

BOKO HARAM

A Nigerian Terror Movement

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 **STRATEGIC
INTELLIGENCE SOCIETY**

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As a U.S. oil supplier, an ally, and a significant contributor to peacekeeping missions in Africa, Nigeria is of strong interest to the United States.¹ Due to multiple social issues and extremist beliefs, a terrorist movement known as Boko Haram has risen, and poses a threat to Western interests. In light of this, the United States should better invest in its relationship with Nigeria and assist in combatting Boko Haram. The radical movement is difficult to profile, but enough information has been gathered to determine that it should be labeled as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO).

Boko Haram Origins

The real name of the Nigerian militant group is Jama'atu Ahlus-Sunnah Lidda'Awati Wal Jihad, meaning the "People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad."² However, they are commonly known as Boko Haram, which is interpreted as "Western education is sacrilege."³ This common name was given by the media and has become the title of the Islamic sect. Muhammad Yusuf founded the group in 2002, hoping to mirror the Taliban's implementation of Sharia rule in Afghanistan.⁴ Twelve out of thirty-six Nigerian states adopted Sharia law in the late 1990s,⁵ but Yusuf wanted to see all of Nigeria under strict Islamic rule. In December 2003, the group attacked a police station to obtain weapons, resulting in thirty deaths.⁶ When attacks on government buildings expanded to the state capital of Damaturu and the state of Borno, Nigerian police counterattacked, arresting or killing members of the Islamic sect.⁷ Attacks have continued to this day, with increased lethality and sophistication.

Ideology

The ideology of Boko Haram is based on Salafist Islam. This branch of Islam focuses on the adherence to strict Koranic law, the implementation of a worldwide Islamic caliphate, and the rejection of Western society and culture.⁸ The opposing branch, Sufism, is based on internal spirituality rather than outward violent action. Approximately 90% of Nigerian Muslims practice Sufism.⁹ Boko Haram's existence serves to cleanse Nigeria of "sinful" Western influence on education and culture, with the goal of making it an Islamic state which adheres to strict Sharia

¹ "Boko Haram: Emerging Threat to the U.S. Homeland." Statement of Lauren Ploch, Specialist in African Affairs, Congressional Research Service, before the Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence. 30 November 2011.

<http://homeland.house.gov/sites/homeland.house.gov/files/Testimony%20Ploch.pdf>, (accessed 11 January 2013), CRS-8; Ploch, Lauren. "Nigeria: Current Issues and U.S. Policy." CRS Report for Congress. 18 July 2012. <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33964.pdf>, (accessed 12 January 2013), Summary page.

² Thomson, Valarie. "Boko Haram and Islamic Fundamentalism in Nigeria." *Global Security Studies*, Summer 2012, Vol. 3, Iss. 3. <http://globalsecuritystudies.com/Thomson%20Boko%20Haram.pdf>, (accessed 15 January 2013), 46.

³ Pham, J. Peter. "Boko Haram's Evolving Threat." No. 20, April 2012. http://africacenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/AfricaBriefFinal_20.pdf, (accessed 12 January 2013), 2.

⁴ Cook, David, Ph.D. "Boko Haram: A Prognosis." James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy, Rice University. 16 December 2011. <http://www.bakerinstitute.org/publications/REL-pub-CookBokoHaram-121611.pdf>, (accessed 13 January, 2013), 9.

⁵ Pham, 2.

⁶ Cook, 9; *Spiraling Violence: Boko Haram Attacks and Security Force Abuses in Nigeria*. Human Rights Watch, October 2012. <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2012/10/11/spiraling-violence>, (accessed 11 January 2013), 30-31.

⁷ *Spiraling Violence*, 30-31; Pham, 2-3.

⁸ Thomson, 51.

