

Boko Haram

Name: Boko Haram

Type of Organization:

- Insurgent
- territory-controlling
- terrorist
- violent

Ideologies and Affiliations:

- ISIS-affiliated group
- Islamist
- jihadist
- Salafist
- takfiri

Place of Origin:

Maiduguri, Nigeria

Year of Origin:

2002

Founder(s):

Mohammed Yusuf

Places of Operation:

Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger

Overview

Also known as:

- Islamic State's West Africa Province (Is wap)¹
- Jama'atu Ahlis Sunnar Lidda'awati Wal-Jihad²
- Jama'atu Ahlus-Sunnah Lidda'awati Wal Jihad³
- Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati Wal-Jihad⁴
- Nigerian Taliban⁵
- Wilayat Gharb Ifriqiyya⁶
- People Committed To The Prophet's Teachings For Propagation And Jihad⁷
- Sunni Group For Preaching And Jihad⁸
- Islamic State in West Africa (ISWA)⁹

Executive Summary:

Boko Haram is an ISIS-aligned jihadist group based in northeastern Nigeria, also active in Cameroon, Chad, and Niger.¹⁰

The group promotes a Salafist-jihadist brand of Islam and seeks to establish a caliphate, or Islamic state, in Nigeria.¹¹ To achieve this goal, the group has carried out large-scale attacks inside Nigeria, including an attack on the U.N.

headquarters in Abuja in 2011,¹² the abduction of nearly 300 schoolgirls in April 2014,¹³ and the multi-day massacre of the

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northern town of Baga and surrounding villages in January 2015 that killed approximately 2,000 civilians.¹⁴ In November 2018, Boko Haram attacked a military base in Borno state—looting weapons, equipment, and vehicles, and leaving more than 100 soldiers dead.¹⁵ Since 2009, Boko Haram has claimed the lives of some 30,000 people, and displaced over two million, according to a January 2019 Defense Post report.¹⁶

As noted by the U.N. Security Council, Boko Haram has maintained ties to [al-Qaeda](#) [1]’s North African branch, [al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb \(AQIM\)](#) [2]. Various Boko Haram members trained and fought alongside AQIM in Mali before returning to Nigeria.¹⁷ In March 2015, however, longtime Boko Haram leader [Abubakar Shekau](#) [3] pledged allegiance to [ISIS](#) [4] on behalf of the Nigerian terror group.¹⁸ In August 2016, following months of mounting tension between Shekau and ISIS leadership, ISIS unilaterally announced a replacement for Shekau, [Abu Musab al-Barnawi](#) [5], though Shekau refused to cede authority to the new leader. Boko Haram militants have subsequently been divided in their loyalties to Shekau and al-Barnawi, with the two factions occasionally engaging in clashes, resulting in the death of several of Shekau’s associates.¹⁹

Boko Haram was founded in 2002 in Maiduguri, Nigeria, by a Salafist cleric named Mohammed Yusuf. Although Yusuf called for the establishment of an Islamic state in Nigeria, at the time he did not pursue violence as a means to achieve it.²⁰ That approach changed in 2009, when Boko Haram members took up violence in response to a Nigerian government crackdown and the killing of its leader.²¹ Boko Haram has since launched paramilitary campaigns targeting the Nigerian government and its neighbors as well as dozens of terrorist attacks, increasingly perpetrated by child suicide bombers.²² In addition, the fluid security situation in and around Nigeria has enabled militants to cross into Cameroon, Chad, and Niger, in order to evade Nigerian security forces and carry out regional attacks.²³

Though originally an underground movement, Boko Haram has seized and held land in northeastern Nigeria in order to realize its vision of an Islamic state. Between 2011 and 2015, the group captured territory roughly the size of Belgium. Since 2015, the Nigerian military has dislodged Boko Haram from almost all of the territory it previously controlled.²⁴ As of June 2018, Boko Haram’s geographic reach consists of Nigeria’s northeastern states of Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe, as well as to regions along the border with Cameroon, and around Lake Chad.²⁵

Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari prematurely declared victory against Boko Haram in December 2015, though the announcement was followed by successive suicide bombings perpetrated by the terror group in the country’s northeast.²⁶ The group has been designated as a terrorist organization by the United States, the United Nations, and the European Union.²⁷

Doctrine:

Boko Haram subscribes to a Salafist-jihadist ideology. Before rebranding as the Islamic State’s West Africa Province (Wilayat Gharb Ifriqiya) in March 2015,²⁸ the group commonly referred to itself as Jama’atu Ahlis Sunnar Lidda’awati Wal-Jihad, which broadly translates to “people committed to the propagation of the Prophet’s teachings and jihad.”²⁹ Boko Haram—the name given to the group by the Hausa-speaking residents in northeast Nigeria—translates to “Western education is sin.”³⁰

Like other Salafist groups, Boko Haram seeks to exemplify the community of Muslims (*salafs*, or ancestors) who lived during and immediately after the time of the Islamic prophet Muhammad.³¹ The group’s founder, Mohammed Yusuf, trained as a Salafist preacher and adhered to the teachings of Ibn Taymiyya, a 14th century scholar who preached tenets of Islamic fundamentalism.³² Following Yusuf’s death in 2009, the group took up the practice of *takfir*, whereby a Muslim is able to excommunicate and kill other Muslims whom they deem to be non-believers. In defending the right to kill his “non-believing” coreligionists, Shekau has claimed that a non-believer’s supposed “ignorance” of Boko Haram’s tenets should

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not be “taken into consideration” before killing him.³³

Because of the group’s decentralized structure, not all fighters necessarily follow Salafi-takfirist doctrine.³⁴ Indeed, many members may be non-religious individuals motivated by real and perceived grievances including failures of local governance, sectarian tensions between Christians and Muslims, and the large economic disparity in Nigeria.³⁵ Nonetheless, a strain within Boko Haram adheres to violent and extremist practices that even ISIS has at times deemed too brutal.³⁶

Some analysts have suggested that in recent years, the group has fragmented between factions stressing the need to build stronger links with international terrorist organizations and factions that seek to maintain the group’s exclusively domestic focus with the aim of establishing an Islamic state in Nigeria.³⁷ In March 2015, Shekau pledged allegiance to ISIS on behalf of his terror group. ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi accepted the pledge later that month.³⁸

Organizational Structure:

Boko Haram is a fractious terrorist group with a decentralized organizational structure. Below the group’s leader sits the Shura Council, a 30-member decision-making body that commands the group’s regional cells. These cells differ by location and tactical specialization, ranging from combat troops, explosives experts, welfare service providers, intelligence and surveillance, and a medical committee.³⁹

While its core fighters are believed to number in the low hundreds, thousands of locals may sympathize with and fight for the terror group. The U.S. State Department has estimated that there are at least several thousand troops fighting for Boko Haram as of 2015.⁴⁰ Due in part to counterterrorism efforts under President Buhari—as well as severe food shortages in northeast Nigeria—this number is believed to have fallen throughout 2016 and early 2017.⁴¹ In December 2016, U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) said that Boko Haram likely lost a “significant number of fighters...lessening the overall capability of the organization.” Nevertheless, AFRICOM estimated that the group still has a “few thousand members.”⁴² Evidently not included in these estimates are the approximately 10,000 boys reportedly abducted and trained by Boko Haram between 2014 and 2016.⁴³

Boko Haram was founded and led by Salafist preacher Mohammed Yusuf until his death by the Nigerian military in 2009.⁴⁴ Abubakar Shekau emerged as the group’s leader in July 2010,⁴⁵ and became known for ordering attacks on mosques and using children as suicide bombers.⁴⁶ In early 2012, a group calling itself Ansaru, or “The Vanguard for the Protection of Muslims in Black Africa,” broke away from Boko Haram after citing disagreements with the group’s indiscriminate killing of Muslim civilians.⁴⁷ The offshoot reportedly packaged itself as the “humane” alternative to Boko Haram, and said it would focus attacks on Christians and the Nigerian government.⁴⁸ Its leader, [Khalid al-Barnawi](#) [6], is believed to have previously trained with al-Qaeda’s regional affiliate, AQIM.⁴⁹ When Ansaru was proscribed by the United Kingdom in November 2012, the Home Office referred to the group as “broadly aligned with [al-Qaeda].”⁵⁰

Analysts have suggested that Boko Haram and Ansaru remain operationally linked. Security analyst Jacob Zenn has said that Ansaru acts as an “external operations unit” of Boko Haram,⁵¹ while analyst David Otto has said that the two groups work together “towards a common goal.”⁵² Zenn has also suggested that in working alongside Boko Haram, Ansaru’s militants have prioritized operational success over ideological disputes with Abubakar Shekau.⁵³ Nigerian authorities reportedly captured Ansaru’s leader Khalid al-Barnawi in April 2016⁵⁴ and charged him with the abduction and murder of 10 foreign nationals.⁵⁵ According to a September 2016 report by Jacob Zenn, Ansaru has been relatively “quiet,” though Nigerian security reports indicate that the group is still active.⁵⁶

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In August 2016—nearly a year and a half after Boko Haram pledged allegiance to ISIS under Shekau—the Nigerian terror group split into warring factions: one loyal to Shekau, and the other to ISIS-appointed leader Abu Musab al-Barnawi.⁵⁷ The split came after ISIS announced Barnawi's appointment on August 2nd,⁵⁸ and Shekau swiftly released an audio message in which he denied the leadership change and referred to ISIS's announcement as a coup.⁵⁹ Shekau nonetheless reportedly reaffirmed his pledge of allegiance to ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, referring to Baghdadi in subsequent audio recordings as "caliph."⁶⁰ The faction loyal to Shekau has usually been referred to as Boko Haram or Islamic State's West Africa Province (ISWAP), whereas only al-Barnawi's actions have been reported by ISIS central as the Islamic State in West Africa (ISWA).⁶¹ The two factions were reported to have clashed in the following months, resulting in the death of several of Shekau's associates.⁶² In February of 2019, it was reported that al-Barnawi was replaced as the leader of ISWAP. His successor, Abu Abdullah Ibn Umar Albarnawi, is relatively unknown but was instated when more radical members of the faction detained al-Barnawi and seized control of the group.⁶³

The August 2016 split followed months of growing tension within Boko Haram's ranks. In June 2016, U.S. Marine Lieutenant General Thomas Waldhauser told the senate that several months earlier, "about half" of Boko Haram's militants had split from Shekau due to his alleged failure to adhere to ISIS's counsel. According to Waldhauser, Shekau had not obeyed ISIS's orders to stop attacking other Muslims, and to cease using children as suicide bombers.⁶⁴

Boko Haram has long been a fractious organization composed of various factions and offshoots. As of 2018, the most pronounced division within the group is between those loyal to Shekau and those loyal to Abu Musab al-Barnawi. Each of these camps has, in turn, a unique set of internal disputes. For example, a segment of al-Barnawi's followers reportedly opposed his military chief [Mamman Nur](#) [7]'s leniency in negotiations with the Nigerian government. Tension within the ranks of al-Barnawi's faction reportedly escalated after Nur failed to exact ransom before releasing 104 of the Dapchi schoolgirls kidnapped in February 2018. Nur was allegedly killed by his own men on August 21, 2018.⁶⁵ Boko Haram leader Ali Gaga was also executed by his own men on September 27, 2018, because he allegedly plotted to escape along with over 300 Boko Haram captives and to surrender to the Nigerian military. According to Colonel Timothy Antigha of the Multinational Joint Task Force, these incidents help portray Boko Haram as a well policed and strictly governed organization that does not tolerate disloyalty from anyone, irrespective of position or authority. However, these incidents may also indicate an emerging confidence crisis and fundamental problems with leadership and followership.⁶⁶

