

Document #2019254

USDOS – US Department of State

Country Report on Terrorism 2018 - Chapter 1 - Cameroon

Overview: Cameroon experienced a decrease in terrorist activity in the Far North Region. The Government of Cameroon attributed most of the extremist violence it experienced to the terrorist group Boko Haram (BH), though ISIS-West Africa (ISIS-WA) likely perpetrated some of the incidents. In 2018, BH carried out sporadic attacks in the Far North Region and rarely confronted security forces as it had in 2017. The group targeted civilians in villages on the western border with Nigeria and largely focused on kidnappings, arson, raids, and targeted killings. BH carried out relatively few suicide bombings compared with 2017. ISIS-WA focused its activities in the northern tip of the Far North Region, in villages surrounding the southern Lake Chad Basin. In 2018, ISIS-WA for the most part continued to avoid indiscriminate attacks on the populations, such as those carried out by BH, but also began collecting illicit taxes from cattle herders and fishermen.

In September, President Biya claimed BH had been defeated and underscored the necessity of a return to normalcy in the Far North Region. The Government of Cameroon initiated communication campaigns aimed at curbing “radical extremism” and reintegrating former BH fighters. The government announced the creation of a center in Meme in the Far North Region for the rehabilitation and reintegration of former BH recruits. The government has selected a site but construction has not yet begun.

Countering terrorist threats remained a top security priority for the Cameroonian government, which continued to work with the United States to improve the capacity of its security forces. In 2018, USAID expanded its programming to counter terrorist recruitment in the North and Far North Regions. The United States also increased its counterterrorism assistance to Cameroon through projects implemented by the Department of Justice, the Department of State’s Antiterrorism Assistance program, and the Global Center for Cooperative Security. Cameroon is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

2018 Terrorist Incidents: Although fewer terrorist attacks occurred in 2018 compared with 2017, BH continued to launch deadly assaults in the Far North Region. According to an International Crisis Group report, BH killed at least 135 civilians and 18 soldiers between January and August. Despite a marked decrease in suicide bombings, the group launched numerous attacks, including targeted killings, abductions, ambushes, arson, and raids in search of supplies. Notable attacks in the Far North Region in 2018 included the following:

- On February 4, a BH fighter killed at least six people and burned a church in Hitawa.
- On February 20, BH fighters killed an estimated 10 people and wounded 12 others in Mayo Tsanaga.
- On June 8, BH fighters killed an estimated seven civilians in Maroua.
- On September 20, BH fighters wounded at least six soldiers in Amchide.

- On October 21, BH fighters abducted eight women and one child in Vourkaza.
- On November 28, BH suicide bombers killed two civilians and wounded 29 others in Amchide.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Cameroon made no significant changes to its counterterrorism legal framework in 2018.

Cameroon prosecuted numerous BH-affiliated defendants for terrorism-related crimes, primarily in the military tribunal in Maroua. Many defendants were acquitted because of lack of evidence. Others are serving prison sentences or awaiting trial. Deficits in civilian-military coordination contributed to a low conviction rate. Cameroon prosecutes suspected terrorists pursuant to its 2014 anti-terrorism law, which provides exclusive jurisdiction to military tribunals, prolongs investigative detention periods, and provides for the death penalty. Cameroonian courts have sentenced many BH defendants to death, but none has been executed to date. Cameroon continued to use the anti-terrorism law to suppress criticism and freedom of expression by arresting journalists and activists in connection with the ongoing crisis in the Anglophone regions. The government released 289 low-level detainees arrested on suspicion of being Anglophone separatists and facing misdemeanor charges. However, hundreds of others remain in detention. The government continued to characterize people espousing separatism for the Anglophone regions as terrorists.

Cameroon continued to screen arriving and departing travelers at international airports and other points of entry using PISCES.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: There were no changes in 2018. Cameroon is a member of the Task Force on Money Laundering in Central Africa (GABAC), a FATF-style regional body, but has never undergone a mutual evaluation.

Countering Violent Extremism: Although the Government of Cameroon does not have a national CVE strategy, it took isolated steps to promote reintegration of former BH fighters in 2018. On November 30, President Biya announced the creation of a National Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Committee (NDDRC), which seeks to work with ex-BH fighters and armed separatist groups in the Northwest and Southwest regions. The NDDRC, working with international partners, particularly the UN, will disarm former fighters and reintegrate them into civilian life. According to a presidential decree, the NDDRC will destroy surrendered weapons and provide home communities with multifaceted assistance to facilitate the reintegration of ex-fighters.

UNDP began implementing the Lake Chad Basin Integrated Regional Stabilization Project, launched in 2017. UNDP executed the project within five council areas in the Far North Region. The three-year project, which targets 750,000 people in Cameroon, focuses on ensuring stability and consolidating peace through reconciliation, reintegration, and prevention of terrorism. In June, UNDP officials, administrative authorities, religious leaders, and journalists designed specific messages in local languages to counteract BH's ideology in the Far North Region. They worked with local organizations that relayed these highly contextualized messages to BH affiliates, and promoted reintegration of former fighters who renounced terrorism.

The Association of Civil Society Organizations against Radicalization and Terrorism (COSC-CRT) supported communities in the Far North Region to resist recruitment by BH. In Maroua, COSC-CRT supervised and provided support for 580 internally displaced children within three Koranic schools,

providing messaging focused on counteracting BH's radical ideology. COSC-CRT worked with the media, particularly community radios, to sensitize local communities and foil BH's attempts to recruit supporters through religious propaganda.

International and Regional Cooperation: Cameroon continued its counterterrorism cooperation with the international community, contributing significantly to operations of the Multi-National Joint Task Force. Cameroon is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and TSCTP.

Cameroon was part of a regional initiative organized by the UN and the AU to develop coordinated strategies for screening, prosecuting, and rehabilitating individuals associated with BH. Although not a member, Cameroon participated in regional workshops and events held by the GCTF. In 2018, Cameroon was a pilot country of the International Counterterrorism and Countering Violent Extremism Capacity-Building Clearinghouse Mechanism, an online database under the GCTF to identify and de-conflict gaps in counterterrorism and CVE programming.

ecoi.net summary:

Annual report on terrorism (covering 2018)



Country:

Cameroon

Source:

[USDOS – US Department of State \(/en/source/11558.html\)](#)

Original link (no longer valid):

<https://www.state.gov/reports/country-reports-on-terrorism-2018/#Cameroon>

Document type:

Periodical Report

Language:

English

Published:

1 November 2019

Document ID:

2019254

Austrian Red Cross

Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation (ACCORD)

Wiedner Hauptstraße 32, 1041 Wien

T (Telefon) +43 1 589 00 583

F (Fax) +43 1 589 00 589

info@ecoi.net

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.

