group «Boko Haram». The attention is turned to the foreign policy interests of the United States and Cameroon in Central Africa and the reasons for the involvement of these countries in a regional security system. The regulatory framework of the US and Cameroon in the implementation of policies against «Boko Haram» is analyzed. The features common features of US policy and Cameroon in the fight against terrorism in Central Africa are disclosed.*

***Key words:** USA, Cameroon, Boko Haram, security and cooperation.*

**Actuality.** It is very important to pay attention to the threat caused by the Islamist Boko Haram terrorist group in Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria. Boko Haram has evolved from a local terrorist group to a regional and global security threat. Involved in low-level conflicts since its creation in 2002, Boko Haram intensified assaults against the Nigerian state in 2009, when it launched a series of attacks against police forces in Bauchi and then in Borno, Yobe, and Kano. Since then, Boko Haram has increased its frequency of terror attacks in Nigeria, pledged allegiance to the Islamic State, and expanded geographically to launching attacks in other West and Central African countries, such as Cameroon, Chad, and Niger. Boko Haram has killed at least 15,000 people and displaced 2.1 million in Nigeria alone [4]. Cameroon was once Central Africa's oasis of peace and stability. But since 2012, it has faced terrorist attacks, abductions, kidnappings, and incursions largely initiated by Boko Haram, an Islamic extremist group based in Nigeria. In 2013, the United States House of Representatives Committee on Homeland Security warned against underestimating Boko Haram's willingness and capacity to attack the United States of America [5]. It is very important for researchers to analyze the extend to which the United States is involved in the fight against Boko Haram in Central Africa.

Developing relations with Cameroon as a model and a gateway into that vast region became paradigmatic to the United States of America. The importance of the Gulf of Guinea and its opening to the large Atlantic Ocean, as we will see, particularly explains this new posture. The riches of the Gulf of Guinea in terms of natural resources and strategic position makes the area one of the busiest and most coveted in the world, such that building strategic alliances and securing it has several pay-offs, the main reason for United States co-operation with Cameroon to fight the Boko Haram terrorist group in Central Africa.

**Literature Review.** Few authors wrote about the Boko Haram terrorist group in Nigeria and Central Africa. Dr. Abimbola Adesoji in his book «The Boko Haram Uprising and Islamist Revivalism in Nigeria», explained the rise of Boko Haram and the activities of the terror group in Nigeria and the spread of terrorism to Chad, Cameroon and Niger [1]. Also, Dr. Shaib Ismail Omade in his book «Tracking Terrorism in Africa: Link and Content Analysis of Boko Haram» gives empirical analysis of Boko Haram Terror, causes, perceived sponsors and connectivity in Africa particularly in the North Eastern part of Nigeria [3].

**Objectives.** The objective of the article is to critically analyze the extend to which the US cooperation with Cameroon is helping in the fight against Boko Haram and if this co-operation between the United States and Cameroon will eventually defeat the terror

group in Central Africa.

**Basis Material.** While Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad, Benin, and Niger have been collaborating to fight the terrorist group, Boko Haram's attacks have continued to escalate. The kinds of attacks has been varied and included kidnapping, suicide bombing, assassination, robberies, extortions, burning villages and schools, and attacks of police stations and military positions. The State Department document of Cameroon related to the fight against terrorism and Boko Haram has been analyzed below.

Cameroon became a member of the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP) in 2014. Countering terrorist threats remained a top security priority for the Government of Cameroon, and the government worked with the United States government to improve the capacity of its security forces. Boko Haram took advantage of weaknesses in Cameroon's border security to conduct a number of terrorist attacks in the country's Far North and East Regions in 2014, including targeted killings and kidnappings of Cameroonians and foreigners. Cameroon responded to the attacks with an increased security presence in these regions. In 2014, the United States provided a number of training programs on terrorism and security to help Cameroon address the Boko Haram threat in the Far North. In addition to bolstering the operational capacity of its security forces, Cameroon's prospects for preventing terrorism also depends on the ability of the government to address humanitarian concerns in its northern regions as well as socio-economic and political challenges – such as widespread youth unemployment, poor transportation infrastructure, inadequate public service delivery, endemic corruption, and political marginalization.

