

Secret Intelligence Service

Reports in Brief

Wilayat Gharb Afriqiya

Boko Haram



al-Wilāya al-Islāmiyya Gharb Afrīqiyyah (الولاية الإسلامية غرب أفريقيا, Islamic State West Africa Province, and Jamā'at Ahl as-Sunnah lid-Da'wah wa'l-Jihād (جماعة أه السنة للدعوة والجهاد, Group of the People of Sunnah for Preaching and Jihad) is an Islamic extremist terror group based in north-eastern Nigeria, active in Chad, Niger and northern Cameroon.

The group was led by Abubakar Shekau until August 2016. He was succeeded by Abu Musab al-Barnawi. The group had alleged links to al-Qaeda, in March 2015; it proclaimed its allegiance to the Islamic State. Since the current insurgency began in 2009, Boko Haram has killed tens of thousands and displaced 2.3 million and has been ranked as the world's deadliest terror group - Global Terrorism Index. 2015.



Subsequent to its founding in 2002, Boko Haram's increasing radicalisation led to a violent uprising in July 2009, culminating in its leader being summarily executed. Its unexpected reappearance, following a mass prison break in September 2010, was accompanied by increasingly elaborate attacks, initially against soft targets, and progressing in 2011 to include suicide bombings of police buildings and the U.N. office in Abuja. The government's establishment of a state of emergency at the beginning of 2012, extended in the following year to include the entire north-east of Nigeria, led to an increase in both security force abuses and rebel attacks.

Since May 2013 and the 2.3 million people displaced by the conflict, at least 250,000 have fled Nigeria into neighbouring Cameroon, Chad and / or Niger.

The rebel group have carried out mass abductions including the kidnapping of 276 schoolgirls from Chibok, in April 2014.

Corruption within the government and security services together with human rights abuses committed by them have hindered efforts to counter the unrest.

It was during 2014, that the rebels achieved control of vast territory in and around Borno, their state of origin, estimated at 20,000 square miles in January 2015, but did not capture the state capital, Maiduguri. In September 2015, the Director of Information at the Defence Headquarters of Nigeria announced that all Boko Haram camps had been destroyed.

Boko Haram is interpreted as 'Western education is forbade / forbidden'. Haram being taken from the Arabic حَرَام haram, 'forbidden' - and the Hausa word boko meaning 'fake', used in denoting secular Western education. In addition, Boko Haram has also been translated as 'Western influence is a sin' and 'Westernisation is sacrilege'. Prior to the death of its founder Mohammed Yusuf, the rebel group was also known as Yusufiyya. Northern Nigerians have commonly dismissed Western education as being ilimin boko (fake education, secular schools as being makaranta boko).

Philosophy

Boko Haram originated as a Sunni Islamic fundamentalist group / cult, swayed by Wahhabism - the advocating of a strict interpretation of Sharia law. During 2009 it grew into a Salafist-jihadi group. The movement is irregular, not all members necessarily following Salafi doctrine. The group has condemned as infidels the members of the Sufi, the Shiite, and the Izala sects.

Boko Haram pursues the institution of an Islamic caliphate in Nigeria - opposing any Westernisation of Nigerian society (with reference to what is a predominantly Christian south, the wealth of Nigeria being concentrated among small politico-economic elite).

Nigeria has emerged as Africa's largest economy, yet 60% of the population of 180 million people survive on less than £1 per day.

The sharia law imposed by local authorities, beginning with Zamfara during January 2000 and covering the 12 most northerly states by late 2002, may have promoted links between Boko Haram and political leaders.

The founder Mohammed Yusuf was trained by Kano Salafi Izala Sheik Ja'afar Mahmud Adamu, who referred to him as the leader of young people. The two split during 2002- 20004. They both preached at Maiduguri's Indimi Mosque, which was attended by the deputy governor of Borno. Many of the group were inspired by self-proclaimed prophet Mohammed Marwa (referred to as

Maitatsine - or he who curses others, and as 'annabi', the reference usually used to describe the founder of Islam.

Mohammed Yusuf was born in Northern Cameroon and condemned the reading of books other than the Quran. Yusuf has, while reaffirmed his opposition to Western education, been described by analysts and western media as being well-educated. He outright rejected the theory of evolution, and held steadfast the theory that the earth is flat.

Chronicle

Prior to annexation, and becoming part of the British Empire in 1900 (as Colonial Nigeria), the prior Bornu Empire governed the region where Boko Haram is now active. The Bornu Empire was a sovereign sultanate, administered according to the principles of the Constitution of Medina, with a majority Kanuri Muslim population.

In 1903, both the Borno Emirate and Sokoto Caliphate came under the auspices of the British government. Christian missionaries at this time spread Christianity in the region.

In 1960, and with the conclusion of British patronage, Nigeria was granted independence.

From 1996 Nigeria has been governed by a line of military dictatorships - until the introduction of democracy in 1999. Militancy among ethnic groups was one of the underlying causes of the 1967-70 civil war, when religious violence reached its apogee. In 1980 in Kano, the largest city in the north of the country, a Muslim fundamentalist sect Yan Tatsine (followers of Maitatsine) instigated riots and which resulted in 5 - 5000 deaths. In the subsequent military crackdown, Maitatsine was killed, consequently igniting a backlash of increased violence and which over the next two decades spread across other northern cities. Social disparity and penury contributed to both the Maitatsine and Boko Haram uprisings.

During the decades following the end of British patronage, politicians and academics from the mainly Islamic North have expressed a fundamental dislike of Western education. Political ethno-religious groups, the membership thereof including influential political, military and religious leaders, have prospered in Nigeria, though they were largely suppressed under military rule. Consequently their paramilitary units, fashioned upon the country's return to civilian rule, have been implicated in much of the sectarian violence in the years following. The Arewa People's Congress, the militia wing of the Arewa Consultative Forum, the main political group representing the interests of northern

Nigeria, is a well-funded group with military and intelligence expertise, and is considered capable of engaging in military action, including covert bombing.

Establishment



In 2002, Mohammed Yusuf established the group that became known as Boko Haram in Maiduguri, capital of the north-eastern state of Borno. He established a religious complex and school

that attracted disenfranchised Muslim families from across Nigeria and neighbouring countries. The political goal of the centre was the creating of an Islamic State, and thus became a recruiting ground for jihadists. By denouncing the police and state corruption, Yusuf attracted supporters from unemployed and dispossessed youth. A viable reason that Yusuf founded Boko Haram was that he saw an opportunity to exploit public outrage at corruption in government by linking it to Western influence. He used the existing infrastructure in Borno, of the Izala Society (Jama'at Izalatil Bidiawa Iqamatus Sunnah), a popular conservative Islamic group, so to recruit adherents, before breaking away to form his own. The Izala were originally welcomed into government, along with those sympathetic to Yusuf.

Boko Haram handled its operations somewhat peacefully during the first seven years of its existence, withdrawing from mainstream society and settling in remote north-eastern areas. The government repeatedly ignored warnings regarding the increasingly radical character of the organisation. The Council of Ulama recommended the government and the Nigerian TV Authority not broadcast Yusuf's preaching, but their cautions were disregarded. Yusuf's consequent arrest elevated him to heroic status. Borno's Deputy Governor Alhaji Dibal claimed that the terror group al-Qaeda had links with Boko Haram, but al-Qaeda broke them when they arrived at the conclusion that Yusuf was not reliable.