⁹ IBID, 51.

law.¹⁰ A spokesman of the group, Abu Zayd, said of the Nigerian government, “This is a government that is not Islamic. Therefore, all its employees, Muslims and non-Muslims, are infidels.”¹¹ In addition to Boko Haram’s main focus to transition Nigeria into an Islamic state, they have also expressed interest in attacking Western targets. Musa Tanko, another group spokesman, said in an interview on March 29, 2010:

The United States is the number one target for its oppression and aggression against Muslim nations...We will launch fiercer attacks than Iraqi or Afghan Mujahedeen [Islamic fighters] against our enemies throughout the world, particularly the U.S., if the chance avails itself within the confines of what Islam prescribes, but for now our attention is focused on Nigeria, which is our starting point.¹²

The current leader of Boko Haram, Abubakar Shekau recently stated in a video that “We have killed countless soldiers and we are going to kill more,” and further states that their “strength and firepower has surpassed that of Nigeria...We can now comfortably confront the United States of America.”¹³ In addition to the United States, Boko Haram also identifies the United Nations (UN) and the World Health Organization (WHO) as Western targets. According to David Cook, many Muslims in northern Nigeria believe the WHO commits genocide through polio vaccines.¹⁴

Boko Haram’s ideology centers on the belief that Nigeria, infiltrated by Western culture, should be cleansed so that a true Islamic government and society can exist. The central goal of internally cleansing Nigeria currently supersedes the group’s intentions of attacking Western interests. Andrew Walker supports the belief that Boko Haram poses no clear threat of striking Western targets, due to the marked absence of this type of aggression.¹⁵ The lack of attacks on Western targets, however, does not necessarily indicate disinterest; Boko Haram may simply lack the funds and logistics for a significant operation.

Social Issues

The increased violence and progression of Boko Haram can be attributed mostly to Nigeria’s social problems. The pressing issues include:

- Significant population growth
- Lack of social services and education
- Widespread disease
- High unemployment
- Rampant corruption
- Religious division
- Police abuse¹⁶

Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan, a Christian, has had difficulty in solving the Muslim North’s social needs and providing protection. As a result, he is highly disliked by Nigerian

¹⁰ Pham, 2; Hashim, Ahmed, Gregoire and Nathan Cohen. “Western Ways Are Evil”: The Emergence and Evolution of Boko Haram.” *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analysis*. International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research. <http://www.pvtr.org/pdf/CTTA/2012/CTTA-July12.pdf>, (accessed 11 January 2013), 4-5; *Spiraling Violence*, 30.

¹¹ Cook, 19.

¹² IBID, 16.

¹³ Umar, Haruna and Michelle Faul. “Nigerians want weapons after deadly mosque attack.” *Associated Press*. 13 August 2013. http://hosted2.ap.org/APDEFAULT/3d281c11a96b4ad082fe88aa0db04305/Article_2013-08-13-Nigeria-Violence/id-15dbd505216a4419972c8b7df24919af (accessed 18 August 2013).

¹⁴ IBID, 20.

¹⁵ Walker, Andrew. “What is Boko Haram?” United States Institute of Peace. Special Report 308. June 2012. <http://www.usip.org/files/resources/SR308.pdf>, (access 11 January 2013), 8.

¹⁶ Hashim, 3-4; “Boko Haram: Emerging Threat to the U.S. Homeland”, CRS-5; Thomson, 49-50; *Spiraling Violence*, 9, 24.

Muslims.¹⁷ He must also deal with the country's increasing population growth, expanding from 170 million to 400 million by 2050.¹⁸ The increase in population will only complicate the lack of social services. In addition, Nigeria's oil revenue, which makes up 85% of its GDP,¹⁹ is funneled to the upper class resulting in the deterioration of basic social services and education in a country that has one of the world's poorest populations.²⁰

Lack of medical social services has presented significant health issues as well. According to Lauren Ploch, Nigeria has "the second highest AIDS/HIV burden in Africa and the highest tuberculosis burden in the world."²¹ High unemployment is another factor that plagues the nation, which sustains Boko Haram's recruitment.

A secondary motivation for Boko Haram's attacks is rampant corruption, stated by earlier members in 2004.²² The U.S. State Department points out that Nigeria is riddled with corruption, money laundering, and drug trans-shipments.²³ According to *Spiraling Violence*, "several hundred billion dollars of public funds have been lost due to corruption and mismanagement."²⁴ Corruption cascades from the upper level of the federal Nigerian government, all the way down to local police units.²⁵ The wide range of corruption has had a deeply negative affect on President Jonathan's efforts and a positive effect on Boko Haram.