Financing:

In the early 2000s, Boko Haram founder Mohammed Yusuf reportedly received funding from Osama bin Laden, who distributed \$3 million to Nigerian Salafi groups.⁶⁷ Today, Boko Haram is believed to rely on a combination of local funding sources and lucrative criminal activity, particularly kidnapping for ransom. Its members have kidnapped foreigners and wealthy Nigerians since early 2013. The group has also reportedly received \$3.15 million from French and Cameroonian negotiators in exchange for a French family the group abducted from northern Cameroon in February of that year. U.S. officials have estimated that Boko Haram receives approximately \$1 million for the kidnapping and release of each wealthy Nigerian it abducts.⁶⁸

Boko Haram is also believed to finance itself through bank robberies, protection money from local governors, and foreign donations.⁶⁹ It is suspected that the group also receives funding from local religious sympathizers and individuals opposing the Nigerian government.⁷⁰ Some security analysts have noted that Boko Haram may be less reliant on large funding streams because it does not purchase sophisticated weaponry and runs low-cost operations.⁷¹

The group has received limited funding from AQIM, but that support has reportedly had little impact on Boko Haram's overall funding. Since the group pledged allegiance to ISIS in March 2015, this source of funding may have dried up, given the enmity and competition between al-Qaeda and ISIS. Boko Haram's financial relationship with other extremist groups also appears limited.⁷² In 2016, reports emerged of starving Boko Haram members surrendering to Nigerian security

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forces, indicating that the group was continuing to suffer from major financial strains.⁷³

Recruitment:

Nigerians are likely to join Boko Haram for a variety of reasons. Among these motivations are belief in the group's religious ideology, coercion tactics by Boko Haram soldiers, and local grievances, which may include insufficient access to government employment opportunities and other basic services, as well as humanitarian rights abuses such as unlawful arrests and torture. Recruits may also be drawn to join the group due to familial ties to other members.⁷⁴

Increasingly, Boko Haram is believed to forcibly conscript its members.⁷⁵ Between 2014 and 2016, the group reportedly abducted 10,000 boys and trained them as foot soldiers.⁷⁶ One such individual told humanitarian aid agency Mercy Corps: "[Boko Haram] invaded our village and asked all the youth to come out and follow them or be killed....after they killed the first person who complained of this, we all followed them."⁷⁷ Boko Haram is believed to send many of these conscripted recruits to Cameroon where they are "re-educated" with Boko Haram's ideology, according to analyst Jacob Zenn.⁷⁸

Boko Haram has also attempted to recruit members by offering financial loans, referred to by the Nigerian military as "clandestine dispensation."⁷⁹ Such financial support may be attractive to aspiring business owners already disillusioned by the severe lack of economic opportunity in northern Nigeria. These individuals are believed to either accept loans from the group prior to joining, or join with the expectation of receiving the funds.⁸⁰ Either way, "the payment has been surreptitiously programmed to fail by the benefactor, the Boko Haram," according to an April 2016 statement by the Nigerian military.⁸¹

Training:

At the start of Boko Haram's military campaign in 2009, its members used elementary tactics, such as drive-by shootings, which did not require advanced training. That process changed as the group began employing more advanced forms of weaponry, including explosives assembled by members who had previously trained alongside al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).⁸²

Boko Haram has revealed little about how it trains its soldiers. Besides operating training camps in Nigeria,⁸³ the group is believed to train its soldiers in Cameroon⁸⁴ and Somalia.⁸⁵ In early 2015, Boko Haram alluded to its indoctrination and training of children when it released photos via Twitter depicting child soldier training camps.⁸⁶ The group has reportedly trained children as young as 6 years old to carry bombs into mosques and market places.⁸⁷ In addition, many of the women and girls abducted by the terror group in recent years have been forced to carry out suicide missions.⁸⁸ Over the years, Boko Haram has increased the number of female suicide bombers due to the easy concealment of weapons under hijabs and Islamic customs that forbid men to frisk women. Most security and control posts in the north-east are manned by male security officers which makes it easier for female bombers to walk into crowded areas with less detection.⁸⁹ Additionally, Boko Haram recruits women to distinguish the group and its actions from other Salafi groups as well as garner greater media attention.⁹⁰

¹ Adam Withnall, "Boko Haram renames itself Islamic State's West Africa Province (Iswap) as militants launch new offensive against government forces," *Independent* (London), April 26, 2015, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/boko-haram-renames-itself-islamic-states-west-africa-province-iswap-as-militants-launch-new-offensive-against-government-forces-10204918.html> [8].

² Mohammed Aly Sergie and Toni Johnson, "Backgrounders: Boko Haram," Council on Foreign Relations, May 5, 2014, <http://www.cfr.org/nigeria/boko-haram/p25739> [9].

³ "Sanctions List Search: Boko Haram," Office of Foreign Asset Control, accessed January 17, 2019, <https://sanctionssearch.ofac.treas.gov/Details.aspx?id=3976> [10].

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- ⁴ “Sanctions List Search: Boko Haram,” Office of Foreign Asset Control, accessed January 17, 2019, <https://sanctionssearch.ofac.treas.gov/Details.aspx?id=3976> [10].
- ⁵ George Gorman, “Nigerian Taliban leader killed in custody,” Long War Journal, July 31, 2009, http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2009/07/nigerian_taliban_lea.php [11].
- ⁶ Karl Morand, “Jihadology Podcast: ‘Boko Haram’ Transitions to The Islamic State in West Africa with Jacob Zenn,” Jihadology, August 4, 2015, <http://jihadology.net/category/the-islamic-state/wilayat-gharb-ifriqiyyah/> [12].
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- ⁸ “Sanctions List Search: Boko Haram,” Office of Foreign Asset Control, accessed January 17, 2019, <https://sanctionssearch.ofac.treas.gov/Details.aspx?id=3976> [10].
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- ¹¹ “Security Council Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee Adds Boko Haram to Its Sanctions List,” United Nations Security Council, May 22, 2014, <http://www.un.org/press/en/2014/sc11410.doc.htm> [15]; Mohammed Aly Sergie, and Toni Johnson, “Boko Haram,” Council on Foreign Relations, last modified March 5, 2015, <http://www.cfr.org/nigeria/boko-haram/p25739> [9].
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Key Leaders



Abubakar Shekau
Leader



Abu Musab al-Barnawi
ISIS-appointed leader (August 2016-2019)



Mamman Nur
Third in command (reportedly)



Khalid Al-Barnawi
Allegedly leading the Boko Haram splinter group Ansaru



Mahamat Daoud
Alleged former leader



Abu Abdullah Ibn Umar Albarnawi
Leader of ISWAP (since February 2019)

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- **2009** - :Abu Musab al-Barnawi is dropped and Abu Abdullah Ibn Umar Albarnawi takes his place. More radical members seized control of the group and deposed of al-Barnawi.<hr>
Sources: John Campbell
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Source: Abdulkareem Haruna “Boko Haram attacks Magumeri in Borno
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- 150. **1969 - 1969**:equipment and vehicles. ISIS claims responsibility online. An attempt to recover the bodies of fallen soldiers is foiled by ISWA militants.<hr>
Sources: Ahmed Kingimi
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Source: Robert Postings “Nigeria’s military struggles with Islamic State: Part 1 – an upsurge in attacks
- 152. **1969 - 1969**:September 24 2018
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Sources: Agence France-Presse “Deadly Boko Haram attack in northeast Nigeria sends thousands fleeing
- 155. - **1969**:killing over 50 people during morning prayers. Boko Haram is suspected.<hr>
Source: Ruth Maclean “Nigeria mosque attack: teenage suicide bomber kills at least 50
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- 157. - **1969**:” Al Jazeera October 13
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Source: “Boko Haram Fast Facts ” CNN
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167. - **December 1969:** Al Jazeera
April 29
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169. **1969 - 1969:** Associated Press
March 9
170. - **1969:** *Guardian* (London)
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172. **1969 - 1969:** BBC News
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174. **1969 - 1969:**2014
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175. - **December 1969:** Premium Times
November 3
176. - **December 1969:** "Ten Chinese Workers Among 27 Hostages Freed in Cameroon"
Reuters
177. **1969 - 1969:**2014
http://saharareporters.com/2014/08/06/boko-haram-insurgents-kill-100-seize-another-major-northeast-town.
54
08/12/2014 Hundreds of thousands of Nigerians flee attacks from Boko Haram in northeastern Nigeria. Multinational agencies report they are sheltering more than 40
178. **1969 - 1969:** <i>Guardian Nigeria</i>
July 13
179. **1969 - December 1969:**May 2
2014
180. - **1969:**leaving at least 143 people dead.
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Source: "Boko Haram Fast Facts"
” CNN
181. - **1969:**and government buildings in Bama
killing 55 and freeing 105 prisoners.
The BBC reports that "The fighters reportedly launched the attack in armored vehicles mounted with machine guns... [suggesting] that they are becoming better-resourced and they can adapt to the changing terrain."
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Source: "A year of attacks linked to Nigeria's Boko Haram"
182. - **December 1969:**Meehan Urgently Request that Secretary Clinton Designate Boko Haram as Foreign Terrorist Organization
" U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Homeland Security
183. **1969 - 1969:**two leading Members of Congress—Peter King
chairman of the House of Representatives Committee on Homeland Security
184. **1969 - 1969:**noting that "FTO designation may be required to provide our intelligence and law enforcement communities the tools necessary to ensure Boko Haram does not attack U.S. interests and the U.S. homeland."
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Source: Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence
House Homeland Security Committee
185. - **1969:**fuels popular suspicions that the political establishment played a part in Boko Haram's attacks.
Further similar scandals support this impression and even lead to the storming of an All-Nigeria Peoples Party chairman's house by members of the "Civilian Joint Task Force" (CJTF) comprised of youths helping the security forces to combat Boko Haram.<hr>
Source: Andrew Walker
186. **1969 - 1969:**August 17
2011
187. - **December 1969:** BBC News

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188. **1969:**April 3
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189. **December 1969 - :**" <i>Guardian</i>
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192. **- 1969:**info_params:{"includes_info_params":true}
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Boko Haram

Violent history:

