Peace Studies and Practice
Journal of the Society of Peace Studies and Practice

2024 Edition, Vol. 13, No. 2
Pp 117 - 128

Analysis of Transnationalism Ambazonia Insurgency in Former British Southern Cameroon.

Ọlọrunfẹmi ARIRABIYI-IBRAHIM,
M.A. PCS, M.A. Ling, PGD. Ethno., B.A. Ling.

Federal University Lokoja, Lokoja, Nigeria.



This is a map showing the ten regions of the Republic of Cameroon, with the Anglophone Cameroons (North West and South West) sandwiched between Nigeria (to the West), the Atlantic Ocean to the South, the Littoral to the south East and East, and West Cameroon to the North East. The map and the Compass were taken from Google Maps.

Abstract
This paper analyses the transnationalism Ambazonia insurgency in former British Southern Cameroon of the Republic of Cameroon, which involves transnational border crossings from Cameroon to Nigeria by members to carry out rebellious activities against their home State. The paper traces the historical development of the Republic of Cameroon crises, the role played by the different colonial actors in the partitioning of the Republic into French Cameroun and the British Sothern Cameroons, the Trusteeship that placed the Southern Cameroons under Britain and supervised by the United Nations in line with Article 86 of the Charter of the United Nations, and how Britain conceded the two Anglophonic Cameroons to Nigeria to be administered until the plebiscites of February 1961 when the British Southern Cameroons voted to be an autonomous region under French Cameroun, thinking this will guarantee their independence within the shortest period. The paper argues that Southern Cameroons' decision to join French Cameroun without proper situational analysis and the complaint against Igbos for taking over their economy and administrations and, as such, rejecting Nigeria over French Cameroun contributes to the self-inflicted conflict, which leaves Anglophonic Cameroons worse off. The study holds that the inability of French Cameroun to fulfill its pact, the repression, and ethnic bigotry, their overwhelming majority in public lives, including carrying out policy changes in disregard for the people of Southern Cameroons, are grievances that led to the agitation by the separatists, and declaration of secession in 2017. As a matter of strategy, the separatists adopt insurgency tactics in fighting the government but use transnational approaches to escape the jurisdiction of their home country while recently collaborating with the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB). This terrorist organisation could change the dynamics of the conflicts. In explaining the conflict, this study adopts a qualitative research methodology. The study equally relies on secondary research for data collection, using current journals, archival materials, books, and newspapers as data sources. The study equally made some recommendations as it concludes the research paper.

Keywords: Ambazonia, Cameroon, Conflict, Insurgency, Transnationalism.

1.0 Background

The British Southern Cameroons, which are equally an autonomous part of The Federal Republic of Cameroun, is Cameroon's Northwest and Southwest Regions declared as a Republic by the separatist group, the Ambazonia Restoration Council through a proclamation of October 10, 1990, as the Republic of Ambazonia. Southern Cameroons have a population of about 8.5 million of the Republic of Cameroon's 24 million population figures, with its capital in Buea, according to the separatist (Department of Foreign Affairs 2018). It has a land surface of 16,364 square kilometers of Cameroon's 475,442 square kilometers and consists of "two of the county's ten regions, the Northwest and the Southwest" (Awasom, 2020, p. 143). It shares all its western border with the Federal Republic of Nigeria, and like all other African countries, it has relations across its borderland.

Southern Cameroons have a long history of struggles of identity dating back to 1887 when the Colony of Ambas Bay was ceded to Germany. The expansionist activities of the Germans continued until 1913, when Germany and Britain concluded a boundary treaty settling the frontier between Germany's Kamerun (Cameroon) and the British Protectorate and Colony of Nigeria. In 1914, the British retook the Ambas Bay Coastal area "through Bimbia, Victoria, Idenau right up to Bakassi peninsular with its hinterland to

present-day Nkambe, and then further inland to Lake Chad. The whole strip of the territory is denoted as the British Cameroons" (Ambazonia Department of Foreign Affairs. 2018, p. 9), and all the denoted strip territory as British Cameroons and administered as an appendage of Nigeria.

