# The Role of Conflict Resolution in Counterterrorism in Nigeria: A Case Analysis of the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) and Boko Haram (BH)

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This paper examines the role of conflict resolution approaches in combating terrorism in Nigeria. It suggests that the strategies that emphasize military force are not suitable for tackling the threat of terrorism because of the domestic context within which terrorism in Nigeria has emerged. It argues that the failure to take account of the conflicts within which terrorism has emerged in Nigeria will cripple efforts to deal with the threat. In recent years, the need for conflict resolution as an alternative response to terrorism has become necessary. Using a conflict analysis approach, the paper addresses the following question: to what extent does conflict resolution have a role to play as a counterterrorism strategy in Nigeria?

## TERRORISM, COUNTERTERRORISM, AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION: THE DEBATES

The threat of terrorism is spreading in Africa with various groups exploiting the fragility of the continent. Although a universally accepted definition of terrorism is lacking, available literature suggests that there are identifiable and unique characteristics that distinguish terrorism from other forms of political violence in the region.[1] The vacuity of a straightforward theory to guide policy-making has produced a situation where actions and actors are framed, reframed, and labeled as terrorism/terrorists with significant implications for counterterrorism. This paper defines terrorism as "premeditated,