Police Abuse and Corruption

The Nigerian police force and a specialized joint task force have been just as problematic as Boko Haram; some civilians fear the police more than the radical Islamic sect.²⁶ Police officers are involved in extortion, embezzlement, arbitrary arrests, torture, excessive force, property damage, and extrajudicial killings.²⁷ As a result of excessive police force and Boko Haram attacks, more than 4,000 people have died since 2009.²⁸ When security forces captured Boko Haram leader Muhammad Yusuf in 2009, "he was beaten, made to beg for his life (all of which was videotaped), and then summarily shot,"²⁹ according to David Cook. Police tactics used against Boko Haram include mass arrests and non-discriminate assaults on Boko Haram compounds – resulting in the deaths of innocent civilians who are anywhere near the site when the police arrive.³⁰ In Maiduguri, July 2009, police publicly executed twenty-four detainees right outside police headquarters.³¹ Human Rights Watch notes that Boko Haram detainees are often not charged or put on trial for long periods of time, and the fate of the detainees are unknown.³² The corruption and illegal actions of police officers significantly contributes to the chaos in Nigeria.

Organizational Structure

Bloody conflicts ensued between Yusuf's group and Nigerian law enforcement in 2004.³³ Muhammad Yusuf was arrested and charged several times, but was never sentenced. On July

¹⁷ Hashim, 4.

¹⁸ IBID, 3.

¹⁹ Thomson, 49.

²⁰ IBID, 49-50.

²¹ IBID, 49-50.

²² *Spiraling Violence*, 24.

²³ "Boko Haram: Emerging Threat to the U.S. Homeland", CRS-6.

²⁴ *Spiraling Violence*, 24.

²⁵ Walker, 7; *Spiraling Violence*, 25-26.

²⁶ Hashim, 6.

²⁷ *Spiraling Violence*, 9, 25-26.

²⁸ Edukugho, Emmanuel. "Nigeria: Boko Haram – Tallying Casualties of the Insurgency." AllAfrica.com. 01 December 2012. <http://allafrica.com/stories/201212010092.html>, (accessed 22 February 2013).

²⁹ Cook, 11.

³⁰ Walker, 12-13.

³¹ *Spiraling Violence*, 61-62.

³² IBID, 9-10.

³³ Hashim, 5.

26, 2009, Yusuf was captured by the Nigerian government in a series of raids where he was then “captured, beaten, interrogated, and finally shot...but not before more than 700 people were killed and numerous public buildings, including government offices, police stations, schools, mosques, and churches, were destroyed.”³⁴ Following Yusuf’s death, Abubakar Shekau became the leader of Boko Haram while Abu Zayd and Abul Qaqa (pseudonyms) became the official voices of the group.³⁵ Shekau released a video stating, “Do not think jihad is over. Rather jihad has just begun,” and threatened to attack “outposts of Western culture.”³⁶ Under Shekau’s leadership, Boko Haram has risen to new levels of terror and violence.

The organizational structure of the radical group is arguable. Some professionals believe that Boko Haram is no longer centralized as it was at its conception; rather they believe it split into separate factions. Yet others argue for a cell-based organization that is directly controlled by a centralized leadership.³⁷ According to Andre Colling (Red24 analyst), a senior security official in Abuja, and Shehu Sani (member of Nigeria’s Civil Rights Congress), Boko Haram is a very structured cell-based organization. They agree that Abubakar Shekau is the Supreme Leader and oversees the Shura Council, which is comprised of 30 commanders.³⁸ The Shura Council takes directives from Shekau and then coordinates attacks on targets.³⁹ A source that has closely followed Boko Haram disclosed to Andrew Walker how the commanders communicate: “Council members are able to travel into and around Nigeria, and they use mobile phones to communicate, meeting face-to-face less often.”⁴⁰ Each of these members controls a Boko Haram cell, which is supported by specialized departments, according to the senior security official in Abuja. Specialized departments include transportation acquisition (by gunpoint), intelligence gathering and target identification, bomb making, fitting explosives to suicide bombers, bomb placement at targets, and member welfare, which includes the care of suicide bombers’ families.⁴¹