Nigerian politicians who support local terror factions, Boko Haram in particular, do so in order to make life difficult for political opponents. The former governor of Borno State Ali Modu Sheriff initially supported Boko Haram but no longer needed them after the 2007 elections and stopped funding them, but they were then out of control. Of course, Sheriff denies such accusations.

Crusade of Atrocity

In 2009, Nigerian police commenced an investigation into the group code-named 'Operation Flush'.

July 26, security forces arrested nine Boko Haram members and seized weapons and bomb-making paraphernalia. This event and a clash with police during a funeral procession led to revenge attacks on police and widespread rioting. A joint military task force operation was launched in response, and by 30 July more than 700 people had been killed, mostly Boko Haram members, and police stations, prisons, government offices, schools and churches had been destroyed. Mohammed Yusuf was arrested, and died in custody supposedly during an escape attempt.

As had been the case following the 1980 Kano riots, the killing of a leader of an extremist / terror group would have an unintended outcome. He was succeeded by Abubakar Shekau his former deputy / second-in-command.



Borno political and religious leaders at the time stated that they and federal government responded appropriately and, apart from the opposition party, overwhelmingly supported Yusuf's death without reservations regarding the extra-judicial killing.

Security remained a concern in Borno, with residents expressing concern about the importing of weapons and exchanges of religious messages over international borders.

Yusuf's deputy had survived, and audio tapes were in circulation in which Boko Haram threatened future attacks. Nevertheless, many did not foresee imminent bloodshed. Security status in Borno was reduced. Alhaji Boguma, a Borno government official believed that the state deserved praise from the international community for ending the conflict in such a short time, and that the wave of fundamentalism ** had been crushed.

FUNDAMENTALISM : The term has a religious connotation - resolute attachment to a set of irreducible beliefs. The term can be used to denote a tendency among certain groups (mainly, though not exclusively in religion), characterised by a decidedly strict literalism as it is applied to certain specific scriptures, to dogmas, or to ideologies, together with a strong sense of the importance of maintaining in-group and out-group distinctions, leading to an emphasis on purity and the desire to return to a previous model from which advocates believe members have strayed. Rejection of diversity

of opinion as applied to these established fundamentals and their accepted interpretation within the group is often the result of this tendency.

September 2010, Boko Haram having re-grouped under their new leader broke 105 of its members out of prison in Bauchi, along with over 600 other prisoners and went on to launch attacks in several areas within northern Nigeria.

During 2011, under the leadership of Abubakar Shekau, Boko Haram continuously enhanced its operational ability. Upon launching a string of IED attacks upon soft targets, and a vehicle-borne IED attack in June 2011, which killed six at the police HQ in Abuja. In August Boko Haram bombed the United Nations headquarters in Abuja. This was their first Western target. A spokesman claiming responsibility for the attack, in which eleven UN staff members were killed including twelve others, with more than one hundred injured, forewarned of future attacks on the interests of American and Nigerian governments. Speaking soon after the US embassy's announcement of the arrival in the country of the FBI, the aforesaid Boko Haram spokesperson announce their terms for negotiation and which were; the release of all jailed members. The increased refinement of the group led to speculation that Boko Haram was affiliated with Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, active in Niger.

Boko Haram has maintained a steady rate of attacks since 2011, striking a wide range of targets, multiple times per week. They have attacked politicians, religious leaders, security forces and civilian targets. The tactic of suicide bombing, used in the two attacks in the capital on the police and UN headquarters, was new to Nigeria. In Africa as a whole, it had only been used by al-Shabaab in Somalia and, to a lesser extent, Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb.

May 2011 and within hours of Goodluck Jonathan's presidential inauguration, Boko Haram carried out a series of bombings in Bauchi, Zaria and Abuja. The most devastating of these attacks was on the army barracks in Bauchi. A spokesman for Boko Haram informed that the attack had, somewhat illogically, been carried out, as a test of loyalty, by serving members of the military keen on joining the group. This charge was later refuted by an army spokesman, who claimed, "This is no banana republic."

8 January 2012, the president announced that Boko Haram had in truth, infiltrated both the army and the police, including the executive, parliamentary and legislative branches of government. Boko Haram's spokesperson informed that responsibility for the killing outside the president's home in

Maiduguri, of Abba Anas Ibn Umar Garbai, politician and younger brother of the Shehu of Borno (second most prominent Muslim in the country after the Sultan of Sokoto) - "We are doing what we are doing to fight injustice, if they stop their satanic ways of doing things and the injustices, we would stop what we are doing.'" Boko Haram spokesperson.

The killing of Abba Anas Ibn Umar Garbai was only one of several political and religious assassinations Boko Haram carried out during 2012, with the presumed intention of amending perceived injustices in Borno, their home state. Consecutively, the massacres carried on and relentless ferocity, taking the country towards civil war. Come the end of 2011, these conflicting strategies led many to query the group's unity; comparisons were made with the somewhat diverse motivations of militant groups of the Niger Delta.

November 2012, the Nigerian State Security Service announced that four criminal syndicates were operating under the same name (Boko Haram).

Throughout the north-east of the country it was the pursuing of police that was the modus- operandi, they being continually massacred at work or via drive-by shootings at their homes. This was payback for the killing of Yusuf, for whoever were representatives of the state apparatus, or for no reason. Five officers were detained for the murder of Yusuf but the action had no effect on the level of discontent. At this time criminal enterprise prospered.

By mid-2012, hundreds of police personnel had died and over sixty police stations had been hit. The government's response to the country's fast plummet into insecurity was to invest £5 billion in electronic security paraphernalia and which was 20 percent of Nigeria's overall budget. Investment was on bomb detection, communications and transport; and £400 million on a Chinese closed circuit system for Abuja, which neither detected nor deterred any acts of terror.

Cars were in flames and bodies littered everywhere

The political defeat of the military dictator Muhammadu Buhari served to intensify ethno-religious / political pressures, as it violated the terms of a tacit agreement, which was; that the presidency would alternate following two terms of office between candidates from the Christian south and Muslim north. Sectarian rampages literally engulfed the twelve northern states during the three days following the election, and which left over eight hundred people dead and seventy thousand people displaced.

Subsequent to the election a campaign of violence by Boko Haram climaxed in a string of bombings across the country on Christmas Day. In the outskirts of Abuja, thirty seven people were killed in a church that had its roof blown off by a bomb. One resident was noted for reacting thus, "Cars are in flames and bodies are littered everywhere". The phrase was voiced by the international press. Similar Christmas events had been reported in previous years. On New Year's Eve in the local government areas of Jos, Borno Yobe, and Niger, Goodluck Jonathan declared a state of emergency. He also closed the international border in the north-east.

During 2011, Boko Haram carried out one hundred and fifteen terror attacks, killing five hundred and fifty people. The state of emergency served only to accompany an amplification of violence. The beginning three weeks of 2012 accounted for over fifty per cent of the total deaths for the preceding year.

Two days following the declaration of the state of emergency, Boko Haram released a demand aimed at southern Nigerians who were living and working in the north of the country, effectively giving them three days to get out. Three days, after which they began a series of small-scale attacks on Christians and members of the Igbo minority, causing hundreds to flee.

20 January, in Kano, they carried out by far their most deadly action to date, an assault on police buildings, killing one hundred and ninety people. The attacks involved a combined use of car bombs, suicide bombers and IEDs, supported by uniformed assassins.

