

THE ONGOING STRUGGLE AGAINST BOKO HARAM

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HEALTH,
GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS, AND
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

JUNE 11, 2014

Serial No. 113-220

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Affairs



Available via the World Wide Web: <http://www.foreignaffairs.house.gov/> or
<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/>

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

88-290PDF

WASHINGTON : 2014

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
Internet: bookstore.gpo.gov Phone: toll free (866) 512-1800; DC area (202) 512-1800
Fax: (202) 512-2104 Mail: Stop IDCC, Washington, DC 20402-0001

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

EDWARD R. ROYCE, California, *Chairman*

CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, New Jersey	ELIOT L. ENGEL, New York
ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, Florida	ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA, American Samoa
DANA ROHRABACHER, California	BRAD SHERMAN, California
STEVE CHABOT, Ohio	GREGORY W. MEEKS, New York
JOE WILSON, South Carolina	ALBIO SIRES, New Jersey
MICHAEL T. McCAUL, Texas	GERALD E. CONNOLLY, Virginia
TED POE, Texas	THEODORE E. DEUTCH, Florida
MATT SALMON, Arizona	BRIAN HIGGINS, New York
TOM MARINO, Pennsylvania	KAREN BASS, California
JEFF DUNCAN, South Carolina	WILLIAM KEATING, Massachusetts
ADAM KINZINGER, Illinois	DAVID CICILLINE, Rhode Island
MO BROOKS, Alabama	ALAN GRAYSON, Florida
TOM COTTON, Arkansas	JUAN VARGAS, California
PAUL COOK, California	BRADLEY S. SCHNEIDER, Illinois
GEORGE HOLDING, North Carolina	JOSEPH P. KENNEDY III, Massachusetts
RANDY K. WEBER SR., Texas	AMI BERA, California
SCOTT PERRY, Pennsylvania	ALAN S. LOWENTHAL, California
STEVE STOCKMAN, Texas	GRACE MENG, New York
RON DeSANTIS, Florida	LOIS FRANKEL, Florida
DOUG COLLINS, Georgia	TULSI GABBARD, Hawaii
MARK MEADOWS, North Carolina	JOAQUIN CASTRO, Texas
TED S. YOHO, Florida	
SEAN DUFFY, Wisconsin	

AMY PORTER, *Chief of Staff*

THOMAS SHEEHY, *Staff Director*

JASON STEINBAUM, *Democratic Staff Director*

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HEALTH, GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS, AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, New Jersey, *Chairman*

TOM MARINO, Pennsylvania	KAREN BASS, California
RANDY K. WEBER SR., Texas	DAVID CICILLINE, Rhode Island
STEVE STOCKMAN, Texas	AMI BERA, California
MARK MEADOWS, North Carolina	

CONTENTS

	Page
WITNESSES	
J. Peter Pham, Ph.D., director, Africa Center, Atlantic Council	8
Mr. Emmanuel Ogebe, manager, Justice for Jos Project, Jubilee Campaign USA	27
Mr. Anslem John-Miller, representative to the U.S., Movement for the Sur- vival of the Ogoni People	56
The Honorable Robin Renee Sanders, chief executive officer, FEEEDS Advoca- cacy Initiative (former United States Ambassador to Nigeria)	67
LETTERS, STATEMENTS, ETC., SUBMITTED FOR THE HEARING	
J. Peter Pham, Ph.D.: Prepared statement	13
Mr. Emmanuel Ogebe: Prepared statement	31
Mr. Anslem John-Miller: Prepared statement	61
The Honorable Robin Renee Sanders: Prepared statement	72
APPENDIX	
Hearing notice	100
Hearing minutes	101
Mr. Emmanuel Ogebe: Information on Boko Haram attacks	102
The Honorable Christopher H. Smith, a Representative in Congress from the State of New Jersey, and chairman, Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations: Remarks by Dr. Zuhdi Jasser of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom	107

THE ONGOING STRUGGLE AGAINST BOKO HARAM

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 11, 2014

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HEALTH,
GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS, AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:34 p.m., in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Christopher H. Smith (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. SMITH. Since November 2013, the U.S. Government has declared Boko Haram and its affiliate, Ansaru, to be Foreign Terrorist Organizations. This supposedly provides further tools with which to fight such organizations and their sponsors. However, an administration that resisted the FTO designation for so long continues to downplay its significance. This hearing is intended to provide information on that reluctance on obstacles to our effective security and our military assistance to the Nigerian Government in its antiterror fight.

Boko Haram is a Nigerian terrorist group whose name in Arabic is “People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet’s Teaching and Jihad.” The name Boko Haram is from Hausa meaning that conventional education, boko, is forbidden.

According to various reports, Boko Haram began in 2003 when about 200 university students and unemployed youth created a camp in Yobe State near the Niger border to withdraw from what they considered to be corrupt, sinful and unjust Nigerian Government, and their community was supposedly founded on Islamic law. The group was then known as the Nigerian Taliban.

Violent clashes with Nigerian security forces nearly destroyed the group several times, but its charismatic leader, Mohammed Yusuf, kept the group alive until his death while in police custody in July 2009. Since Yusuf’s death there have been various spokesmen. Abubakar Shekau is now considered to be the leader. Furthermore, a breakaway group known as Ansaru has appeared on the scene, but still coordinates with the original Boko Haram.

Because of its repeated attacks against Christian targets during holy days such as Christmas and Easter, Boko Haram is seen by some as principally an anti-Christian organization. This past year alone, Boko Haram terrorists are believed to have killed more than 1,000 Christians in Nigeria. In fact, it is estimated that more than

60 percent of Christians killed worldwide because of religious intolerance die in Nigeria.

However, it would not be a completely accurate interpretation of the facts to assume that what is happening in Nigeria is just a Muslim-Christian conflict. The kidnapping of nearly 300 Nigerian schoolgirls in the Borno State, town of Chibok, on April 14, has caught the attention finally of the international community, albeit 2 weeks after the incident. However, the kidnapping of 8 additional girls after that has been an afterthought; and the kidnapping of another 20 women last week has yet to receive much notice.

Prior to the April kidnappings, Boko Haram had generally killed boys, but let girls go, warning them to go home and give up their dreams of education. There have been previous incidents, however, in which girls have been kidnapped, though not in large numbers as in Chibok.

Now Boko Haram leaders realize that kidnapping girls gets worldwide publicity; and whether these girls are recovered or not, and God willing they will be, they know that they can do this again and get publicity for their nefarious group. The very news media used to galvanize pressure on Nigeria to obtain freedom of the kidnapped girls is being used by Boko Haram to brag of its ability to disrupt social society and taunt Nigerians and their government about their ability to take women and girls away.

Several videos—and I have watched them; I am sure many of you have as well—purportedly of the kidnapped Chibok girls have been released, echoing previously used al-Qaeda tactics in this regard.

In the past 2 years, our subcommittee has sent a staff delegation to investigate the Boko Haram threat, and this past September Greg Simpkins, our subcommittee staff director, and I visited Abuja and Jos to further look into the matter. And, frankly, we went to firebombed churches. We met with Archbishop Kaigama as well as Muslim leaders in Jos and had very, very eye-opening meetings with the survivors, some of whom had lost limbs, certainly they had lost loved ones to these firebombings.

Just on Monday I returned from another 4 days in Abuja where I took time and met with a number of victims who had suffered so much, as well as government leaders. Last week in Abuja, one of the Chibok girls who escaped early on in the ordeal met with our delegation. This brave young woman has suffered so much and was clearly traumatized and in emotional pain. You could hear it in her voice, you could see it in her eyes as she sat motionless recounting her story, yet she spoke not of herself, but of her concern for her friends and her classmates who remain in captivity.

I met with a Muslim father of two girls abducted from the Chibok school. Fighting back tears, he said the agony was unbearable. Again, this is a Muslim father. The story of his daughters underscored the fact that Boko Haram brutalizes Muslims as well.

I also met with another Boko Haram victim, including a Christian mother of two, whose two daughters were abducted back in February 2012. She told us her husband was shot on the spot. Three months later they took the two daughters and abducted them. And then 3 months later Boko Haram gunmen returned and asked if her son had converted to Islam. When she said no, they

shot him on the spot and killed her son. Again through her tears, which were almost uncontrollable, she recounted the horror of losing a husband, a son, and having two of her daughters kidnapped.

We have wasted more than a year not using all of our tools because of the specious argument that doing so would provide publicity to terrorists. And now the administration is downplaying what the FTO designation can, indeed, accomplish. There must be a robust use of the benefits of this designation if we are to be successful in the battle against terrorism in Nigeria.

The three criteria for an organization to be declared an FTO are that it must be a foreign organization; it must be engaged in terrorist activity; and it must threaten the security of the United States nationals, U.S. national security, or the economic interests of the United States. Clearly Boko Haram and Ansaru meet the test, and, again, that is why I introduced H.R. 3209 last year to urge the administration to declare Boko Haram a foreign terrorist organization.

I want to point out that the meetings with our Embassy people were very fruitful, and I want to applaud them for their diligence and for their commitment both on the intelligence side, on the training side of just a small but not insignificant group of Nigerians, particularly in counterinsurgency, as well as humanitarian efforts that they have embarked upon to try to help those who are suffering so much.

Boko Haram and Ansaru do wage attacks on the Nigerian Government as we all know, and they also have domestic targets as well. Nevertheless, their actions prove their participation in the global jihad movement that wages violent war worldwide to establish their skewed version of Islam as a prevailing religion globally.

Various actions such as to the bombing of the U.N. office way back in 2011 in Abuja and numerous statements from Boko Haram spokesmen indicate that there is this international intent, and sadly they are growing. They are not diminishing; they are growing. This international focus has been confirmed by American and Nigerian intelligence. In fact, there was at least one American present during the U.N. office bombing in 2011 which we would have hoped the administration would have acknowledged. I and members of our full committee asked that question as recently as a hearing that was held, chaired by Chairman Royce.

When then-Assistant Secretary Johnnie Carson told us in a July 2012 hearing on Nigeria that Boko Haram's attacks were caused mostly by an animus against the Nigerian Government, I believe he was wrong in the apportionment of cause and effect. There is a tremendous animus toward the Nigerian Government and an effort to embarrass President Jonathan; however, Boko Haram is determined to convert or kill Christians and Muslims that they believe oppose them.

Poverty did not create Boko Haram. That would be an insult, I would suggest respectfully, to the poor. Religious fanaticism, however, is what it is underlying and it is foundational.

Underdevelopment in northern Nigeria provides fodder for a level of discontent with the Federal Government. It provides at least tacit northern support for anyone opposing the government.

If northern Nigeria were its own country, it would be among the poorest, least educated, least healthy countries in the entire world.

Largely due to the terrorist violence in the north, an estimated 3.3 million Nigerians are displaced, making Nigeria the world's third largest displaced population behind only Syria and Colombia. Many of those displaced people are farmers, which will certainly disrupt the next harvest and further impoverish Nigeria's suffering people. Yet the blame for perennial lack in development in northern Nigeria should not be heaped on the Federal Government alone. We have been told that northern states have money for development, and one national legislator from the north acknowledged that each member of Nigeria's Parliament has at least \$1 million—not Nigerian naira, but American dollars equivalent—at his or her disposal for his constituent services. National and state governments in Nigeria have to be pushed to do more on development with money they already have.

Finally, it is imperative that we provide the training and support for Nigerians to develop their own capacity to help Nigeria end the Boko Haram threat. The Leahy law, which forbids U.S. support to military and security forces involved in human rights violations, is seen as an obstacle, to some extent, to achieving that goal, and I say that as someone who has been very supportive of the Leahy amendments both for DoD and the State Department over the many years.

In this hearing room 15 years ago, when Indonesia was matriculating from Suharto to Habibie, and we were training the Kopassus group, an elite group of Indonesians, we had no idea which ones we trained and whether or not they were out there doing urban guerilla warfare and shooting people in Jakarta when violence erupted there. So there is a need for the Leahy law, but it has to be very carefully looked at so that fine infantry and soldiers who have the capability to be leaders are not screened out, and therefore diminishing the ability of the Nigerians to wage an effective campaign against Boko Haram.

I would like to now yield to my friend and colleague Ms. Bass for opening comments.

Ms. BASS. Thank you very much, Chairman Smith. As always, I thank you for your leadership of this subcommittee and for convening today's hearing.

I would also like to thank our distinguished witnesses, and I look forward to hearing your perspectives on the ongoing crisis in northern Nigeria, including an assessment of Boko Haram's recent activities; the U.S., Africa Union, and international efforts to locate the kidnapped girls and mitigate the threat of Boko Haram; and what is ultimately at stake if efforts to quell the group's heinous crimes are not implemented with sufficient resources and all deliberate speed.

Since the April 15 kidnapping of nearly 300 girls by armed militants, international attention from both advocates and the international community has been focused on locating the girls as well as addressing the overarching security challenges caused by Boko Haram.

Following President Obama's initial condemnation of the attacks and kidnappings, the U.S. Government committed to provide tech-

nical and logistical support in the effort to locate the missing girls and support the Government of Nigeria in addressing the threat posed by Boko Haram. These efforts began with a joint assessment mission to Nigeria led by the AFRICOM Commander David Rodriguez and the State Department's Under Secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights. Following the assessment, a multidisciplinary U.S. team was deployed to Nigeria, including military and law enforcement personnel capable of sharing with the Nigerians expertise in intelligence, investigations, hostage negotiating, and victim assistance.

U.S. military assistance to Nigeria, I understand, is currently focused on military professionalization, peacekeeping support and training, and border and maritime security. This includes providing commercial satellite data and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance support to Nigeria's military, and the two governments reached an intelligence-sharing agreement in mid-May. To further support this effort, President Obama has deployed approximately 80 U.S. military personnel to neighboring Chad to contribute to the rescue efforts.

I know that a lot has been said about the State Department's initial reticence to designate Boko Haram as a Foreign Terrorist Organization, and as I understand there were several practical reasons to avoid such a designation in the past. The practical effects of the designation were few, I believe, given limited information suggesting material support for the group from individuals in U.S. jurisdiction. It is my understanding that they have raised most of their money from committing local crimes.

Many U.S. officials cautioned also, as the chairman stated, that the FTO designation might actually serve as a recruitment and fundraising tool. Additionally, some global counterterrorism experts have made similar arguments about potential complications related to the FTO designation, suggesting a designation could inadvertently give additional visibility and credibility to a group among international Jihadists, or could make the operations of U.S.-based relief agencies in Boko Haram areas more difficult. Given the religious component to the conflicts in northern Nigeria, some experts also cautioned against that designation on the grounds that it could fuel perceptions that the U.S. was taking sides between Muslims and Christians.

These and other concerns related to the designation were shared by State Department officials, according to former Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Johnnie Carson.

It should be noted that the FTO designation primarily triggers the freezing of any assets a group might have in U.S. financial institutions, bans FTO members' travel to the U.S., and criminalizes transactions with the organization, but does not convey authorization for direct U.S. military action against a terrorist group.

Since the designation, however, was made in November 2013, it is unclear if it has had any impact on Boko Haram's financing as the extent to which they raise funds from abroad is also unclear.

As we prepare to hear from today's witnesses, I hope we can learn critical lessons from the vast experience and use them to move forward to increase support for the most effective measures that bring an end to the scourge of Boko Haram in northern Nige-

ria. I am committed to working toward this end and look forward to working with my colleagues in Washington and on the continent to find the most effective and sustainable solutions.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Ms. Bass.

I would now like to yield to Mr. Weber.

Mr. WEBER. Mr. Chairman, thank you. I am ready to get going.

Mr. SMITH. Dr. Bera.

Mr. BERA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, thank you, Ranking Member Bass for calling this timely hearing.

Obviously, the grave situation of the nearly 300 girls, that were kidnapped near Chibok is something that continues to distress many of us. You know, according to the United Nations, we have seen over 500 schools that have been destroyed in northern Nigeria by Boko Haram, leaving over 15,000 students without access to education and scores more, thousands more, who are now really fearful about obtaining that education. And, you know, it is those acts of terrorism that started to drive folks from just a normal civilized life.

I look forward to hearing from the witnesses on what more we could do to help better support those within Nigeria, but then also, you know, when Ranking Member Bass touched on sources of funding, better funding of Boko Haram, you know, if I read some of the reports from Nigerian troops and so forth, many of them feel as though, you know, again, if I were to trust the reports, that they are underequipped compared to the Boko Haram troops and forces; so, you know, if they are going into the north and into some of the more difficult terrain to fight against one of the more better-equipped armies in Nigeria.

One thing that we could do short of actually sending troops in would be to look for those sources of funding, and look for those foreign sources of funding, and try to as effectively as possible address the sources that are funding the Boko Haram troops and their equipment.

In addition, I think I stand with Chairman Smith and Ranking Member Bass and the members of this subcommittee that we are committed to doing what we can as the people of the United States working with the international community to continue to aggressively address and fight the terrorism that is coming out of Boko Haram.

So with that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Bera, thank you very much.

Mr. Cicilline.

Mr. CICILLINE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Bass, for holding today's hearing on this very important issue. And even though we are working, obviously, together with some of our international partners to secure the return of hundreds of girls kidnapped by Boko Haram to their homes and to their families, we continue to learn of additional heinous acts perpetuated by this terrorist organization. In fact, earlier this week it was reported that Boko Haram brazenly abducted an additional 20 girls just miles away from the site of the kidnapping in April.

This continued terrorization and intimidation is something that no civilized society can tolerate, and certainly we all agree no child in the world should live in fear of being kidnapped, forced into

marriage, slavery, or killed solely because they pursue an education or practice of a different religious faith.

With an estimated 5,000 people killed by Boko Haram-related violence, it is incredibly important that the international community continue to strongly condemn these actions, and remain focused on this terrorist group, and work together to hold Boko Haram accountable for these really despicable actions.

I look forward to hearing from the witnesses today about our efforts to respond to the horrific violence of Boko Haram and to doing all that we can to respond to the crisis in northern Nigeria. I thank the witnesses for being here, and I yield back. Thank you very much.

Mr. SMITH. I yield to my friend Mr. Stockman.

Mr. STOCKMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Just quick comments, and then I thank you for coming before us today.

One of my concerns is, which I expressed to the chairman, is the interpretation of some Nigerians regarding United States efforts. And I would think that we are transparent, but apparently there are some that believe we have ulterior motives for helping. I can assure you, regarding the chairman, that his sole purpose has been throughout the world is his compassion for others, and that if the leadership or anyone in Nigeria interprets our help or wanting to help as anything other than that, then it is incorrect. And I am a little bit alarmed at the way it is being portrayed, and I can assure you from our standpoint, our motives are there to help and not to have a political agenda.

The other thing I am concerned about, which I would like to get answers to, I don't know if it is a proper forum or we have to have a closed hearing, but I would like to know what kind of weapons. It is my understanding that some of the weapons from Libya have made it into the hands of the terrorists, and, if so, how many weapons and how much? Do we have any comprehensive count of what has ended up in their hands and how they are being used?

If that is the case, everybody knows Libya was an armed camp. Ghadafi kept many weapons. For us to sit by and pretend that the terrorists don't have weapons or weapons that could be harmful to Nigeria, I think, is a mistake. People say the best way that you can cure alcoholism is by first admitting you are an alcoholic; but if we don't have an understanding admitting that we have a problem, then we can never cure the problem. And I think we need some honest debate, not criticism—we are not here to criticize—but honest debate on what is going on so we can help.

Mr. Chairman, I think our intentions here today are to find out how we can help in the proper way and not being offensive, not being a big foot, a big print, but doing something that is real and not interpreted in a negative way. And with that, Chairman, I yield back.

Mr. SMITH. I would like to now introduce our very distinguished panel, beginning first with Dr. Peter Pham, who is the director of the Africa Center at the Atlantic Council in Washington. He is the incumbent vice president of the Association for the Study of Middle East and Africa, an academic organization that represents more

than 1,000 scholars, and is editor-in-chief of the organization's Journal of the Middle East and Africa.

Dr. Pham was the winner of the 2008 Nelson Mandela International Prize for African Security and Development. He has authored half a dozen book chapters concerning Somali piracy, terrorism, and stabilizing fragile states, as well as more than 80 articles in various journals.

We will then hear from Mr. Emmanuel Ogebe, who is the manager of the Justice for Jos Project at the Jubilee Campaign, and an experienced attorney specializing on international matters focusing on Nigeria. Exiled to the U.S. after becoming a political detainee during the brutal years of Nigeria's military dictatorship, Mr. Ogebe has played a key role in shaping U.S. policy toward Nigeria and its quest for democracy. He has experience in managing, designing, and implementing complex international projects and programs in Nigeria.

Mr. Ogebe is presently practicing as a legal consultant on Nigeria admitted to the Washington, DC, bar. He holds the distinction of being the first specialist on Nigeria out of 100,000 lawyers licensed in Washington, DC.

Then we will hear from Mr. Anslem Dornubari John-Miller who served as the chairman of the National Caretaker Committee of the National Union of Ogoni Students, as well as the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People, the parent body under which the Ogoni nonviolent struggle for environmental and social justice is being carried out. While in a refugee camp in Benin, he founded the National Union of Ogoni Students, where he educated the public on the situation of the Ogoni and drew attention to the plight of the refugees who are predominantly students and youth.

Once resettled in the United States in 1996, he continued his work for the Ogoni people, where his efforts resulted in the resettlement of over 1,000 families in the United States.

And then we will hear from Ambassador Robin Renee Sanders, who is CEO of FEEEDS Advocacy Initiative and owns FE3DS, both of which craft economic development and business strategies for African countries. In these organizations, she focuses on food security, education, the environment, energy, economic development and self-help programs, particularly for small and medium enterprises. Prior to this she served as U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria and the Republic of Congo, and was the U.S. Permanent Representative to ECOWAS, the Economic Community of West African States. She has served twice as the Africa Director at the National Security Council at the White House.

This is a very distinguished panel, and we look forward to your insights and recommendations.

Dr. Pham.

**STATEMENT OF J. PETER PHAM, PH.D., DIRECTOR, AFRICA
CENTER, ATLANTIC COUNCIL**

Mr. PHAM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Bass, and distinguished members of the subcommittee. I would like to thank you not only for the specific opportunity to testify before you today on the subject of the ongoing struggle against Boko Haram, but also thank you for the sustained attention which the Com-

mittee on Foreign Affairs, this subcommittee, and other Members of the U.S. House have given to this challenge.

In it is oversight capacity, the House on this issue has been very much ahead of the curve. The very first congressional hearing on Boko Haram was in 2011, at which I had the privilege of testifying; at that time Boko Haram was considered so obscure that all of the participants at that event could have been convened in the proverbial broom closet. Sadly, our analysis proved prescient, and rather than fading away, Boko Haram today poses an even greater menace to Nigeria and its people, their neighbors, and, indeed, the international community as a whole.

With your permission, I will present a summary of my current assessment of Boko Haram and then ask my prepared statement be entered into the record of this hearing.

Mr. SMITH. Without objection, your full statement and that of all the witnesses and any extraneous material you would like included in the record will be made a part of the record.

Mr. PHAM. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Bass, the emergence of Boko Haram cannot be understood without reference to the social, religious, economic, and political milieu of northern Nigeria which have been marked by persistent corruption and relatively few improvements in socioeconomic indicators of well-being since the restoration of constitutional order to the country, leaving many communities in the north with the perception that they are falling further behind their counterparts. This has given Boko Haram's message calling for a radical transformation of Nigerian society a wide resonance across the region even if the tactics the group has adopted are repugnant to the overwhelming majority of Nigerians irrespective of their ethnic identification or religious affiliation.

In this context the group proved a useful instrument for the ambitions of certain politicians in northeastern Nigeria, including Ali Modu Sheriff, who availed himself of the support of the group's leaders and their organization in his successful 2003 bid for the governorship of Borno State, and subsequently appointed a prominent Boko Haram member, Alhaji Buji Foyi, to his cabinet as State Commissioner of Religious Affairs during his first term, thus giving the sect access to not only not inconsiderable public resources, but also public persona.

Eventually the group's relations with state and local authorities soured, tensions escalated, until, as you mentioned, Mr. Chairman, in 2009 security forces moved against the group. Founder Mohammed Yusuf was captured and shot, and not before more than 700 people were killed, numerous public buildings, including government offices, police stations, schools and churches, were destroyed.

With most of its leaders as well several prominent backers dead, the group receded from public attention, and a number of analysts even argued that it was finished. But far from being dead, the group underwent a dramatic transformation with help from foreign Jihadist groups, including al-Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb and al-Shabaab, emerging in what might be described as version 2.0, adopting one of the most deadly instruments in the Jihadist arsenal, the suicide bomb, and via attacks in 2011 of the Nigerian police force and United Nations headquarters in Abuja, dem-

onstrating itself capable of carrying out attacks far from its usual areas of operation.

2012 proved to be another significant milestone in Boko Haram's evolution. While foreign links were a critical part of its ideological and operational shift from version 1.0 to the far more lethal 2.0, the takeover of northern Mali by various al-Qaeda-linked Islamist militant groups at the end of March 2012 provided a whole new set of opportunities leading to what I might term version 3.0.

During the nearly 10 months in which AQIM and its allies held sway over northern Mali, Boko Haram was able to set up a number of bases in the territory where hundreds of recruits received ideological instruction, as well as weapons and other training that subsequently raised its tactical sophistication and operational tempo of Boko Haram's attacks in Nigeria, elevating the group to the level of a full-fledged insurgency.

Following the French-led intervention in Mali, the militants, possibly accompanied by a few foreign nationals, returned to northern Nigeria not only with training and some combat experience in desert warfare, but also vehicles and heavy weapons, including shoulder-fired missiles. Within weeks Boko Haram fighters were raiding military barracks for even more weapons; staging increasingly bold prison breaks; destroying numerous schools, hospitals and other government buildings; and engaging the Nigeria military in pitched open battles, and in some cases totally overrunning border towns.

By the middle of 2013, the militants had effectively evicted Nigerian Government troops and officials from at least 10 local government areas along the borders of Niger, Chad, and Cameroon, and set themselves up as the de facto authority in the region, often replacing Nigerian flags with their own banner, taxing and otherwise ordering citizens about, and creating a large area roughly the size of the State of Maryland within which they operated with even greater impunity.

The foreign influence is discernible in the proliferation of the kidnappings for ransom, abductions being almost a signature trait now. The kidnapping victims now have included not only the schoolgirls from Chibok, but previously a French family of seven, subsequently freed after the payment of a ransom of \$3 million reportedly and the release by Cameroonians of some 16 Boko Haram members; a French priest, two Italian priests, and a Canadian nun, all of whom were subsequently freed; and, more recently, 10 Chinese citizens abducted from a work site in northern Cameroon and still missing.

Kidnapping for ransom, not only of higher-profile foreign nationals, but hundreds of Nigerians whose families have had to offer more modest payments, with most being reported in the order of \$10,000 to \$20,000, although more than \$¼ million has been paid for more prominent abductees, represent only part of the funding stream for Boko Haram, which is rather diversified. As I previously noted, the group enjoyed a partnership with state and local politicians as recently as 6 or 7 years ago and, thanks to these well-placed supporters, appears to have benefited from public resources. There is reason to believe that even after the uprising and suppression of the group in 2009, some political actors funneled resources

to it, albeit for a slightly different calculus than earlier politicians. Some cells have also been accused of carrying out bank robberies and other such, although the extent to which these crimes were committed by and for the benefit of Boko Haram as opposed to being criminal acts blamed on the group is subject of some debate.

Two key aspects to bear in mind are that Boko Haram has developed a very diversified and resilient model for supporting itself, and that as it increasingly takes on more and more the character of an insurgency, it can essentially live off the land with very modest additional resources required, both factors rendering efforts to cut off funding particularly challenging.

On the other hand, in a region where more than two-thirds of the population lives on less than \$1 a day, the funding, no matter how modest, can go very far. For example, it is widely known that Boko Haram leaders pay Almajiri youth literally pennies a day to track and report on troop movements and in some cases to move weapons around.

A comprehensive strategy is therefore required to respond to the burgeoning threat posed by Boko Haram, some of the elements of which would include, first, invest in better information and analysis.

Secondly, encourage the Nigerian Government to deal forthrightly with the threat. Over the years the somewhat lackadaisical attitude that some senior Nigerian officials have taken toward Boko Haram has been perplexing. It should be noted that not only has the Nigerian military been largely ineffectual in its efforts to contain the insurgency, some military units spearheading the fight against Boko Haram such as the Army's 7th Division, are so dysfunctional that just last month its soldiers were reported to have opened fire on their commanding general. Worse still are the instances of actual complicity with the militants, the motivations behind which run the gamut from political opportunism and/or cynicism to corruption; to social, ethnic, and perhaps even familial ties to the militants; and perhaps most concerning of all, ideological sympathy for the extremist agenda.

In addition, address legitimate grievances. At the same time, confronting Boko Haram will require that the government carefully measure its response. The government, Federal and state, must also better address legitimate grievances which have rendered meaningful segments of the population amenable to the extremist message.

Finally, promote specialized training for Nigerian security forces. Undoubtedly the Nigerian security forces, both military and police, could use assistance in the fight against Boko Haram; however, the need is less a matter of personnel and equipment than training, especially in intelligence and investigations. With a defense budget of approximately \$6 billion, Nigeria does not want for material resources; however, what does want is lack of maintenance and how to use that equipment. One of the reasons the U.S. recently had to deploy and unmanned aerial vehicle to Chad to overfly northern Nigeria looking for the schoolgirls is because for want of upkeep, none of the Aerostar tactical drones purchased from Israel by Nigeria several years ago today fly.

That being said, tailored efforts that meet vetting requirements stipulated by U.S. law can and should help Nigerian forces strengthen their civil-military affairs capabilities, facilitate interactions between military forces and civilians, and other useful skills.

Finally, having just returned a day and a half ago from my second trip in a month to the region, we need to help strengthen regional cooperation and the capacity of Nigeria's neighbors. Boko Haram has used Nigeria's porous borders and the limited capacities of neighboring countries to its advantage. Greater cooperation and intelligence sharing between states in the region needs to be encouraged and facilitated by international partners. In this regard the regional summit in Paris last month is a step in the right direction.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Bass, members of the subcommittee, nothing justifies the outrageous kidnapping of the Nigerian schoolgirls, and every realistic effort should be expended to secure their freedom. However, until the profound pathologies which beset the body politic and institutions of Africa's most populous and wealthiest country are addressed, and until Nigeria's international partners move beyond mere rhetorical gestures, it is well nigh inevitable that the tragedy of the Chibok schoolgirls will sadly be repeated many times over as the kidnappings of some 20 women from a nearby hamlet just days ago underscore.

Thank you for your attention. I look forward to your questions.