Between 1919 and 1961, British Southern Cameroons were ruled by the British colonial administration Trusteeship as mandated by the United Nations (U.N.) after the London Declaration of 1919 divided Cameroon into 80% French and the British zone 20% as Southern Cameroons. The 80% was under the French Trusty territory until the 1961 independence plebiscite. On February 11, 1961, an UN-organised referendum in British Cameroon on whether the territory should join neighbouring Cameroon or Nigeria; British Cameroons decided to join the independent Republic of Cameroon with about 70.5% of the vote cast. Notwithstanding the outcome of the plebiscite, the Ambazonians condemned the referendum as fraudulent since the outcome did not reflect the wishes and aspirations of an autonomous region from French Cameroon. The Ambazonia claims that Hobson's choice presented to Southern Cameroon is to "achieve independence "by joining" either French Cameroun or Nigeria" (Ambazonia Department of Foreign Affairs, 2018, p. 10), and the term 'joining' in the understanding of all parties, i.e., French Cameroun, Southern Cameroons, British, and the United Nations means in their interpretation, a form of a federation of two states of equal status.

Following the U.N. Resolution 1350 of March 1959, in which the General Assembly had earlier recommended that the Administrative Authority, in consultation with the U.N. Plebiscite Commissioner, should organise a separate plebiscite under the U.N. supervision for both the Southern and Northern parts of Cameroun, to ascertain the wishes of the territories concerning their future; and Resolution 1473 (XIV) of December 12, 1959, whereby the General Assembly (G.A.) being satisfied with the arrangements for the conduct of the plebiscite in the Northern Cameroons, recommended that the plebiscite be held in Southern Cameroons between September 30, 1960, and March 1961. The U.N. Resolution 1608 (XV) on the future of the Trust Territory of the Cameroons under the United Kingdom endorses the outcome of the plebiscite 2(b) that "The people of Southern Cameroons have similarly decided to achieve independence by joining the independent Republic of Cameroon" (UNGA resolution 1608, 1961, p11). The interpretations given to this particular paragraph by British Southern Cameroons, coupled with the zero-sum attitude of French Cameroon, become the root cause of the intractable conflict since 1961.

However, since 2017, there has been a renewed quest for the restoration of the independence of Ambazonia in line with the separatists' interpretation of the UNGA resolution, who now engaged the Central Government in a rebellious war known as the Anglophone crisis and have gone a step further in setting up a government in exile. The current conflict situation assumed a violent dimension between separatist forces against Cameroon's military since October 2017 (Orock, 2021). Furthermore, the minority status of Southwest and Northwest Cameroons and "the violent abuse it has suffered at the hand of Cameroon's authoritarian State for more than 60 years are the key factors driving anglophone resentment and the separatist conflict" (Orock, 2021, p. 3). Because the Ambazonia Restoration Council had no standing army that could face the State, it continued using insurgency and militancy tactics to confront the State.

This paper examines the Ambazonia conflict and analyses the transitional significance of using insurgency as a tactic. The paper adopts a qualitative research methodology approach to explore and understand the groups and

individuals associated with the conflicts, i.e., the tactics, the subversive natures, and the challenges posed to the regions and how to resolve them. For this purpose, the data collection for this work is based on secondary sources. These include published and unpublished materials like journals, archival materials, Newspapers, and books. The study, therefore, is purely desktop research, with the reliability of the material not in doubt because of the comparative information carried out in the research process.

1.1. Conceptual Definition

1.1.1 Defining insurgency

Defining insurgency has been a complex issue because there are multiple definitions due to different considerations, including politics. Notwithstanding, however, all the definitions have common fundamentals. In Guide to the Analysis of Insurgency (2012, p.1), the United States of America Government (U.S.A.) says the insurgency is a "protracted political-military struggle directed toward subverting or displacing the legitimacy of a constituted government or occupying power and completely or partially controlling the resources of a territory through the use of irregular military forces and illegal political organisation". Somit (1962) opines that insurgency traditionally has a domestic origin and is directed at political or economic objectives. Insurgencies, therefore, concentrate on persuading or coercing the people through the tactic of violence and subversion. North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), for example, defines insurgency as "the actions of an organised, often ideologically motivated group and movement that seeks to effect or prevent a political change of a governing authority within a region" (NATO, 2010, p. 8).
Emanating from these definitions, (NATO, 2010, p.8) holds that an insurgency must have "three elements: (1) action or activities by an organised group; (2) a goal of some form of political change over a ruling regime; and (3) the use of violence or subversive activities. All three components are necessary for a conflict to be an insurgency". There are three characteristics of insurgents that some scholars like Somit regard as behaviour traits, summarised as follows:

I. Insurgent operations are part of traditional guerrilla warfare used as a common tactic against their tormentor. Somit further holds that in guerrilla warfare, the known laws of war are set aside, and the fixed rules assumed in fighting the wars are equally jettisoned; it is a case of no-holds-barred struggle, so also the distinction between military and civilian, and combatant and non-combatant all form of abuses are of no consequences – torture and violence at its crudest form is employed. The tactic of guerilla warfare, apart from the fact that it is more costly in terms of operationality, is an antithesis to military professionalism and traditions (Somit, 1962).

ii. The second is the insurgents' asymmetricity of strength between the insurgents and the military or regime being challenged. It is common knowledge that the insurgents have no military capability like the regime being fought, so "when the military situation gets so bad that you cannot meet your opponent head-on, of necessity there is resort to guerrilla warfare" (Somit, 1962. p.48). Nationalists have used this kind of tactic, referred to as nationalist insurgency. This tactic is one of the fundamentals that make them insurgents; if not, they would not be one.

iii. The third type of insurgency has a domestic origin and political or economic objectives. Political objectives entail either a desire to oust foreign domination or a specific political goal and economic objectives, such as land reform or tax reform. This type of insurgency is usually called a revolutionary insurgency and, technically, is different from rebellion. A revolution seeks to remodel the entire social structure, whereas a rebellion desires only to seize power to carry out governmental

authority. Somit holds further that both rebellion and revolution aim to seize internal power. Both equally have three courses of action in achieving their aims:

First, that power can be seized through a coup d'état. Somit submits that some elements are added to the characteristics of contemporary insurgencies because the newer feature insurgencies pose other dimensional problems today than the previously known ones, and "the contemporary insurgent can employ two powerful doctrines, two potent ideologies – nationalism and communism – eliciting popular support" (Somit, 1962, p. 47).

The second, the revolutionary path, entails a full-scale civil war involving armed forces. Sometimes, loyalty amongst the armed forces can be divided, which plays a decisive part in the struggle to support the insurgents.

The third mode to seize power is through insurrection or insurgent movements. While (1) and (2) could be attempted through substantial strength, lacking strength leads the insurgents to restore to insurrection and guerilla warfare, which is an open admission to weakness. This lines with Mao Tse-tung's four principles of guerilla warfare, which are "(1) Enemy advances – we retreat. (2) Enemy halts – we harass. (3) Enemy tires – we attack. (4) Enemy retreats – we pursue." (Somit, 1962, p. 40). Somit further opines that "insurgency is simply a transitional stage which weakens the enemy to the point of being able eventually to defeat him via full-scale military operation" (1962, p. 40). This paper aligns with NATO's definition because the Ambazonia insurgent group seeks to effect political change by severing British Southern Cameroon from the Federal Republic of Cameroon through insurrection, knowing that the group is lacking in strength militarily to match the Federal Government; the Ambazonia insurgents asymmetricity strength becomes the obvious tactical tools of deployment.

1.1.2. Transnational Insurgency

Transnationalism involves activities that are not restricted within local or national borders but across nationally recognised borders. (Risse-Kappen 1995, p.3) defines transnationalism as "regular interactions across national boundaries when at least one actor is a non-state agent or does not operate on behalf of a national government or an intergovernmental organization." The implications are that the insurgents go across the national borders of influence to carry out attacks, recruit rebels to come across into their sphere to carry out nefarious activities or have foreign networks for external funding of their insurgency, training, and collaboration with other relevant organisation with similar ideologies, and or safe haven for sanctuary (Salehyan, 2009; Onuha, 2014). The ability, therefore, to operate across the border distinguishes domestic insurgent groups from transnational insurgents.

Transitional insurgencies use international networks to establish links with groups and foreign countries that share similar ideologies for purposes of funding, recruitment, and training; supply of arms and ammunition; and collaborations they are not fighting by themselves but as parts of general international networks (Garba, 2021; Somit, 1962). Accordingly, when the heat turns on them in their hiding place on the national territory, they escape to an external sanctuary in the neighbouring country to distract or divert their pursuers and use this sanctuary for mobilisation. The transnational insurgency has, therefore, become part of the worldwide network of struggles dictated by the strategy of struggle, which doctrines of nationalism and ideologies have largely determined for eliciting support.

