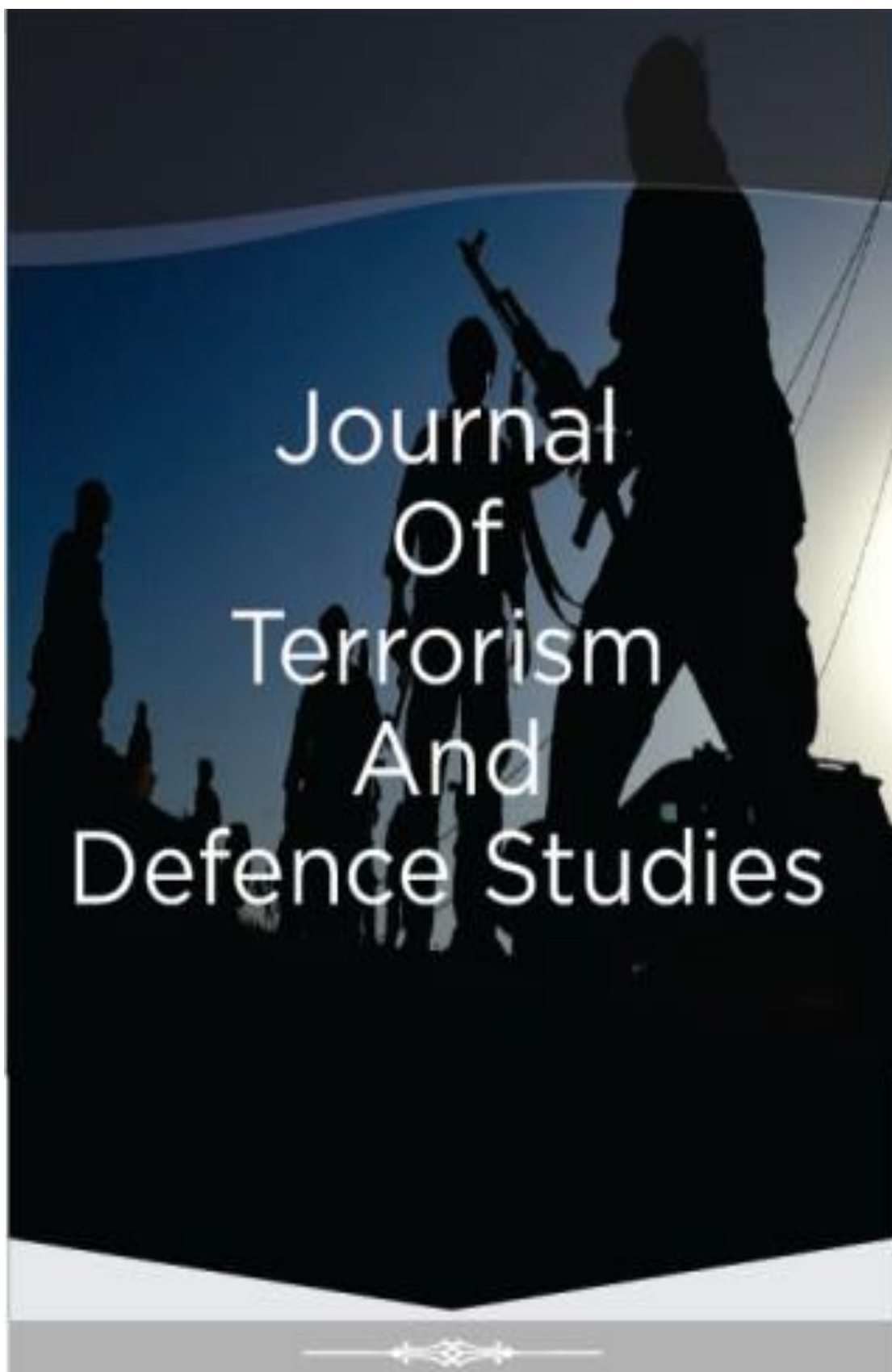




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## Editorial Note

### Rethinking Security Beyond the Bullet

*The Journal of Terrorism and Defence Studies inaugurates this issue with a bracing premise: that security is not merely a tactical problem but a philosophical one. The five articles collected here, spanning Nigerian poverty dynamics, West African coups, and the axiology of peacebuilding, collectively argue that the defence community must move beyond kinetic metrics toward structural and ethical diagnostics.*

**Nwadike and Ani's** lead article, *Insecurity and Poverty in Nigeria 1980–2024*, establishes the volume's empirical spine. Using simultaneous equation modelling, they demonstrate that terrorism activity indices directly affect both undernourishment and agricultural output. The policy implication is stark: security spending without poverty reduction is self-limiting. Their call for "security literacy" as a national strategy reframes defence as a civic, not merely coercive, enterprise.

**Gontor's** *Axiology of Peacebuilding* elevates the discourse into political philosophy. The critique of liberal peace orthodoxy that elections and markets do not automatically produce stability is timely given recent coups in Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, and Guinea-Bissau (the seventh since 2020, which Njoku documents). Gontor's proposal to elevate National Peace Institutions to statutory "Policy Governors" with veto power over conflict-generating legislation is provocative and, in the post-kinetic era, necessary. Peacekeeping opens the gate; axiological governance inhabits the house.

The econometric rigour continues in Nwadike et al.'s VAR analysis of security shocks on Nigerian investment growth (1980–2024). Their finding of positive shock elasticity meaning security disruptions produce measurable, persistent negative responses in investment offers quantitative grounding for what field officers already know: insecurity is a tax on development. The recommendation that security literacy become a "fundamental national strategy" echoes the lead article, suggesting intra-volume consensus.

Njoku's *ECOWAS at 50* provides the geopolitical canvas. Seven coups since 2020, the exit of AES states, jihadist expansion, and renewed great-power resource competition threaten fifty years of regional integration. The Regional Security Complexes framework usefully centers Nigeria as a pivotal state. But the article quietly asks: if ECOMOG's peacekeeping legacy is to survive, what happens when the guarantor state faces its own profound internal crises? That question hangs over the entire issue.

Gontor's second contribution, *Prevention of Post-Election Conflict in Africa*, completes the architecture. Comparing ECOWAS, SADC, IGAD, ECCAS, and AMU, it argues that post-election violence stems not from flawed ballots but from structural injustices exclusion, patrimonialism, and weak accountability. RECs cannot prevent what they cannot diagnose. The insistence on "positive peace" (justice, inclusion, accountability) rather than mere ceasefire is the volume's unifying ethical thread.

Taken together, these five articles move terrorism and defence studies away from exclusive focus on insurgent tactics and toward the deeper question: what makes a political order worth defending? The answer emerging here; value-based governance, security literacy, empowered peace institutions, and regionally anchored conflict prevention is not soft. It is hard in a more demanding way.

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