Mr. SMITH. Dr. Pham, thank you very much for your comprehensive testimony.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Pham follows:]



Prepared Statement of

Dr. J. Peter Pham
Director, Africa Center
Atlantic Council

before the

United States House of Representatives
Committee on Foreign Affairs
Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations

on

“The Ongoing Struggle Against Boko Haram”

Wednesday, June 11, 2014,
2:00 p.m.
Rayburn House Office Building, Room 2172
Washington, D.C.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Bass, Distinguished Members of the Subcommittee:

I would like to thank you not only for the specific opportunity to testify before you today on the subject of the ongoing struggle against Boko Haram, but for the sustained attention which the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations, and other members of the United States House of Representatives have given to this challenge. In its oversight capacity, the House has, on this issue, been very much ahead of the curve, convening—through the Committee on Homeland Security’s Subcommittee on Intelligence and Counterterrorism—the very first congressional hearing on Boko Haram in 2011, which I also had the privilege of testifying at. At that time, Boko Haram was considered so obscure that the all the participants at the event, held in conjunction with the release of a bipartisan report spearheaded by Representatives Patrick

J. Peter Pham Prepared Statement at Hearing on “The Ongoing Struggle Against Boko Haram”

June 11, 2014

Meehan and Jackie Speier on the threat posed by the militant group, could have convened in the proverbial broom closet. Sadly, our analysis proved prescient and, rather than fading away, Boko Haram today poses an even greater menace to Nigeria and its people, their neighbors, and, indeed, the international community as a whole.

The Evolving Threat of Boko Haram

However, before addressing the current struggle against Boko Haram, I think it is incumbent upon us to recall the group’s evolution.¹ This context is especially important if we are to understand its likely trajectory and how best to formulate a response that will be relevant, realistic, sustainable, and, perhaps most importantly, strategic in the fullest sense of that term, rather than token, ineffectual, and, at worst, downright counterproductive to the achievement of overall objectives which I would like to believe are shared by everyone appearing before the Subcommittee today and, indeed, the millions of people worldwide who have joined through social media to condemn the outrages perpetrated by this extremist group, especially abduction of the nearly 300 schoolgirls from Chibok almost two months ago.

The emergence of the militant sect cannot be understood without reference to the social, religious, economic, and political milieu of northern Nigeria. While it is murky, some accounts link the group’s origins back to the *Maitatsine*² uprisings of the early 1980s which left thousands dead and cut a path of destruction across five northern Nigerian states. Certainly there are comparisons to be drawn between Boko Haram and the earlier movement in terms of ideology, objectives, and *modus operandi*.

Both Yan Tatsine and Boko Haram can be described as fanatical sects whose beliefs are not held by the majority of Nigerian Muslims. In their denunciation of Western civilization, both also came to reject the legitimacy of the secular Nigerian state, invariably described as *dagut* (“evil”) and unworthy of allegiance and ended up waging war against it in an effort to replace it with a “purified” Islamic regime. In both cases, police were unable to quell the outbreak of violence and military forces had to be deployed. The passage of time between the two

¹ See J. Peter Pham, *Boko Haram’s Evolving Threat*, African Security Brief 20 (Washington: Africa Center for Strategic Studies, National Defense University, 2012).

² The Maitatsine movement took its name from a religious preacher, Muhammadu Marwa, who moved from his native Cameroon to northern Nigeria around 1945. His polemical sermons, ostensibly based on the Quran and aimed at both religious and political authorities, earned Marwa the sobriquet by which he was generally known, “Maitatsine” (in the Hausa *lingua franca* of northern Nigeria, “he who curses”), as well as the ire of the British colonial authorities who had him deported. Maitatsine eventually returned to Nigeria sometime after its independence and, by the early 1970s, had gathered a large and increasingly militant following, the “Yan Tatsine” (“followers of Maitatsine”), drawing heavily from youth, unemployed migrants, and others who felt that the official Islamic hierarchy was unresponsive to their needs. Maitatsine proclaimed himself a prophet and became increasingly anti-government in his pronouncements. He was killed by security forces during a December 1980 insurrection in Kano, but his followers rose up again in 1982, 1984, and 1985. See Elizabeth Isichei, “The Maitatsine Risings in Nigeria 1980-1985: A Revolt of the Disinherited,” *Journal of Religion in Africa* 17, no. 5 (October 1987): 194-208.

J. Peter Pham Prepared Statement at Hearing on “The Ongoing Struggle Against Boko Haram”

June 11, 2014

movements has been marked by persistent corruption and relatively few improvements in the socioeconomic conditions of northern Nigeria, leaving many communities in the North with the perception that they are falling further behind their counterparts in the (mostly Christian) South.³ This has given Boko Haram’s message calling for a radical transformation of Nigerian society a wide resonance across the region, even if the tactics the group has adopted are repugnant to the overwhelming majority of Nigerians irrespective of their ethnic identification or religious affiliation.

According to most accounts, the name *Boko Haram* is itself derived from the combination of the Hausa word for “book” (as in “book learning”), *boko*, and the Arabic term *haram*, which designates those things which are ungodly or sinful.⁴ Thus “Boko Haram” is not only the group’s common name,⁵ but also its slogan to the effect that “Western education (and such product that arises from it) is sacrilege.”⁶ The group’s founder, Mohammed Yusuf, once described the cosmological view that resulted from such an ideology in a 2009 interview with the BBC: “Western-style education is mixed with issues that run contrary to our beliefs in Islam. Like rain. We believe it is a creation of God rather than an evaporation caused by the sun that condenses and becomes rain. Like saying the world is a sphere. If it runs contrary to the teachings of Allah, we reject it. We also reject the theory of Darwinism.”⁷

Notwithstanding these rather eccentric beliefs, the group proved a useful instrument for the ambitions of certain politicians in northeastern Nigeria, including Ali Modu Sheriff, who availed himself of the support of the group’s leaders and their organization in his successful 2003 bid for the governorship of Borno State and subsequently appointed a prominent Boko Haram member, Alhaji Buji Fofe, to his cabinet as state commissioner of religious affairs during his first term, thus giving the sect access to not inconsiderable public resources. During this period, Mohammed Yusuf was even able to establish a mosque—tellingly named for the thirteenth-century forefather of contemporary Salafism Ibn Taymiyyah—and school in Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State.

As the group’s relations with state and local authorities soured after 2007, what little regard it had for Nigeria’s traditional Muslim hierarchy also declined. The introduction of Islamic law (*shari’a*) in the twelve northern Nigerian states since 1999 was deemed insufficient by

³ See John Campbell, *Nigeria: Dancing on the Brink* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2011).

⁴ This interpretation is disputed in a learned paper by Paul Newman, emeritus professor at Indiana University, who posits that a more nuanced understanding would translate the word *boko* as “inauthenticity or fraud,” a term which was only later applied pejoratively to British colonial policy of imposing secular schools on northern Nigeria in the early twentieth century. See Paul Newman, “The Etymology of Hausa *Boko*” (unpublished paper, Mega-Chad Research Network, School of Oriental and African Studies, 2013).

⁵ The group’s formal name is *Jama’atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda’awati Wal-Jihad* (“Congregation of the People of the Tradition [of the Prophet] for Proselytism and Jihad”); see Freedom C. Onuoha, “The Islamist Challenge: Nigeria’s Boko Haram Crisis Explained,” *African Security Review* 19, no. 1 (2010): 54-67.

⁶ Abimbola Adesoji, “The Boko Haram Uprising and Islamic Revivalism in Nigeria,” *African Spectrum* 45, no. 2 (2010): 100.

⁷ Joe Boyle, “Nigeria’s ‘Taliban’ Enigma,” BBC, July 31, 2009.

J. Peter Pham Prepared Statement at Hearing on “The Ongoing Struggle Against Boko Haram”

June 11, 2014

Mohammed Yusuf and his followers, who argued that the country’s ruling class as a whole was marred by corruption and even Muslim northern leaders were irredeemably tainted by “Western-style” ambitions. They envisaged a “pure” *shari’a* state would ostensibly be both more transparent and just than the existing order.

Nevertheless, an uneasy truce—punctured by occasional skirmishes with police and other local authorities with which Boko Haram was increasingly at odds—prevailed until June 2009, when an altercation during a funeral procession quickly escalated into a full-fledge riot during which security forces opened fire and more than a dozen people were injured. A month later, a police raid on a Boko Haram safe house in neighboring Bauchi State led to reprisal attacks on police and five days of subsequent rioting which spread across Bauchi, Kano, Yobe, and Borno. In response, security forces besieged and stormed the group’s mosque compound in Maiduguri. The violence finally petered out after Mohammed Yusuf was captured, beaten, interrogated, and finally shot—supposedly while attempting to escape—but not before more than 700 people were killed and numerous public buildings, including government offices, police stations, schools, and churches were destroyed. With most of its leaders as well as several prominent backers, including Buji Foi, the former Borno State religious affairs commissioners, dead, the group receded from public attention and a number of analysts even argued that it was hopelessly fractured, if not altogether finished.

Far from being dead, however, the group underwent a dramatic transformation, emerging in what might be described as its “version 2.0,” “version 1.0” being the period up to the death of Muhammad Yusuf and Boko Haram’s ostensible suppression. In retrospect, the first sign of this was a June 2010 Al Jazeera interview with Abu Musab Abdel Wadoud, a.k.a. Abdelmalek Droukdel, the emir of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). The head of al Qaeda’s North African franchise stated that his group would provide Boko Haram with weapons, training, and other support in order to expand its own reach into Sub-Saharan Africa in order not only to gain “strategic depth,” but also to “defend Muslims in Nigeria and stop the advance of a minority of Crusaders.”⁸ At the time, this claim was widely dismissed, both because Droukdel was known for outsized ambitions and because he was having difficulties with the more dynamic southern commanders within AQIM.⁹

Shortly afterward, Mohammed Yusuf’s former deputy, Abubakar bin Muhammad Shekau, who was thought to have been killed during the 2009 uprising, surfaced in a video that might be described as “classic al Qaeda.” Wearing a headdress and framed by an AK-47 and a stack of religious books, Shekau proclaimed himself the new head of Boko Haram and promised vengeance: “Do not think jihad is over. Rather jihad has just begun.”¹⁰ Significantly, he threatened attacks not only against the Nigerian state, but also against “outposts of Western

⁸ “Al Qaeda Makes Move on Troubled Nigeria,” UPI, June 17, 2010.

⁹ J. Peter Pham, “Foreign Influences and Shifting Horizons: The Ongoing Evolution of al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb,” *Orbis* 55, no. 2 (Spring 2011). See also J. Peter Pham, “The Dangerous ‘Pragmatism’ of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb,” *Journal of the Middle East and Africa* 2, no. 1 (January-June 2011).

¹⁰ Nick Tattersall and William Maclean, “Nigerian Sect Leader Praises al Qaeda, Warns U.S.,” Reuters, July 13, 2010.

J. Peter Pham Prepared Statement at Hearing on “The Ongoing Struggle Against Boko Haram”

June 11, 2014

culture.” In a published manifesto, Shekau linked the jihad being fought by Boko Haram with the jihadist efforts globally, especially that of “the soldiers of Allah in the Islamic State of Iraq.”

Two months later, in September 2010, Boko Haram fighters dramatically broke into a federal prison in Bauchi State and freed more than one hundred of their fellow members who had been awaiting trial since the previous year’s uprising. In the process of the assault, involving bombs and automatic weapons, the militants also let out more than 750 other prisoners and scattered leaflets warning of further violence.

The latter was not long delayed. On Christmas Eve 2010, the group set off a string of seven improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in Jos, Plateau State. The bombings, which targeted the town’s Christian communities, left 80 dead and scores of others wounded. The group subsequently carried out a number of other attacks—mainly small IEDs thrown from moving vehicles or planted near targets in Maiduguri and Bauchi—aimed primarily at candidates in the 2011 elections it had denounced.

The elections, considered by Islamist hardliners to be a forbidden “innovation” (*bid’ah*) imposed by the West, were already contentious in that a significant number of Muslims, especially in the Northeast, deeply resented the candidacy of President Goodluck Jonathan, a southern Christian who had succeeded President Umaru Musa Yar’Adua, a northern Muslim, after the latter’s unexpected death in 2010. The decision by Jonathan to seek a full term in his own right upset the informal compact within the ruling People’s Democratic Party whereby the presidency alternated every eight years between Christians, who dominate the southern part of the country, and Muslims who dominate the North.

Meanwhile, Boko Haram continued to target Muslim figures who opposed it, the mounting toll of victims including the brother of the Shehu of Borno, the traditional ruler of the Kanuri people of northeastern Nigeria, southeastern Niger, western Chad, and northern Cameroon; Ibrahim Ahmad Abdullahi Bolori, a prominent Maiduguri cleric who had criticized Boko Haram; and Ibrahim Birkuti, a cleric in southern Borno State who was also well-known for his criticisms of the sect.

On June 16, 2011, Boko Haram demonstrated a very significant and ominous tactical and operational upgrade in its capabilities when it launched a suicide attack using a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (VBIED). Believed to be the first suicide attack in Nigeria ever, the operation targeted the Inspector-General of the Nigerian Police Force (NPF), whose convoy the terrorist followed into the NPF headquarters compound in the federal capital of Abuja. Security was able to detain the suspect vehicle, but the explosion nevertheless killed two bystanders and was large enough to destroy several dozen police vehicles parked nearby. In fact, the incident showed that far from being a spent force, Boko Haram had adopted one of the deadliest instruments in the jihadist arsenal. Moreover, it also demonstrated that the militant group was capable of carrying out attacks far from its usual areas of operation.

J. Peter Pham Prepared Statement at Hearing on “The Ongoing Struggle Against Boko Haram”

June 11, 2014

Interestingly, just two days before the attack in Abuja, Boko Haram had issued a statement in which it boasted ominously for the first time of ties to jihadists in Somalia: “Very soon, we will wage jihad... our jihadists have arrived in Nigeria from Somalia where they received real training on warfare from our brethren who made that country ungovernable.”¹¹

Two months later, on August 26—after having spent the interim carrying out more than a half dozen smaller attacks on government officials, establishments that serve alcohol, and churches—Boko Haram carried out another major attack, sending a suicide bomber with an explosives-laden car into the UN offices in Abuja. Twenty-five people were killed and at least 80 were wounded. This attack, the first by the group against an international target, as well as the video it subsequently released of the bomber offering praise to slain al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden and referring to the UN as a “forum of all global evil,”¹² put it squarely in the ranks of terrorists who have specifically targeted UN agencies in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Algeria.

After the attack on the UN, there was little let up in the violence, which has included a number of complex operations, including the November 4, 2011, assault on Damaturu, capital of Yobe State, which involved suicide attacks on various police stations followed by the massacre in the Christian quarter of the city which left 150 people dead; the 2011 Christmas morning bombing outside the Catholic church in Madalla, near Abuja, which killed at least 32 people as they exited Mass, and the four other explosions that went off that day across Nigeria; and the coordinated January 20, 2012, attacks in Kano, Nigeria’s second-largest metropolis and the Muslim North’s economic, political, and cultural hub, which left more than 185 people dead. The attacks in Damaturu and Madalla are consistent with the ultimatum the group has issued demanding that Christians leave northern Nigeria.

The year 2012 proved to be another significant milestone in Boko Haram’s evolution. While foreign links were a critical part of Boko Haram’s ideological and operational shift from “version 1.0” to the far more lethal “version 2.0,”¹³ the takeover of northern Mali by various AQIM-linked Islamist militant groups at the end of March 2012 provided a whole new set of opportunities.

In fact, evidence has emerged that during the nearly ten months in which AQIM and its various allies—including Ansar Dine and the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO)—

¹¹ “Nigerian Islamists Vow ‘Fiercer’ Attacks,” AFP, June 15, 2011.

¹² “Nigeria UN Bomb: Video of ‘Boko Haram Bomber’ Released,” BBC, September 18, 2011.

¹³ In addition to the previously mentioned links between Boko Haram and AQIM, there is the case of the Chadian-born Mamman Nur, at one time the third highest-ranking figure in Boko Haram’s leadership behind Mohammed Yusuf and Abubakar Shekau, who, after Boko Haram members dispersed in the aftermath of the government crackdown in 2009, is believed to have gone to Somalia, where he and a small group of followers are thought to have received training in camps in territory controlled at that time by al-Shabaab and, presumably, forged links with various transnational jihadist networks before returning to Nigeria in early 2011. A January 2012 report by the United Nations noted that Boko Haram members had also received training in Mali the previous summer and that seven others were arrested in Niger with names and contact details of AQIM militants. See Adam Nossiter, “In Nigeria: A Deadly Group’s Rage Has Local Roots,” *New York Times*, February 26, 2012.

J. Peter Pham Prepared Statement at Hearing on “The Ongoing Struggle Against Boko Haram”

June 11, 2014

held sway over northern Mali,¹⁴ Boko Haram was able to set up a number of bases in the territory where hundreds of its recruits received ideological instruction, weapons and other training that subsequently raised the tactical sophistication and operational tempo of Boko Haram’s attacks in Nigeria, elevating the group to the level of a full-fledged insurgency. Following the French-led Operation Serval intervention in Mali, the Nigerian militants, possibly accompanied by a few foreign nationals they met during their sojourn there, returned to northern Nigeria not only with training and some combat experience in desert warfare, but also vehicles and heavy weapons, including shoulder-fired missiles. Within weeks, Boko Haram fighters were raiding military barracks for even more weapons, staging increasingly bold prison breaks, destroying numerous schools, hospitals, and other government buildings, engaging the Nigerian military in pitched open battles, and, in some cases, totally overrunning border towns. By the middle of 2013, the militants had effectively evicted Nigerian government troops and officials from at least ten local government areas along the borders of Niger, Chad, and Cameroon and set themselves up as the *de facto* authority in the region, replacing Nigerian flags with their own banner, taxing and otherwise ordering citizens about, and creating a large area within which they could operate with even greater impunity.¹⁵

The influence of foreign elements, especially AQIM, has also been witnessed in the proliferation of kidnappings-for-ransom in Nigeria—the abductions being almost a signature of AQIM over the years. The catalogue of kidnapping victims now have now come to include not only the schoolgirls from Chibok, but, previously, a French family of seven,¹⁶ subsequently freed after the payment of a ransom reported to be \$3 million and the release from Cameroonian prisons of some sixteen Boko Haram members¹⁷; a French priest, two Italian priests, and a Canadian nun, all of whom have likewise been freed; and, more recently, ten Chinese citizens abducted from a worksite in northern Cameroon last month and still missing.¹⁸

¹⁴ The Islamist forces were driven out—at least of the cities, towns, and other populated areas—by a French-led military beginning in January 2013.

¹⁵ See Yusuf Alli, “Tension as Boko Haram Grounds 10 LGs in Borno,” *The Nation*, April 20, 2013. The ten local government areas overrun at the time of this report—Marte, Magumeri, Mobbar, Gubio, Guzamala, Abadam, Kukawa, Kaga, Nganzai, and Monguno—have a combined area of nearly 33,500 square kilometers, slightly larger than that of the state of Maryland, and a population of some 1.5 million people. More than one year later, the militants still maintain sway over the territory.

¹⁶ It is worth noting that, in a video released one month after the abduction of the French family, Abubakar Shekau justified the kidnapping by saying, “We are holding them hostage because the leaders of Cameroon and Nigeria detained our women and children under inhumane conditions”; see Hamza Idris, “Why We Abducted French Nationals—Shekau,” *Daily Trust*, March 19, 2013. That Nigerian federal authorities subsequently released women and children it had detained, purportedly members of militants’ families, showed that the claim was not without basis; see Chuks Okocha, Yemi Akinsuyi, Michael Olugbode, and Aminu Mohammed, “Boko Haram Amnesty...Women, Children Detainees to be Released First, Says FG,” *This Day*, May 23, 2013.

¹⁷ “Nigeria’s Boko Haram ‘got \$3m ransom’ to free hostages,” BBC, April 26, 2013.

¹⁸ Another favorite AQIM tactic—one which the North African group’s *kata’ib* have used to deadly effect for years in Nigeria—is to dress up in stolen or purchased military uniforms and slaughter civilians. Boko Haram militants apparently used the tactic in several attacks on in the Gwoza district of Borno State last week which resulted in a death toll as high as 400 to 500 people.

Kidnapping for ransom—not only of higher-profile foreign nationals, but of hundreds, if not thousands, of Nigerians whose families have had to offer more modest payments, with most being reported to be in the order of \$10,000 to \$20,000, although more than \$250,000 has been paid for more prominent abductees¹⁹—represent only a part of the funding stream for Boko Haram that appears to be rather diversified. As previously noted, the group enjoyed a partnership with state and local politicians as recently as six or seven years ago and, thanks to well-placed members, appears to have benefited from public resources. There is reason to believe that even after the uprising and suppression of the group in 2009, some political actors funneled resources to it, albeit for a slightly different calculus than the earlier politicians with which Mohammed Yusuf partnered. Some cells have also been accused of carrying out bank robberies and other such, although the extent to which these crimes were committed by and for the benefit of Boko Haram as opposed to being criminal acts blamed on the group is the subject of some debate. The two key aspects to bear in mind are that Boko Haram has developed a very diversified and resilient model of supporting itself and that, as it increasingly takes on more and more of the character of an insurgency, it can essentially “live off the land” with very modest additional resources required—both factors rendering efforts to cut off its funding challenging. On the other hand, in a region where more than two-thirds of the population lives on less than one U.S. dollar a day, the funding, no matter how modest, can go very far. For example, it is widely known that Boko Haram leaders pay *al-majiri* youth²⁰ literally pennies a day to track and report on troop movements as well as to transport weapons and other supplies for the militants.

Thus emerged the Boko Haram that Nigeria, its neighbors, and the international community confront today, what might be termed “version 3.0.” In short:

- (1) Boko Haram has grown increasingly virulent since 2009, reflecting significant transformations in capacity, tactics, and ideology.
- (2) The group has expanded its links with al-Qaeda affiliates—although, *pace* some alarmists, Boko Haram is not so much an al-Qaeda affiliate as a “friend of a friend”—and possibly other violent non-state actors.

¹⁹ In May 2013, approximately \$320,000 was reportedly paid by the Borno State government to secure the release of onetime Nigerian oil minister Shettima Ali Monguno, an octogenarian who was kidnapped following prayers at his local mosque; see Ndahi Marama, “Kidnapped Monguno Regains Freedom after Payment of Ransom,” *Vanguard*, May 7, 2013. Monguno’s abduction was exceptional insofar as it broke with the generalized pattern whereby “virtually all the kidnapping victims were mid-level officials, or their relatives, who were not wealthy enough to have security details, but could afford modest ransoms”; see Jacob Zenn, “Boko Haram’s Evolving Tactics and Alliances in Nigeria,” *CTC Sentinel* 6, no. 6 (June 2013): 11.

²⁰ Derived from the Arabic for “migrants,” the term refers millions of boys in northern Nigeria who beg alms for their Islamic teachers in return for shelter and Quranic lessons.

J. Peter Pham Prepared Statement at Hearing on “The Ongoing Struggle Against Boko Haram”

June 11, 2014

- (3) The impact of Boko Haram’s violence has burgeoned in recent years to the extent that it is now estimated that it has displaced more than 300,000 people and affected millions of others.
- (4) In contrast to earlier periods, the group now appears not only capable, but willing to exercise control over not insignificant swathes of territory, metastasizing in the process into some closer to a classic guerrilla insurgency, in geopolitical effect if not in tactics or doctrine.
- (5) Support for Boko Haram—whether proactive, or tacit and based on a lack of enthusiasm for the government²¹—among some of Nigeria’s marginalized Muslim communities suggests that security measures alone will be insufficient to overcome what has become a regional challenge.

Confronting Boko Haram

A comprehensive strategy is required to respond to the burgeoning threat posed by Boko Haram, some elements of which would include:

Invest in better information and analysis. Despite the importance of Nigeria and the significance of the challenge it faces, what is actually known and reported is still amazingly limited. Some of the analysis in recent years could, at best, be described as wishful thinking (such as the frequently reported, but never confirmed, divisions within Boko Haram between those followers of the slain Mohammed Yusuf who want to focus on the transformation of Nigeria into their version of a *shari’a*-compliant state and those who believe that the state must first be brought down) or exaggerated (such as the fissure between Boko Haram and the *Jama’atu Ansarul Muslimina fi Biladis Sudan* splinter group, better known as “Ansaru”). And these differences in judgment reflect the opinion of only a handful of agencies and analysts, since very few bothered, until very recently, to even examine the group.

I would be remiss if I did not take this opportunity to again raise the issue of the lack of any American diplomatic presence in Nigeria north of Abuja, despite the fact that idea of a consular post in Kano has been kicked around for years. As former U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria John Campbell and I argued earlier this year, beefed up diplomatic capabilities would enable the United States to make friends and build networks precisely in case more robust future engagement in the region becomes necessary.²²

²¹ In fact, research by some human rights organizations seems to indicate that the heavy-handed tactics of Nigerian security forces—including extrajudicial killings of suspected militants or even ordinary citizens in communities attacked by Boko Haram, arbitrary and mass arrests followed by mistreatment of detainees held for long stretches without trial, and other abuses—have actually fueled Boko Haram’s campaign of violence. See, for example, the October 11, 2012, report by Human Rights Watch, *Spiraling Violence: Boko Haram Attacks and Security Force Violence in Nigeria*.

²² J. Peter Pham and John Campbell, *Does Washington Have a Stake in the Sahel?*, Council on Foreign Relations

J. Peter Pham Prepared Statement at Hearing on “The Ongoing Struggle Against Boko Haram”

June 11, 2014

Moreover, the Nigerian federal and state governments need to do more to build relationships with one another and with the local communities in and around which Boko Haram operates if they are to acquire the type of actionable intelligence needed to prevent future attacks—and the first step in forging those relationships is, as in any counterinsurgency, providing basic security to the civilian population. It should be noted, as the evidence from the Chibok kidnapping seems to sadly indicate, that the problem is not only lack of intelligence, although this is admittedly a significant challenge. There must also be a willingness to act on the information received. In Chibok, there seems to have been forewarning of the attack, if not necessarily all the information on the specific objectives of the assault, but state and local officials, for whatever reasons, failed to take appropriate measures to protect the town in general and the school in particular.

Encourage the Nigerian government to deal forthrightly with the threat. Over the years the somewhat lackadaisical attitude that senior Nigerian officials have taken toward Boko Haram has been perplexing given that the group has made no secret of its goal, however unrealistic, of bringing down the Nigerian state itself. Yet the late President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua left for a state visit to Brazil right in the middle of the 2009 uprising and, only upon his return, set up a commission of inquiry. There are troubling indications—including Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan's failure nearly two months after the kidnapping of the girls to yet visit the scene of the crime and this past week's half-hour-long interview with Stephen Sackur on BBC's “Hard Talk” by tin-eared presidential senior advisor Oyin Okupe—that lack of engagement is still a problem.

It should also be noted that not only has the Nigerian military been largely ineffectual in its efforts to contain—much less, crush—the burgeoning insurgency, the very military unit now spearheading the fight against Boko Haram after the much-criticized Joint Task Force was disbanded last year, the Nigerian army's 7th Division, is so dysfunctional that just last month its soldiers opened fire on their commanding general.²³ Consequently the officer in question was removed and the division got its fourth commander since the beginning of the year—a turnover rate that hardly conducive to strategic and operational continuity.

Worse still have been instances of actual complicity with the militants. President Jonathan has even acknowledged that the militants have sympathizers or enablers throughout the government, “some of them are in the executive arm of government, some of them are in the parliamentary/legislative arm of government, while some of them are even in the judiciary.”²⁴

Expert Brief, January 14, 2014.

²³ In just one incident involving the 7th Division, an attempt in March 2014 by Boko Haram to free prisoners being kept by the military unit at the Giwa Barracks in Maiduguri, resulted in more than five hundred people, including attackers, detainees (Boko Haram and otherwise), and innocent bystanders being killed by soldiers. See Amnesty International, *Nigeria: More than 1,500 Killed in Armed Conflict in North-Eastern Nigeria in Early 2014*, March 31, 2014/

²⁴ “Nigeria's Goodluck Jonathan: Officials Back Boko Haram,” BBC, January 8, 2012.

J. Peter Pham Prepared Statement at Hearing on “The Ongoing Struggle Against Boko Haram”

June 11, 2014

The motivations behind this complicity are, undoubtedly, complex and run the gamut from political opportunism and/or cynicism to corruption to social, ethnic, and perhaps even familial ties to the militants to, perhaps most concerning of all, ideological sympathy with Boko Haram’s extremist agenda.

While one is encouraged by reports in recent days that some fifteen senior Nigerian military officers, including ten generals, were under arrest for allegedly helping Boko Haram by giving information on troop movements, allowing soldiers under their command to fight with the militants, and even supplying arms to the extremists, that such officers may exist at all is unsettling.²⁵

In any event, if the escalating scale of the attacks failed to shake the Nigerian government out of its seeming complacency, the global social-media phenomenon of the #BringBackOurGirls campaign may have done the trick, not only raising awareness of the plight of the schoolgirls, but in focusing much-needed attention on the burgeoning threat posed by the Islamist group and shaming authorities in Nigeria into asking for the help they have long needed. Of course, it remains to be seen whether this attitude reverts to the previous “default position” once the news cycle shifts anew.

Address Legitimate Grievances. At the same time, confronting Boko Haram will require that the government carefully measure its response. Ham-fisted security operations like the “Operation Flush” security sweeps in the northern part of the country have succeeded in little except to further inflame public opinion against the government. The government must also better address the many legitimate grievances which have rendered meaningful segments of the population in the North amenable to the militant group’s message about overturning the status quo in Nigeria. Frustrations with living conditions are particularly keenly felt in northern Nigeria, where the proportion of the population living below the poverty level is between two and three times the rate in the South. Dramatic action is needed to end corruption, build a more inclusive government, alleviate poverty and lack of access to healthcare, expand access to education, and create a transportation, utilities, and communications infrastructure capable of sustaining economic growth for Nigeria’s nearly 180 million people.

Promote specialized training for Nigerian security forces. Undoubtedly the Nigerian security forces, both military and police, could use some assistance in the fight against Boko Haram. However, the need is less a matter of personnel and equipment than training, especially in intelligence and investigations. With a defense budget of approximately \$6 billion, Nigeria does not want for material resources, although corruption and lack of maintenance both take their toll: one of the reasons the United States recently had to deploy an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) to Chad to overfly northern Nigeria looking for the schoolgirls is because none of the Aerostar tactical drones the West African country purchased for millions of dollars from Israel

²⁵ Robert Marquand, “Nigeria Has Arrested 10 Generals for Aiding Boko Haram,” *Christian Science Monitor*, June 4, 2014.

J. Peter Pham Prepared Statement at Hearing on "The Ongoing Struggle Against Boko Haram"

June 11, 2014

several years ago are currently operational for want of basic upkeep.²⁶

Due caution should be exercised to maintain the lightest possible international footprint lest this support itself become an issue that militants can exploit—to say nothing of other risks, legal and strategic, in foreign partners being themselves tainted by, if not altogether rendered complicit in, the rather poor human rights record of the large segments of the Nigerian military. The State Department's human rights report for Nigeria last year, to cite just one document, while acknowledging that "the most serious human rights abuses during the year were those committed by Boko Haram, also makes note of a number of "arbitrary or unlawful killings" by Nigerian security forces and is quite critical of what it describes as "summary executions, assaults, torture, and other abuses" which have characterized their operations against Boko Haram. It should be noted that, despite persistent and well-documented reports of human rights violations over the last few years, the Nigerian authorities have yet to muster the political will to seriously investigate the allegations, much less bring perpetrators to justice.

