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Country Report on Terrorism 2021 - Chapter 5 - ISIS-West Africa

Aka Islamic State West Africa Province; ISISWAP; Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant-West Africa; ISIL-WA; Islamic State of Iraq and Syria West Africa Province; ISIS West Africa Province; ISIS West Africa; ISIS-WA

Description: ISIS-West Africa (ISIS-WA) was designated as an FTO on February 28, 2018. In 2015 a faction of Boko Haram pledged allegiance to ISIS in an audiotape message. ISIS accepted the group's pledge, and the group began calling itself ISIS-West Africa. In 2016, ISIS announced that Abu Musab al-Barnawi was to become the new leader of ISIS-WA.

Activities: ISIS-WA has been responsible for numerous attacks in Nigeria and the Lake Chad region since 2016.

In 2019, ISIS-WA attacked the convoy of the then-governor of Borno State as it drove from the capital of Maiduguri to a town near Nigeria's border with Cameroon, killing as many as 10 people. In 2019, ISIS-WA claimed responsibility for two attacks in western Niger, ambushing Niger Army soldiers in Tongo Tongo, resulting in 28 deaths, while also attacking Niger security forces near the Koutoukalé prison that killed 1 soldier.

In 2019, ISIS-WA fighters launched an attack against a military base near Baga in the Lake Chad area, killing 20 Nigerian and five Chadian soldiers. Also in 2019, ISIS-WA attacked a convoy of Action Against Hunger (AAH) and Nigerian health ministry employees in northeastern Nigeria. One AAH driver was killed during the attack, while five persons were taken hostage; ISIS-WA claimed to have killed four of the hostages by year's end. Later that year, ISIS-WA released a video showing the execution of 11 reported Christians and claimed the killings were revenge for the killing of ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.

In 2020, ISIS-WA attacked the convoy of the Borno State governor in northeastern Nigeria, killing 15 security personnel. Also in 2020, ISIS-WA claimed responsibility for two attacks in the Monguno and Nganzai areas in northeastern Nigeria, killing 20 soldiers and 40 civilians. ISIS-WA also claimed responsibility for raiding a village in the Gubio area, killing 81 people. Later that year, ISIS-WA fighters kidnapped a humanitarian aid worker and two local officials at a checkpoint in the village of Wakilti in Borno State.

In 2021, ISIS-WA fighters launched an attack on a military base near the town of Ajiri in Borno State, killing 5 soldiers, 15 JTF militia members, and 10 civilians, and was responsible for killing a Nigerian Army general and three soldiers during an attack on the local government area Askira Uba in Borno State.

Strength: ISIS-WA has an estimated 3,500 members.

Location/Area of Operation: Nigeria and the greater Lake Chad region

Funding and External Aid: ISIS-WA receives funding from local sources, the capture of military supplies, taxes, and kidnapping-for-ransom payments.

ecoi.net summary:

Brief description of the ISIS-West Africa (Excerpt of chapter 5 of the country report on terrorism 2021)

Countries:

Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Nigeria

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