- **December 2003:** Attack on a number of police stations in Kanamma, Yobe state by a group then referred to as the Nigerian Taliban. Some of its members later went on to become members of Boko Haram.⁹¹
- **April 2007:** Assassination of Sheikh Ja'afar Mahmoud Adam, a prominent, popular cleric and regular preacher at the Ndimi mosque in Maiduguri shortly before the 2007 presidential election.⁹²
- **July 2009:** Boko Haram members set churches, a police station, and a prison on fire in Maiduguri, killing hundreds.⁹³ The government responds by arresting 700 Boko Haram members and laying siege to the mosque in Maiduguri. In response, Boko Haram members begin to indiscriminately kill police officers and civilians. After regaining control of the town, the police and military crackdown on the group, allegedly killing hundreds of Boko Haram members, including Yusuf (who dies in police custody).⁹⁴
- **2010:** Boko Haram members return to Maiduguri, instigating attacks against police stations and military barracks to avenge the killing of Yusuf. The group also attacks a local jail, freeing prisoners, and begins attacks against Christians, critical Muslim clerics, suspected collaborators, UN agencies, bars, and schools. Initial attacks mainly constitute of shootings.⁹⁵
- **December 24-28, 2010:** Boko Haram claims responsibility for a twin bombing in Jos, a city in central Nigeria, killing at least 38 people on Christmas Eve. On the same day, two bombs also go off in two churches in Maiduguri.⁹⁶
- **December 31, 2010:** The group sets off a bomb near barracks in Abuja on New Year's Eve, killing at least 4 people.⁹⁷
- **June 16, 2011:** In the first suicide bombing in Nigerian history and the first such attack by Boko Haram, a suicide bomber detonates a car bomb at the Nigerian police's headquarters in Abuja, killing between six and eight people. The attack marks a new degree of sophistication in the way it is carried out.⁹⁸
- **August 26, 2011:** A suicide car bombing of the UN building in Abuja kills at least 21 people and injures dozens.⁹⁹ Boko Haram claims responsibility for the attack, the group's first strike on a foreign target.¹⁰⁰ Some security analysts claim that the sophisticated execution of the attacks hints to support from transnational terrorist organizations such as Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).¹⁰¹
- **November 4, 2011:** Boko Haram attacks a number of targets in Yobe, Damaturu and Borno states, targeting security forces and their offices, markets and 11 churches. At least 100 people are killed.¹⁰²
- **November 15, 2011:** A police vehicle within the motorcade of the Borno state governor, Kashim Shettima, is attacked with a bomb in Maiduguri.¹⁰³
- **December 2011:** Boko Haram instigates a number of bomb attacks across Nigeria on Christmas Day including at St Theresa's church in Madalla, a church in the city of Jos, three attacks in northern Yobe state and two attacks in town of Damaturu and Gadaka.¹⁰⁴
- **April 26, 2012:** Boko Haram bombs the offices of the newspaper *ThisDay*.¹⁰⁵
- **February 19, 2013:** Boko Haram carries out its first cross-border operation and first kidnapping,¹⁰⁶ taking hostage a French family of seven in Cameroon.¹⁰⁷ The family is later released, reportedly in exchange for ransom, though the French and Cameroonian governments deny paying one.
- **May 7, 2013:** About 200 armed Boko Haram fighters storm a police station, military barracks, and government buildings in Bama, killing 55 and freeing 105 prisoners. The BBC reports that "The fighters reportedly launched the attack in armored vehicles mounted with machine guns... [suggesting] that they are becoming better-resourced and they can adapt to the changing terrain."¹⁰⁸
- **September 19, 2013:** Boko Haram militants attacked city of Benisheik in Borno state, killing at least 87 people.¹⁰⁹
- **September 29, 2013:** Boko Haram gunmen attack agricultural school in Yobe, killing 50 male students.¹¹⁰

Boko Haram

- **April 14, 2014:** Twin bomb attack claimed by Boko Haram at Abuja bus station kills more than 70 people.¹¹¹
- **April 14, 2014:** Boko Haram kidnaps more than 200 girls from a school in the northern town of Chibok in Borno state, triggering international condemnation and viral social media demands to “Bring Back Our Girls.”¹¹²
- **May 2, 2014:** A car bomb explodes on a busy road in Abuja, killing at least 19. The attack happened days before Nigeria was due to host the World Economic Forum on Africa.¹¹³
- **May 5, 2014:** Boko Haram militants kill more than 300 residents in the town of Gamboru Ngala.¹¹⁴
- **May 20, 2014:** Twin bomb attacks in Jos kills at least 118 people.¹¹⁵
- **May 21, 2014:** Boko Haram gunmen kill at least 27 people in towns Sharwa and Alagano.¹¹⁶
- **June 25, 2014:** Twin bomb attacks in Abuja and Lagos kill at least 22 people. Boko Haram has claimed responsibility for the attack in both cities. If true, this would be the first attack by Islamist militants in Lagos.¹¹⁷
- **July 19, 2014:** Members of Boko Haram attack the village of Abbas Gava in northeastern Nigeria.¹¹⁸
- **July 23, 2014:** Two suicide attacks in Kaduna kill 82 people. One of the attacks was aimed at opposition leader and former president, Muhammadu Buhari. It is widely suspected that Boko Haram is responsible for the attacks.¹¹⁹ There was widespread speculation in the Nigerian media that the attack was an indication of Boko Haram’s strategy to further destabilize Nigeria.
- **July 28, 2014:** Boko Haram members kidnap the wife of Amadou Ali, Cameroon’s vice prime minister and one of the country’s most visible political figures.¹²⁰
- **July 30, 2014:** A female suicide bomber blows herself up in the city of Kano killing 6. This is the third suicide attack carried out by a female suicide bomber. According to security analysts, it is not clear whether the group is recruiting female bombers or forcing kidnapped girls to carry out suicide missions.¹²¹
- **August 6, 2014:** Boko Haram seizes the town of Gwoza in Borno state, killing 100.¹²²
- **August 11, 2014:** Boko Haram kidnaps at least 97 men and boys and kills 28 people, and injures 27 others, in a raid on villages in Borno state.¹²³
- **August 12, 2014:** Hundreds of thousands of Nigerians flee attacks from Boko Haram in the north east of Nigeria. Multinational agencies have said they are now sheltering more than 40,000 people.¹²⁴
- **August 21, 2014:** Boko Haram seizes a riot police training academy in northern Nigeria, driving out recruits.¹²⁵
- **August 21, 2014:** Boko Haram seizes another town, Buni Yadi in Yobe state, reflecting an apparent strategic shift toward taking and holding territory in order to achieve its goal of establishing an Islamist state.¹²⁶
- **September 2, 2014:** Boko Haram attacks and attempts to seize the town of Bama in northeast Nigeria. Nigerian Military officials are able to repel the attack and kill 70 Boko Haram fighters, but the group returns the next day and succeeds in seizing the town.¹²⁷
- **September 6, 2014:** Boko Haram militants attack the town of Gulak near the Cameroon border. Eyewitnesses state that the fighters “went from house to house shooting people.”¹²⁸
- **September 18, 2014:** Boko Haram suicide bombers kill 15 people at a Nigerian teachers’ college. The bombers open fire at students and then detonate explosives in a crowded lecture hall.¹²⁹
- **September 20, 2014:** Boko Haram kills four civilians in Cameroon. Over 40,000 Nigerians have fled to Cameroon in order to escape Boko Haram.¹³⁰
- **September 25, 2014:** Boko Haram kills 18 people in an attack in Shaffa, Nigeria.¹³¹

Boko Haram

- **October 18, 2014:** Boko Haram attacks the village of Dzur, killing at least eight.¹³² Gunmen also abduct around 60 Nigerians from a village bordering Cameroon.¹³³
- **October 22, 2014:** Boko Haram is suspected to be behind a bomb that exploded at a bus station in northern Nigeria, killing at least five and wounding 12.¹³⁴
- **October 23, 2014:** Suspected Boko Haram militants kidnap at least 25 girls from a town in northeastern Nigeria.¹³⁵
- **October 31, 2014:** A car bomb kills at least 10 at a bus stop in northeastern Nigeria.¹³⁶
- **November 2, 2014:** Militants armed with guns and explosives attack Koton Karfe prison in central Kogi state, freeing 144 inmates. Boko Haram is linked to the attack.¹³⁷
- **November 3, 2014:** A suicide attack in the northeast Nigerian town of Potiskum kills 29 at a Shiite ceremony. Authorities hold Boko Haram accountable.¹³⁸
- **November 6, 2014:** Boko Haram militants raid Ashaka cement factory and steal dynamite from its quarry.¹³⁹
- **November 7, 2014:** A suicide bomber suspected of belonging to Boko Haram kills at least 7 people outside of a bank in northeast Nigeria.¹⁴⁰
- **November 10, 2014:** A Boko Haram suicide bomber disguised in a school uniform sets off explosives at a high school in northern Nigeria, killing 48 students and wounding 79.¹⁴¹
- **November 14, 2014:** Boko Haram insurgents recapture the town of Chibok in northeastern Nigeria, where nearly 300 girls were abducted seven months prior. The militants entered the town “shooting from pickup trucks and motorcycles,” forcing thousands to flee.¹⁴²
- **November 21, 2014:** At least 45 people are “slaughtered” by Boko Haram militants in an attack. The attack is believed to be in retaliation to an incident two days prior in which soldiers shot four of the group’s members. According to an eyewitness, the militants “tied peoples’ hands behind their backs and slit their throats like animals.”¹⁴³
- **November 23, 2014:** Boko Haram militants murder 48 fish vendors in northeastern Nigeria. Some victims’ throats are slit, while others are tied up and drowned in Lake Chad. News regarding the attack was slow to surface because Boko Haram militants had destroyed cell towers in the area in previous attacks.¹⁴⁴
- **November 24, 2014:** At 09:00 Nigerian time, Boko Haram insurgents flood the town of Damasak in northeast Nigeria, killing an unknown number of people. An eyewitness says that the militants “fired shots into the houses to force people out... many people have died.”¹⁴⁵
- **November 25, 2014:** Two female suicide bombers belonging to Boko Haram kill 44 people in an attack in the northeastern city of Maiuguri. The first attacker detonated her bomb, killing three women. When rescuers rushed to the scene, the second girl set off her explosives, killing dozens more.¹⁴⁶
- **November 26, 2014:** Boko Haram insurgents attack two villages bordering the town of Chibok, where nearly 300 schoolgirls were kidnapped in April 2014. The attack leaves more than 20 dead, and left nearly all the houses in the villages “burnt to ash.”¹⁴⁷
- **November 27, 2014:** An attack at a northeast Nigerian bus station—purportedly carried out by Boko Haram militants—kills 40 people including five soldiers.¹⁴⁸
- **November 28, 2014:** Gunmen purportedly belonging to Boko Haram set off three bombs and open fire on worshippers at a mosque in northern Nigeria’s biggest city, Kano. The attack kills at least 81 people.¹⁴⁹
- **November 30, 2014:** Boko Haram militants raid a mostly Christian town in northeast Nigeria after nightfall, killing “scores” of people. Eyewitness accounts tell of 30 men riding into the town on motorcycles throwing bombs into houses and shooting the people who flee.¹⁵⁰
- **December 1, 2014:** Boko Haram militants launch an attack on government, police and military buildings in Damaturu.