That being said, tailored efforts that meet current vetting requirements can help Nigerian forces strengthen their civil-military affairs capabilities to facilitate interactions between military forces and civilians, especially in the North. We know how to carefully vet potential military personnel for training even under the most difficult of circumstances, as my Atlantic Council Africa Center colleague Sean McFate both demonstrated in the security-sector reform of Liberia a decade ago in the wake of a civil war that took the lives of nearly a tenth of the population and recounted in his study last year for the U.S. Army War College.²⁷ The question is whether we have the strategic vision, patience, and commitment to do so. One presumes that the new 650-man Ranger Battalion that U.S. Army Africa (USARAF) has begun training meets the requisite standards and hopes that its record over time will reflect the benefits not only of the tactical and operation training, but the ethos which America's men and women in uniform bring to their calling.

Strengthen regional cooperation and the capacity of neighboring countries. Boko Haram has used Nigeria's porous borders and the limited capacities of neighboring countries to its advantage. Regional efforts, such as the United States' sponsored Trans-Sahara Counter-Terrorism Partnership (TSCTP) that supports small mobile training teams, civil-military engagements, and development programming should be specifically adapted to the challenges posed by shifting Boko Haram operations. Greater cooperation and intelligence sharing between states in the region need to be encouraged and facilitated by international partners. In this regard, the regional summit in Paris last month is a step in the right direction.

It should also be borne in mind that threat of Boko Haram is both heightened by and, in turn, magnifies the significance of other jihadist activities in the Sahel, including the situation in northern Mali, which has worsened in recent weeks, and the resurgence of Mokhtar

²⁶ "Nigeria's Neglected Israeli Drones Can't Help Find Missing Girls," *Ha'aretz*, May 20, 2014.

²⁷ Sean McFate, *Building Better Armies: An Insider's Account of Liberia* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, 2013).

J. Peter Pham Prepared Statement at Hearing on “The Ongoing Struggle Against Boko Haram”

June 11, 2014

Belmokhtar’s AQIM splinter group and its merger with MUJAO as *al-Murabitun* (“the sentinels”) and the new group’s activities in some of Nigeria’s West African neighbors, many of whom have exceptionally limited military and law enforcement capability to secure their borders or respond to extremist threats, even if their leaders do not necessarily labor under the dysfunctional politics bedeviling their Nigerian counterparts. In point of fact, some neighbors—I would single out Niger²⁸—have demonstrated not only strong political will to battle militants, but also to forthrightly confront internal conditions which would otherwise be exploited by them. The United States has worked with several of these partners through programs such as the TSCPT and should continue to do so, expanding it as need arises and circumstances permit (as was the case with Cameroon’s joining earlier this year).

Conclusion

Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Bass, Distinguished Members of the Subcommittee:

With all this in mind, permit me to conclude by citing the prudent norm embraced by President Obama in the 2012 *U.S. Strategy toward Sub-Saharan Africa*: “Addressing the opportunities and challenges in Africa requires a comprehensive U.S. policy that is proactive, forward-looking, and that balances our long-term interests with near-term imperatives.”

In the current situation, the desire to bring as fast as possible the trauma of the kidnapped girls to a happy end and, if possible, their abductors to justice, is understandable. However, we should be forthright in acknowledging that current strategic and budgetary constraints limit U.S. resources available for commitments abroad in general and Africa in particular, and policymakers consequently need to carefully husband resources, prioritize engagements, and rely on complicated (and often messy) compromises in order to resolve conflicts and secure outcomes America can live with. While up to now there is no conflict between the “action” demanded by social-media campaigners and other activists and the broader regional interests of the United States, the virtues of prudent statecraft are inherently in tension with the black-and-white, awareness-raising ethos of impassioned advocacy. The measured response of the administration, especially the steps taken by components of the Department of Defense acting under the National Command Authority, has so far been appropriate to the strategic and operational realities on the ground. But what next?

While nothing justifies the outrageous kidnapping of the Nigerian schoolgirls and every realistic effort should be expended to secure their freedom, there is no denying that a complex web of legitimate political, economic, and social grievances have rendered significant segments of the population in northern Nigeria amenable to Boko Haram’s radical message, if not the militants’

²⁸ See J. Peter Pham, “Niger Needs More than Drones,” *New Atlanticist*, February 25, 2013. Over the years, Niger has arrested a number of Boko Haram militants who crossed over its border, leading to a June 2013 prison break by the group to free its members. As recently as early May, a Nigerien military unit was ambushed by Boko Haram militants near the southeastern city of Diffa, not far from where the U.S.-led “Flintlock 2014” regional military exercise was conducted less than two months earlier.

J. Peter Pham Prepared Statement at Hearing on “The Ongoing Struggle Against Boko Haram”**June 11, 2014**

methods. Until the profound pathologies which beset the body politic and institutions of Africa’s most populous and wealthiest country are addressed, it is well-nigh inevitable that the tragedy of the Chibok schoolgirls will, sadly, be repeated many times over.²⁹

Consequently, as the strategy document noted, we must balance our near-term objectives with a policy approach that is sustainable over the long term and that requires not only resolve and patience, but also a commitment to be comprehensive of all the factors involved and to embrace all the values—legal and ethical, American and universal—which are at stake in this struggle.

²⁹ Just two days ago, suspected Boko Haram militants kidnapped twenty women from a nomadic settlement at Garkin Fulani, not far from Chibok, forcing the women to get into trucks that took them to an unknown location. See Haruna Umar, “Boko Haram Suspected as 20 Women Abducted in Northeastern Nigeria,” Associated Press, June 9, 2014.

Mr. SMITH. And Mr. Ogebe.

**STATEMENT OF MR. EMMANUEL OGEBE, MANAGER, JUSTICE
FOR JOS PROJECT, JUBILEE CAMPAIGN USA**

Mr. OGEBE. Yes. Thank you very much, Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Bass, and distinguished Congressmen. I thank you kindly for once again giving me the opportunity to engage with you on the topic that currently agitates the conscience and the consciousness of many on our globe today.

I want to share with you some of the perspectives from our recent visits to Nigeria, and I would ask your indulgence that my full statement be submitted for the record.

May I say, sir, that it took the U.S. 25 months after first two Americans were attacked by Boko Haram before the designation of Boko Haram as an FTO occurred. It took the UK 16 months, after the first British citizen was killed, before the UK designated them, and it took the U.N. 33 months after the bombing of the U.N. headquarters in Abuja before they imposed sanctions on Boko Haram, and on June 2, the EU finally designated Boko Haram a terror group even though the first European citizen was killed 25 months earlier.

So this shows there has been a systematic pardon by the international community to drag their foot on a group that is now recognized to be the second deadliest terror group in the world after the Taliban.

May I just say that one of the things we noticed on my recent trip to Nigeria last week is that when I was in Nigeria in April, the average deaths a week were approximately 100. In the 4 days we were in Nigeria last week, the average was 100 a day, and so the world is unanimously against Boko Haram, but Boko Haram is still horridly against the world.

May I go on to say with regard to—I have six points here with regard to the status of Boko Haram's activities, but I will only mention two. One of them is the elevated gender-based violence. And that, of course, we have seen with the abduction of the women, but in addition to the abductions, this week we had, for the very first time, a report of a female suicide bomber, so Boko Haram is continuing to evolve its tactics and its horrors.

The point number 5 here I will skip to is increased global Jihad ties, and this is important. A British radicalized Nigerian citizen has been implicated in the bombing in Abuja that took almost 100 lives. Now, why this is important is that we have only seen three British radicalized Nigerian terrorists undertake attacks.

The first attack was against the United States of America when the underpants bomber tried to blow up a Delta plane. The second attack was last year when a British radicalized Nigerian beheaded a British soldier on the street, and then the third one was in April when they attacked a bus station in Nigeria. What this tells us is that Britain is becoming a source destination and transit country for terrorists who want to attack in Syria as well as in Nigeria, and this, I suppose, validates the fact that global terror is working hand in hand to undermine global security.

Now, if I may go ahead, I would want to talk about Nigeria's response to the insurgency, and I want to point out, as my colleague

already has, that, you know, Nigeria's multi-million-dollar CCTV cameras and Nigeria's satellite have dropped out of the sky, so there are so many aspects of the dysfunction and inefficiencies in the system that complicates the threat metrics in Nigeria.

I would want to point to point number 4 here where I talk about inadequate victim relief and psychosocial support. We met with parents of missing kids, and one of them told us how at least two parents that he knows have died from the sheer trauma of the not knowing what has happened to their kids. This is just the horror that keeps on giving, if one may use that expression.

One of my concerns in trying to work with Nigerian Government leaders, especially those working refugee issues on why they have not been able to repatriate or assist IDPs was that all of that is under the national security advisor, and I would think that something as critical as care for citizens and displaced people would not be the forte of the NSA. The NSA has a lot of issues on his hands, and so Nigeria has this unwieldy bureaucracy that makes it not effective.

Maybe I should touch on point number 5 with regard to dwindling troop morale. We have heard, of course, of the mutiny that occurred. There was reports yesterday about possible defections to Boko Haram, but it is easy to see that all is not well in the military establishment in Nigeria.

I have a sub-header here on the international response, and particularly with regard to the U.S. Our findings indicate that the offices in the U.S. Embassy that should liaise with the Nigerian authorities on some of this critical issues are overstretched and understaffed. One of the diplomats expressed that they were sent out of Nigeria to a neighboring country at a critical stage in the investigations concerning the missing girls, and so that has, of course, been a concern for the folks at the Embassy who want to work on these issues.

Similarly, I am aware that some years ago, the Treasury office that was located in our consulate in Lagos which is responsible for tracking financial crimes and transfers and things of that nature, was, for some reason, moved to South Africa, and so you begin to wonder, where are the resources to implement the FTO and to—and to trace terror financing, which is badly needed.

I would like to skip, if I may, to point number 3 in my statements, and I am talking here about the competitive disadvantage the United States has with regard to the area surveillance they are currently undertaking in Northern Nigeria in the hope of finding the girls. The problem with this is that this is an hour late and a dollar short because what has happened is that Boko Haram began aerial evasion techniques 1½ years ago when they were in northern Mali. They were already conducting drills to evade drones, and so when we come in 1½ years later, they are at least 1½ years ahead of us in that strategy.

I would like to draw attention to another, I think for me, the most unsettling point here, which is poor intelligence. We met last week with one of the escaped girls, one of the Chibok girls who escaped from the terrorists, and to our shock and consternation, she had not been interviewed by the Nigerian police, she had not been interviewed by the Nigerian Army, and so the impression we have

is that for some reason, 2 months after their abduction, the investigations have not been going very well if this key witness has not been interviewed by anyone.

I think it was particularly unsettling that it would take an American NGO and an American Congressman to find out the facts of what happened to her. And several pieces of information she gave us last week are not even in the public domain, and so I am concerned that the multi-disciplinary force that the U.S. sent in has not been effectively able to work with the Fusion Centers in Nigeria to show them the basic groups of how to conduct a missing person investigation.

I have several recommendations here, and I am going to just probably work on two. The first is the U.S. needs to provide technical assistance to Nigeria to set up a victim compensation fund similar to what we had for 9/11. There does not seem to be a sense of urgency on the Nigerian side to provide relief and systematic assistance to victims of this atrocity, and the United States needs to encourage Nigeria to do that and share with them the model that was used very effectively after 9/11. But let me say here that in addition to sharing with Nigeria that model, the United States has the ability to fund such a victim relief or compensation fund, not by using taxpayers' money, but by releasing Nigerian funds that have been frozen in the United States or have been subject to asset forfeiture. We think that this is one way to get the Nigerian Government not only to do what is right, but to do it in a transparent manner that directly benefits citizens that have been impacted by this situation.

I want to give kudos, if I may, to the State Department. This year they decided to start funding child terror camps for children who survive terror and they come to the U.S. to a 9/11 camp and get trauma care, and so this is a notable action by the State Department that we would like to applaud.

Let me maybe throw a challenge now to many Americans, including the American Congresswoman and American Ambassadors who have actually gone to school in Nigeria and say that this is a time to stand with this country to ensure that there is not a rollback of education.

So I am prepared to wrap up my remarks. I want to maybe point out that one of the real concerns for us with regard to the battle against Boko Haram is the fact that the United States, State Department in particular, has continued not to be very frank and truthful about the threats, the goals of the organizations, their objectives, and so on and so forth. I was particularly concerned to read Ambassador Carson saying a couple of weeks ago that Boko Haram does not present a threat to the United States of America today. Let me point out beyond any doubt that not only has Boko Haram remained a threat to the U.S., it has attacked four American citizens that I know of. It has attacked an American diplomat working with United Nations, it has attacked an American diplomat working at the American Embassy in Abuja, and it has attacked two American charity workers working in northern Nigeria. It beats me why the State Department has not acknowledged that still to date.

As I wrap up, I do want to point out that the release and the prisoner swap with Sergeant Bergdahl could potentially have a negative impact on the ability of the Nigerian Government to negotiate with the terrorists to free the girls. I think that it presents itself as a victory to the Taliban, and as a result, Boko Haram may decide that, you know, we want the bigger stakes to be able to release the girls. I, therefore, would encourage the U.S. to consider the global ramifications of its dealings with terrorists in that nature before they take them, because the danger now is that American citizens might become human bitcoins for terror trades around the globe because the terrorists obviously are in constant touch and in constant leakages around the world.

And so these are some of the few quick points I wanted to make, and I wanted to again thank you very much for the opportunity to share some of this thoughts with you, and I commend your courage and your lead in taking this up this issue at a time when no one was paying attention. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Ogebe follows:]

**Congressional Testimony of Emmanuel Ogebe
Special Counsel, Justice for Jos Project
Jubilee Campaign
www.jubileecampaign.org**

THE ONGOING STRUGGLE AGAINST BOKO HARAM

**Before the
Committee on Foreign Affairs
Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and
International Organizations
United States House of Representatives
June 11, 2014**

Mr. Chairman, ranking member and distinguished congressmen and women, I thank you most kindly for once again giving me the opportunity to engage with you on a topic that currently agitates the conscience and consciousness of many on our globe today.

I. ABDUCTED CHIBOK CHILDREN: A TURNING POINT?

Global outrage has finally attended the atrocities unleashed by the terrorist group Boko Haram years after you took the lead in alerting the world about these alarming killers but it appears that the hashtag twitter campaigns have been more robust than any actual domestic or multilateral action in Nigeria to truly bring back the girls. Prior to the Chibok schoolgirl abductions, much of the international response was inattention and inaction, now it is attention but inadequate action.

It took the US twenty-five months after the first two American's were attacked and one year after the third and fourth Americans were targeted before Boko Haram was designated a Foreign Terrorist Organization.

It took the UK sixteen months from the time its first citizen was killed by Boko Haram to legally brand them terrorists.

It took the UN thirty three months after the UN HQ in Nigeria was bombed before Boko Haram was sanctioned as an Al-Qaida-linked terror group.

On June 2, 2014, the EU finally designated Boko Haram a terror group. This was about twenty-five months after the first European hostages were killed by Boko Haram.

During my visit to Nigeria in April, the average deaths were a hundred per week; in my 4-day visit last week, it was an average of one hundred deaths a day. Almost triple the number of missing girls have been killed by Boko Haram in the eight weeks since the kidnappings. The world may solidly against Boko Haram but Boko Haram is still horridly against the world.

II. SITUATION REPORT

I would like to highlight a few notable trends and findings from our recent fact-finding visits:

A. THE STATE OF BOKO HARAM'S INSURGENCY

1. GEO-REGIONAL EXPANSION OF CONFLICT

The insecurity and ferocity of the insurgency has seen a resurgence and is spreading southward to the capital Abuja and east to the neighboring country of Cameroon. In the 8 weeks under review, there have been bombings in the northwest, north central and federal capital area outside of the traditional northeastern conflict epicenter.

2. SERIAL ATTACKS ON VICTIMS

Existing victims are being re-traumatized by the inadequate response of the Nigerian government and the international community. Those who did not flee the area as refugees

or IDPs have been subjected to second and third waves of Boko Haram's further atrocities.

3. ELEVATED GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

The terrorists have escalated their gender-based targeting of women. In the last eight months, we were involved in the relocation and rehabilitation of four slave-brides fleeing Boko Haram captivity. With the recent abductions of almost three hundred Chibok girls, Boko Haram has made it clear that they are now targeting females.

4. ESCALATED SCORCHED EARTH STRATEGY

Boko Haram continues to ravage Northern Nigeria, killing over 1000 people in 8 weeks. The terrorists are bolder and more diabolical than ever and have completely overrun several borderline rural communities. Indeed, swathes of Borno state are now virtually ungovernable and government operations have been shut down whilst the terrorists often install their flags instead.

5. INCREASED GLOBAL JIHADI TIES

A British-radicalized Nigerian, the suspected mastermind of the April bus park bombings, had once been arrested by Nigerian security agents before he was released on bond. This was the first known British-radicalized Nigerian Islamist to strike in Nigeria. The first known British-radicalized jihadist was the underpants bomber who struck on a US plane at Christmas 2009. The next were the cleaver murderers who beheaded a British soldier in 2013 and now this bus station bomber on April 14, 2014. Also, British media links the so-called British "Black Widow" terrorists to the April Abuja bombings.

The UK is therefore now a source, transit and destination country for jihadists going to Africa, America, Europe and the mid-east. Not only do terrorists transit from UK via Turkey to fight in Syria, but arms from Turkey and jihadists from the UK are now finding their way into Nigeria as well. More needs to be done in the UK-Turkey terror transit corridor to curtail the foreign fighter and arms influx in the global jihad supply chain.

6. INCREASED REGIONAL FOREIGN FIGHTERS

While Boko Haram has historically had foreign members in its midst, the new trend is to recruit young boys from neighboring countries such as Niger to beef up their numbers during raids and attacks. These foreign fighters, unlike their predecessors, are not ideologues or doctrinal jihadists per se. They are generally hired guns and non-immigrants who return to their home countries and view this more as contract-killing.

B. NIGERIA'S RESPONSE TO THE INSURGENCY

1. LACK OF POPULATION MANAGEMENT DATA BACKBONE:

Nigeria lacks rudimentary systems and structures for demographic management. In Nigeria, there is no functional phone or vehicle registration system, nor comprehensive personal identification or licensing infrastructures. These systemic failures allow terrorists to blend in with civilians, breeze past checkpoints, and continue pillaging with ease. Corruption is not the reason Boko Haram is fighting Nigeria, but corruption is

partly the reason Nigeria has been unable to fight off Boko Haram. Nigeria's satellite dropped from the skies in 2008, its much touted multi-million dollar CCTV system, is moribund and its aerial drones are grounded.

2. DIVERSION OF MILITARY ASSETS:

Nigeria has reportedly mobilized even customs officials to the northeast to help with the counter-insurgency. Concurrently, significant military and police resources are being utilized for political campaigns and other activities such as the huge security deployments for the World Economic Forum at the peak of the missing girls' saga. This detracts from what should be the main mission: searching for the girls and protecting Nigerian citizens. Ironically, last week the Nigerian government launched an offensive against the media—protesters and even opposition rallies—further diverting from the real enemy.

In what is arguably a losing strategy, the army launched a recruitment effort where applicants are required to pay for the opportunity to be enlisted and deployed to combat the terrorists. Even if this marketing strategy were effective, the learning curve for the new recruits is too steep and would take too long to resolve the insurgency any time soon.

3. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

The Nigerian army has built boreholes and conducted development projects in the northeast to win hearts and minds. Boko Haram has reportedly come and destroyed those projects thus undermining the government's ability to better engage with the community.

4. INADEQUATE VICTIM RELIEF AND PSYCHO-SOCIAL SUPPORT:

Nigerian aid to victims and victims' families is scarce. At least one escaped Chibok school girl we met had not received proper medical assistance for her injuries sustained while fleeing, mostly because she lacked personal resources to pay for treatment. Media reports say that some parents have even died from the stress caused by the abduction and the sheer hopelessness of the situation.

5. DECREASING TROOP MORALE:

There continues to be break downs in the chain of command. Mutiny and general discontent amongst the ranks of the Nigerian security forces have led to several very public incidences.

C. THE INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

1. INADEQUATE RESIDENT DIPLOMATIC AND DEFENCE RESOURCES

Although the United States has sent Nigeria law enforcement help, the United States' response has been similarly inadequate. Existing U.S. bilateral security and intelligence cooperation assets are overstretched and understaffed. At this critical point of investigation when the girls were still newly missing, resident US assets were reportedly deployed outside Nigeria to other missions instead of prioritizing on this situation.

Similarly, a Treasury-affiliated office which is critical to financial crimes and terror funds tracing was relocated from the Lagos consulate to South Africa many years ago. It is unclear if there are plans to bring it back to help implement FTO and SDGT sanctions.

It is interesting that the US response to Al-shabab's horrific attack on a Kenyan mall last year was to send Special Forces to take out the mastermind. Yet, Boko Haram is an admitted affiliate of Al-shabab and has perpetrated similar atrocities, such as sorting out Christians from Muslims and beheading them on the highways in last September's horrific Benesheikh chainsaw massacres.

If the argument could be made that American action was predicated on Kenya's East African regional security role in Somalia and Sudan why would American action be so tentative given Nigeria's global security role in Sierra Leone, Sudan, Somalia, Congo, Bosnia, Rwanda, Haiti and Liberia (America's sole African love child.) When America would not put boots on the ground in the one African nation co-founded by Americans, Nigeria did so at a cost of billions of dollars and Nigerian soldiers' lives. Nigeria's military engagement in Liberia is the longest-running commitment in the nation's history. The point here is not that there should be American boots on the ground. It is simply that Nigerian boots have been on the ground for America numerous times over the years so choosing to help Nigeria, in whatever shape, size or form, should not be such a struggle. A strategic ally deserves better.

2. MISPLACEMENT OF MILITARY RESOURCES

The US troop deployment to Chad is somewhat puzzling as it does not appear to be part of a definite strategy. Boko Haram is clearly active in Cameroun, but not very active in Chad. Northern Nigeria is vast enough without throwing Chad into the mix. The deployment smacks of a political half-measure that is more aesthetic than effective. It soothes the populist push for action while appeasing some Nigerian Muslim clerics who have warned about the effects of American troops in Nigeria. Chad is more Muslim than Nigeria so this speaks volumes as to their sensitivities compared to northern Nigeria's.

3. COMPETITIVE DISADVANTAGE

America's aerial surveillance of northern Nigeria is of suspect efficacy. Boko Haram is light years ahead of this technology. The press reported that last year, Boko Haram's training camps in Mali engaged in drone evasion drills and techniques.

4. MISGUIDED PRIORITIES

The United Nations is behind on humanitarian assistance to victims. Rather than prioritizing victim assistance, the United Nations is spending scandalous sums of money "documenting human rights abuses." Atrocities have already been well-documented by human rights groups and the media. What the world needs is a solution, not another document. Yet, the U.N. is reinventing the wheel instead of addressing the obvious needs of victims.

5. INADEQUATE REFUGEE SUPPORT

The Nigerian, American, and international humanitarian response has been less than adequate. Refugees are still fleeing and there is inadequate provision for this

humanitarian crisis. The state of emergency, first declared in May 2012, resulted in a major population displacement. These refugees are simply trying to stay out of Boko Haram's way by either fleeing south or across international borders. Relief agencies complain of inaccessibility or non-responsiveness from UNHCR officials while UNHCR complains of insufficient resources to cater for the refugees.

6. POOR DOMESTIC AID

U.S. and EU diplomats and aid agencies continue to insist that it is impossible to deliver humanitarian assistance because of the intense conflict. Even yet, they neglect the local relief organizations, FBOs, CBOs, and NGOs who constantly risk their lives to save others.

7. POOR INTELLIGENCE

Our team met families from the attacked school. However, in speaking with one of the escaped Chibok school girls, no one had interviewed her—not the police, not the army, and not the intelligence people. She had only spoken to her school principal, her church members and the district head. This is a gap that the multi-disciplinary, multi-lateral assistance team should have brought up with their Nigerian counterparts.

There is something instinctively wrong with the notion that a critical first-hand witness was first interviewed by an American charity and a congressman than by a joint intelligence team from her own nation.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. INTERNATIONAL

The following are a few recommendations for a proper international response to the situation:

1. The satellite surveillance systems should be enhanced with all available technology in order to detect Boko Haram movement. Intelligence cooperation and tactical support should be rapidly deployed to assist in finding the girls. The United States, as a world leader with huge technical capabilities, should upgrade its intelligence and tactical support to Nigeria—a key African ally.
2. The international community should increase overall humanitarian assistance. Currently, there are scant signs of international humanitarian assistance.

The U.N. should scale up its humanitarian efforts by reimbursing terrorism victims the \$30 million the Nigerian government spent to repair the U.N. headquarters in Abuja after its bombing by Boko Haram in 2011. This U.N. headquarters repair project deprives Nigeria's poorest victims of terrorism, vital resources needed for critical surgery, physiotherapy, and rehabilitation and yet benefits the world's largest international bureaucracy with new office buildings.

In terms of humanitarian assistance from the United States, the Department of Justice ("DOJ") should apply Nigerian funds confiscated under asset forfeiture towards humanitarian relief. The Department of Justice's Kleptocracy project has recovered

millions of dollars stolen from Nigeria. These funds need to be injected back into Nigeria to help the neediest victims, as well as to build up security and law enforcement to contain the insurgency. The DOJ has half a billion dollars in assets frozen from the late Nigerian dictator's looted stash. These funds could significantly reconfigure Nigeria's non-existent national security and social security infrastructure. Further, the Security and Exchange Commission ("SEC") should apply the millions of dollars in fines levied on American companies sanctioned for corrupt practices in Nigeria to victim assistance and anti-terrorism capacity building.

3. All involved parties should stop appeasing Boko Haram with a so-called "soft approach." A soft approach is giving in to terror and undermining the rule of law in our civilization. Hundreds of years of history have confirmed that appeasement seldom stops radicals who desire to overtake society. Boko Haram needs to be stopped on the short-term while other programmatic interventions are developed longer-term. This includes finding insurgents, jailing them, and putting them through the judicial processes without interference.
4. Currently, the U.N. has designated Boko Haram an Al-Qaida affiliate and has imposed a series of sanctions. As proven by the United States dilly-dallying over designation, inaction has achieved nothing if not more deaths. The UN should aggressively implement immediate sanctions, and cripple Boko Haram's ability to operate. The U.N. Security Council recently condemned Boko Haram's actions and threatened to take action. Thus, the U.N. Security Council should refer Boko Haram to the International Criminal Court for investigation and prosecution on crimes against humanity charges under the Rome Statute. As a world leader, the US can champion these initiatives at the U.N.

The FTO sanction should be aggressively implemented to target movement of cash and weapons. For instance, Turkish Airlines was recently reported as having been used to ferry weapons into Nigeria. The international community and U.S. should fully investigate this with a view to imposing sanctions where necessary.

5. The US should expand its YES project aimed at bringing eligible children from around the world for a one year study in the US program to include child victims of education-based terrorism. YES has evolved in Nigeria over the years but there is need to include an expansion to accommodate child victims of terrorism.
6. The US State Department has just this year begun funding child survivors of terrorism summer therapy camps in collaboration with a 911 charity. This is highly commendable and should be maintained.
7. Over one hundred UK and Canadian higher institutions aggressively recruit for international students in Nigeria. These international students help subsidize the cost of education for British kids to attend university. These countries should consider providing scholarships for northern Nigerian students who are highly under-represented in the international student enrollment.
8. The US can train exceptional candidates selected from across the Nigerian police, military, immigration, customs, and other paramilitary agencies to create a Special Elite

Force or SEALs to be able to handle hostage rescue and counter-insurgency operations. This could circumvent the Leahy amendment's restrictions while shortening the learning curve for candidates who have basic training.

9. The US Binational Commission should follow through with its commitment to integrate NGOs into its dialogues. Groups like ours who have extensive knowledge and networks within the country can help guide and better inform the consultative processes on how best to help.
10. Nigerian Americans are the most educated group in the US as the Houston Chronicle reported a couple of years ago. The US should consider expanding international study opportunities access for Nigerian students from the vulnerable zones especially since the US recently delisted Nigeria from the visa lottery program.
11. Many prominent Americans including congresswomen, US ambassadors, distinguished academics amongst others studied in Nigeria years ago and it is time to give back to Nigeria during this unspeakable assault on its educational system. Dr Elizabeth Wallace, the first African American Ph.D holder Aberdeen Mississippi (Shivers High School Class of '63) had her studies paid for by a Nigerian university. Today she has returned to Nigeria to build a school in the north.

B. NIGERIA

The following recommendations may be useful to the Nigerian government as far as a Human Impact Mitigation Planning and counterinsurgency response strategies are concerned.

1. First, schools in the vulnerable parts of northern Nigeria should be shut down and students relocated to more secure locations to continue their education. Parents and teachers should explore temporary home-based instruction using a combination of homeschooling, online and nomadic education concepts.

If the government could shut down schools for months simply to allow voter registration, there is no reason why they cannot be shut down to save children's lives. A state of emergency urgently needs to be declared in the education sector of the Terrorism-Prone Zones (TPZ).

2. The government should provide emergency scholarships and grants to existing institutions to help expand their absorptive capacity for student intake. This should include running multiple shifts—morning and afternoon—to ensure continuity of education for children evacuated from the TPZ.
3. A reasonable reward should be offered for each of the missing Chibok children. Their names and pictures splattered across the region in a global amber alert. Given reports that some of the girls have been given out for small dowries as little as N2000 (\$13) the government should be able to offer a N500,000 (\$3000) reward per child for their safe

return. Following Abu Shekau's threat to sell the girls, a buy-back program similar to what human rights groups did in Sudan should be contemplated.

4. A prisoner exchange offer should be made to Boko Haram for the return of the girls. If Nigeria could sign a prisoner exchange treaty with UK which has only one known citizen in custody compared to hundreds of Nigerians in UK jails, it would be well worth considering the release of a high value captive.
5. Border crossings in particular must impose a zero exit policy for young girls without proper parental certification. As I visited a UN refugee camp for Nigerians in Cameroun, two gendarmes were killed by Boko Haram. Cameroon immediately shut the borders. A similar policy should be implemented here.
7. Mandatory ID checks must be the order of the day for all travelers using any mode of transportation. There must be manifests obtained, filed and reviewed for every travel movement.
8. Hospitals should be given anticipatory approval to treat victims of attacks and the government must honor the financial obligations arising from these bills.

Ambulances, helicopters and special mobile casualty units should be mobilized and stationed in terrorism-prone zones to ensure rapid medical intervention after attacks.

