



FORUM: Security Council

QUESTION OF: Finding Solutions to defeat Boko Haram

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INTRODUCTION

In 1999 Nigeria was removed of its military rule; however ethnic and political violence has been an issue within the country since then. So far, an estimated 20,000 people have been killed due to the violence between Boko Haram and Government forces. Furthermore, many more are now displaced within and outside of Nigeria. 'Boko Haram' has been ensuing terror and violence within the northern and central regions of Nigeria and as well been a continuous threat to the West African states around Lake Chad since the insurgency properly began in 2009. They aim to create an Islamic state and rid Nigeria of western influence, by overthrowing the current precarious state of the Nigerian government led by President Goodluck Jonathan. Boko Haram follows a form of Islam which makes it 'haram' to associate with western culture.

The Nigerian Army has been fighting a slow and gain-less war against the group for years, but economic conditions within the country and corruption have made it so the two sides are trapped in a fragile stalemate. In addition, the 9 year conflict between the Nigerian forces and the Sunni militant group has created a man-made famine in Nigeria. This has caused Nigeria's HDI value for 2015 to be 0.527, positioning it at 152 out of 188 countries and territories. This is very conflicting, because as of 2015, Nigeria is the world's 20th largest economy, worth more than \$500 billion and \$1 trillion in terms of nominal GDP and purchasing power parity respectively. It even overtook South Africa to become Africa's largest economy in 2014. However, poverty is still rampant in the country and it is now currently in danger of mass famine. Fear of the group continues while more and more atrocities are committed freely: It is already responsible for many massacres, ethnic cleansings and most recently for the use of child suicide bombers. This has created a perfect storm for famine. Land mines and insecurity are keeping farmers from their farms and exacerbating the dire food crisis. "A famine unlike any we have ever seen anywhere" said UN assistant Secretary General, Toby Lanzer.¹

¹ "About the Crisis". United Nations Office for the Coordination of Human Affairs. <http://www.unocha.org/nigeria/about-ocha-nigeria/about-crisis> 2 Sieff, Kevin. 2016.

"A Staggering Hunger Crisis Is Unfolding In Nigeria, And The World Is Barely Aware". Washington Post. http://www.washingtonpost.com/sf/world/2016/10/13/they-survived-bokoharam-now-millions-in-nigeria-face-a-new-threat-starvation/?utm_term=.efe9b1d2b0d1

The UN estimates that over the next 12 months an estimated 300,000 children in Borno state alone will suffer from severe acute malnutrition with the ongoing disruption to basic services the risk of waterborne diseases, such as diarrhea and cholera, is growing. In addition, some parts of the country are just too dangerous for aid agencies to operate. All the Attacks on civilians and the on-going terror led to the declaration of a state of emergency within the country by the government in 2011/early 2012. However this and the continuing efforts of the United Nations in cases such as the 2014 kidnapping of Chibok schoolgirls has failed to ease the current security situation in Nigeria.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The sect that became known as Boko Haram was founded by Mohammed Yusuf in 2002 in the northeastern city of Maiduguri, the capital of the north-eastern state of Borno in Nigeria. He established a religious complex and school that attracted poor Muslim families from across Nigeria and neighbouring countries. The centre had the political goal of creating an Islamic state with full implementation of Sharia law, by denouncing the police and state corruption. Yusuf attracted followers mostly from unemployed youth with that being the case, it is shocking to realize that Nigeria is Africa's biggest economy. This is because of dire economic inequality between the different states of Nigeria: 60% of its population live on less than \$1 a day, with the primary wealth being concentrated amongst the Christian minority in the South of the country and the small political elite. Boko Haram therefore became very attractive for unsatisfied individuals and transformed itself into a recruiting ground for Jihadis. At the time of its creation, the ranks of the followers of the group were filled with not only extremists. There were also people in the ranks who were frustrated at the highly uneven economic conditions in the region as compared to the rich, Christian South and the rampant corruption of the country's officials. With the conditions of the region, the group was as able to attract a large number of followers.²

The group's official name is Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wal-Jihad, which in Arabic means "People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad". Residents of Maiduguri have named the group Boko Haram. Loosely translated from the region's Hausa language, this means "Western education is forbidden". This is due to their primary ideology of outright rejection of Western Society and anything that is associated with it. Their ideology is based on the principles of the Khawarij, advocating Sharia law.