Boko Haram

The attack involves two female suicide bombers detonating bombs at the central Maiduguri market.¹⁵¹

- **December 10, 2014:** Boko Haram dispatch two female suicide bombers at a textile market in the city of Kano, killing six.¹⁵²
- **December 11, 2014:** Boko Haram claim responsibility for twin bombs that explode in the city of Jos, in central Nigeria, killing 31.¹⁵³
- **December 13, 2014:** Boko Haram fighters kill 35 people and kidnap about 185 others in a remote farming village in northeastern Nigeria called Gumsuri.¹⁵⁴
- **December 18, 2014:** A suspected Boko Haram militant kills 32 and kidnaps 172 women and children during a raid in Northeastern Nigeria.¹⁵⁵
- **December 21, 2014:** Boko Haram releases a video of its militants killing civilians. They explain that the individuals are being killed because “they are infidels.” In the video, the leader states, “from now, killing, slaughtering, destructions and bombing will be our religious duty anywhere we invade.”¹⁵⁶
- **December 22, 2014:** Boko Haram is responsible for a bomb that goes off in a bus station near Gombe city, Nigeria. At least 20 people were killed.¹⁵⁷
- **December 30, 2014:** 15 people are killed after Boko Haram militants open fire in Kautikari, a town near the Cameroonian border.¹⁵⁸
- **December 31, 2014:** Gunmen suspected of belonging to Boko Haram kidnap 40 young men and boys, mostly between the ages of 15 and 23, from the village of Malari in northeastern Nigeria.¹⁵⁹
- **January 1, 2015:** Boko Haram militants attack a bus in northern Cameroon, killing at least 15 people.¹⁶⁰
- **January 3, 2015:** Boko Haram fighters take control of the northeast Nigerian town of Baga and a nearby military base. Hundreds of civilians are killed in the ensuing days.¹⁶¹ Baga hosts the headquarters of a multinational force from Niger, Nigeria, Chad, and Cameroon.¹⁶²
- **January 4, 2015:** Boko Haram announces it has captured the northeastern Nigerian town of Baga. During its weekend raid Boko Haram destroys about 620 buildings in Baga and more than 3,100 in neighboring Doron Baga, according to Amnesty International.¹⁶³ Reports later surface that Boko Haram killed 2,000 people during its capture of Baga.¹⁶⁴ The Nigerian government later says only 150 people, including militants, actually died, but Amnesty International says the death toll is much higher than the official numbers.¹⁶⁵
- **January 5, 2015:** Boko Haram uploads a video to YouTube of its leader, Abubakar Shekau, threatening to overrun Cameroon unless it throws out its constitution and embraces Islam.¹⁶⁶
- **January 6-7, 2015:** Boko Haram raids in Baga leave dozens dead after militants burn homes and buildings while indiscriminately shooting people.¹⁶⁷
- **January 10, 2015:** The Nigerian military repels Boko Haram fighters trying to capture Damaturu, a major northeastern town.¹⁶⁸
- **January 10, 2015:** A girl of around 10 years of age with a bomb strapped to her blows herself up in a market in the city of Maiduguri. At least 16 people are killed and more than 20 are injured.¹⁶⁹
- **January 11, 2015:** A pair of child suicide bombers, both around 10 years old, blow up in an open-air market in Potiskum in Yobe state, killing at least three people.¹⁷⁰ The children are suspected to be part of the group of 200 schoolgirls kidnapped by Boko Haram in April 2014.¹⁷¹
- **January 12, 2015:** Boko Haram forces cross over from Nigeria into neighboring Cameroon and attack a military camp in Kolofata. The Cameroonian military repels the attack, killing 143 militants, according to the government. At least one Cameroonian soldier dies in the fight.¹⁷²

Boko Haram

- **January 13, 2015:** At least two people are killed and 14 wounded in a suicide attack outside of a mosque in the state of Gombe. Boko Haram does not immediately claim responsibility, although Gombe is just outside its main area of operations.¹⁷³
- **January 14, 2015:** The Nigerian army pushes back a Boko Haram attack in the town of Biu in the state of Borno.¹⁷⁴
- **January 18, 2015:** Suspected Boko Haram militants kidnap an estimated 80 people in northern Cameroon.¹⁷⁵ The attack marks the first time that Cameroonian villagers are kidnapped by suspected Boko Haram militants.¹⁷⁶ Meanwhile, a suicide bomber in northeastern Nigeria kills four and injures more than 40 in an attack suspected to be carried out by Boko Haram.¹⁷⁷
- **January 25, 2015:** Boko Haram militants attack Nigeria's northeastern city of Maiduguri, reportedly killing dozens. Militants also capture the northeastern town of Monguno.¹⁷⁸
- **January 28, 2015:** CNN reports that Boko Haram has killed "scores" in the recent series of attacks in Nigeria's Adamawa state.¹⁷⁹
- **February 1, 2015:** Nigerian troops repel Boko Haram militants closing in on Maiduguri. Hundreds of insurgents are reported dead.¹⁸⁰
- **February 5, 2015:** Approximately 800 Boko Haram insurgents shoot or burn to death 90 civilians in a Cameroon border town. The town's information minister tells the Associated Press that the insurgents "burned churches, mosques and villages and slaughtered youth who resisted joining them to fight Cameroonian forces."¹⁸¹
- **February 9, 2015:** Boko Haram militants hijack a bus in the north of Cameroon, kidnapping as many as 30 civilians.¹⁸²
- **March 2, 2015:** Chadian troops retake control of the northeastern Nigerian town of Dikwa, which Boko Haram had occupied for weeks. Boko Haram kills hundreds of civilians before retreating.¹⁸³
- **March 2, 2015:** Boko Haram posts a beheading video on Twitter of two men the group claims were spies. One of the men, claiming to be a farmer from the Nigerian village of Baga, says on camera that a policeman told him he would "become rich" if he informed on residents in his village. The video includes English, Arabic, and French subtitles. It is Boko Haram's first purported beheading video.¹⁸⁴
- **March 19, 2015:** Boko Haram attacks the Nigerian town of Ngala, which the army said it had retaken from the terrorist group. Boko Haram kills 11 people in the raid.¹⁸⁵
- **March 27-28, 2015:** At 11 p.m. on March 27, scores of suspected Boko Haram gunmen attack the Buratai village in northeastern Nigeria's Borno state. The gunmen burn most of the village and decapitate 23 people. Dozens are wounded.¹⁸⁶
- **March 29, 2015:** Boko Haram attacks the Bauchi state capital, Bauchi city. Gunmen attack public buildings, security checkpoints, police stations, and polling places, destroying ballot boxes. The Nigerian army responds with airstrikes. They burn down the office of the paramilitary Nigeria Security and Civil Defense force, a police station, and the local electoral commission office. Nigeria orders an indefinite curfew in the area. The fighting coincides with the second day of voting in Nigeria's elections. Bauchi opposition politicians blame the curfew on efforts to affect the elections' outcome.¹⁸⁷
- **April 7, 2015:** In Borno State, Nigeria, Boko Haram militants slaughter 24 civilians at a mosque after disguising themselves as preachers.¹⁸⁸
- **April 16, 2015:** Boko Haram strikes into Cameroon and murders 16 civilians. Six Boko Haram militants are killed by the Cameroonian army.¹⁸⁹
- **May 9-10, 2015:** Boko Haram gunmen kill two Cameroonian soldiers during clashes over the weekend. Three Boko Haram gunmen also die. Cameroonian officials said the fighting began when Boko Haram militants reportedly moved toward the northern Cameroonian town of Zelevet near the Nigerian border.¹⁹⁰
- **May 13, 2015:** Boko Haram kills at least six civilians and six members of a vigilante youth group in an attack on the

Boko Haram

Nigerian city of Maiduguri.¹⁹¹

- **May 15, 2015:** Boko Haram retakes the Nigerian town of Marte in Borno state, which government forces had liberated in February.¹⁹² Boko Haram also attacks the Nigerian town of Mule, about six miles from the Borno state capital.¹⁹³
- **May 16, 2015:** At least seven people are killed when a female suicide bomber blows herself up in Damaturu, the capital of northern Nigeria's Yobe state. No group claims responsibility but authorities suspect Boko Haram.¹⁹⁴
- **May 22, 2015:** Boko Haram militants hack 10 people to death in Nigeria's northeastern Adamawa state.¹⁹⁵
- **May 29-31, 2015:** Boko Haram conducts a three-day string of bombing attacks in northern Nigeria, killing at least 42.¹⁹⁶
- **June 2, 2015:** Boko Haram bombs Maiduguri, killing an estimated 20 people.¹⁹⁷
- **June 12, 2015:** Boko Haram militants burn six northeastern villages in Nigeria's north, killing 37, according to a survivor.¹⁹⁸
- **June 17, 2015:** Boko Haram launches an attack in Niger, killing dozens of civilians.¹⁹⁹
- **June 18, 2015:** Suspected Boko Haram insurgents attack Nigerien villages, killing dozens, in the Diffa region of Niger close to the Nigerian border.²⁰⁰
- **June 23, 2015:** At least 50 people are killed in various Boko Haram attacks in Borno and Yobe state. One of the attacks reportedly includes a suicide bombing carried out by a 12-year-old girl.²⁰¹
- **June 24, 2015:** Boko Haram militants shoot dead at least 42 people in separate attacks in northeast Nigeria.²⁰²
- **July 2, 2015:** In Borno state, Boko Haram militants gun down nearly 150 people as they pray in mosques during the holy month of Ramadan.²⁰³
- **July 3, 2015:** Boko Haram insurgents murder nearly 200 Nigerians in attacks across the northeast of the country. In one of the attacks, a young female suicide bomber kills 12 in a mosque in Borno.²⁰⁴
- **July 6, 2015:** Two bombs set off by suspected Boko Haram militants kill 44 in Nigeria's central city of Jos.²⁰⁵
- **July 10, 2015:** Boko Haram releases its first beheading video since its allegiance to ISIS.²⁰⁶
- **July 19, 2015:** Suspected Boko Haram militants murder 20 Cameroonians in Kamouna, Cameroon. Many children are among the dead.²⁰⁷
- **July 25, 2015:** Boko Haram militants kill at least 25 in Adamawa state in eastern Nigeria.²⁰⁸ On the same day, a suspected Boko Haram suicide bomber kills 10 in northern Cameroon.²⁰⁹
- **August 17, 2015:** A Chadian judicial source announces Chad will hold 10 Boko Haram suspects on trial for "murder using explosives, illegal possession of weapons of war and criminal conspiracy."²¹⁰
- **August 18, 2015:** Nearly 150 Nigerians are shot or drown while fleeing Boko Haram insurgents in Nigeria's northeastern Yobe state.²¹¹
- **August 23, 2015:** Suspected Boko Haram militants attack a convoy carrying Lieutenant General Tukur Buratai, the new head of the Nigerian army. One Nigerian soldier and 10 militants die, while Buratai is left unharmed.²¹²
- **August 25, 2015:** Two teenage suicide bombers carry out an attack in Damaturu, a northeastern Nigerian town, killing five and injuring 41.²¹³
- **August 30, 2015:** Boko Haram militants kill dozens of Nigerian civilians in raids on remote towns in the northeast of the country.²¹⁴