9. Satellite and other surveillance apparatus should be utilized to detect nocturnal movements and preempt terrorist activity. Nigeria's Nigcomsat Company must be fully repositioned to maximize its operational capabilities for national security purposes.
10. A DNA and biometric ID and corresponding databank needs to be urgently established for improved evidence-based policing and forensic investigation.
11. All local government funds in the areas most affected should be channeled towards victim and IDP support. No actual governing is going on in many areas. Indeed, thousands of citizens have been displaced. Thus, the budgeted social services for them needs to be redirected to their current exigencies and emergencies.

The TPZs need the equivalent of a government-in-exile to adequately cater for those who are refugees abroad or IDPs in other states. At a UN refugee camp we visited, almost 3000 Nigerians were just being given food rations for the first time in 49 days. Yet Nigeria hosted the World Economic Forum at a cost of millions of dollars while citizens are starving in foreign lands.

Refugees say Emergency Management officials visited from Nigeria in November promising aid. They have not been seen since. Officials of Nigeria's refugee commission have not shown up. Nigeria needs to sign an IDP agreement with the UN to provide a bilateral assistance framework.

12. The larger population of the terror-prone zones should be relocated to safe locations and the exited area thoroughly combed to isolate the terrorists. This includes evacuating Sambisa forest of regular villagers, relocating and resettling them in newly established towns, and completely isolating the Sambisa forest to ensure the terrorists are cordoned off. The same applies to Gwoza hills where the terrorists must be uprooted or hemmed into the caves and crevices. This method will reconfigure the combat into symmetrical warfare rather than urban guerrilla warfare amidst vulnerable civilian populations.
13. The government of Nigeria needs to return all schools confiscated from missions and private owners to enable them be properly run. They should be given grants and subventions to allow them expand their enrolment and provide scholarships to children from the TPZs.
14. Lastly, the government of Nigeria needs to establish a Victim Relief Fund similar to the US' 911 Victims' Compensation Fund that will provide long and short-term assistance including implementing the Human Impact Mitigation Plan outlined above.

As a human rights lawyer, one does not come to these conclusions lightly. However it is all too apparent that the Boko Haram conflagration is the most clearly articulated and orchestrated quest to extinguish contemporary human civilization as we know it.

If Al-Qaida was motivated by anger at US presence in holy lands, Boko Haram is simply incensed at all things "other"—thus espousing a broader hate-filled universe for attack. That this is a clash of civilizations is no more in doubt. The education, modest development, and inchoate legal, governmental, and global systems in Africa are at high risk of collapse from groups like Boko Haram. Where Al-Qaida merely put constraints on entrenched Western constitutional concepts of freedom of movement and privacy, what is at stake in Africa is much more foundational. The threat of Boko Haram in Nigeria, MUJAO in Mali, and Al-shabab in Somalia is nothing if not existential. Africa cannot afford to drop out of the civilization/development production line, nor can the world afford to let it. The era when Rome falls to the barbarians must not be relived.

The world stood up and then moved the oceans in search of the missing Malaysian airline. The time has come for the world to stand together and confront this monstrosity because unlike the missing plane, this situation can still be turned around.

IV. THEY CAME FOR THE GIRLS: A TIMELINE OF NOTABLE BOKO HARAM ABDUCTIONS

The saga of over two hundred school girls abducted by the Nigerian terrorist group Boko Haram is yet another cruel twist in the ongoing Nigerian tragedy. After initially stating that one hundred girls were abducted, the government eventually concluded that two hundred seventy six girls were kidnapped. Considering that some girls have now managed to escape, two hundred seventy six is still conservative since the government says about four hundred female students were present at the time. The government is still trying to account for the non-abducted students.

Whether or not the government ever gets the figures right, the child-shaped vacuum in each parents heart breaks each moment as they anxiously wait for news. Each child is a life—not a statistic. Beyond the numbers is the deeply disturbing fact that this incident highlights the continued brutality of the Islamists’ terror war on Nigeria and the government’s continued pattern of inadequately responding.

On April 14, 2014, a week before I arrived in Nigeria on a relief mission, suspected Boko Haram insurgents attacked the predominantly Christian village of Chibok and violently abducted hundreds of innocent female students. Although the national and global news reports have given increased attention to the situation in Nigeria, this is not the first time Boko Haram has conducted jihadist abductions. Furthermore, unless the world unites to stop this barbaric behavior, it will not be the last time Boko Haram kidnaps children in a desperate attempt to carry out its jihadist agenda.

- In 2005, Boko Haram infamously abducted Christian pastors and moved them into Boko Haram’s mountain camps. The pastors were used as slaves until their subsequent rescue by the Nigerian army.
- In 2009, Boko Haram’s leader, Mohammed Yusuf, abducted scores of pastors and other Christians. The Christians were kept in Yusuf’s mosque grounds in Maiduguri, capital of northeastern Borno state where the terrorists are largely based. In a notorious conversion ceremony, Yusuf demanded that the Christians either convert or die. Yusuf personally beheaded Pastor George Ojih when he refused to renounce his Christian faith. The surviving Christians, who recanted their faith after the public decapitation, were rescued only after the Nigerian army captured the terrorists’ campus. Yusuf died in police custody shortly after his arrest.
- Post-2009, Boko Haram evolved into a more lethal, bloodthirsty, and sophisticated jihadist group under new head terrorist Abu Shekau. They have now gained advanced weaponry and media savvy to achieve their jihadist agenda. The National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (“START”) ranked Boko Haram the second deadliest terror group in the world in 2012, with over a thousand deaths resulting from Boko Haram attacks. Only the Taliban is more destructive.
- Head terrorist Abu Shekau oversaw the southward expansion of Boko Haram’s theater of conflict, expanding the reign of terror to four bombings in Abuja, Nigeria’s capital, in 2011. Boko Haram bombed the police headquarters in June, the All Christian Fellowship Church in July, the United Nation’s building in August, and St. Theresa’s Catholic Church in December. St. Theresa’s Christmas Day suicide bombing had the highest number of casualties in the capital area—44 lives—before the April 14, 2014 bus station attack that doubled that figure.
- Boko Haram and its offshoot Ansaru also have been linked to several kidnappings of westerners in Northern Nigeria and Cameroon. Those abducted were held for ransom. On two occasions, when the army attempted to rescue the abductees, Boko Haram executed the hostages. On another occasion, Boko Haram executed hostages based on media speculation of an impending rescue attempt. In all about fifteen countries have suffered citizen casualties, including Italy, the UK, and Germany.

- In September 2013, Boko Haram perpetrated one of its most heinous attacks yet. They blocked off a major highway and systematically beheaded Christian travelers and government workers. Over 160 people died. Muslim men who did not work for the government were spared but abducted. Escaped female slave-brides said that these Muslim men were forcefully conscripted into Boko Haram.

However, the 276 Chibok school girl's abduction on the same day as the bus bombings has focused global attention on Boko Haram's unknown history of gender-based violence. While the world watched in horror as hundreds died on the missing Malaysian flight 370 and the South Korean ferry disaster, Boko Haram's capture of Chibok's children marks a new low of man's inhumanity to woman. Boko Haram's violence against girl children simply boggles the mind due to its sheer avoidability.

Sadly, these abductions were not completely new. A September 2013 fact-finding mission I conducted determined that Boko Haram had begun specifically targeting females and school children. During the mission, we encountered a lady, Mrs. Shettima, whose husband was killed in front of her children for refusing to convert to Islam. Irritated by her crying daughters, the terrorists abducted the girls. This occurred in February 2012 when the girls were ages seven and nine. Far from being an isolated incident, it was not until Jubilee Campaign's unscheduled rescue of a fleeing Boko Haram slave-bride that the systematic pattern of targeting females became evident. In February 2012, we visited an IDP camp for Christians who had fled coordinated house-to-house killings in northeastern Yobe state. These Christians reported that their homes had been marked with graffiti to identify them. At night, the terrorists would invade and kill only the men. This was Boko Haram's strategy for gendercide and religicide.

With the massive flight of men, it was only a matter of time for the resilient terrorists to devise a strategy that also encompasses women. The abduction of women, as low ransom value captives, is a stark reminder that the jihad Boko Haram wages is not an economic rebellion as some would have us to believe. As Boko Haram has repeatedly declared, this is a war aimed at Christians and those who value women as equals, not an economic problem.

Our studies have concluded that the mass displacement of mostly religious and ethnic minorities as Internally Displaced Persons ("IDP") within Nigeria or refugees in neighboring countries caused Boko Haram to target other available victims. The shuttering of many northeastern churches, coupled with a multitude of frightened refugees and an ineffectual government response, has made northeastern Nigeria vulnerable to mutating jihadist violence.

Yobe state previously had over one thousand churches. Now, according to a pastor we interviewed there, barely eighty pastors remain. The 95% attrition is a higher percentage than the decimation of Christians in Iraq. Currently, Yobe state has been virtually de-Christianized—and Boko Haram has released a soundtrack bragging as much.

How about schools? Why school kids? For starters, Boko Haram has an infamous stance against western education. Pakistan and Nigeria accounted for more terror attacks on schools than the rest of the world combined in 2012. While those attacks were mostly on empty school buildings, there was the occasional campus massacre like the Mubi polytechnic attack of October 1, 2012.

Students were asked their names and religion, asked to recite a Koranic verse, and killed when they failed to satisfactorily quote the Koran.

By 2014, Boko Haram attacked a middle school and butchered fifty-nine boys in a horrific massacre that set a new moral, age, and terror low for the jihadists. Survivors reported that their genitals were methodically checked for pubic hair growth to determine their eligibility for slaughter. In northern Nigeria, children don't need to be as outspoken as Pakistan's Malala to get shot in the head. They just need to show up at school.

The Buni Yadi middle school massacre in February 2014 was the first time young children were killed on such a huge scale. During that attack, the terrorists warned female students to leave school and get married because they were of "marriageable" age. A Chibok victim we spoke to had his house bombed by the terrorists. Fifteen family and community members were among the abducted girls. One of them who escaped the Boko Haram camp by crawling under a briar fence that badly scarred her back, quoted her captors as stating: "school is bad." She reported that Boko Haram promised to "share" the girls out in marriage.

As we analyzed Boko Haram's rules of engagement which forbid the direct killing of women (but not in mass explosions) a female colleague remarked: "there are things you can do to a woman that are worse than death." Even if every Chibok child were recovered alive, this is a tragedy that requires immediate contingency planning. The government must invent a strategy to defeat Boko Haram to stop these barbaric terrorists from murdering sleeping villagers, selling teenage girls, and denying promising children an education. Nigeria's lost girls could all be found—but yet still more be lost.

Ultimately, the Chibok abductions highlight two main issues that are deeply unsettling on both a macro and micro level. First, the fact that the terrorists were able to con the school to hand over the girls to "protect" them, creates a credibility crisis for future government directives on a micro level. The government needs to ensure that security systems and strategies to prevent young girls from being so readily abducted and taken like lambs to the slaughter. Just last week, Boko Haram insurgents dressed like soldiers, rounded up villagers in a church, and told the people that they were the military deployed to protect the village. Once the trusting villagers were easily accessible, Boko Haram summarily massacred them.

Second, the macro crisis of confidence in the government is aggravated by the government's inadequate response to the kidnappings. A military statement calling for "prayer" was decidedly ineffectual—not a confidence-inspiring strategy. There are no known credible lines of communication or negotiation with the terrorists. Thus, desperate parents trooped through the forest in search of their children because there was no visible presence of the army in a notorious terrorist enclave.

Sadly, the terrorists now know what atrocities garner media attention. Being resilient and media savvy, Boko Haram will come for more girls again. As it stands, the terrorists have reportedly abducted at least 8 more girls during my visit in May and another twenty women last week. Even worse, with inadequate record keeping, lack of citizen demographics, absence of human impact mitigation responses, and systemic dissimulation as state strategies, it will be difficult to confirm

if all the abducted Chibok girls will ever be rescued or accounted for—whether there be 243 or 276 estimated girls. For each individual parent, the child-shaped vacuum in their heart renders these sketchy statistics moot.

V. A PERVERSIVE THREAT TO THE STRUGGLE AGAINST BOKO HARAM

Several factors threaten the international community's ability to understand and effectively respond to Boko Haram terroristic threat. However of primary focus for discussion is threat appreciation beclouded by the fog of diplomacy and political expediency.

DISINFORMATION AND MISINFORMATION

The continuing false narratives of both the US government and the Nigerian government complicate an already complex insurgency. Till this date, it is impossible to determine accurate numbers of casualties of both civilian and military victims of Boko Haram from the Nigerians. Till this day, the US does not acknowledge a minimum of four Americans known to have survived or escaped Boko Haram attacks.

Nigeria's misinformation is somewhat explicable as Boko Haram has the monopoly of showcasing via video its own propaganda on YouTube while the Nigerian army is left with e-mailed press statements claiming stupendous victories in undocumented battles or downplaying casualties. The US need for disinformation, on the other hand, is not so easily comprehensible.

nited States officials and other international leaders statements that display either intentional bias or a lack of knowledge about Boko Haram.

1. The top targets of Boko Haram:

When Ambassador Robert Jackson, Acting Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, testified to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on May 15, 2014, he said: "I would offer that more of the thousands of people who died as a result of Boko Haram's activities are Muslim than Christian."¹ Dr. Sewall, another State Department official, similarly testified to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs on May 21, 2014: "Indeed, the majority of Boko Haram's estimated 4,000 total victims to date have been Muslim."² Just a few days ago, the Congressional Research Service stated: "The group [Boko Haram] has focused on a wide range of targets, but civilians in the impoverished, predominately Muslim northeast have borne the brunt of the

¹ *#BringBackOurGirls: Addressing The Threat of Boko Haram: Hearing Before the United States S. Comm. on Foreign Relations, Subcomm. on African Affairs*, 113th Cong. 2nd sess. (May 15, 2014) (testimony of the Honorable Robert P. Jackson, Acting Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs).

² *Boko Haram: The Growing Threat to Schoolgirls, Nigeria, and Beyond: Hearing Before the United States H. Comm. on Foreign Affairs*, 113th Cong. 2nd sess. (May 21, 2014) (testimony of the Honorable Sarah Sewall, Under Secretary for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights, U.S. Department of State).

violence.³ In 2012, The U.S. Institute of Peace reported that Boko Haram believes that Northern Nigeria is ruled by corrupt Muslims and thus must wage war against the false Muslims.⁴

These uninformed statements are patently false. Effectively defeating an enemy requires knowing the psyche of the enemy: what motivates them, what their goals are, and whom they target. Only when the U.S. acknowledges what the data clearly shows, will the U.S. be able to advance an effective strategy to defeat Boko Haram.

Current data unmistakably shows that Boko Haram primarily targets Christians, not fellow Muslims who generally are collateral damage. **(Please see attached graph)** Furthermore, it is feasible that most of the unidentified civilian targets (25% of deaths) were Christians. It is a well-known fact that Boko Haram targets areas where Christians congregate such as churches, bars, foot-ball viewing centers (not usually patronized by Muslims) and Christian villages and sections of town. Though some killed in bomb blasts were certainly Muslims who happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time, the reality in Nigeria is that most of the people who attend churches or live in Christian villages are in fact Christians. For high-ranking U.S. officials to make such unfounded statements is astounding especially given the available data.

The 2013 Country Reports on Terrorism mentioned several Boko Haram attacks, including attacks on the military, polio vaccination workers, a French family, luxury motorbuses, students and mosques,⁵ but the Department of State neglected to mention that the majority of these horrific attacks, both in brutality and in sheer numbers, were directed at Christians. For example, Boko Haram separated Christian factory workers from Muslims and slaughtered all 17 Christians on February 23, 2013; killed 50 Christians during a funeral ceremony on May 14; killed over 100 Christian villagers between July 1–7; murdered 53 Christians in front of their church (16 burnt alive inside the church) on August 7; and slaughtered 26 Christian villagers in random attacks between December 8–11, 2013.⁶ These horrific attacks should have been mentioned as notable in the “2013 Terrorist Incidents” section of the report. The Report did not directly mention a single attack on Christians, although attacks on Christians comprised the majority of both incidents and casualties in 2013. Though the Report did briefly acknowledge the most brutal attack, the September 17, 2013 attack in which Boko Haram blockaded a road and slaughtered over 160 civilians with guns and chainsaws, it failed to mention the anti-Christian sentiment motivating the attack. Boko Haram looked at travelers’ ID’s to ascertain their names and religion and asked civilians to recite certain Koranic verses before slaughtering the Christians. Muslim men were spared and forcibly conscripted into Boko Haram, but those working for the government were killed. The State Department glossed over the facts and made the attack sound like an indiscriminate attack on random citizens.

In fact, the village of Chibok was specifically targeted as a slave-raiding attack on a predominantly Christian community. Thus, this sample attack by itself shows how 90% of the

³ Lauren Ploch Blanchard, *Nigeria's Boko Haram: Frequently Asked Questions*, CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE, May 28, 2014.

⁴ Andrew Walker, *Special Report: What is Boko Haram?* United States Institute of Peace, June 2012.

⁵ United States Department of State, COUNTRY REPORTS ON TERRORISM 2013 37–38 (United States Department of State Publication, Bureau of Counterterrorism 2014).

⁶ The Facts on Nigeria Violence: Incidents, Reports, Statistics, 2013, <http://factsnigeriaviolence.org/spreadsheet/2013-2/> (last visited June 2, 2014).

girls abducted were Christians whom Boko Haram proudly announced it had “liberated” and forcefully converted. The lesser known fact is that the Christian girls are mostly from one Christian denomination which is affiliated to the Church of the Brethren in America.

EYN has so far documented the deaths of 369 members, the destruction of over 1115 member’s homes and the abduction of over 178 members at the hands of Boko Haram⁷. In Gwoza county, only two out of 34 churches have not been destroyed. In Michika town, the local church membership fell by 577 people due to killings, abductions and population displacement by Boko Haram.

A newly released report by a northern Nigerian minority rights group states:

“The Chibok Girls

The abduction of over three hundred female secondary school students from Government Girls Secondary School (GGSS), Chibok, Borno State, Nigeria on April 14, 2014 has elicited consternation all over the world. This is not the first time that Boko Haram has abducted female students. This is, however, its biggest haul. Chibok is a predominantly Christian community and the bulk of the abductees reflect this predominance in the ratio of 9:1. A few facts have since arisen about the abduction saga:

- The Sambisa Forest is some 60 kilometers from Chibok, Borno State;
- The Federal Minister of Education had advised the state Governor, Alhaji Kashim Shettima, to relocate all students sitting for this year’s West Africa School Certificate Examination (WASCE) to Maiduguri the state capital of Borno State, Nigeria for adequate protection, because the examination body, West Africa Examination Council lost three invigilators to *Boko Haram* in 2013. The advice was implemented everywhere in Borno State except as it relates to GGSS Chibok;
- Muslims in Chibok cooperated with the insurgents when they invaded to carry out the abduction. As a matter of fact, a son of the former Secretary of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Chibok ward was the supplier of petrol to *Boko Haram*. He was arrested by the community and handed over to the military;
- Chibok is a bastion of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Borno State, though the state is an All Progressive Congress (APC) Party ruled state;
- Boko Haram was generally avoiding Chibok after a former Chairman of the LGA, Hon. Wanangu Kachuwa, was gunned down in front of his house, shortly after returning from a Church service;
- *Boko Haram* invaded Chibok with fighters dressed in military fatigues in 25 pick-up vans and operated from 11 p.m to 3 a.m;
- The invaders burnt down some houses belonging to Christians in Chibok town while a detachment proceeded to the school premises, where they told the students that they were soldiers who had come to rescue them;

⁷ EYN Summary of Attacks Spreadsheet (Annexure)

- Two of the vehicles that were used to transport the female students were commandeered from the local motor park;
- *Boko Haram* insurgents looted the school's food store before burning the school down;
- The school's Principal and Vice Principal, Administration, (both Muslims) and their families, and other teachers were nowhere around the school on the night of the abduction, suggesting some foreknowledge. The Principal is new to the school having just been appointed to take over from the former Christian Principal in keeping with the unwritten policy in Borno State to not allow Christians head any state government institution;
- The Governor of the state claimed that he alerted the military of the pendency of an attack on the school four hours before the attack took place, yet made no attempt to evacuate the students from the school. In any case, *Boko Haram* does not require four hours to travel to Chibok from the Sambisa Forest, their believed embarkation point. As such, anyone with foreknowledge of four hours before the attack must be a *Boko Haram* insider;
- The state Governor kept contradicting the Defence Headquarters spokesman, and the Principal repeats whatever the Governor says;
- Certain individuals are in cahoots with the insurgents. For instance, Governor Shettima of Borno State announced to the media that the girls abducted in Chibok had been forcibly converted to Islam and married off to *Boko Haram* fighters. A day later, Abubakar Shekau, the sect's leader released a video clip making the same claim. Shehu Sani, an "activist", claimed that the sect wanted to exchange the girls with members of the sect arrested by the Nigerian authorities. A day later, another clip emanated from Shekau making the same demand;
- Notable northern and opposition leaders have voiced opposition to international assistance to help bring back the Chibok girls and to fight terrorism in Nigeria.

As shocking as the Chibok incident is it is not a happenstance. Non-Muslim females have historically been preyed upon by Muslims in Northern Nigeria. The obvious conclusion is that the Chibok girls were abducted because of their faith. Also:

- In May 2013 *Boko Haram* attacked a police barracks in Bama, Borno State, and abducted 12 Christian women and children. Shekau took responsibility for the attack and abductions on May 7 2013;
- Hajja, a 19 year old Christian was abducted from the Gwoza, Borno State area. She was forced to convert to Islam, forced to involve herself in the sect's operations and was set to be married to one of her captors when she managed to escape;
- In August 2013, a Christian student reported an attack on her university accommodation. The men were murdered, the women segregated into Muslim and non-Muslim and the Christian women were systematically raped;

- Mid-February 2014, *Boko Haram* murdered 51 persons in Konduga, Borno State, and abducted 20 young women;
- In Buni Yadi, Yobe State, earlier in 2014, 76 students of Federal Government College were murdered in cold blood and 16 female students abducted. They have not been heard of ever since.”⁸

2. Goals of Boko Haram:

Ambassador Robert Jackson also told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, “As the world now knows, Boko Haram opposes democracy and formal education. It has attempted to crush the kind of faith in the promise of education and prosperity that families in Chibok showed . . . I actually think the prime motivator is to raise more funds for Boko Haram through a ransom. However, the fact that Boko Haram opposes Western education is certainly a reason why these girls were targeted.”⁹

This statement could not be further from the truth. The school girls were low value captives, unlike the Westerners Ansaru and BH have abducted from time to time. One person we interviewed stated that with almost 300 female students, Boko had captured a whole “nation” of female forced converts who could be impregnated and forced to breed an entire brood of Muslim children. If Boko Haram is selling the girls off for \$12 as reported, the gross income from selling three hundred girls is \$3600. For a well-armed, RPG-launching terror group, this amount is a drop in the bucket compared to the millions of dollars they derive from the kidnap of French citizens.

3. Motivations of Boko Haram

Ms. Amanda Dory, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for African Affairs, stated in a speech on June 18, 2012 that the effort to defuse Boko Haram “must focus on addressing underlying socioeconomic, political, environmental and governance challenges from a Nigerian basis.”¹⁰ Johnnie Carson, former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, was quoted as saying in an interview, “. . . we believe that the bulk of the Boko Haram movement is – they’re focused on trying to discredit the Nigerian Government, trying to do everything in its power to show that the government is ineffective in the defense of its people and in the protection of government institutions.”¹¹

⁸ What The World Needs to Know – Briefing Paper of the Middle Belt Dialogue

⁹ #BringBackOurGirls: Addressing The Threat of Boko Haram: Hearing Before the United States S. Comm. on Foreign Relations, Subcomm. on African Affairs, 113th Cong. 2nd sess. (May 15, 2014) (testimony of the Honorable Robert P. Jackson, Acting Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs).

¹⁰ Karen Parrish, *Strategy Guides Africa Engagement, Defense Official Says*, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (June 18, 2012), <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=116792> (last visited June 2, 2014).

¹¹ Interview by Holly Jensen with Johnnie Carson, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of African Affairs, *LiveAtState: U.S. Policy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa* (September 20, 2012), available at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ime/198023.htm>.

These statements ignore Boko Haram's stated tenets of radical jihad against all other religions, especially Christianity. **Their full name, "People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad," makes it blatantly obvious that Boko Haram's true intentions are to promote radical Islamic law in the face of all other religions.** Boko Haram's actions demonstrate this religiously charged agenda—over 49% of individuals killed over a 2 year period were Christians. During 2013, Boko Haram only targeted 2-3 mosques, killing approximately 56 people in an effort to warn moderate Muslims to cooperate with Boko Haram's extremist ideals.¹² Simultaneously, over 60 churches were destroyed and hundreds of Christians slaughtered, many of them during the night when Boko Haram attacked sleeping villagers.¹³ It is simply inexcusable for United States officials to ignore readily available data and instead assert speculation and conjecture as facts. In response to the common misconception that Boko Haram exists because of economic inequality or discontentment with the Nigerian government's "service delivery", Boko Haram's leaders have made their goals and targets crystal clear. Head terrorist Abu Shekau said: "This war is between the Muslims and the Infidels . . . you should know that it is not an ethnic war, it is not an ignorant war, it is not a war for money, it is not a war for any other reason. No, it is a religious war!" His predecessor Mohammed Yusuf stated, "They will say, 'you know, Christians and Muslims can stay at peace.' This is a lie. Do you know why? Allah said it. This is what Allah is saying, 'won't you kill?'"

In the face of all this evidence, it is absolutely incomprehensible why the United States government keeps denying what Boko Haram has affirmed—that they exist to kill Christians and implement a total Sharia state. Boko Haram has repeatedly stated that their interpretation of their religion is to kill all non-Muslims, especially Christians and Jews. The United States would be better equipped to contain the terrorists if officials would simply acknowledge that Boko Haram's stated objective is to target primarily Christians (and in their world view American is Christianity personified) and Nigeria's American-style democracy. Only then can the United States help Nigeria implement an effective strategy for saving thousands of innocent lives.

4. Denial of Al-Qaida and Global Jihad Affiliations:

On May 7, 2014, Johnnie Carson said to an interviewer, "It [Boko Haram] is not yet part of a larger international jihadist movement, and it is not Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb or the old Al-Qaida East Africa cell. This is largely a Nigeria-focused insurgency . . ."¹⁴ United States officials have been denying Boko Haram's ties with Al-Qaida for years. In 2012, Coordinator for Counterterrorism Daniel Benjamin denied Boko Haram's transnational connections when he said, "While not a formal Al-Qaida affiliate, the group known as Boko Haram launched widespread attacks across Nigeria, including one in August against the United Nations

¹² The Facts on Nigeria Violence: Incidents, Reports, Statistics, 2013, <http://factsnigeriaviolence.org/spreadsheet/2013-2/> (last visited June 2, 2014).

¹³ Peter Clotey, *Nigeria Group Warns of Boko Haram Christianity Attacks*, VOICE OF AMERICA May 14, 2014, available at <http://www.voanews.com/content/nigeria-group-warns-of-boko-haram-christianity-attacks/1914722.html> (last visited June 2, 2014).

¹⁴ Interview by Robert McMahon with Johnnie Carson, former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, *Media Call on Nigeria* COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS (May 7, 2014), available at http://www.cfr.org/nigeria/media-call-nigeria/p32955?cid=nlc-religion-religion_and_foreign_policy_bulletin-links-20140515&sp_mid=46057449&sp_rid=anViaWxlZUBqdWJpbGVlY2FtcGFpZ24ub3JnS0.

headquarters in Abuja that signaled its ambition and capability to attack non-Nigerian targets.”¹⁵ This statement is odd, however, as just two months later the State Department designated three of Boko Haram’s most prominent leaders as foreign terrorists because of their global terrorist affiliations, of which their most significant was Al-Qaida. For such a prominent US official covering counterterrorism abroad, it is unsettling that he did not know of Boko Haram’s partnership with Al-Qaida, especially when it became part of US foreign policy a mere two months later.¹⁶

Even now in 2014, influential former officials such as Johnnie Carson continue to deny the obvious—that Boko Haram is affiliated with Al-Qaida. It is inconceivable that Boko Haram could have carried out its attacks on the U.N. and subsequent civilian targets without the assistance and training from Al-Qaida. In April 2012, documents obtained in the house where Bin Laden was killed showed that Boko Haram leaders had been in contact with Al-Qaida leaders. A Boko Haram spokesperson boasted, **“We are together with Al-Qaida. They are promoting the cause of Islam, just as we are doing. Therefore they help us in our struggle and we help them too.”**

Boko Haram launched its career of international terrorism when it bombed the United Nations compound in Abuja. Afterward, they released a video stating that the bombing’s purpose was to send a message to the United States President and other infidels. Since then, Boko Haram has killed citizens of 15 countries: Kenya, China, Norway, Nigeria, Italy, France, India, Ghana, Germany, South Korea, Lebanon, Syria, Cameroon, United Kingdom and Mali. They have kidnapped and held for ransom citizens of several countries. Boko Haram is particularly a threat to America because of their perception that America is the head of the Christian world.

On January 27, 2012, Abu Shekau released a video stating the United States is an enemy of Islam. Addressing the United States he said, “Do not think jihad is over. Rather jihad has just begun. O America, die with your fury.” More recently, journalists and researchers have begun to question Shekau’s mental stability, calling him “insane” and a “wannabe Osama Bin Laden.” Despite his mental state, Shekau follows in Bin Laden’s footsteps by making increasingly dire threats to the United States, President Obama, and other leaders. Clearly, Boko Haram will not hesitate to murder or kidnap American citizens. Access to Al-Qaida resources makes Boko Haram a serious threat to Americans travelling internationally and to the U.S. homeland. Former American officials should stop calling Boko Haram a regional threat and should recognize the groups for what it is—an international terrorist organization posing a major threat to the United States.

Furthermore, even the International Criminal Court Chief Prosecutor recently stated that Boko Haram is a “non-international armed conflict,” referring to the violence in Nigeria although this is debatable given the terror group’s activities in Mali and Cameroun. Although the Chief Prosecutor is currently conducting a preliminary examination into Boko Haram

¹⁵ *Bureau of Counterterrorism: Budget, Programs, and Policies: Hearing Before the United States H. Comm. on Foreign Affairs, Subcomm. on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade*, 112th Cong. 2nd sess. (April 18, 2012) (testimony of the Honorable Daniel Benjamin, Coordinator for Counterterrorism U.S. Dep’t of State).