In 2014, Boko Haram was responsible for targeted killings of Cameroonians in Mayo-Sava, Mayo-Tsanaga, Mayo-Danay, and the Logone and Chari Divisions of the Far North Region – including the villages of Kolofata, Fotokol, Waza, Amchide, and other localities at the border with Nigeria. Terrorist incidents in 2014 included:

On June 30 in Mayo Sava Division of the Far North Region, Boko Haram killed the village chief of Magdeme, who they suspected was collaborating with security forces.

On May 16, Boko Haram kidnapped 10 Chinese engineers in the Far North Region of Cameroon, where they were working on a road construction project. The assailants attacked the engineers' camp in Waza, and took the hostages to Nigeria before eventually releasing them in October. On July 6, a group of 10 men on motorcycles stormed the Lamida of Limani in the Mayo-Sava division and kidnapped two teenagers, both students at the local high school. On July 27, Boko Haram launched a cross-border attack on Kolofata and kidnapped over a dozen people, including the Lamido (traditional ruler) of Kolofata and the wife of Cameroon's Vice-Prime Minister, Amadou Ali. The assailants took the hostages to Nigeria before releasing them, along with the Chinese nationals, in October[6].

Between October and December, Boko Haram targeted civilians and military patrols in different areas of the Far North Region using vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices, stationary improvised explosive devices, and mines [6].

In order to cope with the fight against Boko Haram, Cameroon improved on its legislation, law enforcement and border security. Certain provisions of the 1965 Cameroon's Pane Code to prosecute acts of terrorism were changed. For example, prior to 2014, Cameroonian law did not explicitly criminalized terrorism but in December 2014, the National Assembly adopted legislation specifically addressing terrorism. This new law calls for the death penalty against any act of terror in the territory of Cameroon. Faced with the security challenges at its borders with Nigeria and the Central African Republic, the Cameroonian government increased coordination and information sharing among law enforcement, military, and intelligence entities, including the General Delegation for External Research, the National Army, the Rapid Intervention Unit (BIR), and the National Gendarmerie.

In 2014, Cameroon received United States capacity building training to improve its

counterterrorism and law enforcement efforts, including programs on the civil–military response to terrorism and the legal aspects of defense. The above measures supported Cameroon’s improvements in the detection of and responses to terrorist attacks, although further efforts are needed for the country to be able to more effectively deter terrorist incidents. But with the United States help, Cameroon is doing very well in the fight against terrorism [6].

In 2014, Cameroon continued to issue regional biometric passports aimed at providing enhanced security for residents of the Economic and Monetary Community of Central African States zone. In response to terrorist incidents, Cameroon reinforced its border security by establishing more control posts and deploying additional military units, including the BIR, to the Far North Region of the country. The government also stepped up screening efforts at ports of entry and highways, using terrorist screening watch lists as well as biographic and biometric technology in some cases. However, the capacity of security forces to patrol and control all land and maritime borders remained limited due to inadequate staffing and resources, leading to some uncontrolled border crossings.

Cameroonian military and police units proactively confronted and disrupted the activities of suspected Boko Haram members. In 2014, Several large arrests were made. According to reports, the police arrested 104 Boko Haram members, including 84 minors and 20 adults, operating in a Madrassa in the Mayo-Danay Division of the Far North. The adults were allegedly teaching their students how to become messengers, combatants, and suicide bombers for Boko Haram[6].

In order to counter the financing of terrorism, Cameroon is now a member of the Central African Action Group Against Money Laundering (GABAC). Through its membership in GABAC, Cameroon has adopted a legislative architecture to implement anti-money laundering and financial supervision actions. It established a financial intelligence unit, the National Financial Investigation Agency, which processes suspicious transaction reports and initiates investigations. Under the newly adopted legislation, any person convicted of financing or using financial proceeds from terrorist activities would be sentenced to life in prison. There has been no prosecution or conviction for money laundering since 2014. Also, Cameroon actively participates in African Union peacekeeping operations, and its military schools train soldiers and gendarmes from neighboring countries. Cameroon has pledged forces as part of the Multinational Joint Task Force to fight Boko Haram with neighboring countries [6].

Equally, in order to counter the radicalization to violence and radical extremism, Cameroonian authorities have taken a series of measures to counter violent extremism, including forming partnerships with local, traditional, and religious leaders to monitor preaching in mosques. The Government of Cameroon partnered with faith-based organizations such as the Council of Imams and Religious Dignitaries of Cameroon (CIDIMUC) to educate citizens on the dangers of radicalization and violent extremism, promote religious tolerance, and present religion as a factor for peace. This objective was furthered through targeted messaging in mosques, special prayer sessions, press releases, and through roundtable discussions and conferences bringing together people from various religious backgrounds. One of CIDIMUC’s strategies has been to work for improving the living conditions of imams [6].