2. 0. The Conflict Trend from the 1970

Since the early 1970s, there have been latent conflicts between the serving politicians from the Southern Cameroons and the President of the United Republic of Cameroun, Ahmadu

Ahidjo, who is from French Cameroun. This conflict led to the removal of people like Augustine Jua, of Southern Cameroon's origins, from the position of the Prime Minister of Southern Cameroons barely three years into government in 1968. In 1970, following President Ahmadu Ahidjo's disagreements concerning the abuse of Federal autonomy through marginalisation and the gradual assimilation of Southern Cameroons, Vice President Foncha from Southern Cameroons was relieved of his duty. Events cumulating from May 20, 1972, show indices of the unstable relationship between French Cameroun and the Southern Cameroonians, who feared being assimilated by French Cameroun. On that date, a referendum asking for the amendments of the Federal Constitution to a Unitary Constitution, and seeking to dissolve the "the Southern Cameroons House Assembly, House of Chiefs, abolishing the post of Prime Minister and Centralising administration in Yaoundé, the French Cameroun Capital" (Department of Foreign Affairs, 2021, p. 12), and dismantle the Federation was organised. After the resignation of President Ahmadu Ahidjo on November 6, 1982, Paul Biya, also a Prime Minister in the Government of President Ahidjo from French Cameroun, became the President.

In 1984, President Paul changed the country's name from the United Republic of Cameroon to La Republic du Cameroun by a Presidential Decree. Flowing from the actions of the President, agitation for the struggle for independence for Southern Cameroons intensified, the grievance being the dismantled Federal structures that had hitherto guaranteed the existence of the two Federations. This led to the demand for autonomous regions within the federal framework, which was against the unitary system of government. However, when their demands failed, they restored to agitation for outright independence (Nkwi, 2020). In 1993, Southern Cameroon held a conference under the aegis of the All-Anglophone Conference (AAC-I) at Buea, bringing together a cross-section of Southern Cameroonians that unanimously asked the Government of Cameroun for constitutional talks with an agenda that will address Cameroun's two - countries' possibility. The outcome of the AAC-I conference resulted in the visit of the delegation from Southern Cameroons to the United Nations Headquarters in 1993, led by the erstwhile Vice President, J.N Foncha, and S.T. Muna, a former Prime Minister of Southern Cameroons, and a follow-up conference in 1994 after their return from New York (Ambazonia Department of Foreign Affairs, 202, p.12). Following the outcome of the visit to New York, a second conference tagged AAC-II, held between April 29 and May 1, 1994, in Bamenda, reaffirmed the outcome of the first meetings. However, the conference went further to make what is named AAC-II Bamenda Proclamation, signed by Sam Ekontang Elad on May 1, 1994, which seeks the independence and sovereignty of Southern Cameroons. Numbers 6 to 9 of the proclamation, which is very relevant to this paper and here reproduced as taken from Remi Tassing online, July 28, 2018, states thus:

> "6. Should the Government either persist in its refusal to engage in meaningful Constitutional Talks or fail to engage in such talks within a reasonable time, the Anglophone Council shall inform the Anglophone People by all suitable means. Thereupon, it shall proclaim the revival of the Independence and Sovereignty of the Anglophone territory of the Southern Cameroons and take all measures necessary to secure, defend, and preserve the sovereignty and Integrity of the said Territory.
>
> 7. Following the Proclamation of the Revival of the Independence and Sovereignty of Southern

> Cameroons as provided for here above, the Anglophone Council shall, without having to convene another session of the All Anglophone Conference, transform itself into the Southern Cameroons Constituent Assembly for drafting, debating and adopting a Constitution for the Independent and Sovereign State of Southern Cameroons.
>
> 8. For paragraph (7) above, the Anglophone Council shall enlarge itself to other organs or individuals as shall appear expedient, beneficial, or necessary and in the interest of Southern Cameroons.
>
> 9. In the event of the situation contemplated in paragraph (7) above, the Independent and Sovereign Southern Cameroons and the Independent and Sovereign Republique du Cameroun shall negotiate their peaceful separation based on the Buea Peace Initiative and on such other terms as shall be mutually beneficial".

However, choosing to misinterpret or misunderstand willfully, "the Anglophone desire for autonomy, Cameroonian authorities, and their activities have further pushed the Anglophones to a tight corner in which they have decided to fight back since 2016" (Nkwi, 2020, pp.280-281). Nkwi further identifies two possible convincing causes of the contemporary conflict situations in the Anglophone Cameroons as the role of the U.N. and the British during the decolonising mission, which led to the role of the separatists who chose war in 2017 with the Cameroon-led Government.