¹⁶ Office of the Spokesperson, *Terrorist Designations of Boko Haram Commander Abubakar Shekau, Khalid al-Barnawi, and Abubakar Adam Kambar* (June 21, 2012) U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, available at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2012/06/193574.htm>.

atrocities for evidence of crimes against humanity, the ICC needs to upgrade this into a full-fledged crimes against humanity investigation especially following the UN's referral of this issue. Ties with Al-Qaida make Boko Haram very dangerous, especially considering that Abu Shekau desires to emulate Osama Bin Laden, the mastermind of the World Trade Center attacks. Al-Qaida has proven their potential to destroy countless lives. Access to those global jihadist resources makes Boko Haram more than a mere "Nigerian problem."

Mr. Carson, Mr. Benjamin, and other prominent U.S. officials should not be underestimating the true potency of Boko Haram. Boko Haram clearly has ties with the most dangerous, most virulent terrorist organization on earth whom it has actually surpassed in brutality.

"At the time -- and I still think it's very true -- we didn't move on Boko Haram because we thought it would give them a recruitment boost," said Johnnie Carson, denying that he and then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton were asleep at the switch regarding Boko Haram designation. "We engaged the Nigerians quite extensively. Not being on the [FTO] list didn't inhibit our ability to help . . . It could evolve over time, but [Boko Haram] is not a threat today to the homeland."¹⁷

Boko Haram is a very lethal threat to the homeland and it has been so for a while. It has actually attacked at least four Americans that we know of:

1. An American diplomat serving in the UN in Nigeria in 2011
2. An American diplomat serving at the US embassy in Nigeria in 2011
3. An American couple serving as charity workers in northern Nigeria in 2012

Mr. Carson is currently at the U.S. Institute of Peace where even in semi-retirement his patently flawed assessments still carry weight on these issues.

Improper problem analysis leads to inaccurate problem solving and in this case amounts to willful intelligence failure and a potential threat to national security. It is indeed troubling when Boko Haram statements appear to have more credibility than the interpretations and explanations of officials.

5. Denial of Boko Haram's Congruency:

John Campbell, former ambassador to Nigeria, and other officials have consistently denied Boko Haram's congruency as a unified jihadist group. On May 7, 2014, John Campbell said to the media, "Boko Haram seems to me to be not such much an organization as a movement. It's highly diffuse. It's multilayered. It does not seem to have a unified command and control. Abubakar Shekau, the most prominent part of Boko Haram, appears to be much more a warlord than he does the leader of an organization."¹⁸ This is a distinction without a difference

¹⁷ James Gordon Meek and Dana Hughes, *Debates in DC Delayed Action on Boko Haram, Officials Say*, ABC NEWS, May 8, 2014, available at <http://abcnews.go.com/Blotter/debates-dc-delayed-action-boko-haram-officials/story?id=23642464&page=2>.

¹⁸ Interview by Robert McMahon with John Campbell, former Ambassador to Nigeria, *Media Call on Nigeria* COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS (May 7, 2014), available at <http://www.cfr.org/nigeria/media-call-nigeria/p32955?cid=nlc-religion->

because whether or not he fits into our idealized western box of what a terrorist should look like, his lethality is indubitable – Boko Haram has held off Africa’s largest military force.

While Boko Haram certainly has factions within itself, such as Ansaru, it is widely known to have a defined, although highly esoteric, leadership structure that organizes, encourages, and acknowledges violence as its own. The State Department hesitated to declare Boko Haram a foreign terrorist organization until November 2013, due in part to claims that it was not a unified terrorist group. As the recent kidnappings have proven, Boko Haram displays all the signs of an organized group, i.e., capability to retain hundreds of prisoners, coordinate multiple attacks, achieve military objectives and strategize future violence. Abu Shekau has titled himself as its leader; and, without evidence to the contrary, there is no reason to doubt his proclamation. He is certainly accomplishing his mission—murdering, pillaging, and terrorizing innocent people. Furthermore, Boko Haram is financially stable through such means as robbing banks, demanding protection money, and gathering ransom in addition to influx of funds, foreign fighters and arms from abroad. They consistently organize and carry out systematic attacks on Christians, military, schools, Muslims who cooperate with the authorities and anyone who don’t fit their agenda.

Johnnie Carson has given a multitude of reasons why lingering on the Foreign Terrorist Organization (“FTO”) designation was correct. He has consistently stated that the U.S. feared FTO status would give Boko Haram a recruitment boost, and that it would make Boko Haram target international instead of primarily Nigerian interests.¹⁹ However, Jubilee Campaign and The Washington Working Group on Nigeria have been urging a FTO designation for years. In hindsight, Boko Haram had only been gathering more support while the U.S. quibbled over whether they were “organized” enough for designation. As proven by the United States dilly-dallying over designation, inaction has achieved nothing, if not allowing more deaths. The U.N. should learn this lesson, proactively implement immediate sanctions, and cripple Boko Haram’s ability to function.

At several hearings, senior officials have made statements that are either false or ill-informed. In 2012 they told Congress they didn’t know about Iran arms shipments to Nigeria; in 2014 they don’t know of BH attacks on Americans in Nigeria even though one of the four Americans known to have survived an attack insists that US intelligence was privy to that information before it occurred. US government officials should be known for what they know and not for what they don’t know.

VI. CONCLUSION

A. POLICY REVIEW

As the world now can see, Boko Haram is as evil a terror group as the world has ever seen. This group for years got away with murder based on a “see no jihad, hear no jihad, and say no jihad” US policy that cited “legitimate grievances.” The truth is that hate, tribalism and

[religion_and_foreign_policy_bulletin-link5-20140515&sp_mid=46057449&sp_rid=anViaWxlZUBqdWJpbGVlY2FicGFpZ24ub3JnS0.](#)

¹⁹ James Gordon Meek and Dana Hughes, *Debates in DC Delayed Action on Boko Haram, Officials Say*, ABC NEWS, May 8, 2014, available at <http://abcnews.go.com/Blotter/debates-dc-delayed-action-boko-haram-officials/story?id=23642464&page=2>.

religious intolerance are not “legitimate grievances”. Where the US claims a north/south dichotomy is responsible for tensions in northern Nigeria, the fact is that a northern hegemony over the south is at the core of the said tensions. Yet, Southern and Central Nigeria, for the years the underdogs in the North’s political domination have not shown this level of militancy and violence which their marginalization could have provoked. Boko Haram has been violent for 10 years but the north has been backward for a 100 years.

B. LEAHY AMENDMENT

Officials say assistance to Nigeria is limited because of the Leahy Amendment which restricts support to troops accused of human rights violations. This is an important law and as someone who fourteen years ago this week was abducted by Nigerian security forces, detained and brutally assaulted for months as a human rights lawyer advocating in Nigeria, I am cognizant of its importance.

However in our struggle to achieve FTO designation for Boko Haram, we realized two things:

1. It is easier to blacklist a foreign army for human rights violations than to designate terrorists.
2. There are better guidelines for appealing an FTO designation by a terrorist than there are for foreign armies blacklisted by Leahy.

Poor implementation of this law could undermine a critical regional ally and potentially US strategy of down-sizing military and working via regional forces. It is deeply ironic that the Nigerian military division accused of human rights abuses in the Niger Delta was actually working closely with international oil companies. Indeed the human rights abuses afflicted in the region was in an effort to protect vital US and European oil investments in Nigeria. US courts were presented with evidence that Nigerian security personnel were substantially appendages of the oil companies and were ferried, fed, and funded by them in many instances²⁰

A waiver, compartmentalization, or some other work around would be needful in these circumstances. US has to be a role model for Nigerian army on how to handle this situation. Whether by examples of what it did wrong with the Afghan and Iraq insurgencies or what it did right. The fact is that it is the same source—global jihad, the same modus operandus, the same ideology, and the same threat.

C. CONTAINING GLOBAL JIHAD PROLIFERATION

Three military actions in which the US has been involved have arguably helped empower to Boko Haram to where it is today.

²⁰ <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/jun/08/nigeria-usa>

1. The US invasion of Afghanistan in 2002 discovered the presence of Nigerian foreign fighters alongside Al-Qaida and the Taliban. None is known to have been moved to Guantanamo. A year later the “Nigerian Taliban” surfaced in northern Nigeria.
2. The US-supported NATO ouster of Libya’s Gaddafi in 2011 led to the proliferation of arms and possibly fighters to northern Nigeria.
3. The US-supported French/AU roll-back of Jihadists in northern Mali in 2013 again led to proliferation of both arms and foreign fighters into northern Nigeria.

In this sense the Taliban/POW Prisoner transfer could likely have an impact on Boko Haram and the captive girls. It creates a precedent of appeasement where Boko Haram may now insist on freeing some of its key members already in custody.

While I am not opposed to the safe return of the girls, the Bergdahl swop sends a message of victory to the Taliban and their BH acolytes that they can “rescue” their men from the belly of the great Satan. If BH was tentative about their demands before, they will be no more.

In dealing with such a diffuse matrix of globally-linked Jihadists, the US needs to be more circumspect about the ripple effect such a high-profile prisoner exchange can cause. American citizens could potentially become the human bit coins for terror trades across multiple continents.

D. BILATERAL MUTUAL RESPECT

The protracted FTO debate revealed to some extent the duplicity in diplomatic relations between Nigeria and the US. While on the face of it both countries showed a joint determination to stall our pro-designation efforts, the USG still refused to do it even after Nigeria finally caved in and outlawed Boko Haram under its own laws. US sources secretly whispered that they held out because of fear of Nigerian military human rights abuses and not so much Boko Haram after all.

While Nigerian military sources had privately hinted that Nigerian politicians were wary of FTO because of the potential search light on their financial dealings, the US itself was opposing FTO and at the same criticizing Nigeria for corruption and blaming it for the insurgency.

There would need to be greater mutual respect and transparency. Some US military sources have sincerely acknowledged that transitioning Nigerian military from peacekeeping operations abroad straight into a home-front insurgency can be problematic and these are the sorts of issues that should be frankly dealt with.

The US appears to care more about security in the South South of Nigeria where oil is produced. Clearly the crisis in the north has not impacted US access to oil from the Niger Delta. Indeed the US is a large beneficiary of oil theft from the south so its access to Nigerian crude seems assured regardless of what happens. Nigerian officials express frustration that although they have sought help in stopping crude oil theft, America’s response has been tepid. Therefore the northern conflict is much less a priority of the US.

In conclusion, let me share an experience last week. Family members of missing girls told us that they had agreed to levy themselves and raise \$70,000 for a Camerounian witchdoctor who said he could find the girls. They dropped the plans when they heard that the US and others

were going to assist the Nigerian government in finding their girls. Instead of retreating into the dark ages, they have reached out to the modern world for help. I think this says it all. Thank you.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Ogebe, thank you very much for your testimony. I just want to note for the record that it was you who set up the meeting for me and my staff director to meet with the young 18-year-old survivor of the Chibok abduction. She left before they had even gotten a kilometer away from the school, but still was extraordinarily traumatized, so thank you for setting that up.

Mr. John-Miller.

STATEMENT OF MR. ANSLEM JOHN-MILLER, REPRESENTATIVE TO THE U.S., MOVEMENT FOR THE SURVIVAL OF THE OSONI PEOPLE

Mr. JOHN-MILLER. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Bass, all protocols observed. I thank you and members of your committee for giving me the opportunity to address you on current developments in Nigeria as they relate to the atrocities of the Boko Haram and how the United States and Nigeria can continue to work together to put an end to the activities of this terrorist group.

First, I commend the Government and people of the United States for condemning the kidnappings of the Chibok girls and the Obama administration's effort with the Nigerian Government to secure the release of these girls. I am very positive that with such collaboration, the Chibok girls will ultimately be reunited with their families. On the current efforts to rescue the abducted Chibok girls, I must emphasize that the United States and other countries involved encourage the Nigerian Government to employ every means available at its disposal, including diplomacy, to secure their release. While I continue to maintain my position that no government should negotiate with any terrorist group, I am deeply concerned that if the same principle is adopted in the case of the Chibok girls, their return may not be in the near future.

Since the abducted girls are Christians, they risk being killed by the leader of Boko Haram because he knows that the girls remain Christians, despite their so-called conversion. He may resort to killing the girls if force is employed in their rescue just to blackmail the Governments of the United States, Nigeria, and others. In this regard, I commend the efforts of ex-President Olusegun Obasanjo, who has initiated some moves to secure the release of the girls through dialogue and diplomacy.

While the United States and the international community's attention is focused on how to secure the release of the abducted Chibok girls, it is important to note that this sophisticated and coordinated attacks that Boko Haram was carried out after the abduction of the girls show that the organization remains strong, bold, and determined to inflict unimaginable harm and destruction on Nigeria so that the Nigerian State will plunge into total anarchy and chaos, thereby making it ungovernable.

As such, the ongoing war against Boko Haram in Nigeria should be treated—should not be treated with levity or treated as a local Nigerian crisis, but should be elevated to the status of the war against al-Qaeda. The United States Congress should, therefore, work closely with the Obama administration to develop comprehensive counterterrorism strategies that will help Nigeria to crush Boko Haram and put an end to the carnage and sufferings of the people of the northeastern part of Nigeria and the neighboring

countries of Cameroon, Chad, and Niger Republic. Many terrorism experts and scholars have attributed poverty and underdevelopment in the northeast of Nigeria as the cause of Boko Haram and prescribed provision of job opportunities and development of the region as a solution to the problem, and I partly agree only in the context that poverty and idleness makes youths of the area vulnerable and easy targets for recruitment as Boko Haram operatives. However, I strongly believe that if the youth recruited were not interested in terrorism, they would have resisted because poverty, underdevelopment, and idleness is not confined only to northeast region of Nigeria, but visible everywhere in the country, especially in the Ogoni and the Niger Delta regions.

Solving the problem of Boko Haram in Nigeria cannot be achieved without addressing the issue of corruption. While there has been much focus on corruption at the national level of governance in Nigeria and the military, very little attention has been paid to the level of corruption at the state and local government levels in the northeast and other parts of the country. Nigeria operates a Federal system of government. We share power between Federal, state, and local governments. These states and local governments receive monthly allocations from the Federal Government and are expected to use the funds to provide basic amenities and develop their states and local governments.

However, such funds end up in the private accounts of the state Governors and the local government chairmen installed by the governors, resulting in paltry sums of money being spent on programs that have direct impact on the lives of the citizens of the state and local communities.

To address the problem of corruption in Nigeria, I propose that the United States Government partner with Nigeria to encourage transparency and accountability at all levels of governance. The United States should also, through its Justice Department, investigate and confiscate all funds stolen by those in power at all levels in Nigeria and saved in banks in New York, Dubai, London, and so on, and prosecute the culprits. The benefits those corrupt politicians enjoy now such as sponsoring themselves and their families on limitless trips to the United States and other developed countries to spend holidays, buying expensive cars and luxury houses, and educating their children in the best schools in foreign countries at the expense of suffering masses should be stopped forthwith.

It is only such decisive steps that will send a clear message to the rulers of Nigeria that the United States is serious about tackling corruption in Nigeria. While a few people may argue that the United States confiscating and arresting corrupt Nigerian politicians anywhere in the world may amount to interfering in the internal affairs of a sovereign nation, I posit that such a step is reasonable and morally justified, especially since corruption breeds discontent and provides a platform for its victims to be recruited as agents of terror.

Closely related to corruption are the human rights abuses committed by the Nigerian soldiers. It is no secret that Nigerian soldiers torture and commit terrible human rights abuses when deployed to various communities, and as such discourage the local population from cooperating with them and providing intelligence

that would have helped in accomplishing their missions. A clear example is the activities of Major Paul Okuntimo, the then chairman of the disbanded Rivers State Internal Security Task Force who committed all sort of atrocities in Ogoniland during the height of the Ogoni struggle in the 1990s. Despite the extrajudicial killings and crimes against humanity, Major Paul Okuntimo and his men committed in Ogoni, he remains a free man walking on the streets of Nigeria instead of being locked behind bars.

In recent times, several allegations of human rights abuses has been leveled against the soldiers deployed to northeast to fight the Boko Haram insurgency, and to date, no investigations have been carried out to unveil the truth or otherwise of the allegations. With such negative perception about the soldiers, the citizens find it very difficult to collaborate with them, and without the involvement of the locals who know the Boko Haram operatives, it is very difficult to defeat the terrorist group.

To address this issue, the United States Government should prevail on Nigeria to set up an independent judicial panel or empower the National Human Rights Commission to investigate such allegations, and any soldiers incriminated be prosecuted so as to serve as a deterrent to others. A case in point is to also influence the Nigerian National Assembly to immediately pass the Enforcement and Punishment of Crimes Against Humanity, War Crimes, Genocide and Related Offenses bill of 2012.

The declaration of Boko Haram as a Foreign Terrorist Organization by the United States Government after the initial reluctance is a welcome development because it paves way for the United States Government to take various steps, including freezing of bank accounts, deployment of drones, and other assets to fight the terrorists. However, one major step that should be taken that will make the current war against Boko Haram successful is to work with the Nigerian Government to identify the sponsors of Boko Haram and bring them to justice.

On occasions, notable commanders of the Boko Haram have been apprehended while hiding in the houses of influential politicians without the host politicians being questioned and investigated over their ties with the terrorists arrested.

With such developments, civilians who would have provided credible and actionable intelligence are afraid that doing so would put them at risk, and inasmuch as this ugly trend continues, the Boko Haram insurgency will continue.

To address this challenge, I urge the Congress to mandate that the Justice Department to immediately initiate steps to collaborate with the Nigerian security and intelligence services to investigate, arrest, and persecute all alleged sponsors of Boko Haram in the United States, or alternatively, the United States should work with other permanent members of the U.N. Security Council to set up a special terrorism court to try all those arrested for involvement in the activities of Boko Haram in Nigeria. Persecuting the sponsors and operators of Boko Haram in an international court will send a clear message to members and potential members of the terrorist group that the international community is very serious about bringing them to justice.

It is imperative to note that Boko Haram insurgency has both religious and political undertones. The inflammatory and incisive statements made by some Islamic clerics and politicians, especially from the northern part of Nigeria prior to and after the election of President Goodluck Jonathan in 2011 has also served as an incentive to the insurgents. Shortly after the 2011 Presidential election, some notable politicians from the north called on the masses in northern Nigeria to revolt against the newly-elected President. With such statements coming from such influential leaders, their supporters subsequently rioted and attacked innocent graduates who were employed by the Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, to help conduct the elections.

To date, no single individual involved in instigating those unwarranted attacks on innocent graduates who devoted their time and efforts for the service of their country have been brought to justice. It is also crucial to note that the intensification of the attacks by Boko Haram is linked to the forthcoming 2015 general elections, and as such, necessary steps have to be taken by the United States and the international community to ensure that the outcome of the 2015 general elections are devoid of all forms of malpractice because such would help in maintaining stability in Nigeria. A major step in this direction is to mobilize international observers to ensure that all votes are counted immediately at the polls and at the polling stations in the forthcoming 2015 general elections.

As the United States Government seek ways to assist Nigeria in addressing some of our challenges, it is also instructive that both countries identify flash points where future crisis might erupt and take proactive steps to address them. A clear example of such flash points is the case of Ogoni. The Ogoni people, since the 1990s, had made presentations to the Nigerian Government and Shell and the international community to address the environmental challenges caused by reckless oil exploration in the area. To date, nothing has been done about it.

In August 2011, the United Nations Environment Programme released the report of its findings in Ogoniland and submitted a report to President Jonathan who promised to promptly implement the report. In anticipation of a massive protest by the Ogoni people for failure of the government to implement the report after 1 year, the government, in 2012, established the Hydrocarbon Pollution Control and Restoration Agency, HYPREP. Despite their reservations, the Ogoni people assured the government and Shell that they will work with the government to implement the report. However, it is sad to note that to this date, very little attention has been paid to that. However, the United States has a role to play. It should encourage the Nigerian Government to address issues that are legitimate and will also be flash points in future.

While the UNEP report remains unresolved, hundreds of Ogoni refugees and political asylum-seekers remain stranded in the Federal Republic of Benin, living under dehumanizing conditions such as no access to food, medication, education, and the rest. One of the cardinal solutions to the Ogoni problem has—as advanced by the Ogoni people, has been to ask the Nigerian Government to at least establish a Bori state. To date, not much has been said about that. However, it is difficult to assess that the outcome of the ongoing

national conference in Abuja will be helpful given the majority versus minority efforts.

Lastly, I would call on the United States Government that as a strong partner of Nigeria, they continue to work with the Nigerian Government to encourage address our problems. However, one major step that can be taken is to appoint a special envoy that will work with the U.S.-Nigeria Binational Commission to coordinate the efforts because so far, it is clear that both the United States has what it is doing on one hand and the Nigerian Government on the other hand. Once again, thank you for giving me opportunity to address you.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Mr. John-Miller.

[The prepared statement of Mr. John-Miller follows:]

**ADDRESS PRESENTED BY ANSLEM D. JOHN-MILLER BEFORE THE
HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON
AFRICA, GLOBAL HEALTH, GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS, AND
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS ON JUNE 11, 2014.**

Mr. Chairman

Ranking Member Bass

All protocols Observed,

I thank you and members of your committee for giving me the opportunity to address you on current developments in Nigeria as it relates to the atrocities of the Boko Haram and how the United States and Nigeria could work together to put an end to the activities of this terrorist group.

First, I commend the government and people of the United States for condemning the kidnappings of the Chibok girls and the Obama Administration's efforts with the Nigerian Government to secure the release of these girls. I am positive that with such collaboration, the Chibok girls would ultimately be re-united with their families.

On the current efforts to rescue the abducted Chibok Girls, I must emphasize that the United States and other countries involved encourage the Nigerian Government to employ every means available at its disposal including diplomacy to secure their release. While I continue to maintain my position that no government should negotiate with any terrorist group, I am concerned that if the same principle is adopted in the case of the Chibok girls, their return may not be in the near future. Since the abducted girls are Christians, they risk being killed by the leader of Boko Haram because he knows that the girls remain Christians despite their so-called conversion. He may resort to killing the girls if force is employed in their rescue just to blackmail the governments of Nigeria, the United States and others. In this regard, I commend the efforts of Ex-President Olusegun Obasanjo who has initiated some moves to secure the release of the girls through dialogue and diplomacy. I implore this Committee to encourage the Nigerian Government to explore all means necessary in securing the release of the abducted Chibok girls.

While the United States and the International Community's attention is focused on how to secure the release of the abducted Chibok girls, it is important to note that the sophisticated and coordinated attacks that the Boko Haram has carried out after the abduction of the girls show that the organization remains strong, bold and determined to inflict unimaginable harm and destruction on Nigeria so that the Nigerian-state will plunge into total anarchy and chaos thereby making it ungovernable. As such, the ongoing war against Boko Haram in Nigeria should not be treated with levity or treated as a local Nigerian crisis but should be elevated to the status of the war against AI

Qaida. The United States Congress should therefore work closely with the Obama Administration to develop comprehensive counter-terrorism strategies that will help Nigeria to crush Boko Haram and put an end to the carnage and sufferings of the people of North-Eastern Nigeria and the neighboring countries of Cameroon, Chad and Niger-Republic.

Many terrorism experts and scholars have attributed poverty and under-development in North-East Nigeria as the cause of Boko-Haram and prescribed the provision of job opportunities and development of the region as the solution to the problem and I partly agree only in the context that poverty and idleness make youths of the area vulnerable and easy targets for recruitment as Boko Haram operatives. However, I strongly believe that if the youths recruited were not interested in terrorism, they would have resisted because poverty, under-development and idleness is not confined to only the North-East region but visible everywhere in the country, especially in Ogoni and the Niger-Delta region.

Solving the problem of Boko-Haram in Nigeria cannot be achieved without addressing the issue of corruption. While there has been much focus on corruption at the national level of governance in Nigeria and the military, very little attention has been paid to the level of corruption at the state and local government levels in the North-East and other parts of the country. Nigeria operates a Federal System of Government which shares power between the Federal, State and Local Governments. These states and local governments receive monthly allocations from the Federal Government and are expected to use the funds to provide amenities and develop their states and local governments. However, such funds end up in the private accounts of the state governors and the local government chairmen installed by the governors, resulting in paltry sums of money being spent on programs that have direct impact on the lives of the citizens of the states and local communities.

To address the problem of corruption in Nigeria, I propose that the United States partner with Nigeria to encourage transparency and accountability at all levels of governance. The United States should also through its Justice Department investigate and confiscate all funds stolen by those in power at all levels in Nigeria and saved in bank accounts in the United States, Dubai, London, etc. and prosecute the culprits. The benefits those corrupt politicians enjoy now such as sponsoring themselves and their families on limitless trips to the United States and other developed countries to spend holidays, buying expensive cars and luxury houses, educating their children in the best schools in foreign countries at the expense of the suffering masses should be stopped forthwith.

It is only such decisive steps that will send a clear message to the rulers of Nigeria that the United States is serious about tackling corruption in Nigeria. While a few people may argue that the United States confiscating and arresting corrupt Nigerian officials anywhere in the world may amount to interfering in the internal affairs of a sovereign country, I posit that such a step is reasonable and morally justified especially since

corruption breeds discontent and provides a platform for its victims to be easily recruited as agents of terror.

Closely related to corruption is the human rights abuses committed by Nigerian soldiers. It is no secret that Nigerian soldiers torture and commit terrible human rights abuses when deployed to various communities and such acts discourage the local population from cooperating with them and providing intelligence that would have helped in accomplishing their missions. A clear example is the activities of Major Paul Okuntimo, then Chairman of the disbanded Rivers State Internal Security Taskforce who committed all sorts of atrocities in Ogoniland during the height of the Ogoni struggle in the 1990s. Despite the extra-judicial killings and crimes against humanity Major Paul Okuntimo and his men committed in Ogoni, he remains a free man walking on the streets in Nigeria instead of being locked behind bars. In recent times, several allegations of human rights abuses has been leveled against the soldiers deployed to the North-East to fight the Boko Haram insurgency and to date, no investigations has been carried out to unveil the truth or otherwise of the allegations.

With such negative perception about the soldiers, the citizens find it very difficult to collaborate with them and without the involvement of the locals who know the Boko Haram operatives, it will be very difficult to defeat the terrorist group. To address this issue, the United States Government should prevail on Nigeria to set up an independent judicial panel or empower the National Human Rights Commission to investigate such allegations and any soldiers incriminated be prosecuted so as to serve as a deterrent to others. A starting point is to influence the Nigerian National Assembly to immediately pass the "Enforcement and Punishment of Crimes Against Humanity, War Crimes, Genocide and Related Offences --- Bill of 2012 - (A copy of the Delta Force Documentary on the atrocities committed by the defunct Rivers State Internal Security Task Force in Ogoni is tendered for the records. Also enclosed is the Punch publication of September 2, 2012 titled "JTF soldiers to face trial for rape, murder, torture")

The declaration of Boko Haram as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) by the United States Government after the initial reluctance is a welcome development because it paves way for the United States Government to take various steps including freezing of bank accounts, deployment of drones and others assets to fight the terrorists. However, one major step that should be taken will make the current way against Boko Haram successful is to work with the Nigerian Government to identify the sponsors of Boko Haram and bring them to justice. On occasions, notable commanders of the Boko Haram have been apprehended while hiding in the houses of influential politicians without the host politicians being questioned and investigated over their ties with the terrorists arrested. With such developments, civilians who would have provided credible and actionable intelligence are afraid that doing so would put them at risk and in as much as this ugly trend continues, the Boko Haram insurgency will continue – (see attached Daily Post Publication of January 15, 2012 titled "Unbelievable: Christmas Day

Bomber Nabbed in Governor's Lodge and This Day Publication of 21 October 2012 titled "JTF: Boko Haram Member Arrested at Senator's Home").

To address this challenge, I urge the Congress to mandate the Justice Department to immediately initiate steps to collaborate with the Nigerian security and intelligence services to investigate, arrest and prosecute all alleged sponsors of Boko Haram in the United States. Alternatively, the United States should work with other permanent members of the United Nations Security Council to set up a Special Terrorism Court to try all those arrested for involvement in the activities of the Boko Haram in Nigeria. Prosecuting the sponsors and operators of Boko Haram in an international court will send a clear message to members and potential members of Boko Haram that the International Community is serious about bringing them to justice.

It is imperative to note that the Boko Haram insurgency has both religious and political undertones. The inflammatory and incisive statements made by some Islamic clerics and politicians, especially from the Northern part of Nigeria prior to and after the election of President Goodluck Jonathan in 2011 has also served as an incentive to the insurgents. Shortly after the 2011 Presidential election, some notable politicians from the North called on the masses in Northern Nigeria to revolt against the newly elected President Jonathan. With such statements coming from such influential leaders, their supporters subsequently rioted and attacked innocent graduates who were employed by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to help conduct the elections. To date, no single individual involved in instigating those unwarranted attacks on innocent graduates who devoted their time and efforts for services to their country had been brought to justice. It is also crucial to note that the intensification of the attacks by Boko Haram is linked to the forthcoming 2015 General Elections and as such, the United States Government and the International Community must ensure that all necessary steps are taken to ensure free and fair elections. Working closely with the Nigerian Government to ensure that the outcome of the 2015 general elections are devoid of all forms of electoral malpractice will help in maintaining stability in the country. A major step in this direction is to mobilize international observers to ensure that all votes are counted immediately the polls end at all pooling stations in the forthcoming 2015 national elections in Nigeria.

As the United States Government seek ways to assist Nigeria in addressing some of her challenges, it is also instructive that both countries identify flashpoints where future crises might erupt and take proactive steps to address them. A clear example of such flashpoints is the case of Ogoni. The Ogoni people since the 1990s had made presentations to the Nigerian Government, Shell and the International Community to address the environmental challenges caused by reckless oil operation in Ogoni since 1958 when oil was drilled in commercial quantities in the area. The environmental, social, and political demands of the people contained in the Ogoni Bills of Rights (OBR) which was submitted to the Nigerian Government since 1990 and the International Community has not been resolved to this date – (see the Ogoni Bill of Rights and

National Network Vol. 11 NO. 21, 2014 June 4-10, 2014 titled "Outburst Of Another Round Of Militancy Imminent In N/D – Mitee" for the records).

In August 2011, the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) released the report of its findings in Ogoniland and submitted the report to President Goodluck Jonathan who promised to promptly implement the report. In anticipation of a massive protest by the Ogoni people for failure of the government to implement the report after one year, the government in 2012 established the Hydro-Carbon Pollution Control and Restoration Agency (HYPREP). Despite their reservations, the Ogoni people assured the government that the Ogonis will collaborate with the agency in implementing the UNEP Report. However, it is sad to note that to this day, very little has been done by the HYPREP to implement the UNEP Report despite the fact that the report observes that Ogonis are dying in their numbers on a daily basis as a result of the consumption of benzene contaminated water – (see copy of the 2011 UNEP Report for the records). Shell has publicly indicated its willingness to work with the government and the Ogoni people in implementing the UNEP Report. Just last week, the President/CEO of Royal Dutch Shell Company, Mr. Ben Van Beurden stated that the funds for the implementation of the UNEP Report has been set-aside in a special and verifiable account and that he was embarking on a trip to Nigeria to seek ways of working with the government to implement the report. While we welcome the move by the President and CEO of Shell, I am concerned that unless all parties are onboard, especially the Nigerian Government, such efforts would amount to nothing – (see National Network Vol. 11 NO. 21, June 4-10, 2014 titled "Ogonis Charge FG, Shell On UNEP Report" for the records).

