

THE MILITARY AND INTERNAL SECURITY OPERATIONS IN
NIGERIA'S FOURTH REPUBLIC: RETHINKING SECURITY FOR
POSITIVE PEACE IN MAIDUGURI, NIGERIA

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The deployment of the military for internal security operations in (post)conflict communities comes with its own peculiar challenges which are often locale-specific, as in the case of victims of alleged military excesses in the Maiduguri metropolis in northeastern Nigeria. This article posits that, given accusations of human rights abuses and extra-judicial killings levelled against members of the military force by civilians as the military strives to enforce its mandate of the “Right to Protect” in the city, the type of peace resulting from prolonged military occupation in Maiduguri constitutes negative peace or a “victor’s peace.” The article argues that military deployment to (post)conflict spots should be conceived, not as an end in itself, but as a means towards an end—positive peace.

INTRODUCTION

Despite divergent views on the newness or oldness of the world’s armed conflicts since the end of the Cold War, armed conflicts today appear primarily as intra-state; there were thirty-six cases of reported intra-state armed conflicts in 2009 alone.¹ These sources of instability subvert democratization processes and result in the increased presence of the military on the streets in the affected areas. This is the case in Nigeria. Here the widening fault-lines of inter-group and state-society relations have combined to put the state in perpetual crisis. As such, argue Ebenezer Obadare and Wale Adebaniwi,² Nigeria is a metaphor for post-colonial African state crises; understanding

PEACE RESEARCH

The Canadian Journal of Peace and Conflict Studies

Volume 44, Number 2 (2012) & Volume 45, Number 1 (2013): 113-134

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