

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	642
Land:	Nigeria
Kilde:	US Department of State
Titel:	Country Report on Terrorism 2021 - Chapter 4 - Terrorist Safe Havens – Lake Chad Region
Udgivet:	27. februar 2023
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	28. april 2023

Document #2088679

USDOS – US Department of State

Country Report on Terrorism 2021 - Chapter 4 - Terrorist Safe Havens - Lake Chad Region

In 2021, Boko Haram (BH) and ISIS-West Africa (ISIS-WA) maintained safe havens in parts of northeastern Nigeria and on islands in Lake Chad, preventing the reestablishment of state administration, service delivery, and humanitarian relief in broader territory surrounding Lake Chad. While BH's terrorist safe havens have been reduced owing in large part to the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) and clashes with ISIS-WA, ISIS-WA has continued to extend its reach, battling both government forces and those of BH. Forces from Nigeria and other members of the MNJTF (Benin, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger) continued to combat both terrorist groups, but still lack the ability to clear safe havens or to secure borders and hold and effectively administer territory regained from the militants. ISIS-WA continues to conduct — through suicide bombers, vehicle-borne IEDs, raids, ambushes, kidnappings, and other means — asymmetric attacks against civilians, military, and government personnel. It funds itself primarily by "taxing" local populations, kidnapping for ransom, and looting material.

In February, BH militants fired a series of rocket-propelled grenades in Maiduguri, Nigeria, killing at least 10 people. In April, a heavily armed ISIS-WA group killed 33 soldiers at a Nigerian base, destroyed a main battle tank, and stole several other military vehicles. When soldiers arrived in response to the attack, ISIS-WA ambushed the reinforcements. This attack was followed by a series of attacks throughout Yobe State in Nigeria's Northwest. The next month, ISIS-WA attacked and overran BH's bases in the Sambisa Forest, resulting in the death of BH's leader, Abubakar Shekau. Numerous BH militants reportedly joined ISIS-WA following Shekau's death, but BH remnants remain active around Lake Chad. No government in the Lake Chad region was known to support or facilitate the proliferation or trafficking of WMD in or through its territory.

ecoi.net summary:

Annual report on terrorism (covering 2021, excerpt of chapter 4 on "terrorist save havens")

Countries:

Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Nigeria

Source:

[USDOS – US Department of State](#)

Original link:

https://www.state.gov/reports/country-reports-on-terrorism-2021/#report-toc_section-8

Document type:

Periodical Report

Language:

English

Published:

27 February 2023

Available on ecoi.net since:

22 March 2023

Document ID:

2088679

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ecoi.net is run by the Austrian Red Cross (department ACCORD) in cooperation with Informationsverbund Asyl & Migration. ecoi.net is funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Austrian Ministry of the Interior and Caritas Austria. ecoi.net is supported by ECRE & UNHCR.