While the UNEP Report remains unresolved, hundreds of Ogoni refugees and political asylum-seekers remain stranded in the Federal Republic of Benin, living under dehumanizing conditions such as no access to food, medication, education, etc.

One of the cardinal solutions that the Ogoni people has advanced to resolve the ongoing impasse with Shell and the Nigerian Government is the creation of Bori State. The proposed Bori State as acknowledged by the Nigerian National Assembly is one that would be economically viable due to abundant human and natural resources endowed in Ogoni and the neighboring communities of Andoni, Opobo, Nkoro, Oyigbo that make up the proposed state. However, given high level of politics based on the dominance of majority vs minority at the ongoing National Conference in Abuja, Nigeria, we are not hopeful that Bori State would be among the states recommended to be created at the end of the conference.

As a matter of fact, the United States remains a strategic partner of Nigeria that we all count on to help Nigeria in navigating through her rough waters. The formation of the US/Nigeria Binational Commission is a bold step in the right direction. However, since deliberations and activities of the Commission remain at the inter-governmental level, it

is very difficult for concerned individuals and civil society organizations that would have contributed toward the success of the commission to participate. To address the concerns of the Ogoni and other peoples of the Niger-Delta, I strongly appeal to this committee to work with the Obama Administration to appoint a Special Envoy saddled with the responsibility of working with the Commission and the Nigerian Government to address the legitimate and genuine concerns of the Ogoni people and others. The Ministry of Niger-Delta Affairs, the Niger-Delta Development Commission (NDDC) and the Niger-Delta Amnesty Program can best be described as bureaucracies in Nigeria. If these establishments were effective, the over two-decades Ogoni conflict with Shell and the Nigerian Government would have been a thing of the past but that is not the case.

Once again, thank you for your interest in the stability of Nigeria and for giving me the opportunity to share my thoughts on recent developments in Nigeria. I look forward to working closely with this committee to seek durable solutions to the crises in Nigeria.

Anslem DornuBari John-Miller
(For and On-Behalf of the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP))

Mr. SMITH. I would like to now welcome Ambassador Sanders.

**STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE ROBIN RENEE SANDERS,
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, FEEEDS ADVOCACY INITIATIVE
(FORMER UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR TO NIGERIA)**

Ambassador SANDERS. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Bass, and members of the committee, I want to thank you for inviting me here today to testify before you. I just returned from Nigeria and was in-country when the international community became more aware of the horrible kidnapping of 247 girls by Boko Haram on April 14, 2004.

Honorable members, you have asked the panel today to discuss the ongoing crisis in Nigeria, and there are several components to this issue. However, my remarks will be based on my knowledge of the region, as I have been in every state in Nigeria and traveled by road from Abuja to Boko Haram's current expanded territory at least four times during my tenure there; what I know of Boko Haram before and since its resurgence, noting that it existed since the late 1990s; and my conversations and firsthand observation while on my recent trip.

I will address three things: The security environment in Boko Haram and areas of possible additional assistance; why Boko Haram was not initially considered an FTO or Foreign Terrorist Organization; and address what I am hearing on Chibok by my contacts.

First, the Nigerian security services in the face of Boko Haram. Current Nigerian services have never experienced anything like what they are facing with Boko Haram today. They need to understand that Boko Haram is unlike the Niger Delta conflict, and they need to toss out that playbook in records to this conflict. Boko Haram is executing asymmetrical warfare, and for the most part, this is outside of the framework of the security forces and their capability to effectively respond.

The Nigerian security services have been in recent conflicts, particularly the military, in recent conflicts in northern Mali, including the initial Nigerian Force Commander. The troops that have also served in Darfur are probably the few that have had the closest experience to asymmetrical warfare, which they are facing now. It is good that Nigeria has accepted international assistance.

From my time on the ground, they have always had—I am talking about the Nigerian military and security services—the following challenges: Airlift, and these are also concurrent with my recommendations. Airlift. Airlift is key to troop rotation. As I heard reports on the ground of PTSD while I was there, it is important because of the distances and tough road travel in the northeast, and airlift is also important because it will help them react faster to the changing situation on the ground as they try to cover 600,000 square miles of territory about the size of either Georgia or Wisconsin.

The services need additional materiel, a special mobile communications equipment, vehicles, technology-based bomb detection equipment. From what I saw in many places when I was on the road there, the bomb detection equipment is quite rudimentary,

and they certainly need improved control over the porous borders, as we have already heard from my colleagues.

They need improved military planning, logistics, equipment supplies, including sufficient spare parts and fuel. They need to expand its small special forces unit and its 24/7 counterterrorism center, both which were stood up or begun to stand up while I was there. They need to establish a satellite CT center closer to the northeast so information doesn't take so long to reach and be analyzed. They need more rapid response forces or what we call mobile units and probably more outposts. Security service personnel and resources are both stretched thin. Realignment is better needed to address the current threat, improvement in strategic communication and review of existing communication approaches because what they have now is not working internally or externally with affected communities, particularly with the families.

I would suggest a liaison committee led by someone respected for their human rights values that engages with and keeps the families informed, not someone who is a spokesperson used to dealing with the press, but a real advocate for the families.

I traveled through Kano last month by road, and on my way to visit an agricultural project, I did observe a lot of the checkpoints along the way. There are about 30 to 50 kilometers apart. I did not see the ability to communicate between most checkpoints. I understand that in the northeast this is more acute as distances between some checkpoints are greater, adding to what we already know that information is not reacted to in a timely or effective matter. I am not excusing the poor responses and late reaction date. I am just providing recommendations from a strategic perspective on things that can be and need to be addressed right now, and I would hope that the assistance packages for Nigeria are including this.

I also want to highlight that I think that this is a long war and a long conflict. Nigeria is at the beginning of this, and they have to realize this. This is no longer a localized conflict or insurgency. There is no easy fix, and every attack in response to Boko Haram cannot be viewed as a death knell blow to it. Long-range security framework to terrorist threat is what is needed. The security services need to regroup, reapproach, readdress in order to begin to get off their heels on the defensive and get more on an aggressive offensive footing.

Right now, the security services are outgunned and out-strategically played. One thing I also want to put into the mix on which I am not sure there has been much focus is the language differences. Most of the security services in the northeast are Hausa speaking, while the majority of the village populations in both Borno and parts of Yobe are Kanuri speakers. Just like the U.S. Military had to ramp up on its Arabic speakers for Iraq, the Nigerian military will need to increase its Kanuri speakers as well.

My next comment will be an unpopular thing to hear from many, but there are people and elements in the Nigerian military who are committed and serious, but they are under-supported and need resources. This does not dilute the issues of the very real challenges for security forces and reports in the past of corruption and failure to respond. That being said, I had several rank and file security service members come up to me on my last trip to say, "Madam,

you know some of us. You know we are not all bad. We do our jobs for our country. Tell people this, Madam,” and I said that I would.

I highlight this to underscore who is going to fight this war, who is going to fight this conflict if it is not for the Nigerian security forces, along with assistance from the international community. They are the vanguard on this conflict, so we need to help them pull up their bootstraps as an institution, address any challenges that they might have, get it together so that they can effectively fight and fight the security threat they are facing. If this entire security structure becomes demoralized, then who is going to fight this conflict?

There have already been reports of one or two incidents where military units allegedly have shown their frustration by shooting at commanders’ convoys. One happened when I was there. Relationships with neighbors on terms of sharing intelligence. Neighbors around Nigeria, they need to really work together and begin to really share not only resources but human intelligence information from villagers in Nigeria as well as neighboring countries. This will be critical elements to fighting this war, this conflict.

There has to be better control of the porous borders and cooperation. P-3 surveillance planes can assist with this, but in the end, on-ground human intelligence is going to be key. Boko Haram also has been brutal, so brutal that that several villages and markets have completely disappeared. And I really appreciate your comment, Mr. Chairman, about raising the food security issue. Food is becoming scarce as planting and commerce have both dried up. The international community also needs to keep an eye on the food security situation as food shortages could become a real issue down the line.

Turning to the question of the designation of Boko Haram as a Foreign Terrorist Organization. As I said earlier, Boko Haram has been around since the late 1990s and was more commonly referred to then and going forward, up until about 2003, as the Nigerian Taliban. Prior to the last 4 years, it executed localized sabotages, attacks on police stations, and recruited young people into the group but no kidnapping at that time. Evidence of some Boko Haram contacts with AQIM started to surface about 9 months after the extrajudicial killing of its then leader Muhammad Yusef and his key lieutenant Al Haji Buji Foi in July 2009. This was shared with the then-government.

I was in Nigeria when Yusef was captured and killed, almost before the cameras, by Nigerian police. From early 2010 until August 2011, almost a full year, there was a lull with some small acts and again localized. The morphing of Boko Haram to using al-Qaeda or AQIM-like tactics to achieve the goal of establishing an Islamic extremist caliphate began really surfacing in mid 2011 with the bombing of the U.N. headquarters in Abuja. And since then, Boko Haram has continually gotten more expansive in both its reach and brutality from 2010 to 2014.

I will expect disagreement on this, but earlier than August 2011, before it bombed the U.N. headquarters in Abuja, in my view, Boko Haram would not have met the third leg of the cited FTO designation in the law. It must be a foreign organization; check. It must be engaged in terrorist activity; check. Its terrorist activity or ter-

ror must threaten the security of U.S. nationals or national security. That didn't really start to happen until 2011, and the rest of the designation also outlines that you have to have a consistent record over time in order to start making the case for FTO which began at that time.

Chibok. First, my heart goes out to the families and the missing girls wherever they might be as I know they are suffering, scared, and afraid. In Paris Monday, there was a global conference on women, and one of the things that was said regarding the Chibok girls is that this tragedy is the epitome and dehumanization that girls do not have the right to control their own fate, their own education, and who they might choose to marry.

Despite reports out of Nigeria, I do not think, and this is my personal view and assessment from having just been out there, that most of the girls have been in Nigeria for a long time. We have no idea how long ago the videos being shown were taken. And these terrorist groups learn from each other, and Boko Haram is nothing but strategic; therefore, I think it is unlikely that most, maybe not all, the girls have been put into smaller groups, taken across the border to Chad or Cameroon or elsewhere, or even if they remain in Nigeria or some of them do, they are probably in smaller groups or in singular situations. So again, the human intelligence factor, the HUMINT, that means everybody working together, sharing on ground resources is going to be critical to hopefully finding some of them.

I also do not want us to forget that from January through March 2014, young girls were being kidnapped, killed, terrorized, and brutalized by Boko Haram. Yesterday, as we already heard, more than 20 more women were reported kidnapped near Chibok.

During January through March 2014, young girls were burned to death in their dorms, other kidnapped, divided up based on their physical maturity level, and those who showed signs of puberty had their throats cut. All of these actions show that Boko Haram Shekau is acting on one of his stated goals, that he would make the mothers and the daughters of Nigeria suffer in revenge for the capture of Boko Haram family members by Nigerian security forces.

I highlight all of these things to underscore that we as the international community cannot be sporadic on these horrible human rights violations and brutality of young girls. We must do all we can to protect the young women in the north, and I have a few recommendations, mostly on the human side of things just in case the current assistance packages are not including these things.

I strongly believe that more trauma and grief counseling for the families and the returned girls must be at the top of the list. I already mentioned the liaison committee by someone respected for their human rights values that can help keep the families informed and also to avoid the similar tragedy that happened in Malaysia with the families not being informed and not kept in the loop. Ensure that the girls that have returned and their families are protected so they don't become victims again.

As I am sure, Boko Haram is watching what happens with them. If we protect their faces, this doesn't mean that Boko Haram elements can't figure out who they are, so we need to be careful with

their safety. I also believe that President Jonathan should meet with the families, even if it is not in Chibok.

And I am not making an apples-and-oranges comparison necessarily, but if the world community can mobilize tons of financial technical human resources to find the missing Malaysia plane of 239 people, it can mobilize the same, it can mobilize the same, to find the 247 girls, no matter in what country they are located.

Things such as mistrust among neighboring countries in sharing intelligence information must take a back seat. I do see an array of assistance but nowhere near the level of mobilization that is probably needed by the entire international community full-time, all the time.

Thank you Mr. Chairman, thank you Ranking Member Bass, and members of the committee.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Sanders follows:]

**The U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health,
Human Rights, and International Organization**

**Testimony by Ambassador Robin Renee Sanders (ret), CEO FEEEDS Advocacy
Initiative June 12, 2014, 2:00pm**

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Bass, and Members of the Subcommittee, I want to thank you for inviting me here today to testify before you. I just returned from Nigeria and was in country when the international community became more aware of the horrible kidnapping of 247 girls by Boko Haram on April 14, 2014.

Honorable Members you have asked the panel today to discuss the ongoing crisis in Nigeria and there are several components to this issue, however, my remarks will be based on:

- My knowledge of the region, as I have been in every state in Nigeria, including travelling by road from Abuja through what is now Boko Haram's current expanded territory of operation at least 4 times during my tenure there. I have been north of Maiduguri also by road in some of the most desolate areas of the world I have been in, and I have served in Sudan by comparison;
- What I know of Boko Haram before and since its vicious resurgence, noting that it has been in existence since the late 1990s; and,
- My conversations and first hand observations while on my recent trip to Nigeria.

With that backdrop, I will address what I understand are the Committees principal concerns for holding this hearing today:

- 1.) The Security Environment and Boko Haram, and areas of possible additional assistance;
- 2.) Why Boko Haram was not initially considered a Foreign Terrorist Organization, FTO; and then;
- 3.) Address what I am hearing from my contacts on Chibok, and concerns there.

The Nigerian Security Services in the Face of Boko Haram:

-- Current Nigerian security services have never experienced anything like what it is facing with Boko Haram today. They need to understand that Boko Haram is unlike the Niger Delta conflict and they need to toss out that play book as regards to this conflict. Boko Haram is executing asymmetrical warfare, and for the most part this is outside of the framework of the security forces and their capability to effectively respond. The Nigerian troops that have been in recent conflicts in northern Mali, including the initial Nigerian Force Commander, and those troops who served in Darfur probably are the few that have had the closest experience in asymmetrical warfare;

--Thus, the existing challenges in some of the security structures are more evident now as they are finding it difficult to cope with the threat. It is good that Nigeria has accepted international assistance to begin to address some of these structural challenges and gaps in capability. From my time on the ground, they have always had challenges in the following areas:

--Airlift is key to troop rotation as I heard reports of PTSD while I was there; it is important because of the distances and tough road travel in the Northeast; and it is important because it will help them react faster to the changing situation on the ground as they try to cover more than 60,000 square miles of territory about the size of Georgia or Wisconsin (see on square miles:

<http://pointblanknews.com/pbn/exclusive/emergency-rule-cell-phones-cut-off-in-borno-vobe-adamawa/>; <http://www.wisegeek.com/how-big-are-the-states-in-america.htm>

--Additional materiel, especially mobile communication equipment, vehicles, technology-based bomb detection equipment (what saw in many places was rudimentary at best); improved control over the porous borders

--Improved military planning, logistics, equipment, and supplies, including sufficient spare parts, and fuel);

--Expand its small special forces unit, and its 24/7 counter terrorism center (both began to be stood up while I was there);

--Establishing a satellite CT center closer to the Northeast region so information doesn't take so long to react to or be analyzed;

--More Rapid Response Forces or what we call mobile units, and probably more outposts.

-- Security Service personnel and resources are both stretched thin, Realignment is needed to better address the current threat;

--Improvement in strategic communications and review of existing strategic communications approaches, because what they have now is not working internally or externally with affected communities, particularly with the families of the missing girls. I would suggest a liaison committee led by someone respected for their human rights values that engages with and keeps the families informed. Not someone who is a spokesperson use to dealing with the press, but someone who is both an advocate, and can avoid the Malaysia flight MH370 fiasco with the families. I lectured as a Visiting Scholar last year at Nigeria's Defense College and talked about the must-do things the security forces needed to do to build better relations and respond more quickly to the affected communities.

-- I traveled through Kano last month by road on my way to visit an agricultural project I am involved with in the Northwest. There were checkpoints all along the way, anywhere from 30-to-50 kilometers apart. I did not see the ability to communicate between most checkpoints. I understand that in the Northeast this is a more acute as distances between some checkpoints is greater, adding to what we already know: *That information is not reacted to in timely or effective manner.*

-- I am not excusing the poor responses and reaction to date. I am just providing recommendations from a strategic perspective of things that can be and need to be addressed right now as I would hope the assistance packages for Nigeria are including.

The Long war, The Long Conflict:

-- Nigeria is at the beginning of a long war or long conflict, and they have to realize this. This is no longer a localized conflict or insurgency. There is no easy fix and every attack in response to Boko Haram cannot be viewed a death knell

blow to it – a long range security framework to terrorist threat is what is needed. The security services need to regroup, re-approach, and re-address it as such in order to begin to get off their heels on the defense and get on an aggressive offense. This has not happened yet, and Boko Haram has not only succeeded in terrorizing 60,000 square miles of territory, but also as evident with the late April 2014 attacks, they have the ability to reach locations just 15 kilometers outside of Abuja, either with sleeper cells or with bombs getting past checkpoints.

-- Right now the security services are out gunned, and out strategically played. One thing I also want to put into the mix on which I am not sure there has been much focus is the language differences. Most of the security forces in the Northeast are Hausa-speaking, while the majority of the village population in Borno are Kanuri speakers. Just like the US military had to ramp up on its Arabic speakers for Iraq, the Nigeria military will need to increase its Kanuri speakers.

--I mention this as part of the overall issue of addressing and reframing of strategic communication and outreach to the villages.

-- My next comment will be an unpopular thing to hear for many, but there are people and elements in Nigeria's military who are committed and serious, but they are under supported and need resources. This does not dilute the issues of the very real challenges for the security forces and reports in the past of corruption and failure to respond. That being said, I had several rank and file security service members come up to me on this last trip to say: "Madame you know some of us, you know we are not all bad, we do our jobs for our country. Tell people this Madame; I said I would."

-- I highlight this to underscore who is going to fight this war, this conflict if it is not the Nigerian security forces, along with assistance from the international community. They are the vanguard of this conflict, so we need to help them pull up their boots straps as an institution to address any challenges they might have to get it together because if the entire security structure becomes demoralized who is going to fight this conflict.

-- There have already reportedly been 1-2 incidents where military units allegedly have shown their frustration by shooting at commanders' convoys – one report happen while I was still in Nigeria.

-- Relationship with Neighboring Intelligent Services:

Nigeria's neighbors and human intelligence from villagers in Nigeria and neighboring countries will be critical elements of fighting this war. There has to be better control of the porous borders and cooperation; P-3 surveillance planes can assist with this, but in the end on-ground human intelligence (or humint) is going to be key. Despite the May 2014 Paris conference, a trust issue remains among the neighbors on sharing intelligence. So we need to help build trust among those services as well.

-- Food Security:

Boko Haram has been so brutal that several villages and markets have just disappeared, which means food is becoming scarce as planting and commerce has ceased. The international community needs to keep an eye on the food security situation as food shortages could become an issue down the line.

-- Designation of Boko Haram as Foreign Terrorist Organization:

The other question I understood the Committee is interested in is why Boko Haram was not named earlier as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO).

--As I said earlier, Boko Haram has been around since the late 1990s, and was more commonly referred to before as the Nigerian Taliban. Prior to the last four years it executed localized sabotage, attacked police stations, and recruited young people into the group, but no kidnapping. Evidence of Boko Haram's some contact with AQIM started to surface about 9 months after (early 2010) the extrajudicial killing of its then-leader Muhammad Yusef's and his key lieutenant Al Haji Buji Foi in July 2009; this was shared with the then-government.

I was in Nigeria when Yusuf was captured and killed almost before the cameras by the Nigerian Police. From early 2010 until August 2011, almost a full year there was a lull with some small acts, again localized. The morphing of Boko Haram to using Al-Qaeda or AQIM-like tactics to achieve the goal of establishing an Islamic Extremist Caliphate began really surfacing in mid-2011 with the bombing of the UN Headquarters in August 2011, and since then Boko Haram has continually gotten more expansive in both its reach, and brutality from 2012-2014.

-- I will expect disagreements on this, but earlier than August 2011 before it bombed the UN Headquarters in Abuja, Boko Haram, in my view, would not have met the third leg of the cited FTO definition in the law:

1. It must be a foreign organization;
2. It must engage in terrorist activity, as defined in several sections off the Immigration and Nationality and Foreign Relations Authorization Acts (Sections 212 (a)(3)(B) of the INA (8 U.S.C. § 1182(a) (3)(B), or terrorism, as defined in section 140(d)(2) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1988 and 1989 (22 U.S.C. § 2656f(d) (2), or retain the capability and intent to engage in terrorist activity or terrorism); and,
3. Its terrorist activity or terrorism must threaten the security of U.S. nationals or the national security (national defense, foreign relations, or the economic interests) of the United States.

-- The Abuja UN Headquarters bombing showed the: reach; capability, brutality, of Boko Haram and its use of Al-Qaeda inspired tactics; underscoring that all nationals were at risk. The UN HQ is right around the corner from the US Embassy, and when I was there I could see the building from my office window.

Chibook/Chibok:

-- First my heart goes out to the families and the missing girls wherever they might be as I know they are suffering, scared, and afraid. In Paris Monday there was a Global Conference on Women, and one of the things said there regarding the Chibook girls is that this tragedy is the epitome in dehumanization that girls do not have the right to control their own fate; their education and who they might choose to marry.

--Despite reports out of Nigeria, I do not think that most/most of the girls have been in Nigeria for a long time. We have no idea how long the videos being shown were taken. And, these terrorists groups learn from each other, and Boko Haram is nothing but strategic. Therefore, I think it is unlikely that most (maybe not all) the girls have been put into smaller groups and taken across borders to Chad and Cameroon, or elsewhere, or kept in smaller groups or singular in Nigeria. So, again the human intelligence factor is going to be critical to hopefully finding some of them.

--I also do not want us to forget that from January-March 2014 young girls were being kidnapped, killed, terrorized and brutalized by Boko Haram. Yesterday, 20 more women were reported kidnapped near Chibok. During January-March 2013, young girls were burned to death in their dorms; others kidnapped, divided up based on their physical maturity level, and those who showed signs of puberty had their throats cut – all of these actions show that Boko Haram's Shekerau is acting on one of his stated goals that he would: make the mothers and daughters of Nigeria suffer in revenge for the capture of some of the Boko Haram families members by the Nigerian security forces.

--I highlight all of these things to underscore that we as the international community cannot be sporadic on these horrible human rights violations and brutality of young girls. We must all do all we can to protect the young women in the North. A few recommendations on human side of this issue, just in case the current assistance are not including these things.

--My recommendation are mostly directed at protecting and assisting the young girls who escaped, their families, and the families of those who are still missing:

- More trauma and grief counseling for families and returned girls;
- Liaison committee lead by someone respected for their human rights values that can help keep the families informed to avoid the Malaysian MH370 family relations issues;
- Ensure that the girls that have returned and their families are protected so they don't become victims again as am sure Boko Haram is also watching what happens with them. Even if we protect their faces, this doesn't mean that Boko Haram elements cannot figure out who they are, so we need to be careful with their safety;
- President Jonathan should meet with the families, even if it is not in Chibok/Chibok;
- Am not making an apples and oranges comparison necessarily, but if the world/international community could mobilize tons of financial, technical, human resources to try to find the missing Malaysia plane MH 370 of 239 people, it can mobilize to find 247 girls no matter in what country they are located.

-- Things such as mistrust among neighboring countries in sharing intelligence must take a back seat.

-- I do see an array of assistance, but nowhere near the level of mobilization that is probably needed by the entire international community – full time, all the time.

Thank You Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Bass and Members of the Committee

Mr. SMITH. Ambassador, thank you very much for your, again, comprehensive statement, but also your very comprehensive recommendations as to what should be done. You asked the threshold question, who is going to fight this war, and of course it is Nigerian military. I think your point about that Boko Haram is executing asymmetrical warfare, that is, for the most part, is outside of the framework of the security forces and their capacity to effectively respond is a very profound and necessary statement.

People are wondering why the success has not been gleaned by the military. I remember in Darfur, meeting with troops that had been deployed there as peacekeeping. This isn't a peacekeeping mission. This is, as we all know, a counterinsurgency mission that requires a very, very specialized set of skills and training, and as Dr. Pham has pointed out in his testimony, you know, the 650-man battalion that is being trained up, while that is good, that is certainly only a drop in the bucket, I would respectfully submit, as to what is necessary.

So my first question to the panel would be—as I said in my opening, I am very much in favor of vetting, as you pointed out, Dr. Pham, in your statement. Vetting is important, tailored efforts that meet the current vetting requirements can help Nigerian forces strengthen their civil-military affairs capabilities, but there are some aspects to vetting and exclusion of certain individuals who are capable and are not human rights abusers that may be excluded because of the current modalities employed by the Leahy amendment, and I was wondering if any of you, perhaps the Ambassador or Dr. Pham or any of our distinguished panelists would like to speak to that.

Your point about the command and control and the ability to communicate, Madam Ambassador, is right on. I was there on the ground for 4 days and heard some of the U.S. experts and others, not being critical, but being observing what is taking place. The ability to communicate quickly, effectively with actionable information has to be at the top; otherwise, Boko Haram is gone, they have moved on, they have either abducted or killed in another area, and now they are somewhere else, so I think your point was extremely well taken there.

Maybe there is a need, if you would speak to this as well, \$6 billion. I have heard as much as \$8 billion for their defense budget. Given their oil reserves and capacity there, money shouldn't be an object to ensuring that there is, for want of a better word, an emergency supplemental funding to make sure that the bullets, the capabilities are there, including command and control, in a very, very expedited way so that the troops that are trained, properly vetted, counterinsurgency capacity can wage a battle, as you pointed out, Madam Ambassador, this is going to be a long-term battle. I think we kid ourselves if we think this is going away anytime soon, especially since it is in ascendancy, not descendancy, so if you could speak to that issue as well.

And finally, on the issue of intelligence. I am very proud of what the United States is doing and very impressed by the capabilities of our men and women who are providing intelligence at the Fusion Center. It is, as you said, Dr. Pham, a very light footprint. It is very important that there not be a huge international presence, the

likes of which could be counterproductive, particularly to the propaganda war being waged by Boko Haram but very, very well focused capacity, assistance, and training, it seems to me, ought to be quadrupled, particularly in the area of training. I mean, they have the troops. They have the motivation. They just need a specialized skill that those of us in the West have been fighting, particularly our militaries, for so long in combating al-Qaeda and other kinds of groups, so if you could speak to those issues, I would appreciate it.

Mr. PHAM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let me just briefly address your three points and defer to my colleagues. On the Leahy amendment, we all share the belief that, by and large, the Leahy law protects U.S. interests in the long term, but you do raise the question of the exclusion of qualified individuals who might be useful in this current fight.

I would emphasize, I think, that the Leahy law, as I understand it, excludes battalion- and brigade-level units that have been implicated in, or at least well-documented human rights abuses. In many respects, what is needed in many of these units to raise morale in not only training but reforming of new units to give them a new identity, a new start. Before I turn away, I don't want to say the Leahy law is irrelevant, but in a way we have got to work around. Although, already we have vetted 187, I believe, Nigerian military units and 173 police units, so there are actually whole Nigerian units that could receive assistance even now in their current form, but for other units, I think we can get qualified people, and sometimes that is the best thing. We have learned our own experience of the last decade in some of the wars, sometimes pulling people from different units and forging them together is the best way to move ahead. So I think we can—there are workarounds. We just need to be creative about it.

Secondly, with respect to resources, I would tend to emphasize that we can get more, no puns intended, bang for our buck with Nigeria's neighbors. Nigeria is a wealthy country. It can afford—it needs training, but it can afford resources. The neighbors are less well-off, especially countries that have demonstrated a political will to fight the terrorists, Niger being a good example of that, but simply don't have the resources, and there, because it is a smaller country, smaller military, we can better account for the funding being spent and the multiplier effect of having them seal their borders which Boko Haram has been using to cross, crossing Niger, Chad, other countries, might be a better use of our limited resources and then devote our resources in Nigeria to training rather than materiel, which Nigerians are more that capable of paying for themselves.

And finally, on the intelligence issue. I probably would agree with your assessment on the good that we have done with the small number we put there, and we certainly can increase that. One thing, I would be remiss if I didn't use this opportunity to raise the fact that we do not yet, after years of constantly talking about this year in and year out, and Ambassador Sanders, I think, will be able to comment on, we have yet to deploy a diplomatic mission north of Abuja. This is an area with arguably the largest Muslim population in all of Africa, larger than even Egypt's population

if you think about the number of Nigerians in the north. We don't have a diplomatic installation. We don't have even the lightest of footprints to build bridges, to gather knowledge of the people and to build relationships, which will help in—when we have to ramp up in these cases, and we need to revisit this with, I think, far greater urgency than even in the past. Thank you.

Mr. OGEBE. Yes. I have a couple of quick points here, sir, and the first is that as we worked on advocacy to bring about the designation, the FTO designation, we found that it was easier to blacklist a foreign army under Leahy than it was to get a designation for a terror organization, and so that was, I thought, ironic.

Secondly, the guidelines for appealing an FTO designation are easier than for reversing a blacklist under Leahy, so I think there needs to be some kind of parity between the two because we need some of this foreign armies to help us with regional security considerations.

The second point I wanted to quickly address was military capacity. Nigeria used to have a really outstanding Air Force, but all the years of military dictatorship saw attrition, internal attrition as generals—one general after the other killed off some of the best pilots, and so on and so forth, they had, so we now see a Nigerian Air Force that is a shell, a real shell of its former self. And last year Boko Haram attacked an air force base and destroyed five jets, and the Army's response was, oh, you know, oh, the jets were faulty anyway, so it wasn't a big loss. But what are they doing having five broken down jets in your base in the first place?

I think the one last point I will make on this is that part of the problem with the military strategy is that there is so much disinformation that it is difficult to even know where to help them. They are not being truthful about losses, about combat incidents, and so on and so forth, so you don't know what really is going on. And from what we can tell, they are taking a really bad bashing, as the Boko Haram video of the attack on Giwa barrack shows. They are really getting the short end of the stick in this battle. Thank you.

Ambassador SANDERS. Thank you for your questions, Mr. Chairman. I want to start on the intelligence issue because I think we need to have a broader discussion about expanding what we mean by that. Certainly I am 100 percent behind you in terms of the capability of U.S. intelligence. I had the privilege of having access to that, so I do respect that, but I am actually talking about human intelligence on the ground, having a way to either better communicate with villagers and locals living in the area so you get a better sense of what is going on, which is why I kind of raised the language issue because I remember being up there and being with Hausa speakers in terms—even the military police contingents that were with me and not being able to communicate once we got outside of Maiduguri with the population outside of the capital because they weren't speaking the same language.