Boko Haram

- **August 31, 2015:** Boko Haram gunmen on horseback kill 79 people in remote villages in northeastern Nigeria.²¹⁵
- **Early October 2015:** On October 2, militants carry out multiple bomb attacks in Nigeria's capital Abuja, killing 18 and wounding 41. Boko Haram claims responsibility on October 5.²¹⁶ On October 11, five suicide bombers belonging to Boko Haram kill at least 36 Nigerians at a refugee camp in Chad.²¹⁷
- **November 27, 2015:** A suspected Boko Haram suicide bomber kills 21 Shiites in the middle of a religious procession from Kano to Zaria, Nigeria.²¹⁸
- **December 25, 2015:** Boko Haram insurgents launch a Christmas day attack on a town in northeast Nigeria, killing at least 14 and wounding several others.²¹⁹
- **December 28, 2015:** Boko Haram insurgents kill at least 80 people with rocket-propelled grenades and multiple suicide bombings in northeastern Nigeria.²²⁰
- **February 1, 2016:** Boko Haram burns children alive as part of an attack in northeast Nigeria that kills 86. The new tactic is believed to be in response to a recent claim by the Nigerian government that Boko Haram is unable to carry out any attacks other than suicide bombings.²²¹
- **November 2016:** Boko Haram kidnaps approximately 400 women and children, including at least 300 elementary school students, in the town of Damasak. The incident receives little media attention until Human Rights Watch publishes an investigation into the incident in March 2016.²²²
- **January 30, 2016:** Boko Haram militants firebomb Dalori village, three miles from Maiduguri, killing 86 people.²²³
- **February 9, 2016:** Two suspected female Boko Haram operatives blow themselves up at a camp for displaced persons in Dikwa, northeastern Nigeria, killing 58 people and wounding nearly 80.²²⁴
- **May 12, 2016:** Boko Haram suicide bombers attack in Maiduguri, leaving two Nigerian policemen dead.²²⁵
- **June 14, 2016:** Boko Haram militants kill 24 people, mostly women, who were in mourning at a funeral in the village of Kuda in Nigeria's northeastern Adamawa state.²²⁶
- **September 2016:** Militants loyal to ISIS-appointed Abu Musab al-Barnawi clash with those loyal to Abubakar Shekau, resulting in the death of several key members of Shekau's faction.²²⁷
- **September 18, 2016- September 19, 2016:** Boko Haram insurgents launch three attacks in the village of Tallari in Nigeria's northern Borno State. Militants behead the village chief and his son, ambush a military convoy, and gun down eight Christians.²²⁸
- **December 9, 2016:** Two teenage girls blow themselves up in a marketplace in Madagali, Adamawa state, killing 30 people and wounding 67 others. The Nigerian military holds Boko Haram responsible.²²⁹
- **January 17, 2017:** Boko Haram insurgents attack a refugee camp hours after it is mistakenly bombed by the Nigerian air force.²³⁰
- **February 22, 2017:** Boko Haram insurgents kill seven Nigerian soldiers during an attack on a military outpost in Gajiram, northeastern Nigeria.²³¹
- **March 15, 2017:** Suspected Boko Haram fighters attack the town of Magumeri in northeastern Borno state, indiscriminately firing into civilian homes and killing "scores" of people, according to online news agency *Sahara Reporters*.²³²
- **March 31, 2017:** Boko Haram militants kidnap 22 girls and women in two separate raids in northeast Nigeria. They also kill a herdsman who refused to pay a protection fee.²³³
- **June 7, 2017:** Boko Haram attacks the northeastern Nigerian city of Maiduguri with explosives and gunfire, forcing civilians to flee as Nigerian military forces repel the extremists.²³⁴

Boko Haram

- **July 25, 2017:** Boko Haram ambushes an oil exploration team belonging to the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation in northeast Nigeria. The attack kills more than 50 people.²³⁵
- **August 15, 2017:** A woman suicide bomber explodes at a market in northeast Nigeria, killing 27 people. Almost simultaneously, two other suicide bombers detonate their devices near a camp for displaced persons. In all, 83 people are wounded in the three explosions. Boko Haram is suspected.²³⁶
- **November 15, 2017:** Four suicide bombers, which include females, carry out attacks in Maiduguri. At least 10 people are killed. Boko Haram is suspected.²³⁷
- **November 21, 2017:** A teenage suicide bomber attacks a mosque in Mubi, Adamawa State, killing over 50 people during morning prayers. Boko Haram is suspected.²³⁸
- **March 2, 2018:** Three aid workers are killed in Rann, northeast of Maiduguri in Borno state, and another three are kidnapped. Two of the three are later executed.²³⁹
- **July 26, 2018:** Boko Haram fighters attack a military base and a police station in Jakana, a village close to Maiduguri, leaving hundreds either dead, captured, or missing.²⁴⁰
- **August 30, 2018:** Boko Haram attacks a Nigerian army post in Zari village in northern Borno state, killing at least 48 soldiers.²⁴¹
- **September 6, 2018:** Boko Haram attacks a civilian convoy near the town of Gwoza, Borno state, killing two and kidnapping 25 others.²⁴²
- **October 10, 2018:** ISWA attacks the military base in Metele, Borno state, killing or injuring at least 23 soldiers.²⁴³
- **October 23, 2018:** Boko Haram kills two people in an attack on a village northeast of Chibok.²⁴⁴
- **November 14, 2018:** Boko Haram kills 16 farmers and leaves dozens missing in an attack in northeast Nigeria.²⁴⁵
- **November 15-21, 2018:** ISIS-affiliated ISWA militants attack military bases in Borno state, killing over 100 soldiers and leaving approximately 150 additional troops missing. Before burning down the remains of the installations, they loot weapons, equipment, and vehicles. ISIS claims responsibility online. An attempt to recover the bodies of fallen soldiers is foiled by ISWA militants.²⁴⁶
- **November 20, 2018:** Boko Haram militants kill 53 soldiers and farmers in three days of attacks in northeastern Nigeria.²⁴⁷
- **December 7, 2018:** Boko Haram attacks Rann, a town in Borno state, and destroys the UNICEF clinic, the only healthcare center in the frequently attacked region.²⁴⁸
- **December 8, 2018:** Boko Haram fighters loyal to factional leader Abubakar Shekau attack a military base in northeast Nigeria with guns, killing two. A Boko Haram suicide bomber is “neutralized” before detonating the bomb.²⁴⁹
- **December 14, 2018:** Boko Haram invades military bases in the northern part of Borno state, killing “many” soldiers.²⁵⁰
- **December 24, 2018:** An ambush by Boko Haram terrorists on the road from Maiduguri to Damaruru kills 13 soldiers and one officer.²⁵¹
- **December 26, 2018:** Boko Haram seizes six towns, all major population centers in Kukawa local government area of northern Borno, overrunning the multinational forces’ headquarters formed by Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, and Niger, a naval fighting base, and a Marine Police base. Approximately 30,000 people flee. In early-January 2019, the Nigerian military retakes the city.²⁵²
- **January 2, 2019:** Boko Haram militants raid at least three military posts and overpower troops in northeast Nigeria.²⁵³
- **January 5, 2019:** Boko Haram kills two Nigerian soldiers and injures seven civilians in an ambush close to the border with Cameroon.²⁵⁴

Boko Haram

- **January 13, 2019:** Suspected members of Boko Haram attack Magumeri, an agrarian community in Borno state. An earlier attack in Magumeri on November 25, 2018 killed three soldiers and injured six others.²⁵⁵
- **January 14, 2019:** Boko Haram fighters attack a military base and torch aid buildings in Rann, northeast of Maiduguri in Borno state, killing at least 14 people and forcing thousands to flee. It is previously reported that ISWA has conducted the attack, but Boko Haram claims responsibility, according to an online video released on January 17, 2019.²⁵⁶
- **January 28, 2019:** Boko Haram burns down hundreds of structures in the town of Rann. The attack kills at least 60 people.²⁵⁷
- **February 1, 2019:** Boko Haram militants attack Rann, a border town in Borno State. Militants burn down hundreds of structures housing internally displaced people. Over 60 people are killed.²⁵⁸
- **February 13, 2019:** Suspected Boko Haram rebels attack the convoy of the governor of Nigeria's Borno state. The attack kills at least three people. A separate security source says at least 10 are killed. The convoy came under attack while traveling to Gamboru Ngala for a campaign rally.²⁵⁹
- **February 16, 2019:** Members of Boko Haram attacks a military base in Buni Yadi. The insurgents captured military equipment, although the majority was recovered. Nine people were killed, including five militants, and another five were injured.²⁶⁰
- **February 23, 2019:** Boko Haram members raid Maiduguri, firing rocket-propelled grenades onto the city hours before voting begins in Nigeria's presidential election. One soldier is killed and 20 others are injured.²⁶¹
- **March 8, 2019:** A farmer's vehicle strikes a landmine buried by Boko Haram militants in northeastern Nigeria, killing at least five and wounding dozens more. The mine was planted by extremists on the eve of the February 23rd elections.²⁶²
- **March 10, 2019:** Boko Haram militants attack Gueskerou, killing seven soldiers and 38 militants.²⁶³
- **March 22, 2019:** Militants storm the town of Dangdala, near Lake Chad. They kill at least 23 Chadian soldiers. Chadian soldiers are part of a U.S.-trained West African task force deployed to counter Boko Haram.²⁶⁴
- **March 25, 2019:** Suspected Boko Haram militants ambush a military and civilian convoy in Nigeria's northeast. At least 20 are killed and many others are missing. The convoy was relocating civilians to a displacement camp in Damboa.²⁶⁵
- **April 7, 2019:** Twin suicide bombings in Maiduguri kill three and injure more than 30. The attack was reportedly carried out by two female members of Boko Haram.²⁶⁶
- **April 18, 2019:** Boko Haram militants attack the Multinational Joint Task Force in northeastern Nigeria (MNJTF). At least two Chadian soldiers attached to the MNJTF and 52 Boko Haram members are killed in the assault.²⁶⁷
- **April 30, 2019:** Extremists attack a village in northeastern Nigeria, killing at least 25. It is suspected that Boko Haram is responsible for the raid.²⁶⁸
- **May 25, 2019:** Extremists ambush a military and civilian convoy in Nigeria's northeast. The ambush kills at least 20. It is suspected that Boko Haram carried out the attack.²⁶⁹
- **June 12, 2019:** More than 300 suspected Boko Haram fighters attack military positions on Darak, an island near Lake Chad in Cameroon. The attack kills 24 civilians and soldiers, and kills over 84 fighters, with eight taken into custody.²⁷⁰
- **June 13, 2019:** Boko Haram fighters attack and burn down a military base in Kareto, Borno State. The attack kills at least one commander.²⁷¹
- **June 17, 2019:** Three suicide bombers detonate explosives at a cinema hall in Konduga, Borno State. Over 30 are killed and 39 are injured. No one claims responsibility for the attack although Boko Haram is suspected.²⁷²