Reports by Human Rights Watch and by Amnesty International published in 2012 were cited by government agencies and local and international media, based on research carried out over the course of the conflict in the worst affected areas of the country. Both were critical of Boko Haram and in addition, of the Nigerian security forces;

"Boko Haram should immediately stop all attacks, and threats of attacks, that cause loss of life, injury, and destruction of property. The Nigerian government should take urgent measures to address the human rights abuses that have helped fuel the violent militancy."

Regarding the Security Forces : Effectively, it was (and still is) the case that very serious human rights problems lay at the door of the security forces. Included are; extra-judicial killings, summary executions, torture, rape, and other abominable, inhuman, and degrading treatment of prisoners,

detainees, and criminal suspects; harsh and life-threatening prison and detention centre conditions, arbitrary arrest and detention, prolonged pre-trial detention, denial of fair public trial, executive influence on the judiciary, infringements on the rights of citizen's privacy, restrictions imposed on the freedom of speech, press, assembly, religion, and movement , and so on and so forth.

October 9 2012, bystanders in Maiduguri claimed that members of a vigilante group based in Maiduguri, the JTF (Restore Order), went on a killing spree after a Boko Haram bomb killed an officer. Media reported the JTF vigilante group murdered at least forty five civilians and destroyed at least one hundred houses in the neighbourhood. The JTF commander based in Maiduguri denied any allegations.

November 2 2012, observers claimed the JTF shot and killed at least forty people during raids they carried out in Maiduguri. The army claimed it dismissed certain officers from the military as a result of 'alleged abuses' committed in Maiduguri, but there were no formal prosecutions in Maiduguri.

Credible reports indicated that uniformed military personnel and para-militarised police carried out summary executions, assaults, torture, and other abuses throughout Bauchi, Borno, Kano, Kaduna, Plateau, and Yobe. The police, army, and security forces committed extra-judicial killings and used lethal and excessive force to capture criminals and suspects, as well as to scatter protesters. The authorities failed to hold police accountable for the use of excessive and / or deadly force and for the deaths of people taken into custody. The security forces operated with impunity in the illegal seizure, detention, and often extra-judicial execution of suspects. Any reports of state and / or federal inquiries set up to investigate suspicious deaths remained unpublished, if they were even completed in the first place.

Neither were there developments in the case of five police officers accused of executing Muhammad Yusuf, in 2009, at a state police HQ. In July 2011 authorities arraigned five police officers in the federal high court in Abuja for the murder of Yusuf. The court granted bail to four of the officers, while one continued in custody.

The use of excessive force by police, including the use of live ammunition to scatter demonstrators resulted in numerous killings during the year. Security forces reportedly fired on protesters in various states across the country during demonstrations, resulting at least fifteen deaths and an unknown number of wounded.

States with an increased security presence due to the activities of Boko Haram experienced a rise in violence and lethal force at police and military roadblocks. This was despite some improvements resulting from the closure of police checkpoints in many parts of the country

Police and security forces were often implicated in kidnapping schemes, in abductions of civilians, occurring in the Niger Delta and the Southeast

Although the Nigerian constitution and law prohibits such practices and provides for punishment of such abuses, torture is not criminalised, and security service personnel, including police, military, and Security Service officers, regularly did torture, beat, and abuse demonstrators, criminal suspects, detainees, and convicted prisoners alike. Police mistreated civilians to extort money. The law prohibits the introduction into trials of evidence and confessions obtained through torture but it has to be said that the police often used torture to extract confessions.

Boko Haram is based Borno State and which adjoins Lake Chad as does Chad, Cameroon, and Niger. The conflict in Nigeria caused refugees to spill over the national borders to involve all four of these countries.

In 2013, Boko Haram augmented their operations in Northern Cameroon, and were involved in many encounters along the borders of Chad and Niger. They were linked to a number of kidnappings, often reportedly in conjunction with the Boko Haram splinter group Ansaru, thus gaining them increased international notice.

February 2013, Boko Haram kidnapped seven French tourists in the far north of Cameroon.

November 2013, Boko Haram kidnapped a French priest in Cameroon.

December 2013, Boko Haram gunmen attacked civilians in several areas of northern Cameroon. Security forces from Chad and Niger also reportedly partook in skirmishes against suspected Boko Haram members along Nigeria's borders.

In 2013, the group kidnapped a further eight French citizens in northern Cameroon and obtained ransom payments for their release.

So to evade the Nigerian army Boko Haram often retreated into the hills around the border with Cameroon, whose own army was (and still is) unwilling to confront them.

In 1998, Nigeria, Niger and Chad established a Multinational Joint Task Force.

February 2012, Cameroon signed an agreement with Nigeria to establish a 'Joint Trans-Border Security Committee', which was installed in November 2013.

In 2014 Cameroon revealed plans to conduct coordinated but separate border patrols. It convened again in July 2014 to further improve cooperation between the two countries.

Late 2013, Amnesty International had credible information to the effect that over nine hundred and fifty inmates had died in custody, most of them held in detention centres across Maiduguri and Damaturu.

The U.K. Home Office also documented official state corruption during December 2013.

The Nigeria Police Force, State Security Service, and the military all were (are) supposed to report to civilian authorities. However, these security services periodically act outside of civilian control. The government lack effective mechanisms to investigate and punish abuse and corruption. The Nigeria Police Force remain susceptible to corruption, commit human rights abuses, and generally operate with impunity in the apprehension, illegal detention, and sometimes execution of criminal suspects. The State Security Service also commits human rights abuses, particularly in restricting freedom of speech and press. In certain cases private citizens or the government brought charges against perpetrators of human rights abuses in these units. However, most cases lingered on in court or were left unresolved following an initial investigation.

May 2013, the state of emergency was extended so to cover the whole of the three north-eastern states of Yobe, Adamawa and Borno resulting in tensions within the region. During the year following the announcement, a quarter of a million people fled the three states, followed by a further one hundred and eighty thousand, between the months of May and August 2014. A further two hundred and ten thousand fled from bordering states, bringing the total displaced by the conflict to six hundred and fifty thousand. Many thousands left the country.

August 2014 Amnesty International video shows Nigerian Army and allied militia groups executing people, including by slitting their throats, and throwing their corpses in mass graves. More than one hundred and fifty villages and towns were attacked.

April 2014, that Boko Haram kidnapped two hundred and seventy six schoolgirls from Chibok. Shekau announced his intention to sell the girls into slavery. Only fifty managed to escape captivity. This particular incident brought Boko Haram global media attention (which it was intended to do), certain of which focused then US First Lady Michelle Obama. President Goodluck Jonathan, in the face of condemnation for his perceived ineptitude, as well as allegations of state collusion, responded by hiring a Washington public relations firm.