"Nigeria Human Development Report 2016". 2016. United Nations Development Programme. http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/NGA.pdf 4 "Nigeria Becomes Africa's Largest Economy". 2014.

Al-jazeera. <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2014/04/nigeria-becomes-africa-largest-economy20144618190520102.html>. "Nigerian Food Crisis." Disaster Emergency Committee. <https://www.dec.org.uk/article/nigeria-food-crisis> 6 S/RES/2349

²Harrison, Amy. 2017. "Nigeria's Food Crisis: By The Time Famine Is Declared, It's Too Late". The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionalsnetwork/2017/jun/12/nigeria-food-crisis-un-response>.

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Some of Nigeria's conflict began in 2004, when militant groups in the south of Nigeria (Niger Delta) were angered by the corrupt oil industries of Nigeria's economy. This led to violent attacks such as kidnappings of business owners and various other crimes against civilians. However as a result of an amnesty program in 2009 (26,000 militants surrendered their weapons), the violence facing the Niger Delta region has lessened. In 2009, the extremist Islamic group Boko Haram's leader, Yusuf, was killed while in custody of the police which ensued a series of 'revenge attacks' on both the government and civilians. Since then, Nigeria has faced terrible conflict over the past 6 years. In attempts to rid Nigeria of western influence and take control of the government Boko Haram has taken control of large parts of northern Nigeria such as Borno, Yobe, Kano, Adamawa and more recently central Nigeria. From 2010 they have had a new leader, Shekau, during which time the violence has escalated radically. In 2010, Boko Haram began freeing prisoners (freed more than 600 prisoners) in attempts to secure control over northern Nigeria through force. As mentioned previously Boko Haram has been identified as a terrorist group by the United Nations and since May 2014 they have been placed under the same sanctions as fellow extremist group Al-Qaeda. Although attacks and outbreaks of violence such as bombings and abductions have become commonplace over the past 6 years, there have been many specifically targeted crimes. For example in August 2011, the UN headquarters in Abuja was suicide-bombed killing 25 and injuring 116. Then in April 2014, 276 teenage girls were abducted causing countries such as the USA and Britain to send search parties. The largest Boko Haram massacre occurred on 3 January 2015, killing up-to 2000 people. It has become clear to the rest of the world Nigeria is unequipped to fight the insurgent group due to overwhelming economic, political and social issues, such as extreme poverty, corruption and an undeveloped economy. This has resulted in a great number of Nigerians fleeing the north and central Boko Haram controlled regions. Furthermore, the government is not widely respected due to a lack of military control (military killed 600 people as revenge as reported by Amnesty International) and a lack of knowledge on both Boko Haram and the country's situation. Countries such as the UK are hesitant to aid the government (militarily) due to their little control over the situation. In June 2014, Nigeria was said to have the highest number of terrorist killings in the past year, 3477.

Starting in late January 2015, a coalition of military forces from Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, and Niger began an extensive military campaign against Boko Haram. On the 4th February, the Chad Army killed over 200 Boko Haram militants. In retaliation, Boko Haram launched an attack on the Cameroonian town of Fotokol, killing 81 civilians, 13 Chadian soldiers and 6 Cameroonian soldiers. U.S. officials have estimated that Boko Haram may have between 4,000 and 6,000 active fighters, while other sources argue its force could be larger. By some accounts, the group may have lost some 30 percent of its fighting force during the 2015 regional offensive to reclaim territory from the insurgents. In March 2015, Boko Haram lost control of the Northern Nigerian towns of Bama and Gwoza to the Nigerian army. The Nigerian authorities said that they had taken back 11 of the 14 districts previously controlled by Boko Haram. In 2015, the Nigerian government had claimed the defeat of Boko Haram. Despite this strong claim, there have still been steady attacks in 2016 and 2017. In 2017 alone, the group killed more than 900 people and reportedly launched over 90 armed assaults and 59 suicide attacks. Boko Haram did not only create direct casualties, but it has also created a large internally displaced population. It is estimated that there are 1.7 million people internally displaced within Nigeria. The ongoing fighting has

also created a man-made famine which is only exacerbated by the lack of action by the Nigerian government. The problem of Boko Haram is thus far from over.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Terrorism

As defined by the Oxford Dictionary, terrorism is the unofficial or unauthorized use of violence and intimidation in the pursuit of political aims.³

Jihad

Jihad is arabic and translated to “a struggle for their belief” or a “holy war”. Although the true form of the word is simply to struggle, through recent years it has been interpreted as a method of extremism. The western world often refers to thus many extremist islamic groups such as AlQaeda and Boko Haram as ‘jihadists’.