So when you look at some of these outlying areas, I was wondering whether or not, as part of this communication is that needs to be looked because maybe they are just not being able to communicate with each other. I am not reducing the issue any by saying that, but I think it is an issue that needs to be looked at. We found

that for ourselves in Iraq, and I think it may be an issue for the Nigerians to pay attention to, so those two things.

In terms of intelligence also, the CT center, which I won't say where it is, but I think they need to really have a satellite center closer to the area of conflict because if everything has to come back to where that center is located to be analyzed and reacted to, you are looking at days and sometimes weeks here to do that, so that is a reality that I think—I won't say it is a quick fix, but it is certainly a reality that can address some of the issues.

And then in terms of troops, I don't know how many of the troops who serve in Darfur and Mali are either being included, maybe they are not even based in the north, I have no idea, but are they in this group that has been vetted that can actually provide some intel in terms of how you deal with asymmetrical warfare to their colleagues on the ground. I think that is a big issue.

They have only a small special forces unit, and so maybe that is additional—I think maybe the trainers that we have there now from the U.S. are helping to do that, but their special units need to be expanded, and they have to have more mobile units than they have right now.

Transportation from one point to another. I don't know if you have been up there or my colleagues have been up there in recent times, but it is a very, very difficult environment to travel in, so I can't—I can't underscore enough the need for equipment, vehicles, and others.

On the human rights issue—sorry.

Mr. SMITH. Would you yield briefly? Would you encourage the Nigerian Government to do an emergency supplemental as we would do here, as we have done time and again to appropriate additional funds, because I heard story after story of too little ammunition, too little of everything, and how do you fight a battle or a war when you don't have the capability in terms of munitions?

Ambassador SANDERS. I have two responses to that. One, I think the money is there and they have enough money to do it. I don't think the money is being deployed properly, and I don't think it is getting where it needs to be. So you can add more money to the fire, but if it still doesn't get deployed where it needs to be and utilized properly, you are still going to have the same issue, so I would stress deployment and utilization of the resources they have more effectively and more efficiently and getting them to the right people that need to have it, and certainly, in the northeast, they are short on a lot of things, even fuel, you know, to get from one place to another.

On the human rights issue, one of the things that I had suggested when I was on the ground recently, not this year but the end of last year, was really looking at having fast track military courts on human rights issues so that there is transparency in the process, that the public knows, the military knows, and there is a sense of addressing impunity if things do happen in the human rights arena. So, that hasn't been done yet, and I still think that that is something that they can do.

The neighbors, cannot be stressed enough, their role is extremely important. They don't have the resources, but it is not only just resources. There is a general mistrust in sharing intelligence across

countries, and I think that somehow we, maybe we can play a facilitating role in helping address that mistrust because without that kind of coordination, cooperation, and communication, then all the human intelligence stuff that we are talking about, even hard intelligence, is not going to be useful if it is not responded to in an effective and coordinated manner.

On the FTO. I can just say this. I think that the—and then I will go back to Leahy, but on FTO, I would encourage, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Bass, that your subcommittee and your staff take a look at the details of the FTO. We are in a completely new global environment. When you look at the date on some of these updates, 1985, 1988, 1989, you know, we are in a completely different global world today than we were at that time, and we have a—I won't say a Cold War element here because it is not, the dates don't correspond, but in a way, it is structured that way, and in the end, I think that a closer look needs to be taken for the FTO so that we don't wait 12 months, 25 months, 33 months to designate an organization that needs to be designated as such. So I would encourage that.

I have already talked about the equipment issue. On presence in the north. That is really a thorn in my side, I must say, and I presume that my colleagues, who are on the ground there, feel the same.

We have tried, I know, to establish a presence in the north several times. When I was there, there was an administrative decision at least. We didn't get to implementation phase to try to have a small consulate in Kano. There were a lot of administrative challenges to executing on the ground, most of which was security. How do we protect the Americans that would be there? What we did have there in Kano, in Bauchi, and in Borno, and I went to all three sites, we did have an American corner presence. I don't think because of the state of emergency that we can have those anymore, and the security situation; so the diplomatic issue, fundamentally and theoretically is absolutely on target. The reality, though, makes it a challenge for us as a government. How do we protect the people that are there, and how can they effectively do their jobs if they are then hunkered down and can't get out? So that is the reality that we have to talk about because American lives come first.

On the Leahy amendment on vetting, I think that we can find qualified people and elements. As I said, I know a lot of them personally. I have worked with them firsthand. I went to every single military exercise that I could get to to really have a better sense of what the capability was and the environment was; and as I said, there are a lot of good, dynamic people in the Nigerian security services. I had two military police responsible for my protection when I was there for 3 years, top notch guys.

So I would argue that, you know, let's walk the fine line that we have to walk on this, provide the training and assistance that we need to provide to the elements that we are sure of that have not been implicated in human rights violation. If they can stand up a fast-track military court to be able to address those other issues, let's get that done. And I think that I have addressed all of your initial questions.

Ms. BASS. Thank you very much. I really want to thank all of the panelists. I think this has been an exceptional hearing, and I appreciate your information and your input and your recommendations. I just had a couple of questions. The report suggests that the Nigerian Government has been hesitant to accept U.S. assistance and, as a matter of fact, my understanding is we were trying to provide that assistance right away, and there was reluctance on their part; and I wanted to know if members of the panel could respond to that and maybe provide us some kind of insight. I would also like to know if that has changed.

In my comments, I did go through several ways that I know our Government has been involved; but that doesn't necessarily mean it is all that welcome. And, Ambassador Sanders, and this also applies to other members of the panel, too, I wanted to know what you feel specifically, especially in the north, are the most pressing concerns. I know it is poverty, but what exactly does that mean? And I did understand that there was a Nigerian entrepreneur who said that he is going to go up to the north and provide some jobs. I don't know how specific or realistic that is. And I would, you know, agree with the panelists. It might have been Mr. John-Miller, I am not sure, who said that it is not just about poverty, but poverty does set the stage. When people are desperate, they will join forces like Boko Haram. So, anyway, I wanted to know about that.

And this is just a side note for Dr. Pham. You said that the Nigerians had drones from the Israelis, but the drones don't fly, and I just wanted you to finish that. You made that comment, but I wanted you to explain about that. Thank you. You can start, Dr. Pham.

Mr. PHAM. Thank you, Ranking Member Bass. I will start with the last one on the drones. Two years ago on the ramp-up after the big wave of attacks on 2011, Nigeria purchased a number of drones from Israel, Aerostar drones. They also purchased, and the government allocated, reportedly \$20 million for a maintenance contract. The Israeli firm that was supposed to maintain the drones came, set up shop. They never got paid, and so after a few months of this, although the money was allocated, they closed up shop and went away. They are in business to make money. They went away, and then no one picked up the slack. The money was allocated, and the good Lord knows where the money went. And so 2 years later when the drones are needed, not being maintained for 2 years, they don't fly; and that is just one anecdote, and one could find others.

A couple years ago some of my colleagues at the Atlantic Council, in the Africa Center, did an analysis of the Nigerian fleet and how many of the vessels listed in the battle order were in dry dock, and it was a good two-thirds of the fleet. So it is a systematic problem. It is not going to be solved overnight, and it doesn't reflect on individuals who really want to serve their country. But it is a systematic issue. But they did have the drones. That is an open source bit of information out there that they have the drones, but none of them fly.

Ms. BASS. Thank you. Would other witnesses like to respond to some of the other issues I raised?

Mr. JOHN-MILLER. Well, on the issue of the north and what should be done, it is not just an issue of underdevelopment in poverty, because like I said in my presentation, poverty is all about a place. If you go to the Niger Delta and look at the landscape, you will agree that the situation is not as grave as the Niger Delta. And even when the Niger Delta took up arms, when they were told, look enough is enough, they listened. So to tell me that poverty is responsible for the situation, that is not accurate. It has to be looked at from the lens of politics. The belief has been that it is a north-south divide when it comes to political offices.

When a President comes from the north, obviously power changes hands when Yar'Adua came, and unfortunately he passed, power went to Goodluck Jonathan from the Niger Delta. And the belief was that when Jonathan completes his 4 years, it should go back to the north. With the belief that Jonathan is about to complete his 4 years and go, that is one of the reasons why you see the intensification of attacks. So this issue has to be addressed. As far as leadership in Nigeria is concerned, it is open to all. Not just a matter of one zone producing the elite of the country and then for some reason when the other one is unable to produce, it now brings up issues, and then there is crisis.

It is also clear that corruption, until we deal with the issue of corruption, no matter the human intelligence we have and all that, corruption invades every aspect. Look at the case of the military. How can you have a functional military when the budget of the military is unbelievable, but where are the weapons to show that the budget actually was spent on the weapons.

Ms. BASS. And one of the reasons why I asked you the question was I was just trying to identify some solutions.

Mr. JOHN-MILLER. Right. So what should be done is this. The U.S. Government and the international community needs to sit down with the leadership of Nigeria and make it imperative to them that this the trend that corruption is having on the situation in the country.

Ms. BASS. So the first question I was asking was about Nigerians' reluctance to accept U.S. assistance, so within that context, how can we do what you just said?

Mr. JOHN-MILLER. Okay. I read in the papers, and I am also going to bring you back to the issue of culture and also ethnicity as also part of it. When the U.S. responded that they were going to give the Nigerian Government drones and all that, everybody welcomed it. I issued a statement. It was just a few northern politicians who opposed it, and the reason for opposing it is that they see it as a way of empowering Jonathan; and if the assistance is accepted, it will certainly expose them, who are the sponsors of Boko Haram.

So in their way, they don't want anything that will give opportunity for the security operatives to unveil the real sponsors of Boko Haram. That is why no matter what you do, they will always criticize that. The best thing that should be done is to come out clearly and say as long as this is terrorism, if you are implicated, you will be picked up. This is a national security issue. It has nothing to do with politics. If you even look at the arguments over whether the Chibok girls are abducted or not, you will see that it

is politics. The Borno government is saying that the Federal Government is not doing enough. The Federal Government is saying, no, you are not doing enough. You will see that there is no unity amongst the levels of government; and when it comes to terrorism, the safety of lives and property of the citizens comes first.

Ms. BASS. Okay. Maybe I can hear from the other two witnesses.

Mr. OGEBE. Yes. I was going to say that part of the reluctance of Nigeria not accepting foreign assistance is this persona, this whole persona of, oh, big brother Africa; you know, we are the world. We take care of everyone; no one takes care of us. So that clearly was a constraint. But talking to some of the military sources in Nigeria for example, regarding the FTO, they did hint that there was a reluctance by politicians to have finances being tracked and all of that. So that may have been why they were not gung ho about FTO designation themselves. But I think that Nigeria is now at the point where they realize they can't go it alone. And if this is any encouragement to you, some of the families we met last week told us how they were contributing \$70,000. These are poor peasant families. But a witch doctor in Cameroon had apparently offered to help them bring back their girls, and these poor families were trying to raise that money; and here is what they told us. They said when we heard in the news that the Americans were coming, we decided not to raise that money, and that was for me very uplifting. And that was for me very uplifting. And I think it illustrates the point that they were retreating back into the dark ages because their government had failed. And then they saw a glimmer of hope from the world, and that is why the majority of them are excited about America's intervention.

Ms. BASS. Okay. Thank you. Let me go on to Ambassador Sanders.

Ambassador SANDERS. Thank you, Ranking Member Bass. You are absolutely right in terms of there being a resistance to receiving U.S. military training more than anything else, not necessarily equipment, but really sort of the training. I saw that firsthand when I was on the ground. I spent my first 12 months or 18 months fighting back their concerns about AFRICOM. If you put things back in context, you know, do a little bit of history on this issue, AFRICOM had really just been stood up for a couple years before, and there was this phobia about AFRICOM on the continent. When I landed in Nigeria, the phobia on AFRICOM was at an all-time high, not wanting a military footprint on the continent, all of those things that we have now seen kind of dissipate.

I have always been a big advocate of AFRICOM in terms of its capability for training, the intel it brings to the table and everything else. As I said, my team and I worked really hard to change that dynamic around in Nigeria. So, yes, you are absolutely right. There was that resistance early on, and maybe things would have been different. Now I see a huge change in that. As you said, the AFRICOM commander was just there. I know he went to several locations, not just in the capital, and I think that is a real turning point for Nigeria.

Let me just put one word of caution on the table though. As we move forward, now that we have this open door and there is a desire for our assistance and our help, I also think we have to re-

member that this is a military that thinks of itself as a professional military. It has served in peacekeeping operations probably more than any other African country in the world. They were the top peacekeepers from the African continent. Their force commanders were in Mali. Their force commanders were in Darfur. They were in Liberia, for instance. So we have to keep that in mind as we go in and try help them and assist them. And keep that in mind that we can't also add to the demoralization that they may be feeling now. We need to be going in with the best foot forward, which I am sure our guys are doing, but I just want to put that out there for the record.

In terms of the poverty issue, definitely that is a feeder issue. It is not, I would say, I was always in the camp of saying that I didn't see poverty being the driver. I actually saw when I was up there, I had a session with religious leaders. I had a session with students from Maiduguri University my last time up there before I left. And then I did an open town hall in downtown Maiduguri, one of the toughest environments I have ever had to speak in.

What I walked away with from that encounter, at least the last one, which is very tough, very hostile to the U.S., all of those things, I walked away saying this is really more about a clash of civilizations, really a different world perception of where people, where the fundamentalist groups want to take their country. So how do we address that?

What I saw this last time was a slight change in that because Boko Haram has been so brutal, that their recruitment and feeder issues have diminished somewhat in their ability to attract people to their entity, and that to me is a good sign that maybe we as an international community can capitalize on by then addressing the sectoral development issues, because the attraction for Boko Haram, I think, has been diminished quite significantly because of their brutality.

I was at one session with a group of students at the University of Maiduguri, and I will never forget this young woman, and she stood up and said, "Why doesn't the U.S. like people of Islamic faith?" There was that initial sense, I thought, from a lot of young people in that part of the region. I don't see that as much now because of the brutality of Boko Haram.

So I think we have an opportunity here to capitalize on that changing tide that has happened on the ground and really come in with some fundamental development tools to address education, health care, but more importantly, potable water and sanitation I would put at the top of the list, as well as really providing an enabling environment for people to live their lives in quality and in peace.

Ms. BASS. Thank you very much.

Mr. SMITH. Gentlelady Jackson Lee from Texas is recognized.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Let me thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your courtesies to a member of the Judiciary Committee and Homeland Security Committee and a former member of this committee that has had a very strong commitment to the continent, and of course to these issues, to our children, and to this crisis dealing with Boko Haram.

Let me thank each of the witnesses and take note of Ambassador Sanders for her service to the country and to Jubilee for its very in-depth persistent presence in some of the more difficult areas.

So I am going to start with Mr. Pham on the presence or non-presence of the African Union and whether or not they can pose an effective catalyst for a concerted purposeful action against Boko Haram. Do they have the necessary assets to view this as an attack on Africa and to be able to be helpful?

Mr. PHAM. Thank you, Congresswoman Jackson Lee, for that question. First, let me begin by saying Boko Haram is a threat not just to Nigeria but to Africa itself. In that respect, it should be and it ought to be a concern for the African Union as a whole. That being said, the African Union faces several constraints which we have to be realistic about what it can do in this particular situation. The first constraint is the reluctance still, as Ambassador Sanders just mentioned in her response to the ranking member, of Nigeria to its going down, but there is still a resistance to outside, if you will, interference which the African Union would have to overcome.

Secondly, the African Union, unfortunately, its counterterrorism center is based in Algiers. And part of that is it enters into the very murky and complex politics of Algeria, its relationship with al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, its relationships with Boko Haram. It gets into a whole bunch of weeds. So although the legitimacy of the African Union should be brought into play, its condemnation, its convening power, in reality, we are facing a situation that requires immediate action and resources which by the time the African Union got it all together, it is definitely way too late for the poor girls from Chibok and for the current effort. So for now we should use what we can from the African Union, use its convening power, its moral authority, but recognize there are very severe institutional dynamics which limit its ability to act effectively in this particular situation.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I don't want to pursue that frailty, but that disappoints me greatly. The African Union, as I understand it, based still in Ethiopia, is it, has military resources and assets as I thought, and I am just shocked that this is not a potent enough issue that they cannot be engaged. I am not going to ask you to respond, but I am just going to say on the record, I am disappointed, and I hope they will have an opportunity to meet some of their representatives here. I know we have met some of them in Africa, but I am just shocked because some of us as Members of Congress have indicated that that would be a good partnership to look at it from the African perspective.

There has got to be some military force that has a concerted effort, and I heard Ambassador Sanders' comments about the resources that Nigeria has; and I also heard your comments tragically that this has been going on since the 1990s, so it has now mushroomed, and it is now at a point where it is going to be that much more difficult to contain it, but contain it we must. That is my view of it. Contain it we must, and we must use not only the resources that we did looking for the Malaysian flight, which I truly believe we should as well. This is too rich a world, even with the developing nations, but I frankly believe that we should use the

resources that we are using collectively as a world family against al-Qaeda, because when you hear the word al-Qaeda, hair stands on the top of everyone's head, and every resource that they have is thrown at it. In this instance, not only are we missing world support, but we are missing world resources.

Let me ask Mr. Ogebe, thank you for being here representing Jubilee. Can you speak to the religious crisis that we are facing, and is there any way to part the waters on the religious crisis? Because if we are to go to Kano where it is sort of the centerpiece, does someone get on a van and come with a peace flag, a white flag, and say let's bring everybody together? Is that a reality at this point in time? And I might just want to put on the record, Mr. Chairman, I am aghast, and I am going to get to the two other witnesses, that the loose existence of official military garb, uniforms, can be co-opted, put on terrorists, and innocent persons in a church literally shot down in cold blood. The worst of it is that they were receiving these individuals, welcoming them as people who were coming to help them, save them, protect them. Emmanuel?

Mr. OGEBE. Thank you very much, Congresswoman. Yes, the religious motivations of Boko Haram are explicit, and clearly they have conducted what I consider a pre-genocide on the Christian minorities of northern Nigeria. Now, speaking particularly with regard to their attacks on religious communities, last year they attacked over 60 churches, and in the same time frame they attacked about two to three mosques.

So overwhelmingly their focus is on Christian targets, government targets, and occasionally they attack Muslim groups that cooperate with the military authorities. Now that said, the concern that you make with regard to their access to military uniforms is very valid, and this really has created a credibility crisis for the genuine security forces because there are people showing up in uniforms and carting away girls whom they say they are going to protect.

And that had just happened again last week when they showed up in the church and rounded up people and said we are here to protect you and massacred scores of people in that village.

Some of our findings are that at one point, the Nigerian chief of staff, in an effort to boost, recruitment of northerners into the army, enrolled a lot of people. There are mass recruitments. And the records indicate that the night before graduation, after all of the training, a lot of these people deserted; so they deserted with knowledge and tactics of the Nigerian military, and they deserted with uniforms. So when you watch some of the videos of the attacks, you can see that these are very well-trained people who know the ropes of the Nigerian military's tactics.

Secondly, and this is sad, this goes to the issue of corruption again. For many people in the security forces, they have to buy some of their own equipment, including their own guns and uniforms. And so if you open source uniforms and guns and bullets, you will clearly have a problem of proliferation falling into bad hands.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. And you may have a problem, if the chairman is kind enough to indulge me, I am sorry, if I can continue, you may have a proliferation of mismatched uniforms not letting the

people know what is what. Let me just pose this question. I want to get to the other witnesses, because maybe I am being idealistic. First of all, would anyone listen to a ceasefire? Would anyone listen to the carrying of a white flag to go into the region and say, I want to sit down—and I see a smile—I want to sit down and at least talk about a ceasefire and a cessation of the violence, then begin to talk about the issues, because in the testimony that has been given in the questionings of the ranking member, there were the issues of extreme poverty, but there is also issues that the country itself has enormous wealth, but we know that the northern region is enormously impoverished, which may have been the genesis of a lot of this. Is there any, any hope of some kind of effort like that, and who would be the leaders of that effort?

Mr. OGBE. Well, with regard to the poverty, let me quickly polish that off. Boko Haram is killing Christians within their community who are as poor as them, or in some cases, even poorer because those Christians tend to be denied access to government services because they are religious minorities. The Christians could very well be terrorists as well if poverty was the simple reason or rationale for this, and they are not doing that.

With regard to the idea of the ceasefire, Boko Haram does not respect humanitarian corridors or any of the conventions that civilized people respect in combat, for example, allowing medics to come in, allowing relief to come in. They have actually gone out of their way to kill medical workers, so they may not be open to moral suasion from any source. That said, at this point because of the world headlines, the global spotlight on them, they may be open to approach.

I will say that we have contacts who have contacts who communicate with Boko Haram; and I tried to find out while I was out there last week whether they were open to talking, and apparently that channel has been silent for a while. I think, Congresswoman, if you wanted to lead that effort, we would be solidly behind you; but I can't think of anyone who would lead the charge as far as trying to broker a ceasefire. But certainly with the media headlights, which they clearly like—they are media savvy—there may be a window to actually have a dialogue with them.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Thank you. So on this side of the table, let me now call for a ceasefire, and let me join with my colleagues here, Chairman Smith, and the members of this very esteemed subcommittee, and therefore, say that we want a ceasefire. We want to save lives. I know there are many experts at this table, but if they can hear the sound of our voices, we have just asked for a ceasefire, and I am not taking this lightly. This is baffling and outrageous, but I do believe that there has to be some moment where we can find a way to save these girls.

May I ask the last two witnesses this question, and Ambassador Sanders, you in particular have just come back, for those of us who may be headed in that direction, what should we be looking for? What should we see? What should we ask? And to Mr. John-Miller, we thank you for your service. Again, I am going to ask you the question about any hope for a ceasefire from a humanitarian perspective that then gives us the opportunity to bring these girls back. We are hashtagging it. We are press-conferencing it. These

girls are still scattered, still away from their families, and still frightened; and so I would ask you that. I am going to go to Ambassador Sanders first, what we should be focused on.

Ambassador SANDERS. Thank you, Congresswoman. I wanted to just briefly say something on the AU, and I will go right to your questions. I just wanted to let you know that the ECOWAS countries have trained together before and have worked together before in conflicts, so maybe that is where the additional troop support could come from as opposed to the broader AU, and maybe it could be under a U.N.-AU mandate with Nigerian troops in the lead but having additional support from troops who have been involved in asymmetrical warfare. So that is a possibility. They have had a lot of exercises together as ECOWAS, and that is a possibility.

In terms of who you should meet, certainly you need to meet people in the security services. That would include the military, the police, and their equivalent of the CIA basically. I think you will get a sense from them of where they think their challenges are, and you can hear what they say, and then you can hear what our trainers are saying or those that are there to help on the U.S. assistance packages, and see where those things meet. And maybe there are still gaps, but I know that our team there is doing a top notch job. They always have. But I do think that those are key.

Then I would also include the Justice Ministry in that as well because you want to make sure that everything possible on the justice and non-impunity side is being done as much as possible, so I would add that to it.

I would lastly want to just say both Muslims and Christians have been killed in this conflict; and I would like to see us always talk about this conflict in that context. If you go back to what Shekau said a couple of years ago about trying to have an Islamic caliphate in northern Nigeria and really starting in the region where the state of emergency is, if you look at one of those states in particular, Adamawa used to be about 50 percent Muslim and 50 percent Christian. The idea is to make Christians so fearful that they move out of the region.

And I think that we can't add our voice to that kind of dynamic, so we need to be very careful about making sure that we are talking about this as both Christians and Muslims, particularly moderate Muslims, being under siege there. But their goal to have an Islamic caliphate means that they don't want anybody who is not Muslim in the north, and that includes moderate Muslims as well.

So I think we just have to be really careful that when we talk about the devastation and the killing and the abuses and the brutality, everyone who is not part of Boko Haram is subject to that.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. What I would say is, I asked Mr. John-Miller to finish my questioning, what I would say is that the idea behind the ceasefire, however it may be expressed here at the table, is really—was really to focus on the idea of the populations, the Christian and Muslim populations, who equally have been victimized, to actually see if they could be the fathers of this ongoing crisis. But what I would say is that is a very good point. It is a point that I pursued and will be pursuing as well. Yes?

Ambassador SANDERS. I had one more thing to add on the ceasefire issue, and unfortunately, I am going to end up in the pes-

simist column on this. Because I said earlier that I think this is about a clash of civilization in terms of how Boko Haram sees the world, I do not see them agreeing to a ceasefire; and I think that we have to keep that in mind as we look at strategic planning and how to address this conflict. I said earlier that we need to eliminate the current playbooks here and come up with a new playbook to address this threat. But if you are talking about and you are hearing what Shekau actually is saying and those that are following him are saying, these are not people that you are going to be able to reason with for a ceasefire; and I hate to say that, but I think we need to keep that in mind.

Certainly we can make the effort and the approaches because I agree with you, we have got to do everything possible; but I also think we have to be realistic and also look at the possibilities they are not going to respond to any overtures of a ceasefire.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I am so grateful that we have this hearing to hear these kinds of very pessimistic facts, but to be realistic in how we approach this. And that is my point, that we may be in an arena that is more unique than we have ever had. And we have moved heaven and earth when we hear the word al-Qaeda and its subsets; we now have maybe a subset that is growing exponentially, and my fear is that it moves throughout the continent where we are trying to work against conflicts. So Mr. John-Miller, if I could finish with you on the questioning.

And might I do this, Mr. Chairman, and let you know that we have some young people from the YES Prep North Forest area ECS Region 4 and CloseUp who are in this room, and I hope they are understanding that our hearing is about saving lives and having tolerance of different groups; so I welcome them here.

Mr. John-Miller, your take on this whole epidemic of violence, and also, why don't I let you focus on the possibility, or not the possibility, but the getting these girls back.

Mr. JOHN-MILLER. Well, my solution is this. I am an optimist, and I strongly believe that every effort put in that direction is wanted. When the U.S. decided to help Nigeria publicly, I do realize that a lot of northerners welcomed the idea, although a few of them really rejected it. But when someone like President Obasanjo stepped in, we began to see some changes because a lot of northern leaders began to say they wanted ceasefire. They want to talk to Shekau and all that. So I think that one thing we can do is encourage President Olusegun Obasanjo to go ahead with what he is doing. I think one of the aspects that complicates the matter is the fact that from information reaching us, he is not all that good with the current President; but if they can keep their personal differences aside and look at this issue as a national issue, I am sure that Obasanjo is going to be able to do something about it, particularly when it comes to bringing back the girls.

I also strongly believe that someone like the Reverend Jessie Jackson has earned the trust and respect of northerners in Nigeria, and he interacts with a lot of them. And the leaders in the northern part of the country play a big role. If these individuals are made to understand the reality of the fact that what is going on is going to drive away the development, is going to cause a lot of

chaos in the country, certainly they would be willing to work with individuals to bring an end to it.

So I would recommend strongly that if it is possible people like Obasanjo and the Reverend Jackson should be saddled with that responsibility to at least help to look into the issue. If some people might argue that it is like giving Shekau more authority, that he is an individual, but the fact remains that like I stated earlier, if adequate diplomacy is not used, he will not release those girls, and any attempt to use force, he will kill them.

So I would strongly suggest that people like Obasanjo and the Reverend Jackson should be looked into to possibly initiate that. I have also met with them, discussed it with them; and they are very optimistic that if given the support and mandate, they can be able to really make a dent or make a headway, so I want us to look at that.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, as I close, let me thank you very much and thank the witnesses. I know that there is more that I could have garnered from this. I do want to say this on the record. I am pleased of the efforts that the United States and President Obama have taken, and I know they are prepared to do more particularly with the intelligence effort, the strategic persons that were on the ground, the ability to use the intelligence gathered to help with the finding of the girls.

I gleaned from your statements, Mr. John-Miller, that emissaries—we have done it before, Mr. Chairman—so I am going to put everything on the table that we raise with Nigeria, we raise with the United States, we raise with the United Nations, just as there was an envoy to Darfur, there is one to South Sudan, and we know that those issues are still boiling, that we may need to do the envoy in this instance. And I also think, Ambassador, the ECOWAS is a great team. They have been successful in the past maybe with the embrace, as you said, of the African Union and the United Nations.

I am throwing my hands up, Mr. Chairman, but I am not giving up. I am frankly believing that we have to keep this on a front burner to save lives, and I would ask, if they can hear my voice, for the people of Nigeria in the northern area to know that they are not abandoned and that there are those of us that feel the pain and certainly can't equal their pain of loss of life, children, husbands, wives, and other family members or the loss of these girls; but we feel the pain, and I am just committed to trying to help as much as I can.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for your leadership, and I thank Congresswoman Bass for her great leadership on this issue and your kindness for allowing me this time on the committee. I yield back.

Mr. SMITH. I thank my good friend from Texas for being a vital part of this hearing and look forward to hearing of her upcoming travel. Thank you so much.

Let me just conclude with a few final questions. I know you have been very, very patient with your time, and the subcommittee deeply appreciates it.

Ambassador Sanders, again, I think it is worth reiterating. You testified ominously that Nigeria is at the beginning of a long war or conflict, and that they have to realize this; it is no longer a local-

ized conflict or insurgency. There is no easy fix or response, and I think that sobering analysis needs to be fully understood and appreciated by everyone.

You also talked about that there needs to be regrouping, re-approach and readdress in order to get off their heels, that is, the Nigerian security forces who are on defense and go on aggressive offense. And I think we need to put exclamation points behind that, and that is why that training more rather than less and an acceptance by the Nigerians that there is a special skill-set that needs to be imparted that has been learned the hard way through our military; and, of course, there are others involved in this as well. So thank you for, you know, bringing that sobering analysis to the committee.

You have also pointed out about the trauma issue. And, again, Mr. Ogebe brought several traumatized victims, moms, dads, that young girl who is one of the lucky ones who escaped Chibok. And noting parenthetically, and I think everybody knows this, the Boko Haram troops were wearing uniforms. They looked like they were the military. That is why the young girls in a very orderly fashion got into the vehicles. They thought it was the military. It was not, of course. They were terrorists. But the trauma counseling that you have called for I think is extraordinarily important.

Years ago, I wrote the Torture Victims Relief Act which deals with those who have suffered trauma from torture. And I did serve as chairman of the Veterans Affairs Committee for a number of years, and I served on the committee for a quarter of a century. PTSD is such a significant mental health issue, and it would seem to me that these individual girls, those who have been abducted, all those who have been involved who have been victimized, there needs to be much more done.

Mr. Ogebe, you talked about the victims compensation fund, and I do hope that President Goodluck Jonathan is listening and his staff. Put those resources toward the families; get them the kind of help, particularly psychologically, that they are so much in need of. Otherwise that trauma imbeds. It goes deeper. It acts out in many, many ways. We learned that especially with our Vietnam veterans when 10 years, 15 years down the line, huge problems manifested; and people who weren't aware of PTSD didn't have a clue, and that includes wives and husbands and families.