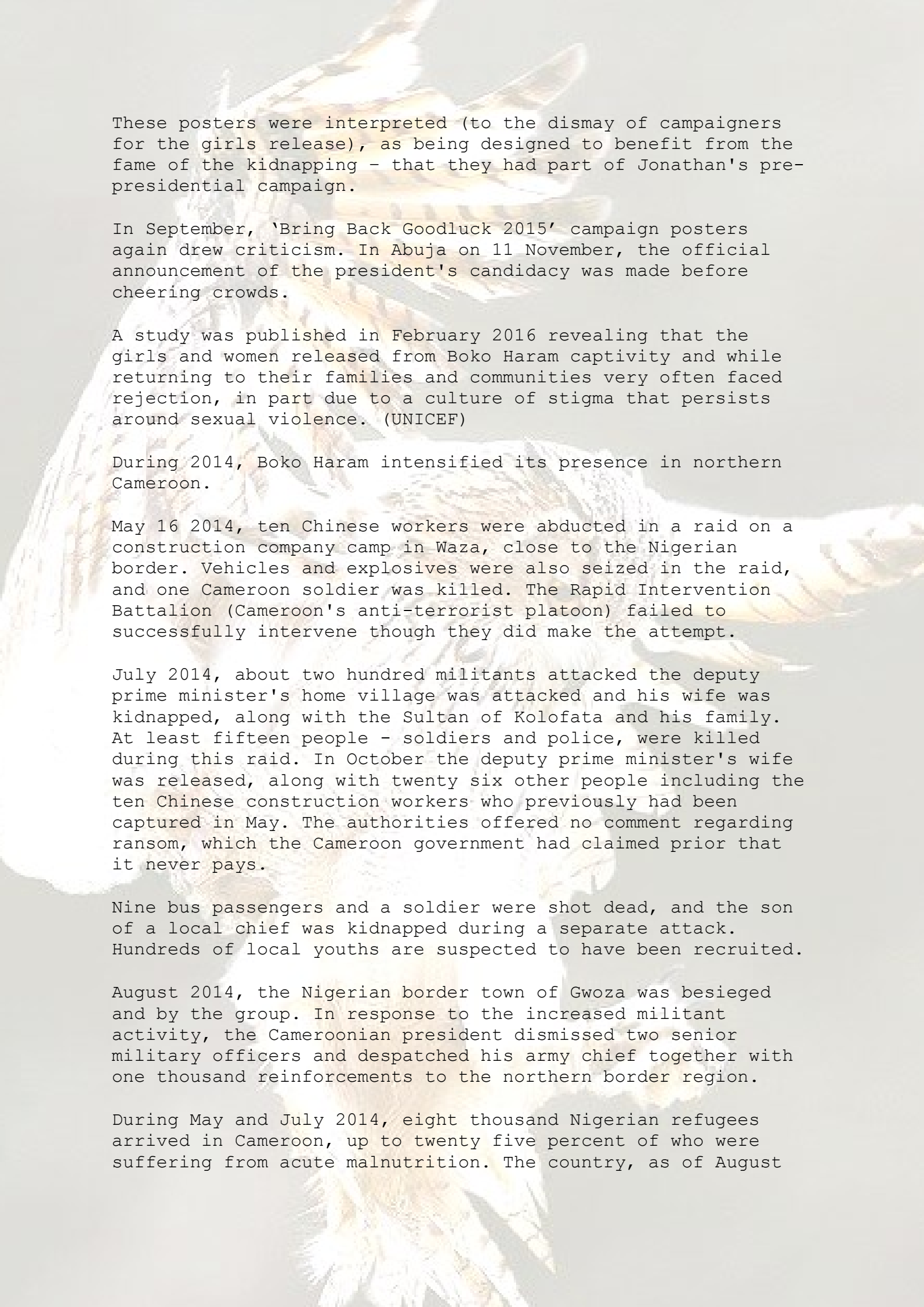
Goodluck Johnathan

The parents of the missing girls and those of who had escaped were kept waiting until July to meet with the president. In October, the government gave an announcement to the effect that the girls were soon to be released, but the information was unreliable.

The proclamation of a peace agreement given to the media and the supposed imminent release of all the missing girls was responded to days later by a video message in which Shekau stated that no such meeting had ever taken place and that all the captive girls had been married off.

The said proclamation to the media, unaccompanied by any evidence whatsoever of the reality of the agreement, was a mere political ploy by the president to raise his popularity before his confirmation of candidacy in the 2015 general election.

Earlier in the year and in the streets of the capital, the plight of the girls was displayed on Bring Back Our Girls political campaign posters. The president denied all knowledge of these posters and took them down, after criticism surfaced.



These posters were interpreted (to the dismay of campaigners for the girls release), as being designed to benefit from the fame of the kidnapping - that they had part of Jonathan's pre-presidential campaign.

In September, 'Bring Back Goodluck 2015' campaign posters again drew criticism. In Abuja on 11 November, the official announcement of the president's candidacy was made before cheering crowds.

A study was published in February 2016 revealing that the girls and women released from Boko Haram captivity and while returning to their families and communities very often faced rejection, in part due to a culture of stigma that persists around sexual violence. (UNICEF)

During 2014, Boko Haram intensified its presence in northern Cameroon.

May 16 2014, ten Chinese workers were abducted in a raid on a construction company camp in Waza, close to the Nigerian border. Vehicles and explosives were also seized in the raid, and one Cameroon soldier was killed. The Rapid Intervention Battalion (Cameroon's anti-terrorist platoon) failed to successfully intervene though they did make the attempt.

July 2014, about two hundred militants attacked the deputy prime minister's home village was attacked and his wife was kidnapped, along with the Sultan of Kolofata and his family. At least fifteen people - soldiers and police, were killed during this raid. In October the deputy prime minister's wife was released, along with twenty six other people including the ten Chinese construction workers who previously had been captured in May. The authorities offered no comment regarding ransom, which the Cameroon government had claimed prior that it never pays.

Nine bus passengers and a soldier were shot dead, and the son of a local chief was kidnapped during a separate attack. Hundreds of local youths are suspected to have been recruited.

August 2014, the Nigerian border town of Gwoza was besieged and by the group. In response to the increased militant activity, the Cameroonian president dismissed two senior military officers and despatched his army chief together with one thousand reinforcements to the northern border region.

During May and July 2014, eight thousand Nigerian refugees arrived in Cameroon, up to twenty five percent of who were suffering from acute malnutrition. The country, as of August

2014, hosted 107,000 refugees fleeing unrest, a number that was expected to increase to 180,000 by the the year end.

A further 11,000 Nigerian refugees crossed the border into Cameroon and Chad during August.

The attack by Boko Haram on Gwoza was a change in strategy. The group continued to capture territory in north-eastern and eastern areas of Borno, in addition to Adamawa and Yobe. Attacks carried out over the border were deterred by the Cameroon military. The territorial gains were officially denied by the Nigerian military.

24 August 2014, Shekau proclaimed that Gwoza was now part of an Islamic caliphate. The town of Bama, 45 miles from the state capital Maiduguri, was captured at the beginning of September, resulting in thousands of residents fleeing to Maiduguri, even as residents there were themselves attempting to flee. The military continued to prevent Boko Haram's territorial gains, which were, however, confirmed by local vigilantes who had managed to escape. The militants were killing men and teenage boys in the town of over 250,000 inhabitants. Soldiers refused orders to advance on the occupied town; hundreds fled across the border into Cameroon, but were promptly repatriated. Fifty-four deserters were later sentenced to death by firing squad.

17 October 2014, the Chief of the Defence Staff announced that a ceasefire had been agreed, stating, "I have directed the service chiefs to ensure immediate compliance with this development." Even without confirmation from the rebels, the announcement was broadcast in newspaper headlines trans-nationally. Within two days, the same media were reporting that Boko Haram attacks had continued unchanged. It was reported that the faction led issue would make such a ceasefire very difficult to achieve.

29 October 2014, Mubi (a town of 200,000 in Adamawa), was taken by the rebels. This further adding to the lack of confidence already felt regarding the peace talks. Thousands fled south to Yola (the capital of Adamawa).

31 October 2014, amid media rumours that the ceasefire announcement had in fact been part of President Goodluck Jonathan's re-election campaign, Boko Haram released a video statement via AFP stating that no negotiations had ever taken place. Mubi was apparently recaptured by the army on 13 November. On the same day, Boko Haram seized Chibok; two days later, the army recaptured the largely deserted town.