Extremist

A person who holds extreme political or religious views, one who often advocates illegal, violent or extreme action. Extremists can cause deep levels of violence and insecurity within countries due to actions that involve discrimination. In Nigeria the insurgent group Boko Haram is described as extremist due to the violent crimes carried out in defence of their beliefs and the discrimination faced by civilians within the country such as Christians, other religious groups and Muslims termed as unfaithful to the group.

Boko Haram

In arabic and hausa ‘boko haram’ is roughly translated to mean “western education is forbidden or sin”. Thus this is the name given to the extremist islamic group within Nigeria whom refute western culture and consider all forms of western education to be false, as well as do not believe in western concepts such as the theory of evolution.

Sharia Law,

is the body of islamic law, which consists of the legal framework within which public and some private aspects of life are regulated, for those living in countries where the legal system is based

³ "The Chibok Kidnappings In North-East Nigeria: A Military Analysis Of Before And After | Small Wars Journal."

"Silent Shame: Bringing out the voices of children caught in the Lake Chad crisis." 2017.

UNICEF https://www.unicef.org/wcaro/nigeriaregionalcrisis/UNICEF_Silent_shame.pdf

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BBC News. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-42735414>. 35 "Nigeria Situation Update 2017". 2017. UN-HCR

on Islam. Although Nigeria currently follows a western form of government (president, democratic, etc), this is relation to one of Boko Haram's aims, being to advocate Sharia Law all through Nigeria (it is currently only in 12 regions).

Amnesty

Amnesty is an official pardon for those who have been convicted of political offences. It is a type of reprieve and was used by the government in 2009 towards Niger Delta militants. It is also a solution taken by many countries as a method of ending conflict and working towards reaching a peace.

Insurgent

A person fighting against a government or invading force/rebel/ revolutionary. The extremist group Boko Haram is identified as an insurgent group as they are fighting and carrying out crimes against civilians the current government in an attempt to seize control.

Famine

As defined by the Cambridge dictionary, famine is a situation in which there is not enough food for a great number of people, causing illness and death.

Human Development Index (HDI)

“The Human Development Index (HDI) is a statistical tool used to measure a country's overall achievement in its social and economic dimensions. The social and economic dimensions of a country are based on the health of people, their level of education attainment and their standard of living.”

Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

“Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is the total monetary or market value of all the finished goods and services produced within a country's borders in a specific time period. As a broad measure of overall domestic production, it functions as a comprehensive scorecard of the country's economic health.”

Khawarij

Khawarij is a sect of Islam. The Khawarij believed that choosing a ruler can be done through warfare and violence, as "judgement belongs to God alone". They considered arbitration a means for people to make decisions while the victor in a battle was determined by God.

ISSUES THAT MAY ARISE

The crisis has spilled over into the neighbouring countries as well. There is an estimated 206,000 Nigerians displaced in Cameroon, Chad, and Niger as of 2017. The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) requested 179,5 million USD of funding to help the Nigeria situation, but only 52 Million USD has been funded.

The group's use of children has also caused great outcry: To sustain an insurgency for nearly eight years, Boko Haram has compensated for its logistical deficiency by deliberately exploiting children to fill in the gaps and meet the basic needs of their fighting forces. Some boys as young as 13 years old are used as combatants and there are numerous cases of girls at the same age being pregnant by their captors.⁴

Local authorities are faced with a serious dilemma as they take captivity escaped children into custody: It is necessary to question them and determine their degree of indoctrination and loyalty to their captors' cause. The children's connection and the authorities' inability to discern their level of radicalism due to being with the group has created concern in their surrounding society. This creates barriers to reintegration and reconciliation.

There have also been reports that Nigerian security forces raping girls that have been freed from Boko Haram.