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- **June 19, 2019:** Boko Haram attacks a military base in Gajiram, killing 25 soldiers. An unreported number are injured. The attack follows a similar assault the week prior.²⁷³
- **July 7, 2019:** Insurgents ambush Nigerian soldiers in Damboa, Borno State. At least five are killed and more than a dozen are injured. The soldiers were on their way to clear a Boko Haram camp, but were ambushed.²⁷⁴
- **July 18, 2019:** Boko Haram rebels open fire on a patrol vehicle in Jakana near Maiduguri. At least six soldiers are killed. The attack comes hours after Major-General Abdulmalik Bulama Biu tells reporters that rebel fighters should lay down their arms “or prepare for a fierce encounter with me.”²⁷⁵
- **July 25, 2019:** Suspected Boko Haram militants abduct six aid workers in Damasak. The Hostages are believed to be held in a Boko Haram enclave in Lake Chad.²⁷⁶
- **July 27, 2019:** Boko Haram militants kill at least 65 and injure another 11 following a funeral in the Nganzai area. Nganzai Council Chariman Muhammad Bulama suspects the attack was in retaliation for residents fighting off and killing almost a dozen suspected Boko Haram militants during an ambush on their village the week prior.²⁷⁷
- **August 6, 2019:** Two female suicide bombers attack the town of Mafa, near Maiduguri. The blasts kill three people and wound eight others.²⁷⁸
- **August 12, 2019:** Boko Haram militants unsuccessfully try to overtake a military base in Gubio, near the Borno State capital. A five-hour gunfight ensues, killing eight Boko Haram militants, two Nigerian soldiers and two civilians.²⁷⁹
- **August 14, 2019:** A suicide bomber blows herself up in a compound near the home of a traditional chief in western Chad. At least six people are killed and five are wounded.²⁸⁰
- **August 15, 2019:** Insurgents attack a military base on the outskirts of Maiduguri. Three soldiers are killed and an unreported number are injured.²⁸¹
- **August 20, 2019:** Nigerian troops open fire on Boko Haram militants along the Gamboru-Dikwa road in Borno State. At least 33 militants are killed and four soldiers are wounded in the gunfight.²⁸²
- **September 11, 2019:** Boko Haram militants ambush a military base in Maiduguri, northeast Nigeria. The attack kills nine while 27 other soldiers are reported missing.²⁸³
- **October 3, 2019:** Gunmen kidnap six schoolgirls and two staff members in northern Nigeria. No group claims responsibility for the kidnapping, but both Boko Haram and ISWAP are active in the region. Unaffiliated armed groups are also rampant in the area that are known to carryout kidnappings for ransom.²⁸⁴
- **January 6, 2020:** A bomb detonates on the El Beid Bridge on Nigeria’s border with Cameroon. Casualty reports are conflicting, as sources say the attack kills anywhere from nine to 30 and wounds another 26 to 35. No group claims responsibility for the attack, but both Boko Haram and ISWAP are active in the area.²⁸⁵
- **January 2, 2020 - January 21, 2020:** On January 2, Boko Haram militants kidnap Reverend Lawan Andimi, chairman of the Christian Association of Nigeria in Adamawa State. The insurgents refuse a ransom and execute him on January 21.²⁸⁶
- **February 10, 2020:** Suspected Boko Haram or ISWAP militants set several trucks carrying passengers on fire in Auno, Borno State. The attack kills at least 30. The trucks were stranded at a military checkpoint due to a curfew set by the military.²⁸⁷
- **March 4, 2020:** Suspected Boko Haram militants ambush a military base in Damboa, Borno State, Nigeria. The attack kills six and wounds at least 50 others.²⁸⁸
- **March 24, 2020:** Boko Haram extremists ambush Goneri village in Yobe state, Nigeria. The attack kills over 50 soldiers.²⁸⁹
- **March 24, 2020:** Boko Haram militants attack an island army base in Boma, Chad. The attack kills over 100 Chadian troops. The seven-hour attack was the deadliest attack by Boko Haram forces in Chad.²⁹⁰

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- **April 5, 2020:** Two Boko Haram suicide bombers detonate themselves in Amchide, Cameroon, on the border with Nigeria. The attack kills seven.²⁹¹
- **June 1, 2020:** Suspected Boko Haram militants shoot and kill a Christian pastor and his wife in Taraba, Northeastern Nigeria. According to the Hausa Christians Foundation, “pastors, Christian leaders and seminarians are either being kidnapped or killed every week” in Nigeria.²⁹²
- **June 9, 2020:** Suspected Boko Haram militants carry out an attack in Foduma Kolomaiya village, Borno State. The attack kills at least 81 people. Village residents claim the attack was in retaliation for villagers resisting an assault a few weeks prior.²⁹³
- **June 13, 2020:** ISWAP militants launch twin attacks in Monguno and Nganzai. In Monguno, a hub for international non-governmental organizations, militants armed with heavy weaponry overtook government forces and burned down the U.N.’s humanitarian headquarters. The attack kills at least 20 and wounds hundreds of others. In Nganzai, militants arrived on motorcycles and pickup trucks. The attack kills more than 40 people.²⁹⁴
- **June 29, 2020:** Suspected Boko Haram militants ambush a civilian convoy of more than 100 vehicles in Komala Village, Borno state. The attack kills at least 11. The militants seize vehicles and supplies before withdrawing to their Sambisa forest hideout.²⁹⁵
- **July 9, 2020:** ISWAP militants ambush a military convoy in Bulabulin village, northeast Nigeria. The attack kills 23 soldiers and wounds two others.²⁹⁶
- **July 23, 2020:** Boko Haram militants kill five hostages, four of which were aid workers who were abducted between Monguno town and Maiduguri in northeastern Nigeria, a month earlier.²⁹⁷
- **August 3, 2020:** Suspected Boko Haram militants detonate a grenade at a camp for internally displaced people in Nguetchewe village, Cameroon. The attack kills 15 and injures five others.²⁹⁸
- **August 20, 2020:** ISWAP militants overrun the town of Kukawa in northeastern Nigeria. The insurgents take hundreds of hostages, many of whom had recently returned to the village after spending two years in displacement camps.²⁹⁹
- **August 27, 2020:** Boko Haram militants ambush the town of Gwoza in Borno State. The attack kills at least 75 elderly people.³⁰⁰
- **September 8, 2020:** Boko Haram militants attack three separate villages in northeast Nigeria on the outskirts of Maiduguri. The attacks kill at least 10 civilians.³⁰¹
- **September 9, 2020:** ISWAP militants carry out two attacks in the Lake Chad area of Borno State. The ambushes kill over 12, with 27 soldiers unaccounted for following the attacks.³⁰²
- **September 20, 2020:** Suspected Boko Haram militants launch an attack in Damboa, Borno State. The attack kills army commander, Colonel DC Bako.³⁰³
- **September 26, 2020:** ISWAP militants ambush the convoy of Borno governor Babagana Umara Zulum near the town of Baga on the shores of Lake Chad. The convoy was escorting displaced Nigerians back to their homes in Baga, Borno State. The attack kills at least thirty and injures over 13 others.³⁰⁴

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Boko Haram

Designations:

Designations by the U.S. Government:



June 21, 2012: The State Department designates Boko Haram leaders Abubakar Shekau, Khalid al-Barnawi, and Abubakar Adam Kamar as Specially Designated Global Terrorists.³⁰⁵

December 1, 2015: The Department of the Treasury designates senior Boko Haram leaders Mohammed Nur and Mustapha Chad, pursuant to Executive Order (E.O.) 13224.³⁰⁷

November 14, 2013: The State Department designates Boko Haram and Ansaru as Foreign Terrorist Organizations and Specially Designated Global Terrorists.³⁰⁶

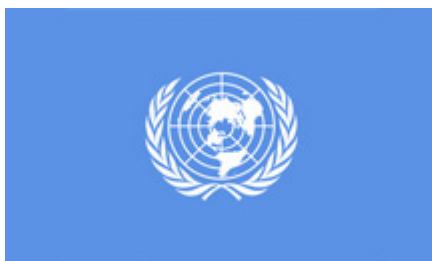
Designations by Foreign Governments and Organizations:



Australia—listed Boko Haram as a terrorist organization on June 26, 2014.³⁰⁸



Canada—listed Boko Haram as a terrorist entity on December 24, 2013.³⁰⁹



United Nations—the UN Security Council’s al Qaeda Sanctions Committee added Boko Haram to its list of designated entities on May 22, 2014.³¹⁰

United Nations—the U.N. Security Council’s al Qaeda Sanctions Committee added Ansaru to its list of designated entities on June 26, 2014.³¹¹

United Nations—the U.N. Security Council’s al Qaeda Sanctions Committee added Abubakar Mohammed Shekau to its list of designated individuals on June 26, 2014.³¹²



EU—designated Boko Haram as a terrorist organization on May 28, 2014.³¹³

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United Kingdom—listed Boko Haram as a financial sanctions target on May 29, 2014.³¹⁴

United Kingdom—listed Abubakar Mohammed Shekau as a financial sanctions target on July 8, 2014.³¹⁵

United Kingdom—proscribed Ansaru (a.k.a. Vanguard for the Protection of Muslims in Black Africa) in November 2012 as “broadly aligned with al-Qaeda,” and listed the group as a financial sanctions target on July 8, 2014.³¹⁶

³⁰⁵ Terrorist Designations of Boko Haram Commander Abubakar Shekau, Khalid al-Barnawi and Abubakar Adam Kamar,” U.S. Department of State, June 21, 2012, <https://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/other/des/266615.htm> [299].

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³¹⁰ “Currently listed entities,” Public Safety Canada, accessed August 22, 2014, <http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/ntnl-scrtr/cntr-trrrsm/lstd-ntts/crrnt-lstd-ntts-eng.aspx#http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/ntnl-scrtr/cntr-trrrsm/lstd-ntts/crrnt-lstd-ntts-eng.aspx#2051> [303].

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³¹³ *Official Journal of the European Union*, Volume 57, May 29, 2014, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L:2014:160:FULL&from=EN> [34].

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³¹⁵ “Consolidated List Of Financial Sanctions Targets In The UK,” GOV.UK, last modified January 24, 2019, <http://hmt-sanctions.s3.amazonaws.com/sanctionsconlist.htm> [306].

³¹⁶ “Consolidated List Of Financial Sanctions Targets In The UK,” GOV.UK, last modified January 24, 2019, <http://hmt-sanctions.s3.amazonaws.com/sanctionsconlist.htm> [306]; “Proscribed Terrorist Organizations,” U.K. Home Office, accessed January 24, 2019, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/538297/20160715-Proscription-website-update.pdf [50].

Boko Haram

Associations:

Ties to Extremist Entities:



[Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb \(AQIM\)](#) [307]

Boko Haram has received limited funding from AQIM.³¹⁷ Boko Haram members have also allegedly attended AQIM training camps.³¹⁸



[Al-Shabab](#) [308]

According to the U.S. military, there are indications that al-Shabab and Boko Haram are allegedly sharing money and explosive material.³¹⁹



[Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa \(MUJAO\)](#)

The two organizations appear to support each other's operations.³²⁰



[ISIS](#) [309]

In March 2015, Abubakar Shekau pledged allegiance to ISIS in an audio message.³²¹ ISIS leader [Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi](#) [310] accepted the pledge soon after.³²² As of March 2016, approximately 1,000 Boko Haram operatives are believed to be fighting alongside ISIS in Libya. ISIS operatives reportedly hire special smugglers to transport Boko Haram militants quickly from Nigeria to Libya, avoiding typical stops on the smuggling route.³²³

Ties to other entities:



[Saudi Arabia](#)

Boko Haram appears to have some connections to Saudi Arabia. The group has allegedly received funding from Saudi organizations and Boko Haram founder Mohammed Yusuf allegedly sought refuge there from Nigerian security forces in 2004.³²⁴

³¹⁷ "How Boko Haram is beating U.S. efforts to choke its financing," Reuters, July 1, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/07/01/us-usa-nigeria-bokoharam-insight-idUSKBN0F636920140701> [71].