16 November 2014, it was estimated that more than twenty towns and villages had been taken control of by the rebels.

28 November 2014, during Friday prayers at the central mosque in Kano, one hundred and twenty people were killed in an attack. There were 27 Boko Haram attacks during this month of November, killing at least seven hundred and ninety people..

3 December 2014, several towns in North Adamawa had been rescued from rebels by the Nigerian military, with the support of local vigilantes. Bala Nggilari, the governor of Adamawa state, stated that the military were aiming to recruit 4,000 vigilantes.

13 December 2014, Boko Haram attacked the village of Gumsuri, in Borno, killing over thirty people, and kidnapping over one hundred women and children.

Attacks carried out in Cameroon

During the second half of December 2014, activity was focussed on the Far North Region of Cameroon.

17 December 2014, an army convoy was attacked with an IEDs and ambushed by hundreds of rebels near to the border town of Amchide, 40 miles north of Maroua, the state capital. One soldier was killed, and 116 rebels were killed in the attack, which was followed by another attack overnight with actual casualties unknown.

22 December 2014, the Rapid Intervention Battalion responded with an attack on a Boko Haram training camp near Guirdivig, arresting 45 rebels and seizing 84 children aged 7-15 who were undergoing training. The rebels fled in pick-up trucks carrying an unknown number of their dead, no information on army casualties was released.

27-28 December 2014, five villages were simultaneously attacked, and for the first time the Cameroon military launched air attacks while Boko Haram occupied an army camp. Casualty figures were not released.

Units of the group attacked Makari, Amchide, Limani and Achigachia in a change of strategy which consists of distracting Cameroonian troops on different fronts, making them more vulnerable in the face of the mobility and unpredictability of their attacks.

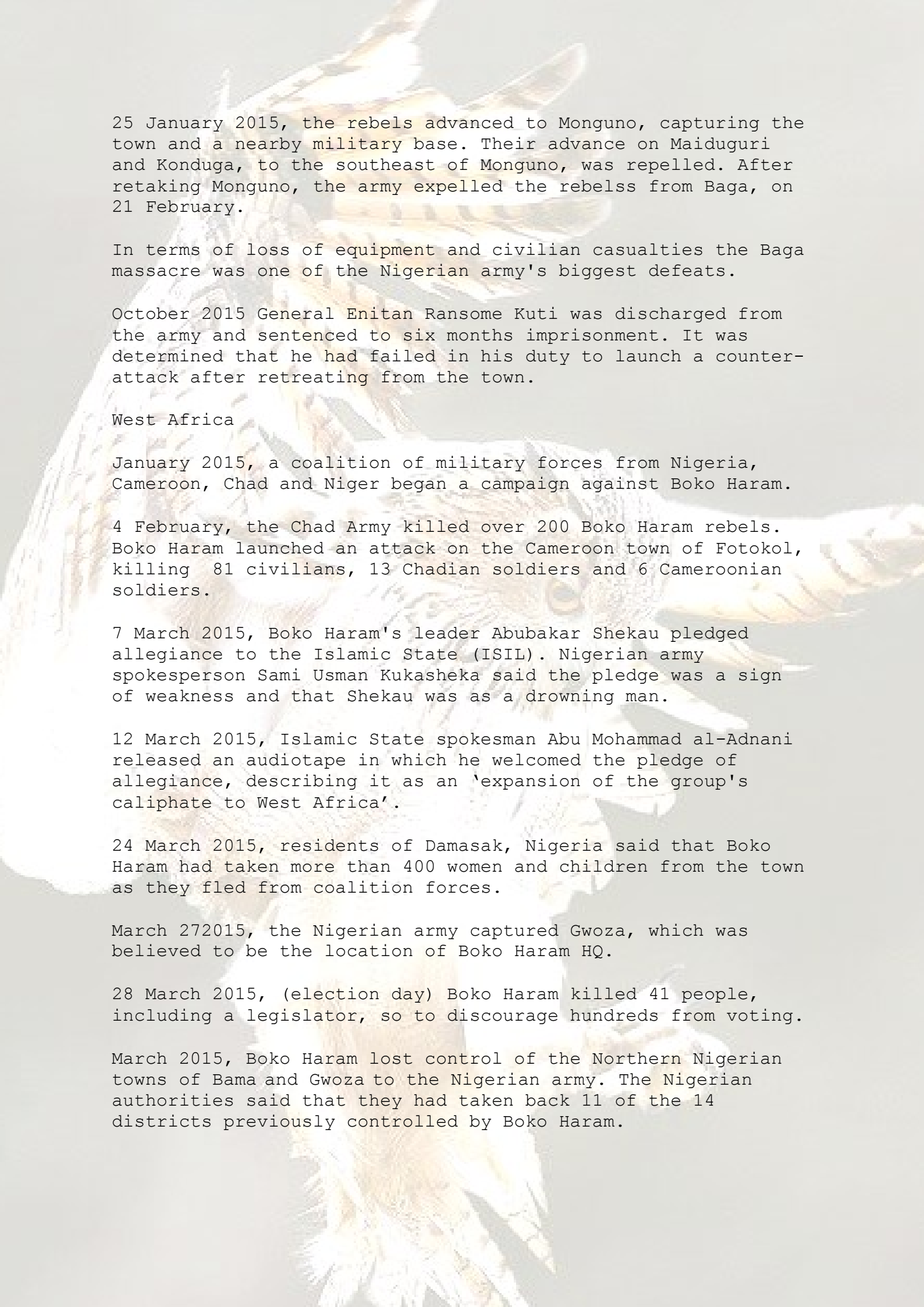
2015

3 January 2015, Boko Haram attacked Baga, seizing it and the multi-national joint task force military base. As the rebels advanced, the army fled. Certain residents did manage to escape to Chad. Although the death toll of the massacre was earlier estimated by western media to be upwards of 2000, the Defence Ministry dismissed these claims as speculation and conjecture, while estimating the figure to be closer to 150.

Media Report

'The Baga Massacre occurred between January 3rd and 7th, 2015 in the state of Baga, Nigeria, West Africa. This ruthless slaughter was carried out by Boko Haram. The group began by attacking and over running military base that was the headquarters of the Multinational Joint Task Force which consisted of troops from Chad, Niger, and Nigeria. After defeating the armed forces, Boko Haram then advanced on the civilians of Baga and forced thousand from their homes, committing mass-murder, leaving their bodies in the dirt and even torching some areas. The ultimate motive of the massacre may have been the seizure of weapons and vehicles from the MNJTF. As for the ultimate death toll, it varies greatly and it's unlikely there will ever be a definite "official" number. Some say 100, others maintain that >> over 2000 were killed.<<
,





25 January 2015, the rebels advanced to Monguno, capturing the town and a nearby military base. Their advance on Maiduguri and Konduga, to the southeast of Monguno, was repelled. After retaking Monguno, the army expelled the rebels from Baga, on 21 February.

In terms of loss of equipment and civilian casualties the Baga massacre was one of the Nigerian army's biggest defeats.

October 2015 General Enitan Ransome Kuti was discharged from the army and sentenced to six months imprisonment. It was determined that he had failed in his duty to launch a counter-attack after retreating from the town.

West Africa

January 2015, a coalition of military forces from Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger began a campaign against Boko Haram.