The food crisis that is currently ongoing in Nigeria due to the ongoing violence. In recent years, the violence has intensified, with warfare tactics shifting from conventional combat to a guerrilla conflict involving suicide attacks and scorched-earth policies. These scorched-earth policies are one of the factors involved in the creation of the famine. In the north-eastern part of Nigeria, more than 3 million people displaced and isolated by the militants are facing one of the world's biggest humanitarian disasters. The situation has received minimum attention due to the fact that it has been largely hidden from view, partly because it has been extremely dangerous for aid groups and journalists to visit affected areas. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has estimated that 3.4 million Nigerians are in need of nutritional assistance, of whom approximately 450,000 suffer from severe acute malnutrition.

Freedom of movement is restricted, so people are unable to farm or fish, making them heavily reliant on humanitarian assistance.⁵

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

Nigerian Government: the government lacks a strong army (no proper equipment or defences) that can defeat the Boko Haram insurgents.

⁴"Silent Shame: Bringing out the voices of children caught in the Lake Chad crisis." 2017.

UNICEF https://www.unicef.org/wcaro/nigeriaregionalcrisis/UNICEF_Silent_shame.pdf 42 ibid 43 ibid 44 Searcey, Dionne. 2017.

"They Fled Boko Haram, Only To Be Raped By Nigeria'S Security Forces". Nytimes.Com. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/08/world/africa/boko-haram-nigeria-security-forcesrape.html>.

⁵Wilson, Mark. 2018. "Nigeria's Boko Haram Attacks In Numbers - As Lethal As Ever".

BBC News. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-42735414>. 53 "North East Nigeria Humanitarian Situation Update". 2017.

OCHA. https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/25012018_ocha_humanitarian_situation_update_december_1.pdf 54 Sieff, Kevin. 2018.

"A Staggering Hunger Crisis Is Unfolding In Nigeria, And The World Is Barely Aware". Washington Post. http://www.washingtonpost.com/sf/world/2016/10/13/they-survived-bokoharam-now-millions-in-nigeria-face-a-new-threat-starvation/?utm_term=.efe9b1d2b0d1.

Human Rights Watch/Amnesty International: The HRW and Amnesty have both issued countless reports on both deaths and attacks on civilians in the country over the past 6 years, also continuing annual reports (HRW) on the security situation within Nigeria. These reports contain recommendations on how to aid the citizens of Nigeria, and how to tackle the Boko Haram

Council on Foreign Relations: Developed a security tracker (NST) to report deaths and attacks in Nigeria, weekly updated.

International Crisis Group: NGO, reports on Nigeria security concerns.

USA: The USA has been involved in aiding the search for the Chibok girls who were kidnapped in April 2014. They have also been granted rights to conduct surveillance over Nigeria from the government.

Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task-Force: Is in charge of carrying out sanctions placed against terrorist groups as Boko Haram and also has a national program within Nigeria to combat the violent extremism.

QUESTIONS DELEGATES SHOULD CONSIDER

1. What further effort should the UNSC undertake in the fight against Boko Haram? What kind of measures should the Council employ against the group or Nigeria?
2. What punishment should the militias face, which fought against Boko Haram by also employing child soldiers? Furthermore, how can the UNSC correctly identify those responsible and what measures can it take to prosecute them?
3. How can the UNSC guarantee the elimination of the food crisis in Nigeria?
4. What efforts will the UNSC make to ensure the safety of the internally displaced people of Nigeria?
5. Should the externally displaced people of Nigeria be resettled? Would it be better to facilitate their return to the country instead?⁶

USEFUL LINKS/SOURCES

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. "2018 Nigeria Refugee Regional Response Plan." 2017

⁶Wilson, Mark. 2018. "Nigeria's Boko Haram Attacks In Numbers - As Lethal As Ever". BBC News. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-42735414>. 53 "North East Nigeria Humanitarian Situation Update". 2017. OCHA. https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/25012018_ocha_humanitarian_situation_update_december_1.pdf 54 Sieff, Kevin. 2018. "A Staggering Hunger Crisis Is Unfolding In Nigeria, And The World Is Barely Aware". Washington Post. http://www.washingtonpost.com/sf/world/2016/10/13/they-survived-bokoharam-now-millions-in-nigeria-face-a-new-threat-starvation/?utm_term=.efe9b1d2b0d1.

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