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³¹⁹ David Smith, "Africa's Islamist militants 'co-ordinate efforts in threat to continent's security,'" *Guardian*, June 26, 2012, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/jun/26/africa-islamist-militants-coordinating-threat> [311].

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Boko Haram

Media Coverage:

Western Media

Until the kidnapping of 200 schoolgirls in Chibok in April 2014 leading to a global outcry and large-scale media coverage of Boko Haram, Western coverage of the group has been limited and restricted to sporadic attention following the violent attacks of the group in recent years. While its aspiration as an Al Qaeda-like organization and its links to transnational terrorist organizations have been noted in the media, the group has been mainly viewed as a domestic terrorist organization fueled by local grievances and sectarian tension, which reflects the assessment of most Western governments of the group.

Boko Haram first rose to international attention following violent clashes with Nigerian police forces in July 2009. While one of the nicknames of the group, “Nigerian Taliban,” was picked up by the Western press, *The Guardian*’s David Smith emphasized the domestic focus of the group around local grievances and sectarian tensions, arguing that Boko Haram “models itself on the Taliban but has no known link.”³²⁵

With the frequency, scale, and violence of attacks by Boko Haram increasing since 2010, media coverage of the group became more frequent. Yet the exact nature of the group remained elusive to many commentators. In *The New York Times*, Jean Herskovits argued “[T]here is no proof that a well-organized, ideologically coherent terrorist group called Boko Haram even exists today. Evidence suggests instead that, while the original core of the group remains active, criminal gangs have adopted the name Boko Haram to claim responsibility for attacks when it suits them.”³²⁶ Similarly Reuters’ Joe Brook asked, “Is Boko Haram just the latest in a long list of violent spasms in Nigeria, or is it the next battalion of global jihadists, capable of thrusting Africa’s most populous nation into civil war?” He went on to argue that “Boko Haram remains firmly focused on domestic Nigerian issues.” However a “small, increasingly ambitious and sophisticated group of extremists controls the very top of the group. A handful of those members have received training outside Nigeria, including from AQIM.”³²⁷

When Boko Haram bombed a UN building in Nigeria’s capital Abuja in August 2011, links of the group to international terrorist organizations such as al-Qaeda were widely mentioned in the press based on both the type of target and sophistication of the attack. Nigeria’s Minister of State for Foreign Affairs was cited by the BBC saying “This is not an attack on Nigeria but on the global community,” she said. “An attack on the world.”³²⁸ Following a proliferation of further attacks, the U.S. army starts to provide counter-insurgency training to Nigerian troops to combat what was described in the *Guardian* as an “armed Islamic insurgency.”

Following a statement by Abubakar Shekau posted on YouTube in January 2012, stating that Boko Haram was “at war with Christians,” media reports begin to highlight Boko Haram’s global ambition, arguing that “the group’s leadership would like to be seen as part of a global jihad.”³²⁹

As Boko Haram began to professionalize its attacks, the group also began to manage its relationship with Western media outlets in a different way. Rather than allowing individual members of the group to talk to a range of journalists, a spokesperson with the name of “Abu Qaqa” begins to appear and contact journalists to link attacks to Boko Haram. At the same time, the leader of the Abubakar Shekau begins to frequently post videos of the group on YouTube.

In January 2012, Abu Qaqa agreed to an exclusive interview with the *Guardian* attempting to justify the group’s violent attacks with the failure of the Nigerian government and portraying Boko Haram as a popular movement. “It’s the secular state that is responsible for the woes we are seeing today. People should understand that we are not saying we have to rule Nigeria, but we have been motivated by the stark injustice in the land. People underrate us but we have our sights set on [bringing sharia to] the whole world, not just Nigeria... People were singing songs in [northern cities] Kano and Kaduna saying: ‘We want Boko Haram.’”³³⁰

As Boko Haram’s attacks particularly against Christians continued and escalated, the U.S. Department of State came under increasing pressure by Congress and the Justice Department to designate the group as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO). With a group of prominent academics urging then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to refrain from a designation, a

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public debate ensues in the U.S. over the question. Picking up on this point, the International Business Times emphasizes the limited usefulness of a designation concluding that “the U.S. needs to stop treating this as a security issue and start treating it for what it is—a political issue.”³³¹

It was the kidnapping of 200 girls in April 2014 in the state of Chibok that led to large-scale Western media coverage of Boko Haram, prompting a global social media campaign in response. But despite global attention, the response of Western governments remained limited. Commenting in the Washington Post, Sarah Chayes argued that “amid the pressure to respond to the anguish, the United States is right not to overdo its counterterrorism assistance to Abuja,” stating that “much of the responsibility for the rise of the Boko Haram extremist group may lie with the Nigerian government itself.”³³² In the midst of the widespread public outrage over the kidnapping of the girls, media attention returns to the question of why Boko Haram had not been targeted by the U.S. administration earlier and designated as an FTO.³³³

While Western media interest in Boko Haram has increased over the last years, most commentators continue to view the activities of the group predominately through a prism of domestic grievances rather than a regional or global jihadist agenda. However, commentators increasingly compare Boko Haram to other regional terrorist groups and point to an agenda that is more regionally rather domestically focused. Thus, Colin Freeman argued in *The Telegraph* that “like al-Shabaab in Somalia and Isis in Syria and Iraq, a group that was unheard just a few years ago is now a major threat to the stability of the region.”³³⁴ Similarly Robin Simcox stated on Al Jazeera English that “ignoring the long-standing connections Boko Haram has to al-Qaeda, or betting that Boko Haram's focus will remain local is not a policy. It is willful blindness.”³³⁵

³²⁵ David Smith, “Nigerian ‘Taliban’ offensive leaves 150 dead,” *Guardian*, July 27, 2009, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/nov/08/nigerian-taliban-us-boko-haram> [316].

³²⁶ Jean Herskovits “In Nigeria, Boko Haram Is Not the Problem,” *New York Times*, January 2, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/02/opinion/in-nigeria-boko-haram-is-not-the-problem.html?pagewanted=all> [317].

³²⁷ Joe Brook, “Special Report: Boko Haram - between rebellion and jihad,” Reuters, January 31, 2012, <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2012/01/31/us-nigeria-bokoharam-idUSTRE80U0LR20120131> [318].

³²⁸ “Abuja attack: Car bomb hits Nigeria UN building,” BBC News, August 27, 2012, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-14677957> [319].

³²⁹ Joe Brook, “Special Report: Boko Haram - between rebellion and jihad,” Reuters, January 31, 2012, <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2012/01/31/us-nigeria-bokoharam-idUSTRE80U0LR20120131> [318].

³³⁰ Monica Mark, “Boko Haram vows to fight until Nigeria establishes sharia law,” *Guardian*, January 27, 2012, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/jan/27/boko-haram-nigeria-sharia-law> [320].

³³¹ Ryan Villarreal, U.S., “Nigeria at odds over designation of Boko Haram as Terrorist Organisation,” *International Business Times*, May 29, 2012, <http://www.ibtimes.com/us-nigeria-odds-over-designation-boko-haram-terrorist-organization-700515> [321].

³³² Sarah Chayes “Nigeria’s Boko Haram isn’t just about Western education,” *Washington Post*, May 16, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/nigerias-boko-haram-isnt-just-about-western-education/2014/05/16/d9bb5824-d9de-11e3-bda1-9b46b2066796_story.html [322].

³³³ Colin Freeman, “Missing Nigerian girls: whatever happened to #Bringbackourgirls?” *Telegraph*, July 14, 2014, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/nigeria/10947211/Missing-Nigerian-girls-whatever-happened-to-Bringbackourgirls.html> [323].

³³⁴ Colin Freeman, “Missing Nigerian girls: whatever happened to #Bringbackourgirls?” *Telegraph*, July 14, 2014, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/nigeria/10947211/Missing-Nigerian-girls-whatever-happened-to-Bringbackourgirls.html> [323].

³³⁵ Robin Simcox, “Boko Haram and defining the ‘al Qaeda network,’” Al Jazeera, June 6, 2014, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2014/06/boko-haram-al-qaeda-201463115816142554.html> [70].

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Rhetoric:



[324]

[Abubakar Shekau, video message released on YouTube, December 29, 2016](#)
[324]

“Our mission is to establish an Islamic caliphate [in Nigeria].”³³⁶



[325]

[Abubakar Shekau, video message released on YouTube, December 29, 2016](#)
[325]

“I am here, well and alive...the battle is just beginning.”³³⁷



[326]

[Abubakar Shekau, audio message released on YouTube, November 13, 2016](#)
[326]

To the West:

“...The war has just begun.”³³⁸



[327]

[Abu Musab al-Barnawi, interview in ISIS's magazine al-Naba, August 2016](#)
[327]

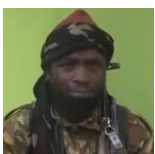
“[We will] booby-[trap] and [blow] up every church that we are able to reach, and [kill] all of those who we find from the citizens of the Cross.”³³⁹



[328]

[Abu Musab al-Barnawi, interview in ISIS's magazine al-Naba, August 2016](#)
[328]

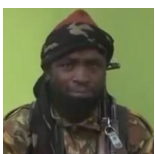
“[Boko Haram] remain[s] a force to be reckoned with.”³⁴⁰



[329]

[Abubakar Shekau, audiotape released on social media, September 19, 2015](#)
[329]

“Buhari is a liar and has deceived you. The army spokesman is also lying. We are alive, I am alive, this is my voice, more audible than it was before. This is Shekau. He and his footsoldiers always run helter-skelter whenever we come face to face with them... Buhari, you once claimed that you will crush us in three months. How can you crush us?”³⁴¹



[330]

[Abubakar Shekau, August 16, 2015](#) [330]

“It is indeed all over the global media of infidels that I am dead or that I am sick and incapacitated and have lost influence in the affairs of religion. Gratitude be to Allah and with his help, I have not disappeared. I am still alive and I am not dead. And I will not die until my time appointed by Allah is up.”³⁴²

[Abubakar Shekau, August 16, 2015](#) [331]

“This ostentatious person, a liar -- I mean Buhari, who raised arms to crush us in three

Boko Haram



[331]

months. You Buhari, why didn't you say in three years? We will certainly fight you by the grace of Allah until we establish Allah's law everywhere on Earth."³⁴³



[332]

[*Abubakar Shekau, threatening the upcoming Nigerian presidential election, February 18, 2015*](#) [332]

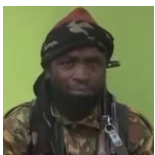
"This election will not be held even if we are dead. Even if we are not alive Allah will never allow you to do it."³⁴⁴



[333]

[*Abubakar Shekau, pledge of allegiance to ISIS, March 7, 2015*](#) [333]

"We announce our allegiance to the Caliph ... and will hear and obey in times of difficulty and prosperity, in hardship and ease. We call upon Muslims everywhere to pledge allegiance to the Caliph."³⁴⁵



[334]

[*Abubakar Shekau, praising the Paris shootings in a YouTube video, January 14, 2015*](#) [334]

"We have felt joy for what befell the people of France in terms of torment, as their blood was spilled inside their country."³⁴⁶



[335]

[*Abubakar Shekau, addressing Cameroonian President Paul Biya in a YouTube video, January 5, 2015*](#) [335]