Scholars have, however, expressed differing opinions on the lopsided handling of Trusteeship by the U.N. and Britain in the British Southern Cameroons case, which is associated with one of the root causes of the conflicts in Cameroon. Chapter XII, Article 76 (b), of the United Nations Charter entrusts the power of Trusteeship over British Southern Cameroons to Britain to promote "political, economic, social, and educational advancement of the inhabitants of the trust territories, and their progressive development towards self-government or independence as may be appropriate to the particular circumstance of each territory and its people," and, "the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned, and as may be provided by the terms of each trusteeship agreement" (Charter of the United Nations, p.48; Nkwi, 2020, p. 287; Ngoh, 2001, p.86). Nkwi (2020) equally believes that Article 76(b) provides legal ammunition for Cameroon nationalists to gain concessions from Britain, the colonial authority.

However, the criticism of the nationalists started from the decision to make British Southern Cameroon a part of Nigeria's Eastern Province administered by the Nigeria Government because of the language factor, secondly, the fact that British Cameroon will evolve politically within the Eastern Province, and thirdly because of the economic reason since British Cameroon was considered not financially viable without the assistance of Nigeria and, or French Cameroons. The British Southern Cameroons, however, kicked against this decision because it violated Cameroon's trusteeship status since Southern Cameroons, as a territory, have the right to be autonomous. The other implication of the British Southern Cameroons being part of a province in Nigeria is that every Constitutional development in Nigeria equally affects the Southern Cameroons, and this allows an influx of Nigerians of Eastern origin to take over the controls of the Southern Cameroons' economy (Awasum, 1998; Nkwi, 2020). Following the Constitution development and debates in

Nigeria, the Southern Cameroons equally make the issue of constitutional debates a part of its agenda as championed by the Cameroons Youth Leagues (C.Y.L.), which serves as an umbrella pressure group for the Cameroonians elite group involved in campaigning for the reformation of the Richard Constitution focusing on regional autonomy. The reason for this, in part, is the complaint against the Igbo (Nigeria) mass immigration to occupy the administration, commerce, and trade, a situation of affairs that rendered the territory to become a colony of a colony (Konings & Nyamnjoh, 1997).

The second cause of the conflict, opines (Nkwi, 2020, p. 287), is the inability of the post-colonial French Cameroun government to take decisive steps to forge with the British Cameroons a unified and sustainable nation-state. Some scholars have observed that what exists between British Cameroons and French Cameroun is nothing more than a marriage of inconvenience because the two States have been embroiled in different challenges of building a sustainable nation, pointing out the inequalities that are glaring between the two States, and scoring French Cameroun leading in all ramifications of development. Others include replacing English with French as a teaching medium and in the legal system. These consequently triggered a sense of marginalisation and frustration from the Anglophones, arguing that those policies amounted to the French colonisation of the Anglophones. This action leads to the November 21, 2016, indefinite strike by Anglophone lawyers and teachers calling on the Cameroun Government to maintain the British education system and the two-way legal system. The effect of the strike was massive as it paralysed the education system, and some lawyers who took part in the peaceful demonstration were brutalised by the military (Awasum, 2020; Orock, 2021).

The war started in January 2017 following the arrest of some of the leaders of the separatist group in Nigeria by the Government, who deported them back to the Cameroun government, which kept them under secret detention. On September 22, 2017, the people of Anglophone came out with olive branches on what they tagged Walk of Life with their flags hoisted on all public building Headquarters in Northwest and Southwest regions. On October 1, 2017, the people came out while defying the military presence and declared the "restoration and independence of the state of Ambazonia" (Nkwi, 2020, p. 299).