Because of the cell-like organization, criminals and political thugs conduct similar actions and claim the name of Boko Haram, thereby casting the blame on the well-known terror movement and inciting police retaliation.⁴² In light of this, most of the attacks in Nigeria reveal a consistent pattern of Boko Haram, pointing towards coordination in strategies and tactics.⁴³ David Cook suggests order and coordination in Boko Haram’s attacks on seemingly random targets:

To the group, it may appear that all of its targets – the government, military and police, the Muslim elite, Christians, and the UN – represent manifestations of a non-Islamic outer world. By attacking all of them, the group demonstrates its rejection of any perceived non-Islamic values.⁴⁴

³⁴ Pham, 3; “Boko Haram: Emerging Threat to the U.S. Homeland.” U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence. 6.

³⁵ *Spiraling Violence*, 38.

³⁶ Pham, 4.

³⁷ *Spiraling Violence*, 11.

³⁸ Colling, Andre. “Nigeria: Boko Haram’s Questionable Ceasefire.” *ThinkAfricaPress*. 31 January 2013. <http://allafrica.com/stories/201301311571.html>, (accessed 25 February 2013); “Boko Haram Reportedly Has Complex Organizational Structure.” *SaharaReporters*. 15 July 2012. <http://saharareporters.com/news-page/boko-haram-reportedly-has-complex-organizational-structure>, (accessed 15 January 2013); BBC’s Network Africa. “Nigeria’s Boko Haram: Will dialogue end the insurgency?” *BBC*. 27 January 2012. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-16761670>, (accessed 25 February 2013).

³⁹ Colling, BBC’s Network Africa, “Boko Haram Reportedly Has Complex Organizational Structure.”

⁴⁰ Walker, 8.

⁴¹ “Boko Haram Reportedly Has Complex Organizational Structure.”

⁴² *Spiraling Violence*, 11.

⁴³ *IBID*, 11.

⁴⁴ Cook, 22.

With the exception of the UN compound bombing, Boko Haram attacks still represent regional focus and capabilities.⁴⁵

UPDATE

August 2013: The Nigerian military reported that Abubakar Shekau succumbed to gunshot wounds a few weeks after a fight with military forces. However, this has not been verified by independent sources.⁴⁶

August 2013: According to the *Huffington Post*, Shekau was deposed by Boko Haram leaders as they opened back-channel peace negotiations with the Nigerian government. The leader of the peace negotiations, Abu Zamira Mohammed, has been appointed leader by the Shura Council (according to reports from the group). Shekau had a \$7 million bounty on his head by the U.S. Boko Haram representatives, sent by leadership, met with government officials on June 25, 2013 and “revealed to the government that Shekau was no longer their leader.” Senior Boko Haram commanders and Shekau’s Chief of Security and personal bodyguard, Abdullahi Hassan, claimed “Shekau has since been shot in the lower leg, thigh and shoulder.” However, there is no guarantee that these negotiations will work.⁴⁷

Progression of Attacks

The year after its leader’s extrajudicial death, Boko Haram was relatively quiet. This silence was broken on September 7, 2010 when Boko Haram staged a prison break at Bauchi and freed 721 prisoners, of which 100 were affiliated with the militant group.⁴⁸ Attacks continued when improvised explosive devices (IEDs) rocked the predominately Christian town of Jos, resulting in the death of eighty civilians and numerous wounded.⁴⁹ Boko Haram executed at least forty-five major operations from September 2010 – November 2011.⁵⁰ The targets of these operations included Christians, police officers, military personnel, public markets, elections, and individuals targeted for assassination.⁵¹ The first and only Western attack in Boko Haram’s history occurred as a suicide bombing at the UN compound in Abuja. In August 2011, a suicide bomber named Muhammad Abu al-Barra drove a car packed with explosives into the compound and detonated it. Boko Haram’s second vehicle borne improvised explosive device (VBIED) attack (the first occurred at police headquarters in Abuja on June 16, 2011⁵²) left 25 dead and over 100 wounded.⁵³ David Cook believes that the bombing at the UN compound was designed to “demonstrate to Nigeria and the world that Boko Haram’s goals were no longer local in nature, but that it had the means by which to instigate violence anywhere in Nigeria, and perhaps even beyond.”⁵⁴ After this successful operation, Boko Haram continued a wave of attacks throughout Nigeria and conducted suicide bombings in Damaturu, Kano, and outside a

⁴⁵ Thomson, 55.