In December 2014, the head of the United States Africa Command (AFRICOM) said the United States will boost support for Cameroon’s efforts to fight the Nigerian terrorist group Boko Haram. General David Rodriguez announced the United States will supply equipment and logistics training during a visit to Cameroon .Rodriguez said AFRICOM will step up assistance in response to a Cameroon request for more United States support to combat Boko Haram which has been terrorizing border villages and using them as staging grounds for its fight to control northern Nigeria.

Rodriguez praised President Biya – who has ruled Cameroon for the last 32 years – for his leadership in security issues in West Africa. «We are also thankful for President

Biya's leadership, as well as the Cameroonian leadership in the region, as they continue to work together with African partners to come up with African solutions to the security challenges of the region», said Rodriguez [7].

The general's visit to Cameroon comes a week after United States-Nigerian military relations came under strain. Nigeria cancelled a United States military training program linked to the fight against Boko Haram militants, after the United States rejected Nigeria's request for Cobra attack helicopters. The United States is legally constrained as to what weapons it can provide to foreign armed forces with questionable human rights records. Nigeria is now turning to Russia to fill the gap. Cameroon and Nigeria have been cooperating in efforts to neutralize Boko Haram. But despite this, the Islamic militants have been increasing attacks along the two countries joint border, stealing supplies, kidnapping, murdering and recruiting young men to fight with them.

In 2015, the U.S. Ambassador to Cameroon Michael Hoza said he expects collaboration with the American military will help save the lives of thousands of people in northern Cameroon as United States provided military equipment and arms to Cameroon. He said the United States is promoting a military partnership with Cameroon to fight the terrorist group Boko Haram because of growing concern over the tragic killings in the northern part of the central African nation. America is the third country, following China and Germany, to officially announce their support for Cameroon's battle against Boko Haram [7]. China supports Cameroon's battle against Boko Haram because of its national interests in Cameroon while Germany supports Cameroon on moral grounds (ethics) in order to avoid the spread of security risks in Cameroon.

Despite the above measures, the attacks by Boko Haram still remain rampant. In 2015, between April and September 2015, 106 Boko Haram attacks were reported in the far north region of Cameroon – up to four attacks per week some months. The kinds of attacks were varied and included kidnapping, suicide bombing, assassination, robberies, extortions, burning villages and schools, and attacks of police stations and military positions.

In October 2015 President Obama declared the deployment of approximately 300 United States Armed Forces personnel to Cameroon to perform intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance operations. These troops (and military equipment) will support the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), under the command of Nigerian Maj. Gen. Iliya Abbah. The MNJTF has 8,500 soldiers and 2,000 police officers that hail from Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, Niger, and Benin [7].

President Paul Biya of Cameroon, and President Muhammadu Buhari of Nigeria welcomed Obama's announced deployment of United State soldiers and intelligence expertise in Cameroon [7]. Intelligence expertise is an important contribution as African countries have serious deficits in intelligence abilities for peace operations. According to political scientist James Poland, intelligence is the first line of defense in fighting terrorism.

While some in West and Central Africa welcome Obama's action, it's too little, too late. Security expert Michel Rubin considers dissuasive military tactics as the «best means to counter terrorist threats» [7]. The United States deployment focuses on intelligence, stopping short of supporting preemptive strikes or more direct and special operations. At its current level, the United States troop and equipment contribution will not provide sufficient military force to eradicate Boko Haram.

The United States support is also coming rather late in the game. The United States commitment of troops in Cameroon came only after China, Russia, Germany and France had already committed to help Cameroon, through defense cooperation agreements (Russia) and by providing sophisticated military equipment (China, Germany) and training for security forces (Russia, Britain, France, and the United States).

Some civil society leaders and local analysts have raised concerns that an intervention would be destabilizing. They perceive United States support as a proxy for competing

with Russia specifically and opportunistic geopolitical positioning more broadly. Cameroon has «a pivotal geographic position» in the Gulf of Guinea, an oil-rich region that includes Angola, Chad, Congo Republic, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Sao Tome and Principe, and Nigeria.