I like your idea, Madam Ambassador, about President Jonathan meeting with the families. Invite them to the villa. Have a meeting with them and put his arms around them and say we care for you because you know with the election coming up, one of my takeaways from 4 days on the ground last week was that the election is serving as an acceleration phase for more terrorism. No ebb tide. They will get worse, not better. And as you pointed, several of you pointed out, the ability to bring bombs into Abuja itself and to breach the security perimeter is very real as witnessed by the attack in the bus station just very recently.

Let me also point out, and I think it is worth bearing, when Greg Simpkins and I were there last September, we did meet with folks involved with President Jonathan's Presidential Committee on Dialogue and Peaceful Resolution which was reaching out to Boko Haram, but it was a bridge to nowhere. Maybe hope springs eter-

nal. There might be something, but I would share your thoughts, Madam Ambassador. We are dealing with Joseph Kony. We are dealing with Charles Taylor, Slobodan Milosevic. We are dealing with bloodthirsty people who have been enabled and empowered to do more rather than less killing.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Would the gentleman yield for just one moment?

Mr. SMITH. Sure.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I just want to say that you have captured just the essence of the vitality of this hearing, and I want to add to what you are saying about the President. No one person can single handedly fight Boko Haram, but there are things that can be done. To my knowledge, there is no victims fund established, relief fund, that has been set up by the Nigerian Government for the victims who have lost people. I don't know what the status of these girls' families, but if they are mourning and are at a central point, just as the families of the Malaysian flight. They have left their homes. They are at a point, they are in need not only of the warm expression of concern; so I would like to make sure I put on the record that I hope, Mr. Chairman, I hope we can write a joint letter with your committee that we want a victims relief fund set up for this crisis that is ongoing by the Nigerian Government, and I think it is key that we do so.

Mr. SMITH. Well, I have raised it. Mr. Ogebe has raised it repeatedly. I do know the personnel from the Nigerian Embassy are here. The Ambassador was here earlier. It seems to me this is something that could be done very easily because those families are left to fend for themselves, and as you mentioned, Madam Ambassador, the possibility, hopefully not the probability, but the possibility of being reabducted remains very real. Boko Haram is capable; and so, please, if you could respond.

Ambassador SANDERS. I just wanted to add one more thing on the trauma and grief. I had it briefly in my statement, but I feel like I need to reiterate it. The PTSD also for the military, and I say that because I heard that a lot from some of the rank and file service members that I saw. Poor troop rotation in the area is one reason. So when we are looking at trauma and grief counseling, you know, hopefully in our package, we are also looking at that for the Nigerian military because I am hearing more and more about PTSD for them as well that have served in the northeast. So I just wanted to add that to the mix.

Mr. SMITH. And if I could add and, again, having served on Veterans Affairs Committee for a quarter of a century, the Veterans Administration, notwithstanding the problems that are facing it now in terms of waiting lists, has literally written the book on how to deal with PTSD; so perhaps our own VA might be of some assistance in dealing with those thorny issues of deep psychological injury that the military as well as victims suffer. Would anyone like to say anything before we conclude? Professor Pham?

Mr. PHAM. I just want to make two brief observations, Mr. Chairman. One is I agree with Ambassador Sanders that realistically, Boko Haram has not shown itself a respecter of persons. Even the traditional authorities are well respected in Nigeria. They have threatened the Sultan in Sokoto. They have attacked the brother

of the Shehu of Borno. These are traditional figures that enjoy great moral suasion. I hope for the best but I join Ambassador Sanders about not being particularly sanguine about the prospects.

The other point I want to make is that Congresswoman Jackson Lee made an excellent point. The Pan-African dimension of tactics. A lot of the tactics that we have just discussed in the last few minutes are African tactics they have learned from other places. AQIM in its previous incarnation as the GSPC, and even before that as the GIA, the idea of wearing uniforms and using the uniform of the military is something they perfected to an art, and they still use in Algeria, and that Boko Haram has picked up. The idea of submitting, as Mr. Ogebe brought up, submitting to training as a way of outsourcing, if you will, in a very perverse way the training of your own fighters. We saw that year in and year out in Somalia when clan and even al-Shabaab militia would enroll with the former transitional Federal Government, receive the training, take the training uniform and weapons, and then move en masse to firing those weapons back on the people that train them.

Again, they have had these connections. They are picking these things up. These ideas move very rapidly across frontiers, and this is why Boko Haram is even now more of a danger than it has been, because the means of communication that facilitate our getting information also facilitate them getting information and exchanging, if you will, best practices.

Ambassador SANDERS. One last thing, and it is really on the heels of what Dr. Pham just said. It is a perspective I have coming out of the diplomatic corps in terms of how we share information, and maybe there are things that we need to pay attention to. These groups do learn from each other. When I looked at the Westgate situation, I thought that they had learned from the Boston Marathon bombers because they brought in a change of clothes so that some of them could actually leave the mall with civilian clothes on or change of clothes or harder to identify.

I think what Boko Haram has learned from Westgate is the separation of the hostages and moving them around. I think that we have to pay attention to, you know, what we are saying out there and what we are hearing out there so that we don't add to the arsenal of things that they use to further impose violence and brutality on civilian populations.

So I would add that I agree wholeheartedly with my colleagues on the panel and everything that they have said, but particularly on this issue, I think we need to pay attention to the fact that they are paying attention to what we say and what we do and what we share; and they capitalize on that, and then they use it in the brutal way that we have seen here in the case of Nigeria.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you. Emmanuel?

Mr. OGEBE. Yes, Mr. Chairman. I agree with what Ambassador Sanders has said. There is a lot more that one would have wanted to share, but I have put it in my paper so that we don't provide fodder to the terrorists who are clearly paying a lot of attention to all that is being said.

I do want to quickly mention two things: The first is with regard to the fact that last week we met with a Muslim father who has two daughters who are missing, and a Christian father who has

one daughter. They traveled 2 days together to come to Abuja to meet with us. And there is something about the pain and the travesty of this experience that is making these people bond together; and as the Ambassador said earlier, hopefully we can seize the moment and help unite these communities so that they can turn on the terrorists that have devastated their lives.

And so part of what we as non-profits plan to do is to continue to encourage the young girls with scholarships and so on and so forth, and these are some of the initiatives that we are working on stealthily because of the sensitivity of the subject matter.

The last thing I want to say is, I want to use this opportunity, and Mr. Chairman, you will forgive me for my abuse here, but I want to pay tribute to my mother who was a northern Nigerian schoolgirl who cried in school when her teacher said that girls don't read science. They only read arts. And she insisted that she wanted to be a doctor, and they finally put her in the boys school because boys were taught science; and she became the first female doctor from northern Nigeria. And I want to pay tribute to other young girls today, including those in captivity, who want to have that same opportunity that my mom had; and I thank you for the opportunity to say that today.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you so very much for your testimonies, very, very incisive. Hopefully we can take this and obviously work with the administration, work with other Members of Congress and the Senate to do far more than we have done. I do want to thank Embassy Abuja, including our DCM, and the two human rights officers, Helena and Michelle. I will go with just first names today, and Maria for their wonderful work, their professionalism. They were very helpful during my 4 days on the ground, and we will continue working with them; and without objection, testimony from the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, Mr. Jasser, will be made a part of the record. And again, I thank you for your testimony, and the hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 5:03 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING NOTICE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6128

**Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International
Organizations**
Christopher H. Smith (R-NJ), Chairman

June 10, 2014

TO: MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

You are respectfully requested to attend an OPEN hearing of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, to be held by the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations in Room 2172 of the Rayburn House Office Building (and available live on the Committee website at www.foreignaffairs.house.gov):

DATE: Wednesday, June 11, 2014

TIME: 2:30 p.m.

SUBJECT: The Ongoing Struggle Against Boko Haram

WITNESSES: J. Peter Pham, Ph.D.
Director
Africa Center
Atlantic Council

Mr. Emmanuel Ogebe
Manager
Justice for Jos Project
Jubilee Campaign USA

Mr. Anslem John-Miller
Representative to the U.S.
Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People

The Honorable Robin Renee Sanders
Chief Executive Officer
FEEEDS Advocacy Initiative
(Former United States Ambassador to Nigeria)

By Direction of the Chairman

The Committee on Foreign Affairs seeks to make its facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. If you are in need of special accommodations, please call 202/225-5021 at least four business days in advance of the event, whenever practicable. Questions with regard to special accommodations in general (including availability of Committee materials in alternative formats and assistive listening devices) may be directed to the Committee.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

MINUTES OF SUBCOMMITTEE ON Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations HEARING

Day Wednesday Date June 11, 2014 Room 2172 Rayburn HOB

Starting Time 2:33 p.m. Ending Time 5:02 p.m.

Recesses 0 (to) (to) (to) (to) (to) (to)

Presiding Member(s)

Rep. Chris Smith

Check all of the following that apply:

Open Session ☒

Executive (closed) Session ☐

Televised ☒

Electronically Recorded (taped) ☒

Stenographic Record ☒

TITLE OF HEARING:

The Ongoing Struggle Against Boko Haram

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Rep. Steve Stockman, Rep. Randy Weber, Rep. Karen Bass, Rep. Ami Bera, Rep. David Cicilline

NON-SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: (Mark with an * if they are not members of full committee.)

*Rep. Shelia Jackson Lee**

HEARING WITNESSES: Same as meeting notice attached? Yes ☒ No ☐

(If "no", please list below and include title, agency, department, or organization.)

STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD: (List any statements submitted for the record.)

Information on Boko Haram attacks, submitted by Mr. Emmanuel Ogebe

Remarks by Dr. Zuhdi Jasser of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, submitted by Rep. Chris Smith

TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE _____

or

TIME ADJOURNED 5:02 p.m.

Gregory B. Smyth
Subcommittee Staff Director

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY MR. EMMANUEL OGEBE, MANAGER,
JUSTICE FOR JOS PROJECT, JUBILEE CAMPAIGN USA

APPENDIX A

BOKO HARAM IN ITS RECENT ATTACKS

Fellow brethren, though we have heard much of our suffering from the ongoing unbearable attacks on the north-eastern part of Nigeria, with sad voice, I want to draw our attention that the fire set to deter us from our faith is still burning and there is not enough effort from the communities or governments to stop the Islamic Jihadist, (Ahalisuna Lida'wati Waljihad) known as Boko Haram, who vowed to install Islamic states in the northern parts of Nigeria from their plan. In such a time like this, we should try to be closely united to our Lord so that we reproduce His life in our own, that our thoughts words and actions should proclaim His teaching, so that He may reign in us and live in us. Whether in mental suffering or bodily pain, let us rejoice and tremble with joy.

In recent attack, on our districts we were terribly affected to the extent that it is impossible to hold church services in some areas.

DCC Barawa

On 26th September, 2013, LCC Barawa and its two LCB's were attacked where four (4) lives were lost and 18 houses burnt including the Pastors house and properties. In another attack, LCC Chikide church buildings including all properties were burnt. It was again on 15th November, 2013 killing five people. In their systematic effort to eliminate churches in the area. LCC Arboko was attacked two times. Nine lives were lost, leaving 66 houses burnt including Pastorium and the Church was burnt while other people sustained injuries. The DCC Barawa is almost empty.

DCC Ngoshe

In DCC Ngoshe – On 14th November, 2013, LCC Gavva No. 1 was attacked. 31 houses were burnt including goats, foodstuff, and cattle. Two (2) people were killed. Gavva No.

DCC Gulak

In an attack at Gadadamai, one of our Pastors Rev. Hannaniya Kwajipwa, was gunshot on He eventually died in a hospital the following day.

DCC Attagara

3 – Church, 23 house including the Pastor's house, foodstuff, cattle and other properties were burnt. Two (2) lives were lost. On 4th September, 2013 Ngoshe No. 2 was attacked. The church and many houses along with three (3) other denominations were burnt. The church borehole was also burnt. We lost 4 lives including the church security man.

At LCC Bala we lost one person.

DCC Gwoza

DCC Gwoza, on 27th September, 2013 LCC Gavva west was attacked, this was the 7th attack on the village where we lost six (6) lives and 134 houses burnt. Other members sustained injury. In another recent attack on the village, two of our members were killed. Among the two was a younger brother of the former EYN President Rev. Filibus K. Gwama.

On 10th October, 2013, LCB Gatha under Gavva west was attacked, two youths were killed and 54 houses burnt, other members converted to Islam.

LCC Fadagwe – one of the three churches and 28 houses were burnt, and living two people in critical health condition. Voice of the Christian Martyrs requested for their transfer to their care centre in Jos. Just of recent the same organization has transferred another one for treatment to the centre.

LCC Takaskala was also attacked killing 2, leaving one person injured and 7 houses burnt.

LCC Sabon Gari Zalidva – was attacked on 10/01/2014. 163 houses were burnt, with nine people including 3 children burnt beyond recognition. LCB Daravzha under LCC Sabon Gari Zaliva was attacked, 100 houses razed, 11 EYN members killed.

People have fled the areas mentioned above to places such as Adamawa, Cameroun, Taraba, Nasarawa, and Abuja.

LCB Wala under LCC Gwoza was attacked, where 16 houses were burnt, one life lost, and three (3) people kidnapped, no news about them as of this report.

DCC Lassa

In DCC Lassa, on 4th October, 2013, LCC Izge was attacked. Five (5) houses including the Pastor's house were burnt. We lost three (3) lives in the first attack. Three days later they returned and burnt two (2) more houses.

The major concern here is that, the attackers can come as many times as they like without interference since there is no provision by the government to protect people and their property in most areas.

DCC Dille

In DCC Dille, LCC Bdagu was attacked on 10th November, 2013. Pastor's house, Church building, musical instruments, farm produce brought as tithes, forty three (43) houses and church documents were completely burnt. Three of our members were also killed including the village head and three other people were injured. Twelve (12) motorcycles and three (3) vehicles were burnt. LCB Yaza under LCC Bdagu was attacked on 9th November, 2013. Church building and properties were burnt, two people lost their lives, and twelve houses including the church leader's house was also burnt. At LCB Kumabza under the same LCC, three (3) EYN member's compounds were burnt.

In an attack at Gadadama, one of our Pastors Rev. Hannaniya Kwajipwa, was gunshot on He eventually died in a hospital the following day.

DCC Attagara

LCC Chinene was attacked where Nine (9) members were killed including a mother and her child who were on the run from the attack by the insurgents who emerged from the hill.

Until today the following areas remain unsafe for Christians to live, particularly those in Maiduguri, Maisandari, Biu, Kautikari, Attagara, Mbulamel, Mubi, Kaduna Mildlu,

Gwoza, Askira, Barawa, Ngoshe, Lassa, Damaturu, Pompomari, Boni Yadi, Tabra, Kwaple, Konduga, Gamadadi, Badarawa, Gavva, Bulakar, Kubrivu, Kunde, Fadagwe, Chikide, Bayan Tasha, Izge, Gajigana, Kwanan Maiwa, Gathgure, Chinene, Michika, just to mention.

The most deadly and horrible attack was on 3rd of May 2014 over 250 members were killed.

Michika

Christian shops, houses, and cars and properties worth millions were burnt in another attack on the town on 26th February, 2014. Three lives were lost. As at the time of writing this report EYN lost 566 members, 1105 houses burnt, 15 members kidnapped till now, no news about them, 26 LCC and 13 LCB burnt.

The church on its pilgrimage is not deserted or forgotten by God, it is not wandering totally in the dark. The reign of Christ, the hidden ruler of the whole world, is already effective in the church.

DCC WAGGA. LCC Wagga Gori was attacked on the 25th of May, 2014. Several houses burnt 21 people killed. All farm produce looted.

SUMMARY OF BOKO HARAM DAMAGES ON EYN FROM 2009 TO DATE

S. No.	Affected DCC	Killed	Houses Burnt	Kidnapped	LCC Burnt	LCB Burnt
1	Chibok	15	22	53	Attagara	Bayan Tasha
2	Yobe	10	4		Damaturu	Gajigana
3	Maisandari	61	3		Pompomari	Kwanan Maiwa
4	Biu	1	1		Boni Yadi	Gathghure
5	Kaukari	31	271	43	Kwaple	Klala
6	Maiduguri	52			Konduga	Tatsa
7	Attagara	39	3	7	Gamadadi	Nijga
8	Mbulamel	9			Tabra	Gatha
9	Kaduna	1			Biu No. 1	Tati,Ngoshe-Sama
10	Mubi	17	2		Badarawa	Yazza
11	Mildu	15			Gawa West	Kumabza
12	Gwoza	39	377	3	Bulakar	S. Gari Barawa
13	Askira	4			Kubrivu	Daravzha
14	Barawa	19	483	3	Kunde	Limankara
15	Ngoshe	14	72		Maiduguri	
16	Lassa	3	7		Fadagwe	
17	Dille	14	91		Chikide	
18	Gulak	1	-		Barawa	
19	Michika	3			Ngoshe No. 2	
20	Kwajaffa	2	18		Gawa No. 1	
21	Balgi	8	28	25	Gawa No. 3	
22	Wagga	10	45	4	Izge	
23	Mussa			40	Arboko	
24	Mbalala				Bdagu	
25	Madagali	1			S/Gari Zalidva	
26					Tskia	
27					Pelambimi	
28					Huyim	
29					Chilari	
30					Klakesa?	
31					Shawa	
32					Chinene No. 1	
33					Znaghwazha	
34					Halagghwa	
35					Ganjara	
36					Angurva	
37					Ngoshe No. I	
38					Takaskala	
Total	25	369	1427	178	38	14

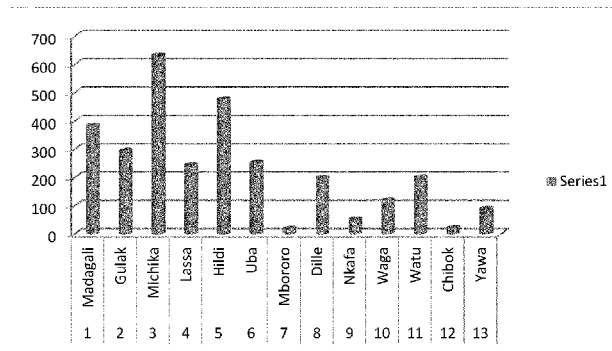
151 C. Sch.Gs

As at 8th June, 2014

REFUGEES

	DCC	Refugees
1	Madagali	383
2	Gulak	295
3	Michika	631
4	Lassa	244
5	Hildi	477
6	Uba	252
7	Mbororo	19
8	Dille	199
9	Nkafa	51
10	Waga	118
11	Watu	200
12	Chibok	21
13	Yawa	89

AS OF JUNE 6, 2014



MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH,
A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AND CHAIRMAN,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HEALTH, GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS, AND INTER-
NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Dr. M. Zuhdi Jasser
Vice Chairman
U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom
Nigeria's Religious Violence
Center for Strategic and International Studies
Washington, D.C.
May 13, 2014

Introduction

Thank you for that kind introduction.

I want to thank the Center for Strategic and International Studies for inviting USCIRF here to share our perspective about religious freedom and more specifically the frightening escalation of religious violence in Nigeria. The work of CSIS in this area has been invaluable to us with your report, "Assessing Risks to Stability," from June 2011 providing great background material. Thank you, Richard, for engaging us to share common missions.

We appreciate your giving us this platform today.

USCIRF is a U.S. government advisory body, separate from the State Department. It is a bipartisan, independent federal commission created by Congress by the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (IRFA). USCIRF's work is guided by nine private-sector Commissioners, appointed by the White House and the leadership of both houses of Congress. Our mandate is to monitor religious freedom worldwide and make independent policy recommendations to the President, Secretary of State, and Congress. We are separate and independent from the State Department. USCIRF uses as its standard the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and other international instruments.

Over the ten-plus years of our work, we have seen a strong correlation between religious freedom and social stability, security, development, and the consolidation of democracy. Conversely, the lack of religious freedom correlates with instability, insecurity, extremism, and a host of other social and political problems. In short, prosperous countries protect religious freedom for all of their citizens.

The Commission has monitored and reported on Nigeria since 2003 and has travelled to the country six times over the past 10 years.

As we all know, Nigeria has received substantial attention in the news lately due to the despicable kidnapping of nearly 300 schoolgirls in the north by Boko Haram, beginning in mid-April.

My remarks today will be based on what I saw on my visit to Nigeria in the preceding month as part of a USCIRF delegation.

My comments will include an analysis of the situation as well as a number of recommendations based on our own observations and meetings with a number of key individuals in Nigeria.

These individuals included Nigerian government officials, Muslim and Christian religious leaders, traditional leaders, and civil society representatives, as well as U.S. Embassy officials and other international interlocutors.

Speaking for USCIRF, let me say that before our trip to Nigeria, we were deeply concerned about the spread of religious violence and its effect on the ability of Christians and Muslims alike to practice their religion in freedom and peace.

We shared an equally deep concern about Nigeria's failure over time to protect their people not just from the Boko Haram violence, but from the longtime sectarian strife that has claimed the lives of more than 16,000 Nigerians on both sides of the Muslim/Christian divide since the turn of the century.

This appalling level of violence has also left hundreds of thousands of Nigerians displaced, with tens of thousands of churches, mosques, businesses, vehicles, private homes, and other structures damaged or destroyed.

That is precisely why, every year since 2009, our Commission has recommended that Nigeria be designated a "country of particular concern" or CPC, marking it as among the world's worst protectors of religious freedom.

And let me add that almost all of our Nigerian interlocutors, including those from the Ministry of Justice, agreed that Nigeria continues to meet the statutory definition of a CPC and therefore merits a CPC designation.

In other words, what we saw and heard on our trip confirmed many of our most serious concerns about the depth and level of religious violence and attendant loss of religious freedom and its negative impact -- both as a human rights issue and a security matter for Nigeria and for the region.

Facts Used to Drive Religious Violence

From Boko Haram to political demagogues, malignant forces have perpetrated or fueled this terrible violence by exploiting at least four fundamental facts about Nigeria.

First, for most Nigerians, religion matters greatly. According to a 2006 Pew survey, 76 percent of Christians and 91 percent of Muslims said that religion is more important to them than their identity as Africans, Nigerians, or members of an ethnic group.

This importance of religious identity has the potential to encourage peaceful values and societal progress for Nigerians, but all too often, it has been exploited as a tool of division and violence.

Second, at the same time as Nigerians are becoming more religious with stronger religious identifications, religious tensions have been rising.

The same 2006 Pew survey found that 62 percent of Nigeria's Christians and 61 percent of its Muslims said they trusted people from other religions only a little bit or not at all.

Christians fear that Muslims are trying to turn Nigeria into an Islamist state.

The adoption of Shari'ah law into the criminal codes of 12 northern states after the turn of the century – which Christians argue is a violation of Nigeria's 1999 Constitution banning a state religion – and the growth of Islamist groups wanting further implementation of Shari'ah law have clearly played a role in elevating this fear.

Muslims, in turn, have had their distrust of Christians fueled by state government efforts to exclude Muslims from state benefits through the concept of "indigene" – persons whose ethnic group is considered native to a certain area – and settlers – those who have ethnic roots elsewhere in the country.

Accessing land, schools, civil service jobs, or public office without an indigene certificate can be almost impossible.

Public officials can and do abuse the power of determining indigene status, granting or denying it based on the religion of applicants as one of the factors.

Besides the importance of religion in Nigeria and the rising religious tensions between Muslims and Christians, a third factor that extremists and demagogues have exploited to drive religious violence is Nigeria's political culture, which includes what amounts to a winner-take-all competition for economic spoils.

Opportunists seeking to gain or maintain political office and access state coffers perceive a path to electoral victory through hurling incendiary invective across the sectarian divide, unleashing violence during election years.

If the past is prologue, the 2015 elections could witness even more bloodshed.

Our delegation was repeatedly told by Nigerians of all faiths that they are expecting -- and in some cases preparing for -- such violence. Many are concerned that there already is evidence that parties are splitting along or appealing to religious identities.

And finally, while Nigeria's government does not engage in religious persecution, its longtime culture of corruption leads to the toleration of severe religious freedom violations by eroding good governance, thus weakening the resolve to uphold rule of law by bringing perpetrators to justice or preventing or containing sectarian violence.

This repeated failure has created a climate of impunity that encourages the violent to commit more bloodshed to advance their aims.

It also means that victims of religious violence do not turn to the state for justice, but to their own religious community for protection and even retribution -- further increasing religious violence.

Indeed, one of our key takeaways from our trip was the complete absence of the state in discussion of efforts to address religious violence.

Correctly noting that the police are unresponsive to this violence, faith leaders, interfaith representatives, and international officials alike saw the promotion of interfaith programs, rather than pressing for the establishment of law and order, as the solution.

Yes, interfaith work matters and is part of the solution, but it is only one part of what should be a comprehensive policy to address religious violence.

And USCIRF is concerned that the outsized focus on and the increase in monetary aid to such programs is birthing an interfaith industry where not all organizations have the ability to be successful -- as well as competition, not collaboration, between interfaith groups.

Needless to say, the spread of religious violence with impunity has led to mutual recriminations between Christians and Muslims.

In our visit with Christian and Muslim leaders, we saw how Christian leaders accused Muslims of starting the cycle of violence, and how Muslim leaders denied the allegation, pointing out that more of their co-religionists had died in mass killings than Christians.

The greatest example of USCIRF concerns about impunity and mistrust among religious communities in Nigeria is the breakup of the Nigeria Inter-Religious Council or NIREC. Neither the president of the Christian Association of Nigeria nor the Sultan of Sokoto can move beyond mutual mistrust and disagreements about who is responsible and what can be done to stop sectarian violence and Boko Haram. Instead, each is forming its own national interfaith body.

Religious Radicalism and Boko Haram

There is little question that on both sides, malignant forces have exploited each of these factors in keeping the fires of religious violence burning.

During our visit, we were told about the growth of radical preachers, hate speech, and incitement to violence, and that the plethora of independent mosques and churches made addressing the problem difficult.

Fundamentalist Muslim preachers point to the country's political corruption, labeling moderate Muslims, Christians, and the rest of the nation as needing Shari'ah law as a cleansing antidote -- and some have engaged in violence against Christians and fellow Muslims.

Some Christian leaders, in turn, portray Islam as a violent religion and accuse Muslims of wanting to subjugate the country.

The growth of such radical preachers only exacerbates religious tensions and is pushing religious communities farther apart.

Unfortunately, the explosion in Boko Haram violence plays right into this mistrust. Some Christian leaders insisted to us that Muslim leaders have not done enough to condemn the violence. USCIRF also heard worrying statements by some Christians labelling all Muslims as either Boko Haram or Islamists.

These perceptions only further divide Nigeria along religious lines and aid Boko Haram in its effort to destabilize the country.

In defense of Muslim leaders, they have repeatedly condemned Boko Haram, many at risk to their own lives.

Muslim clerics we met with insisted that Boko Haram is not Islamic and have denounced its attacks.

But in our judgment, these swift denunciations, while certainly appropriate and welcome, appeared to beg the question of how Boko Haram's radical interpretation arose in the first place and how groups like Boko Haram attract such followings within Nigeria's Muslim communities.

Simply stated, condemnations are important, but what's really needed are serious and candid dialogues within the ranks of Nigeria's Muslims that involve these searching questions, including the question of how people become radicalized and how to counter the process.

The good news, though, is that we did hear evidence that several Muslim interlocutors did recognize the problem of independent imams spewing hateful speech in contributing to religious violence and religious freedom abuses.

In fact, they were concerned enough about the issue to be willing to go as far as supporting the idea of a religious registration law, requiring mosques to register and testing imams on their knowledge of the Qur'an while monitoring their sermons.

While we understand the concern that has led many to contemplate such a law, it would raise deeply problematic religious freedom concerns of its own such as further concerns about state involvement in religion and whose interpretation of Islam should be followed.

But again, we found it encouraging that these Muslim leaders seemed either to care enough about the issue of incendiary rhetoric and its relation to religious violence or enough about what we Americans thought about the issue that they made the remarkable offer in our presence of submitting both mosques and imams to greater state authority.

Recommendations

And because most Nigerians who are in positions of power do care what we as Americans think, this suggests that the U.S. government does have leverage and influence -- perhaps more than it realizes -- over Nigeria and what should be done about its religious violence and religious freedom abuses.

Clearly, such violence is something we should care deeply about. Not only does it entail the taking of human life and the violation of the freedom to practice one's religion, it also threatens to unravel sub-Saharan Africa's pivotal nation and spill over into other states. Not just for humanitarian reasons, but for security purposes, national and regional, the U.S. must care and it must act in a strategic, appropriate way.

So what can and should the United States government do?

The U.S. government needs to increase its recognition of the importance of religion in the violence plaguing Nigeria.

During our visit, the importance of corruption, ethnic and socio-economic identities, and unemployment was impressed upon us as reasons for Boko Haram and sectarian violence in Nigeria.

While these are all contributing factors, they do not negate the pivotal role of religious identity, mistrust, radicalism, and organization as key factors in the violence.

As many Nigerians told us, what may not start as religious, always ends as religious.

As such, failure to include the role of religion in Nigeria will result in policy prescriptions which fall far short of fully addressing the violence.

In response to the critical role that religion continues to play, a comprehensive policy is required.

First, religious freedom and religious violence should be incorporated into the U.S.-Nigeria Bi-National Commission discussions and working groups.

Second, to show Nigerian leaders of all stripes that it means business, the U.S. should designate Nigeria a CPC and develop a binding agreement to address gross violations of religious freedom.

Third, the US government should press Abuja to hold perpetrators of religious violence accountable in order to help end the culture of impunity that fuels instability and prevents too many Nigerians from practicing their religion in peace and security.

Fourth, the US government also should speak out against Nigerian politicians' misuse of religion and identity politics in the lead-up to next year's elections.

In return, the United States should continue to assist Nigeria in its fight against Boko Haram, helping it to increase security to protect Christians and Muslims alike. Nigeria, in turn, must be willing and able to leverage US military and other support effectively.

Washington must also assist the efforts of Nigeria's weak police and judiciary.

And finally, Washington can help Nigeria address sectarian strife by continuing to support Nigerian civil society groups working for Muslim/Christian reconciliation and conflict prevention.

I continue to be impressed with the reconciliation efforts of James Wuye, an Assemblies of God pastor, and Imam Mohammad Ashafa, co-founders of the Kaduna Interfaith Mediation Center.

Conclusion

Clearly, Nigeria's government has a job to do:

That job is to enforce rule of law to defeat anarchy and ensure that every Nigerian's right to religious practice is protected equally under the law.

The job of the United States government should be two-fold – to press Nigeria to do so, forcing its leaders to confront corruption and other obstacles, while also aiding it whenever and wherever we can throughout the process.

But Nigeria's civil society also has an equally critical task ahead – and that task is one of reconciliation.

For Nigeria's sake, both efforts must proceed -- and both efforts must receive greater support from the US to do so.

That, more than anything else, remains our conviction in the aftermath of our Nigeria trip.

Thank you again for inviting me to address you today.