⁴⁶ “Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau killed, claims Nigerian military – video.” *The Guardian*, August 20, 2013. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/video/2013/aug/20/boko-haram-shekau-killed-nigeria-video> (accessed 2 September 2013); “African Markets - Factors to watch on Aug 20.” Reuters, August 20, 2013. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/08/20/africa-factors-idUSL6N0GK1R720130820> (accessed 2 September 2013).

⁴⁷ “Terrorist Leader Deposed in Nigeria.” *Huffington Post*, August 1, 2013. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/phillip-van-niekerk/abubakar-shekau-boko-haram_b_3690034.html (accessed 11 September 2013).

⁴⁸ Cook, 12.

⁴⁹ Pham, 4.

⁵⁰ Cook, 16.

⁵¹ IBID, 16.

⁵² *Spiraling Violence*, 94.

⁵³ IBID, 55; Walker, 5-6; Cook, 19-20.

⁵⁴ Cook, 19-20.

Catholic church in Madalla. Approximately 367 civilians were killed, many of which were Christians. The purpose of these bombings was to expel Christians from the Muslim north.⁵⁵

UPDATE

April 19, 2013: Boko Haram militants battled the Nigerian military while using human shields and burning down 2,000 homes. Over 185 civilians were killed as a result of the action. Extremists had military-grade weapons including rocket-propelled-grenades (RPGs) and heavy machine guns.⁵⁶

May 14, 2013: President Jonathan declared a state of emergency in Yobe, Adamawa, and Borno.⁵⁷

May – June 2013: Boko Haram extremists drive 19,000 rice farmers from their fields, creating food shortages.⁵⁸

August 23, 2013: Islamic militants killed 44 people in Demba village. According to an emergency worker "They set houses ablaze, shot people and even slit some people's throats."⁵⁹

August 25-26, 2013: Boko Haram militants attacked members of Nigeria's vigilante groups in Borno state. Islamic militants disguised as JTF members killed 18 people in Bama and 6 people in Damasak.⁶⁰ Alhaji Baba Shehu Gulumba, chairman of Bama local council, told journalists "They were on guard duty when the sect members dressed in military camouflage came and told them that they were needed at a meeting nearby. When they had been lured away from their duty posts they were then attacked and killed."⁶¹

August 30, 2013: Boko Haram militants ambushed more than 100 vigilantes as they attempted to seek out and arrest Boko Haram members. The Nigerian government confirmed 24 vigilante deaths.⁶²

19 September 2013: Nigerian environmental workers recovered 143 civilian bodies in Benisheik, killed by suspected Boko Haram militants. A Nigerian soldier witnessed the militants in 20

⁵⁵ Pham, 5.

⁵⁶ "Butchery in Nigeria: At least 185 killed as army battles Islamists." *Russia Times*. 21 April 2013. <http://rt.com/news/nigeria-army-islamist-militants-176/> (accessed 18 August 2013).

⁵⁷ Faul, Michelle. "Nigerian Boko Haram Leader Abubakar Shekau Threatens Group Will Burn More Schools." *Huffington Post*. 13 July 2013. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/07/13/nigeria-boko-haram-schools_n_3591457.html (accessed 18 August 2013).

⁵⁸ "Islamic militants drive 19,000 rice farmers off land in Northeast Nigeria." CBS News, June 18, 2013. http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-202_162-57589790/islamic-militants-drive-19000-rice-farmers-off-land-in-northeast-nigeria/ (accessed 20 September 2013).

⁵⁹ Brock, Joe. "UPDATE 1: Suspected Nigerian Islamists kill 44 in northeast – sources." Reuters, August 23, 2013. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/08/23/nigeria-violence-idUSL6N0GO30N20130823> (accessed 2 September 2013).

⁶⁰ "Dozens dead in Nigeria attacks." AlJazeera, August 27, 2013. <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2013/08/201382716265768856.html> (accessed 2 September 2013).