4 February, the Chad Army killed over 200 Boko Haram rebels. Boko Haram launched an attack on the Cameroon town of Fotokol, killing 81 civilians, 13 Chadian soldiers and 6 Cameroonian soldiers.

7 March 2015, Boko Haram's leader Abubakar Shekau pledged allegiance to the Islamic State (ISIL). Nigerian army spokesperson Sami Usman Kukasheka said the pledge was a sign of weakness and that Shekau was as a drowning man.

12 March 2015, Islamic State spokesman Abu Mohammad al-Adnani released an audiotape in which he welcomed the pledge of allegiance, describing it as an 'expansion of the group's caliphate to West Africa'.

24 March 2015, residents of Damasak, Nigeria said that Boko Haram had taken more than 400 women and children from the town as they fled from coalition forces.

March 27 2015, the Nigerian army captured Gwoza, which was believed to be the location of Boko Haram HQ.

28 March 2015, (election day) Boko Haram killed 41 people, including a legislator, so to discourage hundreds from voting.

March 2015, Boko Haram lost control of the Northern Nigerian towns of Bama and Gwoza to the Nigerian army. The Nigerian authorities said that they had taken back 11 of the 14 districts previously controlled by Boko Haram.

April 2015, four Boko Haram camps in the Sambisa Forest were overrun by the Nigerian military who freed nearly 300 females. Boko Haram forces were believed to have retreated to the Mandara Mountains, along the Nigeria-Cameroon border.

May 2015, over 5,000 Nigerian Catholics had been killed by Boko Haram (according to a report by the Catholic diocese of Maiduguri). In addition, leaving 7,000 widows and 10,000 orphans. Boko Haram rebels had taken over several parish centres within the diocese.

July mosques massacres

1 and 2 July 2015, Boko Haram militants attacked multiple mosques. Forty-eight men and boys were killed on the 1st at one mosque in Kukawa. Seventeen were wounded in the attack. Ninety-seven others, mostly men, were killed in numerous mosques on the 2nd, with a number of women and young girls killed in their homes. An unknown number were wounded.

Suicide bombings in Chad

15 June 2015, two suicide bombings of police sites in N'Djamena, the capital and largest city of Chad, killed 38 people. Boko Haram later claimed responsibility for these attacks.

11 July 2015, a male suicide bomber disguised in a woman's burqa detonated an explosive belt in the main market of N'Djamena, next to the main mosque, killing 15 people and injuring 80. Several days after the bombing, Boko Haram claimed responsibility, signing as Islamic State, West Africa province.

Claims of defeat

March 2015, the general election was won by Buhari, who had sworn to remove inefficiency and corruption in the military.

9 September 2015, the Director of Information at the Defence Headquarters, Colonel Rabe Abubakar announced that all Boko Haram camps and cells had been destroyed, and in addition that the group was so weakened that they could no longer hold any territory:

Quote : These terrorists have been subdued, even if they are adopting other means and as they are re-strategising, we are also doing the same and pre-empting them. We have coordinated the air and ground assaults to make sure that these terrorists' hideouts are completely decimated. As I am speaking to you, all the terrorists' camps have completely

been wiped out. So right now they are completely in disarray, have no command and control of where to plan. We have even taken over their camps that most of them abandoned and are attempting to blend into towns and communities. We have also apprehended some of them and very soon innocent Nigerians can move back to their communities. We are making a lot of headway, so people should know that Boko Haram is no longer strong enough to hold grounds. Very soon this issue of whether they are in control of any territory in Nigeria or not will come to the open. I am assuring you that they will never again recapture the territory taken from them because what is happening right now with the deployment of troops, equipment and morale will ensure that.

December 2015, Buhari reiterated, that Boko Haram was technically defeated, and declared in December 2016 that the group had been entirely ousted from its last stronghold of Sambisa Forest.

Borno

20 September 2016, a series of bombings were carried out in Maiduguri and Monguno. The attacks followed an announcement by Shekau effectively repudiating the army's claims of defeat. A military spokesman stated subsequently that the event showed the high level of desperation of Boko Haram.

The Arewa Consultative Forum condemned the continued use of suicide bombers by Boko Haram to kill innocent people in the name of a religious war, as no religion condones such cruel and barbaric act. The Arewa Consultative Forum commended the military and other security agencies for the continued onslaught on the terrorists' enclaves and hideouts, thereby dislodging them from their strong holds.

21 October 2016, Nganzai, Borno, from an account provided by a civilian vigilante, fleeing rebels shot at four cars, killing all the passengers, and then set fire to and looted a nearby village.

23 October 2016 a suicide bombing occurred during a pre-dawn attack at a mosque in Maiduguri. The death toll was officially 6, while hospital sources reported 19 deaths, and a vigilante claimed to have counted 28 corpses and the remains of two suicide bombers. On the following day four female suicide bombers claimed one victim after they were intercepted by in Maiduguri.

27 October 2016 a military operation freed 192 children and 138 women being held captive in two camps in the Sambisa forest. According to Defence HQ, 30 militants were killed.

25 December 2016, according to vigilantes, gunmen set the village of Kimba alight, killing at least 14 people.

27 December 2016, gunmen armed with RPGs fought with troops for two hours in Aldawari village in the outskirts of Maiduguri. On the following morning a bombing at a nearby mosque killed around 20 people

Federal Capital Territory / Nasarawa

2 October 2016, two bombings killed 18 and wounded 41, in Nyanya, and in Nasarawa and in Kujein. All were claimed by Boko Haram.

Adamawa

1 October 2016, villagers in Kirchinga, Adamawa (a village that borders Cameroon and the Sambisa forest) complained of a lack of security personnel after 5 residents had their throats cut during an unchallenged early morning attack.

18 October 2016, the village of Dar, Adamawa was attacked. A large number of gunmen invaded the village, forcing residents to flee to a nearby bush. Two female suicide bombers disguised as fleeing villagers detonated explosives in the bush where many people were hiding, killing 12 persons.

20 October 2016, reports of a military ambush in Madagali, abetted by vigilantes, in which over 30 rebels were killed.

21 October 2016, according to vigilante reports, a joint operation in Madagali and Gwoza killed 150 rebels and rescued 36 captives.

23 October 2016, in Yola (capital of Adamawa), a suicide bomb detonated at a crowded mosque killed 27.

17 November 2016, an explosion at a food market in Yola killed 32,

28 December, 2016, two female suicide bombers detonated explosive belts at a crowded market in Madagali. At least 28 were killed.

Yobe

7 October 2016, Damaturu, Yobe, 15 people were killed by 3 suicide bombers. In Goniri, Yobe 7 soldiers and over 100 militants were killed, and a large arms cache was found, according to an army spokesman, who said that the recent

apparent rise in suicide bombings was an indication of the success of military operations.

Kano

30 November 2016, Boko Haram claimed responsibility for a suicide attack on a procession of Shi'ite Muslims, 21 were killed.

A week earlier two bombers had killed at least 14 in Kano city.

Cameroon

12 January 2017, Boko Haram attacked a Cameroon military base in Kolofata, govt. forces reported killing 143 rebels, while one Cameroon soldier was killed.

18 January 2017, Boko Haram raided two Tourou Cameroon area villages, setting fire to houses, killing residents and kidnapping between 60 and 80 people including an estimated 50 young children between the ages of 10 and 15.

11 October 2017, in the town of Mora, north region of Cameroon, two female suicide bombers killed nine people.

18 October 2017, 10 rebels were killed when they attacked a Cameroon military anti-terrorist division convoy near the border, after a military vehicle became stuck in mud. One army commander subsequently died of his wounds.