Orock (2021) further posits that the Cameroon government conspired with its Nigerian counterpart to abduct Cameroon separatist leaders meeting in Abuja and extradited them to Cameroon, who held them for months without any information about them. Orock further states that the French Government did not make enough attempts to dialogue with the leading separatists. However, when overtures were eventually made, the separatist leaders declined for fear of repression, and the pre-condition the Government always attaches before a discussion could take place—for example, not discussing the fundamentals of the State structure. Orock further opines that the dismissive responses of the Government of French Cameroun and those of the elites from the Anglophone towards the AACs "prompted the establishment of a dissident, radical separatist movement – the Southern Cameroons National Council (SCNC) in 1995" (Orock, 2021, p. 6), who, unlike the federalist, demands pre-1961 two-States territory, but now demanding for total independence as the only way the Southern Cameroons can free themselves from the grips and brutal dominations of French Cameroun and the only way future crisis can be avoided in the territories. However, the immediate trigger to the current situation will be traced to the 2016 repression of the teacher and the lawyers, the total domination of Cameroon public life by French Cameroon, and resentfulness towards

the Anglophone Cameroons by the security personnel, all culminated together to drive the current conflict (Orock, 2021).

3.0. The transnationalisation and significance of Ambazonia's insurgency

Scholars have argued that, due to the reason of asymmetricity of strengths against insurgents that weigh heavily in favour of the organised armed forces of a State and because the State is equally limited as the reason of international boundaries, having no authority beyond one State, which starts and ends within its boundaries, insurgents and other rebellion groups often, as parts of their strategies operate transitionally outsides the confine of their own States, to evade repression from their national Governments. This is because the State has the traditional monopoly to use force within its territory legitimately, establish rules and regulations, regulate opposition activities, regulate rules concerning political games, regulate the activities of the opposition, and issue regulations to suppress any form of challenges to its rules. (Skocpol, 1979) holds the assumption that transnational relations have helped in the emergence of social revolutionary crises and have equally helped to shape the outcomes of the revolution. Some of the transnational significance of the Ambazonia insurgency are thus given below.

3.0.1 Unhindered access through Nigeria border

The proximity from the host country makes across-the-border raids and attacks on the target State very easy while escaping the jurisdiction of their own country into Nigeria seamlessly; this significantly reduces the cost of operations. Ambazonia insurgents are known to while escaping into Nigeria, have carried out deadly attacks on public targets in Cameroons and immediately escaped back to Nigeria. (Salehyan 2007, p. 223), holds that "external bases are tactically desirable for rebels because the State can better conduct counterinsurgency operations at home than abroad. When transnational rebels (TNRs) operate from extraterritorial bases, the State's cost of repressing them increases significantly". The reason is that the neighbouring country where the insurgents escape will frown at its territory being forayed without due clearance from the concerned State. This violates international laws and territorial sovereignty and integrity. However, this can shield the insurgents from their home government's brute force and repression.

3.0.2 Possibility of security breaches

Nigeria is currently faced with terrorist activities on its northern border with the Cameroon Republic, and violent separatist agitation is not quite a distance from its Southern border with the Southern Cameroons. These situations put Nigeria in a perilous situation of having to fulfill her international obligations in the areas of human rights and humanitarian laws, and, or risks her cordial relationship with a friendly neighboring country that has been playing fundamental roles in the counterinsurgency wars against Boko Haram in North East border, devoid of diplomatic rows. Caught in both dilemmas of benefitting from the Republic of Cameroon's cooperation in the fight against terrorism and diplomatic rows that could further destabilise the country, Nigeria vowed not to allow the Ambazonia separatist organisation to use her territory as a lunch pad for secessionist activities.

Thus, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, President Buhari, is quoted in (Africa Review February 13, 2018) as saying that "Nigeria will take necessary measures within the ambit of the law to ensure that her territory is not used as a staging area to destabilise another friendly sovereign country." For this reason, and apparently in breach of international human rights law against the principle of non-refoulment, on January 18, 2018, Nigeria arrested the Ambazonia leaders, including Sisiku Julius Ayuk Tabe, the

President of the Ambazonia Republic, on her territory and extradited them to Cameroon, despite the submission of their asylum paper to the Nigerian government before their arrest. However, notwithstanding Nigeria's position to prevent the Ambazonia separatists from buying arms or smuggling small and light weapons across the border of Nigeria, scholars opine that the trading in proliferation is booming across the Nigeria border with Southern Cameroons, allowing the separatists unrestricted access and are still crossing into Nigeria's territory for training or smuggling.

3.0.3 Humanitarian Challenge

One of the first challenges faced in any conflict is humanitarian issues of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) or Refugees. Since the violent crackdown on the separatists arising from the 2016-2017 protest, the conflict escalated from a low-scale insurgency to a civil war situation, leading to internal displacements of citizens from their safe zones. Currently, there are over 765,000 displaced persons, over 70,000 refugees in Nigeria, and about 4,000 civilian fatalities, according to the International Crisis Group reports. In 2020, Nigeria was said to have provided the refugees with 100 hectares of land and released about one billion Naira as a start-up fund to engage in productive activities.

