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Country Report on Terrorism 2019 - Chapter 1 - Nigeria

Overview: BH and ISIS-WA continued attacks against government and security forces and civilians in the Northeast, resulting in deaths, injuries, abductions, and the capture and destruction of property. ISIS-WA generally focused on attacking government and security forces and applying increased pressure on transport routes across Borno State, and it tried to cultivate stronger ties with local communities, including by providing limited social services and eliminating moderate leaders. BH attacks did not appear to discriminate between civilians and government officials when conducting attacks.

Nigeria worked with affected neighbors under the Multinational Joint Task Force to counter BH and ISIS-WA and regain control over territory. However, civil society and Nigerian press reported significant human rights issues with the government's counterterrorism efforts, and BH and ISIS-WA continued to enjoy nearly complete freedom of movement throughout northern Borno State and eastern Yobe State.

To date, terrorist actions by BH and ISIS-WA have contributed to the internal displacement of about two million people within the states of Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe, and the external displacement of more than 240,000 Nigerian refugees to neighboring countries, principally Cameroon, Chad, and Niger. On October 5, the Bring Back Our Girls (BBOG) campaign marked 2,000 days since 276 students were abducted by BH from Chibok, Borno State, in 2014. According to BBOG representatives, 112 students remained missing at the end of 2019. BBOG organizers noted that while most of the 113 students abducted from Dapchi, Yobe State in 2018 had been released, one student remains in the custody of insurgents.

Nigeria is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, the TSCTP, and the U.S. Security Governance Initiative. The Department of Defense continued to coordinate with the Nigerian military at the Nigerian Defense Intelligence Agency, the Joint Combined Fusion Cell, and the Joint Coordination Planning Committee.

2019 Terrorist Incidents: BH and ISIS-WA carried out hundreds of attacks in Nigeria using small arms, captured military equipment, IEDs (including person-borne and vehicle-borne), ambushes, and kidnappings. The following list details only a fraction of the incidents that occurred:

- On February 12, suspected ISIS-WA terrorists attacked the convoy of then-Governor of Borno State as it drove from the capital of Maiduguri to a town near Nigeria's border with Cameroon; as many as ten were reportedly killed.
- On June 12, suspected BH terrorists killed at least 30 people and injured 42 when three IEDs were detonated at a market in Konduga, Borno State.
- On July 18, suspected ISIS-WA terrorists attacked a convoy of Action Against Hunger (AAH) and health ministry employees in Borno State. One AAH driver was killed, while one AAH staff member, two drivers, and three health ministry workers remained missing, reportedly taken as hostages. On September 25, media reported ISIS-WA said it had executed one of the missing aid workers. On December 13, ISIS-WA said it had killed four of the five remaining hostages.
- On July 27, suspected BH terrorists killed at least 65 people near the Borno State capital. Local officials said that, while some were killed as they returned from a funeral procession, around 40 civilians were killed when they pursued their attackers. Officials also said this may have been a reprisal attack as two weeks earlier, residents had repelled an attack killing 11 suspected terrorists.
- On 26 December, ISIS-WA released a video claiming to show the execution of 11 Christians and claimed the killings were revenge for the killing of ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: There were no changes to Nigeria's CT legal framework in 2019. The draft Terrorism Prohibition and Prevention Bill of 2017 lapsed at the close of the 2018 National Assembly and must be re-introduced.

The Office of the National Security Advisor (ONSA) is responsible for coordinating all security and enforcement agencies, including the Department of State Security (DSS), Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps (NSCDC), Ministry of Justice, and Nigeria Police Force (NPF), which has a CT Unit and Terrorist Investigation Branch.

The government continued processing hundreds of individuals suspected of supporting BH and ISIS-WA. Despite their acquittal, at the end of the year many of these individuals remained in detention facilities in Niger and Borno states awaiting completion of a mandated de-radicalization program or transfer to state-owned transit centers for reintegration into their home communities. For example, in November, nearly a thousand individuals in Borno State were released from Giwa barracks to the Bulumkutu rehabilitation center. These individuals are expected to remain in transit centers while the International Organization on Migration conducts individual data collection and screening. Human rights groups alleged that terrorist suspects detained by the military were denied their rights to legal representation, to due process, and to be heard by a judicial authority.

Border security responsibilities are shared among the NPF, DSS, NSCDC, Customs, Immigration, and the Nigerian military. Coordination among agencies was limited.

The Nigerian government continued to work with the FBI to investigate specific terrorism matters, predominantly through the DSS. ONSA and the NPF provided IED components to the FBI for analysis at the Terrorist Device Analysis Center.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Nigeria is a member of GIABA. Nigeria's Financial Intelligence Unit (NFIU) was readmitted to the Egmont Group in 2018 after implementation of a law that made the NFIU independent of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC). There were no significant updates in 2019.

Countering Violent Extremism: The government continued Operation Safe Corridor, aimed at identifying and reintegrating former low-threat supporters of terrorist organizations. OSC increased the de-radicalization program from 12 weeks to a 24-week program in recognition of the effort needed to conduct vital activities such as capacity building and profiling individuals at the center. By year's end, at least 268 individuals, including 86 children, had completed the program and were reintegrated into society.

Building on the National Action Plan on Disarmament, Demobilization, Repatriation, Reintegration (DDRR), which was endorsed by the Nigerian Government in 2018, the ONSA convened the DDRR Action Plan Operational Project Team (OPT) in January. The OPT is tasked with implementing the ten outcomes listed in the DDR action plan. Members of the OPT include ONSA, OSC, the Joint Investigation Committee, the Defence Intelligence Agency, Defence Headquarters, the Nigerian Prison Service, the NPF, the International Organization on Migration, and state representatives.

International and Regional Cooperation: Nigeria continued high-level participation in regional security and CT conferences. Nigeria is a member of GCTF and co-chairs the GCTF Criminal Justice and Rule of Law Working Group with Switzerland. Nigeria also is an International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law Board Member. In September, Nigeria hosted a delegation from GCERF.

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