12 October 2017, the first 90 of a proposed deployment of 300 US troops arrived in the region along with Predator drones, to assist with reconnaissance and airborne intelligence.

23 October 2017, Boko Haram were driven out of Kerawa, a village of 50,000 people, in Kolofata in the far north. Reports of civilian casualties ranged from eight to eleven. An army spokesman claimed the rebels suffered heavy casualties. The village's military base had previously been targeted by suicide bombers on 3 September, when 30 were killed.

9 November 2017, two female suicide bombers killed three Nigerians during a security check in a truck full of Nigerian refugees.

21 November 2017, a suicide attack in a suburb Fotokol killed four. According to an anonymous military official, 'The first kamikaze detonated his bomb in the house of the traditional chief of Leymarie. Five people died including the bomber.

Several minutes later, three female bombers exploded their bombs close to the initial site but they didn't kill anyone else because they acted too quickly.'

28 November 2017, two suicide bombers killed six near the military base in Dabanga, and in an attack in Gouzoudou five people were killed, according to a military spokesman.

1 December 2017, two suicide bombers killed three, and a third bomber was killed before detonating explosives.

2 December 2017, Cameroon's Defence Minister claimed that, come the end of November, 100 Boko Haram members had been killed and 900 hostages set free, and that a stockpile of arms and munitions, including Islamic State flags had been seized.

Chad

6 October 2015, the Chadian army reported an attack in the border region of Lake Chad. 11 soldiers were killed and 14 wounded in the pre-dawn, cross-border infiltration, and 17 rebels were also killed.

10 October 2015, suicide bombers killed 33 in the market in Baga Sola (a camp for Nigerian refugees)

1 November 2015, two dawn attacks on army posts occurred. Eleven militants and two soldiers were killed at Kaika, and in an attempted suicide bombing at Bougouma, two members of Boko Haram were neutralised and a third blew himself up, wounding 11 civilians (according to a government statement).

9 November, 2015, a state of emergency was imposed in the western Lake Chad region, initially for 12 days, and extended by Chad's national assembly on 18 November to four months.

5 December 2015, three female suicide bombers killed about 30 people at a crowded market on the island of Koulfoua, Lake Chad.

Niger

25 September 2015, fifteen civilians were massacred and stores were looted in a cross-border raid on a Niger village.

2 October 2015, two soldiers died and four were wounded in a Boko Haram attack on a village near the Nigerian border in Diffa Province. The rebels looted stores.

4 October 2015, a policeman and five civilians were killed by 4 suicide bombers near the Nigerian border.

6 October 2015, three Boko Haram militants accidentally blew themselves up while transporting explosives to Bosso, in Diffa.

21 October 2015, near to Diffa two soldiers were killed by explosives while intercepting an attack. Diffa region subsequently was hosting over 150,000 Nigerian refugees, hence under a state of emergency.

14 October 2015, a curfew was imposed.

At least 57 attacks occurred there from February to October 2015. More than 1,100 Boko Haram suspects were arrested in Niger during year 2015.

26 November 2015, Boko Haram launched a cross-border night raid on Wogom village in Diffa Province. A government spokesman said that eighteen villagers were killed, including the chief imam for the village whose throat was cut open by his own nephew.

2016

The attack at Dalori

30 January 2016, at least 86 people were killed and at least 62 injured in an attack by Boko Haram militants on Dalori Village, near Maiduguri, Nigeria. The Nigerian Army was unable to fight the militants until reinforcements arrived, causing Boko Haram to retreat.

Weakening and division

It is worth noting that Boko Haram killed 244 people during the second quarter of 2016, constituting the lowest quarterly figure for five years.

August 2016, the Islamic State announced that it had appointed Abu-Musab al-Barnawi as the new leader of the group. In a video released a few days later, Shekau refused to accept al-Barnawi's appointment as leader and vowed to fight him while stating that he was still loyal to Islamic State leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.

The group has since split into pro-Barnawi and pro-Shekau factions, with reports of armed clashes breaking out between them. Shekau has released videos since the split in which he

referred to his group by its previous name of Jamatu Ahlis Sunna Lidawatti wal Jihad.

31 August 2016, Major General Lucky Irabor stated that the rebels now controlled only a few villages and towns near Lake Chad and the Sambisa forest. The military expected recapturing the final strongholds of the group within weeks.

2017

Rise in child suicide bombing

Reported increase in child suicide bombers, with 27 incidents occurring in the first three months of 2017 in; Cameroon, Nigeria, Niger, and Chad, compared to 30 in the entire previous year, 56 in 2015 and 4 in 2014.

Kidnapped children who manage to free from Boko Haram are often held in custody or ostracized by their community or family. They are held in military barracks, separated from their parents, without medical follow-up, without psychological support, without education, under conditions and for durations that are unknown. Hence, society's rejection of these children, and their sense of isolation and desperation, could have made them more vulnerable to promises of martyrdom through acceptance of dangerous and deadly missions.

The structure of Boko Haram (in brief)

Boko Haram is organized in a hierarchical structure with one overall leader.

The group also operates as a 'concealed cell system', via a network structure, with units consisting of between 300 and 500 fighters. The total number of fighters range between 500 and 9,000.

Between 2002 and 2009, Boko Haram was led by the organization founder, Mohammed Yusuf.

In 2009, following the death of Yusuf, the leadership passed to Abubakar Shekau, who was Yusuf's second-in command.

Abubakar Shekau was born in Yobe, Nigeria, between 1965 and 1975. He is fluent in Arabic, Hausa, Fulani, and Kanuri.

Funding

Kidnappings, theft and extortion

Boko Haram derives funding from bank robberies and kidnapping ransoms.

In 2013, gunmen from Boko Haram kidnapped a family of seven French tourists while on a holiday in Cameroon. Two months later, the kidnappers released the hostages along with 16 others in exchange for a ransom of £2.8 million.

What Boko Haram receives from al-Qaeda associates is small compared when compared with the estimated £1 million ransom for each Nigerian VIP, or foreigner kidnapped. Money is floated via couriers, thus impossible to trace, and communication is face-to-face. Mode of operation includes paying local youths to track army movements so that little funding is needed to carry out attacks. Equipment captured from fleeing soldiers keeps the group constantly well-supplied. The group also extorts local governments. A spokesman of Boko Haram claimed that Kano state governor Ibrahim Shekarau and Bauchi state governor Isa Yuguda had paid them monthly.