The timing of United States announcements about action against Boko Haram furthers Cameroonian skepticism about United States motivations, especially with respect to United States competition with Russia. For example, United States interest in helping Cameroon with anti-Boko Haram efforts increased in December 2014 after Nigeria canceled a United States military training exercise related to the fight against Boko Haram and turned to Russia for military equipment [7]. Shortly thereafter, the head of the U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) Gen. David Rodriguez announced that the United States would provide military equipment and logistic training. Obama's recent announcement to deploy soldiers fulfills that promise. Boko Haram's attacks in Cameroon continue in the wake of Obama's announcement. On Oct. 23, Boko Haram briefly seized control of Kerawa, another city in the far north of Cameroon [7].

Furthermore, the United States donated Vehicles and other logistic equipment were handed over by the United States Ambassador to the Defense Minister on the 9th of December 2015 at the Military Headquarters Brigade in Yaounde. The Minister Delegate at the Presidency in charge of Defense, Joseph Beti Assomo, on December 9, 2015, in Yaounde, reassured the government of the United States of America (USA) through its ambassador to Cameroon, H.E. Michael Stephen Hoza, that the donation of vehicles and logistic equipment will be used in a rational and responsible manner by Cameroon's Defense Forces.

While receiving 18 Toyota Pickups, one trailer truck, a front-end loader, luggage carriers, seven 1,500 to 3,000-litre capacity mobile water tanks and six 30 KVA generators from the US government, Joseph Beti Assomo said the US assistance will augment the mobility and operational capacity of Defense Forces as well as improve their well-being in combat zones with the deployment of the power generators.

«This donation falls within the framework of support to the fight against terrorist sects, notably the jihad-terrorist sect, Boko Haram», he underscored, adding that the assistance adds to a multitude of measures by the United States government [2]. These include the recent arrival in the country of 300 United States soldiers, information-sharing between the United States and Cameroon, as well as the donation of armored vehicles.

Speaking earlier, the United States Ambassador noted that the donation was a symbol of the partnership between both countries against Boko Haram. «We know violent extremism. This is violence on a terrible scale. We want to see a bright future for Cameroon. We are happy to partner with you. We will be here till the end of the fight», Michael Hoza assured [2]. The donation is the second by the United States after six armored cars were donated in October 2015.

However, there have been some success in the fight against Boko Haram. The biggest success so far came in November 2015 when Cameroonian troops attacked the terrorist along the Cameroon Nigeria border and killed more than 100 terrorist and rescue more than 900 hostages taken by the group [8].

The United States has also aided Nigeria, Chad and Niger in the fight against Boko Haram as the terrorist group operates in these countries. For example, the Nigerian government participated in United States counterterrorism capacity building through the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program, including the training of more than 120 Nigeria Police Force (NPF) members in the detection and handling of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs). This increased the NPF's awareness and capacity to protect and preserve evidence from the crime scene of a suspected terrorist act. Through the Antiterrorism Assistance program, Nigerian police, customs officials, and immigration officers also participated in interagency rural border patrol

training to build the law enforcement sector's ability to utilize effectively all agencies in tackling rural border security challenges. The Nigerian government worked with the United States. FBI to investigate specific terrorism matters [6].

Equally, Chad is still participating in the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program. In 2014, Antiterrorism Assistance provided training on Quality Control in Civil Aviation Security and Interviewing Terrorist Suspects, and provided two boats to assist the Chadian River Police Brigade and Niger continued to receive counterterrorism assistance from a variety of international partners, including the United States. The Europe Union supported a 50-person team (EUCAP-Sahel) in Niger to build capacity in fighting terrorism and other organized crime. A number of other international partners provided security sector assistance in Niger, including France and the United Nations. Niger continued to permit French forces to be based in Niamey as well as in other locations to conduct operations such as ground and air surveillance. The United States government, provided terrorism assistance to Nigerien law enforcement – primarily through the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance program and a Resident Legal Advisor from the Department of Justice[6].

**Conclusion.** Despite the fact that the United States support and cooperation with Cameroon in the fight against Boko Haram, it is very clear that the United States-Cameroon cooperation has done a lot to reduce the rampant attacks by Boko Haram in the territory of Cameroon. The military equipments, surveillance drones and United States troops are helping Cameroon to degrade the abilities of Boko Haram. Also, the United States training of Cameroonian troops equally plays a good role in combating the terror group Boko Haram. Nigeria, Chad and Niger are also aided by the United States and other countries in the fight against Boko Haram.