3.0.4 Escalation of Regional Conflicts

There has been palpable fear within the region on the implication of partnerships between the two separatist groups, i.e., the Ambazonia and the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in the South East, that have been advocating for secession from Nigeria to create a country named Biafra. This follows the announcement of both leaders of the separatist group in April 2021 of their formal alliance. Jesse Craig, in The Foreign Policy Reports of May 20, 2021, reports that Cho Ayaba, the leader of the Ambazonia Governing Council, and Nnamdi Kanu, the IPOB leader, appeared in a Press Conference together and declared action plans for the two separatist groups working together for the survival of their organisations. Ayaba was quoted to have said that the alliance between the two organisations is critical because Nigeria and Cameroon have established two autocracies that used violence to suppress their people.

This formation is capable of changing the conflict dynamics in the two countries and across West and Central Africa, considering the violent activities of terrorist organisations like Boko Haram and Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP) that are already prevalent in regions and the IPOB military wing, The Eastern Security Network (ESN) established in December 2020. The implication is increased attacks by these two separatist organizations on government institutions and security personnel in the two countries to weaken Nigeria's Eastern border, thereby allowing the elements of Boko Haram and ISWAP to infiltrate further and change the dynamics within the regions. The alliance of the groups could equally introduce another dimension to criminalities in the Southern parts of Nigeria, already known for the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons. Kidnapping, armed robbery, and cattle rustling could be parts of their tactics for fundraising. The citizens in the region will be subjected to a perpetual fear of the unknown, with their movements restricted and the possibility of losing everything they have to marauders.

3.0.5 The Influence of the Diasporians

The Ambazonia diasporans' roles in advocacy and funding, wherever they are located outside the international boundaries of the Republic of Cameroon, have been significant. It is a known fact that diasporas raised donations for separatist and other rebel groups to commit violence without the donating population having an idea, most times, that their donations are channeled for extremist activities, although the majority know where their donations are being channeled (Vanguard, February 2012). For example, IPOB and its sympathizers in the

diaspora are known to have contributed to the cause of Biafra; for instance, Nnamdi Kanu has been seen touring countries in the diaspora for donations. The same happens to some religious bodies. Zakat, Islamic donation has been "one of the methods abused by designated terrorist groups operating in West and Central Africa for raising funds. This method requires little infrastructure and is profitable because it manipulates a common practice of the Muslim population in the area" (FATF-GIABA-GABAC, 2016, p. 14). Similarly, Ambazonia diasporans have been equally involved in raising money outside the Republic of Cameroon's sovereignty to raise money to prosecute their separatist activities in Southern Cameroons.

4.0 Conclusion

The paper analyses the transnational significance of the Ambazonia insurgency. It presents the causal factors that led to the conflict from the colonial period when the people were placed under the British Trusteeship, called British Cameroons and were made an administrative unit under Nigeria. At the 1961 plebiscite, the British Cameroons became the British Southern Cameroons while choosing not to be part of Nigeria. However, they chose the Cameroun Republic with the understanding of two-state autonomy. This paper believes that this marks the genesis of Cameroon's problems. The paper holds that the inability of the Cameroun Republic to have healthy discussions with Southern Cameroons, coupled with apparent underemployment and the unilateral change of some of the fundamentals of the constitution, repression, and the arrest of prominent leaders during the 2016 and 2017 protests were the primary driver of the current separatist agitation for a separate country. This paper concludes that the across-border alliance between the Ambazonia separatist group and the IPOB separatist group to the West will create regional security challenges, especially for Nigeria, which is already battling some terrorist groups around Southern Cameroons North West.

Recommendation

i. Nigeria should be more involved by facilitating the mediation process between French Cameroun and the Southern Cameroons, where issues relating to grievances concerning both sides can be discussed without hindrances. A compromise could be reached as a first step toward the Possibility of larger meetings.

ii. The alliance between the IPOB and Ambazonia is a disaster. Nigeria should pursue deliberate policies to ensure that an alliance between the two separatist groups never works. This could be done through kinetic and non-kinetic powers while intensifying intelligence gathering by infiltrating the camps of the separatist groups with informants and security agents.

iii. Efforts should equally be made to pluck the leaking and porous borders through joint patrols and ensure that the proliferation of arms and ammunition is reduced to the barest minimum.

iv. The UN should revisit its roles during the Trusteeship period and the consequent referendum in British Cameroon on February 11, 1961, and see the possibility of a two-state Federal solution for the conflict to abate.