Islamist supporters

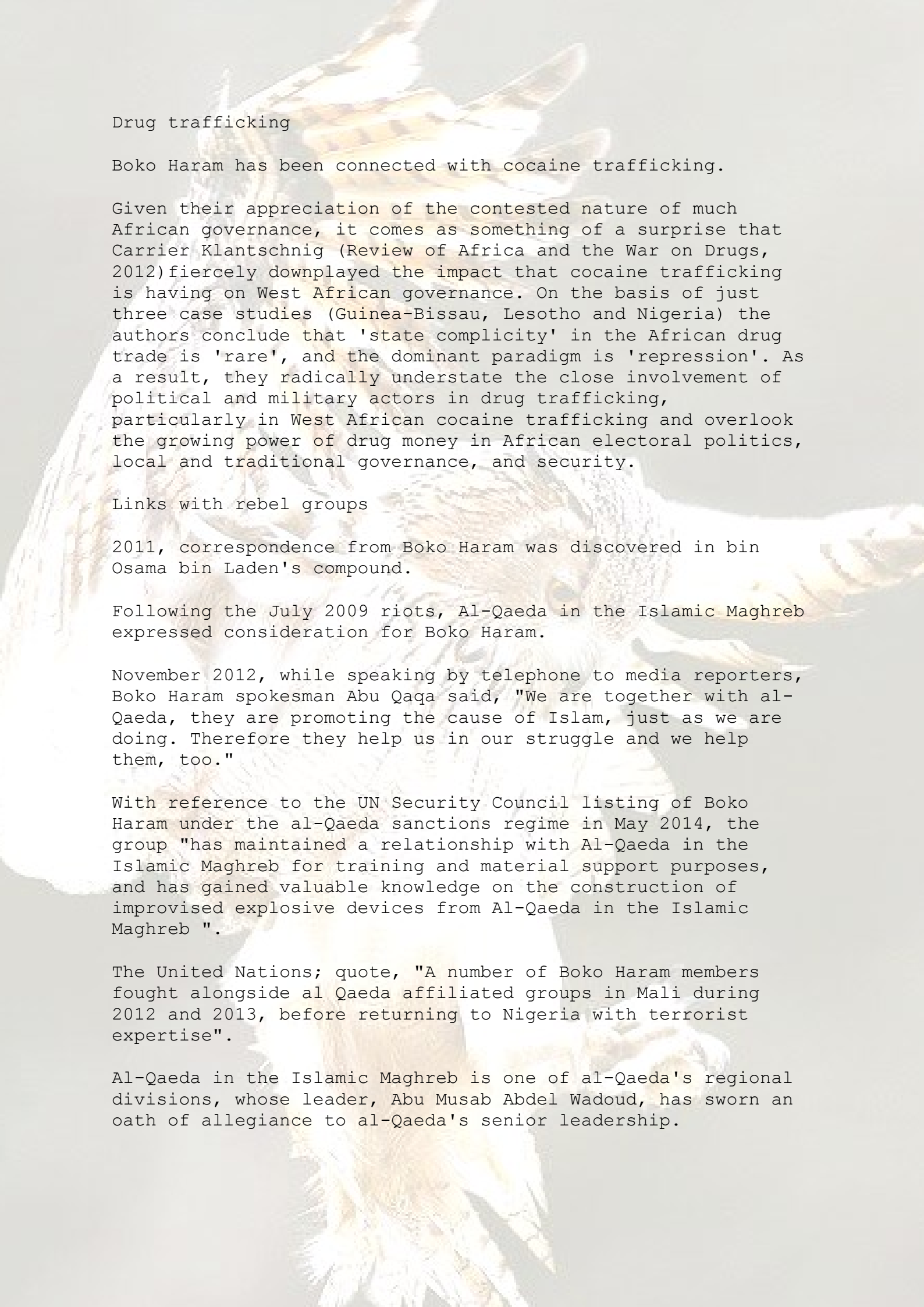
Boko Haram was suspected of receiving funds from corrupt local politicians to discredit their opponents—from local donors who supported Boko Haram's goal of imposing Islamic law while eradicating Nigeria of Western influence.

More recently Boko Haram has expanded its funding base by encouraging foreign donors, and involvement in ventures - fake charity organizations.

February 2012, arrested officials disclosed that while Boko Haram initially relied upon donations from members, its links with Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb opened it up to funding from groups in Saudi Arabia.

Boko Haram covers its sources of funding via the use of a highly decentralised distribution network. The group employs hawala, an Islamic model of money transfer based on an honour system and a trans-national network of agents who make the financing difficult to track.

During the past, Nigerian officials have been criticised for being unable to track most of the funding that Boko Haram has received.



Drug trafficking

Boko Haram has been connected with cocaine trafficking.

Given their appreciation of the contested nature of much African governance, it comes as something of a surprise that Carrier Klantschnig (Review of Africa and the War on Drugs, 2012) fiercely downplayed the impact that cocaine trafficking is having on West African governance. On the basis of just three case studies (Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho and Nigeria) the authors conclude that 'state complicity' in the African drug trade is 'rare', and the dominant paradigm is 'repression'. As a result, they radically understate the close involvement of political and military actors in drug trafficking, particularly in West African cocaine trafficking and overlook the growing power of drug money in African electoral politics, local and traditional governance, and security.

Links with rebel groups

2011, correspondence from Boko Haram was discovered in bin Osama bin Laden's compound.

Following the July 2009 riots, Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb expressed consideration for Boko Haram.

November 2012, while speaking by telephone to media reporters, Boko Haram spokesman Abu Qaqa said, "We are together with al-Qaeda, they are promoting the cause of Islam, just as we are doing. Therefore they help us in our struggle and we help them, too."

With reference to the UN Security Council listing of Boko Haram under the al-Qaeda sanctions regime in May 2014, the group "has maintained a relationship with Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb for training and material support purposes, and has gained valuable knowledge on the construction of improvised explosive devices from Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb".

The United Nations; quote, "A number of Boko Haram members fought alongside al Qaeda affiliated groups in Mali during 2012 and 2013, before returning to Nigeria with terrorist expertise".

Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb is one of al-Qaeda's regional divisions, whose leader, Abu Musab Abdel Wadoud, has sworn an oath of allegiance to al-Qaeda's senior leadership.

'Arguably, al-Qaeda did not officially accept Boko Haram as an affiliate, because following the Chibok schoolgirls kidnapping, al-Qaeda did not praise Boko Haram.

The form and structure of al-Qaeda and its affiliates remains a matter of debate. The exact current status of ties between Boko Haram and the al-Qaeda organization remains unclear.

July 2014, Shekau released a short video in which he voiced support for the head of the Islamic State, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, al-Qaeda's head Ayman al-Zawahiri and Afghan Taliban leader Mullah Omar.

March 2015, Shekau formally pledged allegiance to the Islamic State, which shortly after was accepted by the group's spokesman.

October 2015, though Boko Haram had improved their use of propaganda, there was no evidence of on-the-ground Islamic State advisors.

2013, the Nigerian military shut down mobile phone coverage in the three north-eastern states to disrupt Boko Haram's communication and ability to detonate IEDs. Accounts from military insiders and data of Boko Haram incidences before, during and after the mobile phone blackout indicate that the shutdown was successful, from a tactical point of view. However, it angered citizens in the region (owing to negative social and economic consequences of the mobile shutdown) and engendered negative opinions toward the state and new emergency policies. While citizens and organisations developed various coping and circumventing strategies, Boko Haram evolved from an open network model of insurgency to a closed centralised system, shifting the centre of its operations to the Sambisa Forest. This fundamentally changed the dynamics of the conflict.

July 2014, Nigeria was estimated to have had the highest number of terrorist killings in the world; 3477, killed in 146 attacks.

February 2014, the governor of Borno, said, quote;

Boko Haram are better armed and are better motivated than our own troops. Given the present state of affairs, it is absolutely impossible to defeat Boko Haram.

March 2015, it was reported that Nigeria had employed hundreds of mercenaries from South Africa and the former USSR to aid in making gains against Boko Haram before the March 28 election.

Boko Haram had lost territory (directly contradicting statements made by Boko Haram). Efforts to train and share intelligence with regional military forces is credited with helping to push back against Boko Haram, but officials warned at that time that the group remains a very grave threat.



Secret Intelligence Service

Reports in Brief

Room No. 15

Wilayat Gharb Afriqiya

Boko Haram

Counter-Terrorism Library

Adversitate. Custodi. Per Verum