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**Джабеа Елукє Е.**, аспірант кафедри політології Дніпропетровського університету імені Олеся Гончара (Дніпропетровськ, Україна), E-mail: [emmanueljabs@hotmail.com](mailto:emmanueljabs@hotmail.com)

#### **Співробітництво США і Камеруна у боротьбі з Боко Харам**

**Анотація.** *Стаття посвячена аналізу и систематизації методологических особенностей исследованийДосліджуються співробітництво США та Камеруну у Центральній Африці у боротьбі з ісламським екстреміським угрупованням «Боко Харам». Звертається увага на зовнішньополітичні інтереси США та Камеруна у Центральній Африці та при-*

чини залучення цих країн до регіональної системи безпеки. Аналізується нормативна база США та Камеруна у сфері реалізації політики протидії «Боко Харам». Розкриваються можливості, спільні та відмінні риси політики США та Камеруна у боротьбі з тероризмом в Центральній Африці.

**Ключові слова:** США, Камерун, Боко Харам, безпека, співробітництво.

Джабеа Элуке Е., аспирант кафедри політології ДНУ імені Олеса Гончара (Дніпропетровськ, Україна), E-mail: emmanueljabs@hotmail.com

### Сотрудничество США и Камеруна в борьбе с Боко Харам

**Аннотация.** Исследуются сотрудничество США и Камеруна в Центральной Африке в борьбе с исламской экстремистской группировкой «Боко Харам». Обращается внимание на внешнеполитические интересы США и Камеруна в Центральной Африке и причины вовлеченности этих стран в региональную систему безопасности. Анализируется нормативная база США и Камеруна в сфере реализации политики противодействия «Боко Харам». Раскрываются возможности, общие и отличительные черты политики США и Камеруна в борьбе с терроризмом в Центральной Африке.

**Ключевые слова:** США, Камерун, «Боко Харам», безопасность, сотрудничество.

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Кравець А. Ю.

кандидат політичних наук, доцент,  
доцент кафедри політології, ДНУ імені Олеса Гончара  
(Дніпропетровськ, Україна), E-mail: visnukDNU@i.ua

## ПІДХОДИ ДО ВИВЧЕННЯ БІОПІЛІТИКИ У ЗАРУБІЖНІЙ ТА ВІТЧИЗНЯНІЙ НАУКОВІЙ ЛІТЕРАТУРІ

**Анотація.** Актуалізація біополітичної аналітики у сучасному політологічному дискурсі пов'язана з процесом взаємозближення природничого та соціогумантарного знання. З другої половини ХХ століття у західній політичній думці сформувалось тенденція до переорієнтації наукових досліджень з вивчення політичних інститутів до аналізу поведінки «політичних акторів» та її впливу на політичний процес. Біополітики зосереджують свій дослідницький інтерес на різних аспектах біополітичної проблематики. В контексті сучасних політологічних досліджень біополітику можна визначити як міждисциплінарну галузь наукового знання, що досліджує «людину політичну» як біологічний вид з акцентом на психофізіологічних механізмах політичної поведінки та їх впливом на політичний процес.

**Ключові слова:** біополітика, «людина політична», політична поведінка, політичний процес.

Внаслідок динамічного розвитку політичної науки, в ракурсі уваги науковців з'являється все більше і більше нових дисциплін. Так, з другою половиною ХХ століття увага деяких закордонних і вітчизняних вчених прикута до біополітики.

Актуалізація біополітичної аналітики у сучасному політологічному дискурсі пов'язана з процесом взаємозближення природничого та соціогумантарного знання, зокрема, біології та політичної науки. ХХІ століття – це століття біоцентризму, адже біополітики вважають, що рушійною силою всіх політичних процесів, центральним елементом будь-якої політичної системи є саме індивід – homo politicus.

Біополітика, за словами А. Олескіна являє собою свого роду «кентавра» з біологічним тулубом і політичною головою. В широкому сенсі він трактує її як сукупність біологічних знань, що можуть бути застосовані у політичній сфері [1].

З другої половини ХХ століття у західній політичній думці сформувалось тенденція до переорієнтації наукових досліджень з вивчення владних інститутів до аналізу поведінки «політичних акторів» [2]. При чому ця тенденція розвивається одразу у двох взаємопов'язаних напрямках – біополітиці та політичній антропології.

Класиками біополітики вважаються: Л. Колдуелл зі статтею «Біополітика: наука, етика і соціальна політика» (1964 р.); А. Соміт та його стаття 1968 року «Прогрес