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Case study

Nigeria – Boko Haram and the fight against terrorism

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A case study from the 2014 Human Rights and Democracy Report.



We estimate that, in 2014, more than 4,000 people were killed in Boko Haram attacks, and 900 people kidnapped in Nigeria. This included the abduction of over 270 schoolgirls from Chibok in Borno State on 14 April. The UN estimates that over 1.5 million people have been displaced, and at least three million have been affected by the insurgency in north-east Nigeria.

In 2014, there were increased reports of attacks by Boko Haram and counter-attacks by Nigerian armed forces in towns and villages across north-east Nigeria. Much of the violence has been concentrated in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe States, but there have also been serious terrorist attacks outside these states, such as in Abuja, Jos, Kaduna, and Kano, leading to the death and injury of civilians. Serious human rights abuses perpetrated by Boko Haram include the bombing of public places and religious buildings, the abduction of women and children, the execution of those suspected of aiding the authorities, and fatal attacks on schools and colleges. A Human Rights

Watch report in October highlighted Boko Haram's violence against women and girls in north-east Nigeria, including sexual violence and forced marriage. A number of NGOs have alleged that serious human rights violations have been committed by the Nigerian Security Forces, including extrajudicial killings and torture. In August, Amnesty International and the Channel 4 "Dispatches" programme claimed that Nigerian military personnel and the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) in northern Nigeria had perpetrated extrajudicial killings. Many of these cases were linked to the Boko Haram attack on Giwa barracks in March, and the response by the Nigerian Security Forces.

Nigerian military courts have found 66 Nigerian military personnel guilty of mutiny and sentenced them to death. The legal process, including appeals, continues. We have made clear to the Nigerian authorities the UK's opposition to the death penalty in all cases.

We are currently providing a substantial package of military, intelligence, and development support to Nigeria to help it tackle the threat from Boko Haram. UK military assistance includes training and advice to Nigerian units subsequently deployed against Boko Haram. All military assistance provided to Nigeria by the UK is strictly assessed under the UK government's OSJA Guidance.

We continue to encourage Nigeria to respond constructively to reports of human rights violations by its security forces, and to launch credible investigations into allegations. We have been clear that if members of the military and security forces or CJTF are found to have been involved in human rights violations, they should be brought to justice.

We are also providing support to the large numbers of people displaced by the conflict in north-east Nigeria. In 2014, the UK contributed £1.7 million to the UN's Central Emergency Response Fund and the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department programmes in Nigeria. A further £1 million was provided by the Department for International Development to the International Committee of the Red Cross to provide humanitarian assistance to those in dire need.

This case study is part of the 2014 Human Rights and Democracy Report

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/human-rights-and-democracy-report-2014/human-rights-and-democracy-report-2014>).

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