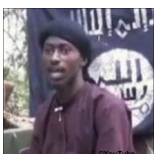
"Oh Paul Biya, if you don't stop this, your evil plot, you will taste what has befallen Nigeria... Your troops cannot do anything to us."³⁴⁷



[336]

[*Abu Musab al-Barnawi, Boko Haram video, January 2015*](#) [336]

In reference to recent Boko Haram attacks in the Lake Chad region:
"As for it's [sic] importance to us, it's because of it removes that military presence from the lands of the Islamic state, and hence establish the shariah [Islamic law] of Allah in the region, and attain safety and security in it for Muslims [sic]."³⁴⁸



[337]

[*Abu Musab al-Barnawi, Boko Haram video, January 2015*](#) [337]

"We have come to give victory to AlSunna [sic] and to establish the governance of Allah on earth."³⁴⁹



[338]

[*Boko Haram Militant Leader, December 21, 2014*](#) [338]

"We have made sure the floor of this hall is turned red with blood, and this is how it is going to be in all future attacks and arrests of infidels," the group leader says in a message. "From now, killing, slaughtering, destructions and bombing will be our religious duty anywhere we invade."³⁵⁰

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[339]

[*Abubakar Shekau, November 1, 2014*](#) [339]

“The over 200 Chibok girls have converted to Islam, which they confess is the best religion. Either their parents accept this and convert too or they can die... who says we are dialoguing or discussing with anybody? Are you talking to yourselves? All we are doing is slaughtering people with machetes and shooting people with guns ... War is what we want.”³⁵¹



[340]

[*Abubakar Shekau, October 2014*](#) [340]

“Anybody that said plans are underway for the release of the [nearly 300 kidnapped] girls is just daydreaming. They would not be returned.”³⁵²



[341]

[*Abul Qaqa, June 2012*](#) [341]

“The Nigerian state and Christians are our enemies and we will be launching attacks on the Nigerian state and its security apparatus as well as churches until we achieve our goal of establishing an Islamic state in place of the secular state.”³⁵³



[342]

[*Abubakar Shekau, May 5, 2014*](#) [342]

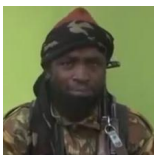
“I abducted your girls. I will sell them in the market, by Allah. I will sell them off and marry them off.”³⁵⁴



[343]

[*Abubakar Shekau, May 2014*](#) [343]

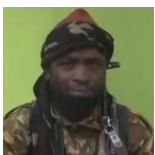
“Women are slaves. I want to reassure my Muslim brothers that Allah says slaves are permitted in Islam.”³⁵⁵



[344]

[*Abubakar Shekau, March 24, 2014*](#) [344]

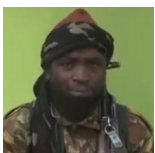
“I promise that we will kill all your (Muslim) clerics. Just like I killed Albani and it was splashed all over the newspapers. I’ll kill them all. Who was Albani, he was nothing. I’ll kill all of them. I’ll spare none but who follow Allah and the Prophet. Whoever follows Jews and the [W]est is my enemy.”³⁵⁶



[344]

[*Abubakar Shekau, March 24, 2014*](#) [344]

“In this world, there are two kinds of people; there are those who are with us or those who are against us, and the latter group are those I’ll kill once I spot them.”³⁵⁷



[345]

[*Abubakar Shekau, March 24, 2014*](#) [345]

“Western education is totally forbidden. Girls, you should return to your homes. In Islam, it is allowed to take infidel women as slaves and in due course we will start taking women away and sell in the market.”³⁵⁸

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[346]

[Abubakar Shekau, March 24, 2014](#) [346]

“Let me make it crystal clear to you save you from unnecessary distorted newspapers and the radio analysis on issues you don’t understand. We are not fighting the north, we are fighting the world. And you will see us fighting the world. This is our job.”³⁵⁹



[347]

[Abubakar Shekau, January 11, 2012](#) [347]

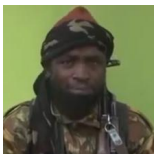
“This religion of Christianity you are practicing is not a religion of God—it is paganism. God frowns at it. What you are practicing is not religion. Aside that, you Christians cheated and killed us to the extent of eating our flesh like cannibals! You did all you wanted to us. We are trying to coerce you to embrace Islam, because that is what God instructed us to do. Even at that, without provocation, you slaughtered us and took our wives and humiliated us!... We are at war with Christians.”³⁶⁰



[348]

[Abubakar Shekau, January 2012](#) [348]

“I enjoy killing anyone that God commands me to kill - the way I enjoy killing chickens and rams.”³⁶¹



[349]

[Abubakar Shekau, June 2011](#) [349]

“Anybody, even if he is a learned Muslim teacher, if we confirm that he exposes us to the government, his children will become orphans and his wife will become a widow, in God’s name.”³⁶²

³⁵⁶ Associated Press, “Boko Haram leader: ‘The battle is just beginning,’” *USA Today*, December 31, 2016, <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2016/12/31/boko-haram-leader-battle-just-beginning/96034042/> [350].

³⁵⁷ Associated Press, “Boko Haram leader: ‘The battle is just beginning,’” *USA Today*, December 31, 2016, <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2016/12/31/boko-haram-leader-battle-just-beginning/96034042/> [350].

³⁵⁸ Agence France-Presse, “Boko Haram leader warns Trump ‘war has just begun,’” Yahoo News, November 14, 2016, <https://www.yahoo.com/news/boko-haram-leader-warns-trump-war-just-begun-093829678.html> [351].

³⁵⁹ Dionne Searcey and Eric Schmitt, “Boko Haram May Have a New Leader, ISIS Magazine Suggests,” *New York Times*, August 3, 2016, <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/04/world/asia/boko-haram-may-have-a-new-leader-isis-magazine-suggests.html> [352].

³⁶⁰ “Boko Haram in Nigeria: Abu Musab al-Barnawi named as new leader,” BBC News, August 3, 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-36963711> [353].

³⁶¹ Agence France-Presse, “Boko Haram leader dismisses Nigerian military claims,” Yahoo News, September 19, 2015, <http://news.yahoo.com/boko-haram-leader-dismisses-nigerian-military-claims-215252023.html> [354].

³⁶² Agence France-Presse, “Boko Haram leader Shekau says he is ‘still in charge,’” Yahoo News, August 16, 2015, <http://news.yahoo.com/boko-harams-shekau-says-still-alive-still-charge-163016566.html> [355].

³⁶³ Agence France-Presse, “Boko Haram leader Shekau says he is ‘still in charge,’” Yahoo News, August 16, 2015, <http://news.yahoo.com/boko-harams-shekau-says-still-alive-still-charge-163016566.html> [355].

³⁶⁴ “Boko Haram leader vows to disrupt Nigeria elections,” France24, February 18, 2015, <http://www.france24.com/en/20150218-boko-haram-shekau-video-nigeria-elections>. [356]

³⁶⁵ “Nigeria’s Boko Haram pledges allegiance to Islamic State - audio clip,” Reuters, March 8, 2015, <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2015/03/08/uk-nigeria-boko-haram-caliphate-idUKKBN0M30TA20150308>. [357]

³⁶⁶ “SITE: Nigerian Militant Leader Praises Paris Violence,” Associated Press, January 14, 2015, http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/A/AF_FRANCE_ATTACKS_BOKO_HARAM?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT [358].

³⁶⁷ Agence France-Presse, “Boko Haram Leader Threatens Cameroon in YouTube Video,” *Daily Mail*, January 7, 2015, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/afp/article-2900424/Boko-Haram-leader-threatens-Cameroon-YouTube-video.html> [155].

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³⁴⁸ Kyle Shideler, "Boko Haram discusses Baga massacre, ideology in new video," *Washington Times*, January 29, 2015, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/jan/29/frank-gaffney-boko-haram-discusses-baga-massacre-i/> [359].

³⁴⁹ Kyle Shideler, "Boko Haram discusses Baga massacre, ideology in new video," *Washington Times*, January 29, 2015, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/jan/29/frank-gaffney-boko-haram-discusses-baga-massacre-i/> [359].

³⁵⁰ "Boko Haram releases video of extremists killing civilians," *Washington Post*, December 21, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/boko-haram-releases-video-of-extremists-killing-civilians/2014/12/21/8549fcd4-8954-11e4-a085-34e9b9f09a58_story.html [148].

³⁵¹ "Nigeria's Purported Boko Haram Leader Says Had 'Married Off' Girls," Reuters, November 1, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2014/11/01/world/africa/01reuters-nigeria-violence.html> [360].

³⁵² Adam Nossiter, "In Nigeria, Fragile Hopes of Boko Haram Freeing Schoolgirls Are Dashed," *New York Times*, October 31, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/01/world/africa/in-nigeria-fragile-hopes-of-boko-haram-freeing-schoolgirls-are-dashed-.html> [361].

³⁵³ "Why we attacked the churches'-Boko Haram," *Osun Defender*, June 11, 2012, <http://www.osundefender.org/?p=32210> [362].

³⁵⁴ Aminu Abubakar, Josh Levs, "I will sell them," Boko Haram leader says of kidnapped Nigerian girls," CNN, May 6, 2014, <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/05/05/world/africa/nigeria-abducted-girls/> [363].

³⁵⁵ Monica Mark, "Missing Nigerian schoolgirls: Boko Haram claims responsibility for kidnapping," *Guardian*, May 6, 2014, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/may/05/boko-haram-claims-responsibility-kidnapping-nigeria-schoolgirls> [364].

³⁵⁶ "This is the full text of the latest message from the Boko Haram leader, ABUBAKAR SHEKAU," *New Issues*, March 24, 2014, <http://www.newissuesmagazine.com/full-text-latest-message-boko-haram-leader-abubakar-shekau> [365].

³⁵⁷ "This is the full text of the latest message from the Boko Haram leader, ABUBAKAR SHEKAU," *New Issues*, March 24, 2014, <http://www.newissuesmagazine.com/full-text-latest-message-boko-haram-leader-abubakar-shekau> [365].

³⁵⁸ "This is the full text of the latest message from the Boko Haram leader, ABUBAKAR SHEKAU," *New Issues*, March 24, 2014, <http://www.newissuesmagazine.com/full-text-latest-message-boko-haram-leader-abubakar-shekau> [365].

³⁵⁹ "This is the full text of the latest message from the Boko Haram leader, ABUBAKAR SHEKAU," *New Issues*, March 24, 2014, <http://www.newissuesmagazine.com/full-text-latest-message-boko-haram-leader-abubakar-shekau> [365].

³⁶⁰ "VIDEO: Boko Haram leader 'Imam Abubakar Shekau' Message to President Jonathan," Sahara Reporters, January 12, 2012, <http://saharareporters.com/2012/01/12/video-boko-haram-leader-imam-abubakar-shekau-message-president-jonathan> [366].

³⁶¹ "Nigeria's Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau in profile," BBC News, May 9, 2014, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-18020349> [367].

³⁶² Adam Nossiter, "A Jihadist's Face Taunts Nigeria From the Shadows," *New York Times*, May 18, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/19/world/africa/a-jihadists-face-taunts-nigeria-from-the-shadows.html?module=Search&mabReward=relbias%3Aw%2C%7B%22%22%3A%22RI%3A16%22%7D> [368]