References

African Review (2018) Africa Center for Strategic Studies February 13, 2018.

Ambazonia Department of Foreign Affairs, (2018) "History of Amazonia Part – I: Western Colonial Rule over Southern Cameroon". 1st Edition, ©DFA-FRA Credits: Government of Ambazonia & U.N. Archives, Cameroon Post, The Post, Sun, CNN, Eden, CIVITAS.

Awasum, N. (1998). "Colonial background to the development of autonomous tendencies in anglophone Cameroon, 1916 – 1961". Journal

of Third World Studies xv, 1: pp. 168 – 183.
Charter of the United Nations and The Status of the International Court of Justice, (2008). Published by the United Nations Department of Public Information, New York.
FATF-GIABA-GABAC (2016). "Terrorist Financing in West and Central Africa" (FATF), Pariswww.fatf-gafi.org/publications/methodsandtrends/documents/terrorist-financing-west-central-africa.htm.
Garba, D. (2021). 'Transnational insurgency: Boko Haram and regional insecurity in Africa'. FUDMA Journal of Political and International Affairs, Dutsin-Ma, Katsina Nigeria.
Galula, D. (1964). Counterinsurgency Warfare Theory and Practice. New York 3, N.Y., U.S.A Publisher: Frederick A. Praeger, 64 University Place,
Konings, P. & Nyamnjoh, F.B. (1997). 'The Anglophone Problem in Cameroon'. The Journal of Modern African Studies, 35, 207-229.https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022278X97002401
Ngoh, V.J. (2020). Cameroon 1884 - Present: The History of a People. Limbe, Cameroon: Design House.
Nkwi, W.G. (2020). 'Britain, UN and the Decolonisation of British Southern Cameroons: The past Foundations of the Present day Ambazonia War of Independence in Cameroon'. Print ISSN 1023-1757; Electronic. ISSN:25 19-5476; DOI https://doi.org/10.29086/25 19-5476/ 2020/sp36a12
Orock, R. (2021). 'Cameroon's Separatist War: Anglophone Grievances and its Diaspora'. South Africa Institute of International Affairs.
Onuoha, F. (2014). Danger not to Nigeria alone – Boko Haram's transnational response. Abuja, Nigeria: Fredrich-Ebert- Stiftung. http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/nigeria/11066.pdf
Risse-Kappen, T. ed. (1995). Bringing transnational relations back in non-state actors, domestic structures, and international institutions. Cambridge Studies in International Relations, series 42. Publisher, Cambridge University Press.
Salehyan, I. (2007). Transnational rebels: Neighbouring State as security for rebels. World politics, 59(2), pp. 217–422.
Skocpol, T. (1979). States and social revolutions: a comparative analysis of France, Russia, and China. Cambridge University Press.
Rocco, T.S., and Plakhotnik, M.S. (2009). Literature reviews, conceptual and theoretical Frameworks: Terms, functions, and distinctions. Human Resource Development Review, 8(1), 120-130. https//doi.org/10.1177/1534484309332617 range.
Somit, A. (1962). Theory and practice of insurgency and counterinsurgency. Naval War College Review. Vol 15, No.2 October 1962.
VANGUARD Media Limited (Feb. 2012), The Lamidos Sanusi Interview: Exaggerating the Concept of Zakat. www.vanguardngr.com/2012/02/the-Lamido-Sanusi-interview-exaggerating-the-concept-of-zakat/
https://www.theafricareport.com/228634/cameroon-crisis-grinds-on-due-to-anglophone-divisions-and-yaoundes-unwillingness-to-negotiate/
https://ambazonia.org/en/about/republic-of-ambazonia/history
https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/198/23/PDF/NR019823.pdf?OpenElement
https://medium.com/@tassingremi/all-anglophone-conference-2-acc-ii-transcription-12d6bd5d17a8
https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/05/20/separatists-nigeria-cameroon-biafra-ipob-ambazonia-anglophone-joining-forces/
https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/central-africa/cameroon