⁶¹ "Nigerian Islamists kill 14 vigilantes in Bama raid." Reuters, August 26, 2013. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/08/26/us-nigeria-violence-idUSBRE97P0PU20130826> (accessed 2 September 2013).

⁶² "Nigeria Islamists kill 24 vigilantes in ambush." Reuters, August 31, 2013. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/08/31/us-nigeria-violence-idUSBRE97U0FO20130831> (accessed 2 September 2013).

pickup trucks and two light tanks. They also stole four military patrol trucks and two light armored tanks from a nearby base.⁶³

Recruiting

U.S. government sources and analysts estimate Boko Haram's active militant members at several hundred.⁶⁴ However, the group has supporters that number in the thousands with some who are possibly involved on a very basic level.⁶⁵ Several sources list the various types of people that are recruited for the radical movement: angry and unemployed men, Islamist militants, criminals, bomb-makers and suicide bombers.⁶⁶ Unemployed Muslim men from the north can be utilized as a recruiting pool for terrorist activities. This is the extent of information on Boko Haram's recruiting methods.

Funding

Boko Haram's sources of funding are few, and often unverifiable. Simplistic bank robberies seem to have provided limited funds to the group in its earlier years.⁶⁷ Some sources claim that former Libyan dictator Qaddafi had provided funds as well as governors in northern Nigeria who paid for protection.⁶⁸ Lately, unverifiable reports within Nigeria mentioned funding from "Al Qaeda-linked organizations in the Middle East and England,"⁶⁹ in addition to Saudi businessmen. A Boko Haram spokesman announced on February 2, 2012 that members traveled to Saudi Arabia to meet with Al-Qaeda and received "financial and technical support."⁷⁰ Nigerian politicians, including a recently arrested senator, have also been suspected of being involved in Boko Haram sponsorship.⁷¹ With the cost of buying explosives and other equipment for an increased wave of attacks, Boko Haram likely has outside sources of funding or material support.

Methods

The methods of Boko Haram have progressed over time, beginning with small arms attacks on local police stations, to massive suicide bombings at government buildings and markets. Boko Haram targets politicians, police, and those who speak out against the group, including Islamic clerics, secular individuals, and preachers.⁷² Targeted persons are killed in a variety of ways. The following is a list of the group's preferred methods:

- Small arms assaults
- Setting fire to schools
- Chemical explosives (according to Andrew Walker)
- Drive-by motorcycle attacks on police checkpoints
- Targeted shootings from motorbikes
- Improvised explosive devices (IEDs)
- Vehicle borne improvised explosive devices (VBIEDs)
- Suicide bombers

⁶³ "Nigeria workers find 143 civilian bodies in region plagued by Islamic extremist group Boko Haram." CBS News, September 20, 2013. http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-202_162-57603839/nigeria-workers-find-143-civilian-bodies-in-region-plagued-by-islamic-extremist-group-boko-haram/ (accessed 20 September 2013).

⁶⁴ "Boko Haram: Emerging Threat to the U.S. Homeland." Statement of Lauren Ploch, CRS-2; Pham, 5.

⁶⁵ Pham, 5.

⁶⁶ Thomson, 54; Pham, 5.

⁶⁷ Cook, 21; Walker, 5; Thomson, 53.

⁶⁸ Thomson, 53.

⁶⁹ IBID, 53.

⁷⁰ "Nigeria: Boko Haram Receives Funds From Al Qaeda." Stratfor Global Intelligence. 02 February 2012. <http://www.stratfor.com/situation-report/nigeria-boko-haram-receives-funds-al-qaeda>, (accessed 18 March 2013).

⁷¹ "Boko Haram: Emerging Threat to the U.S. Homeland." Statement of Lauren Ploch, CRS-7.

⁷² Thomson, 52.

It should be of concern that Boko Haram has increased its use of explosives. The significant increase is addressed by Andrew Walker who said, “Since August 2011, Boko Haram has planted bombs almost weekly in public or in churches in Nigeria’s northeast.”⁷³ Walker also believes that Boko Haram will continue this trend of attacking Nigerian targets instead of transitioning to Western targets.⁷⁴ The progressive use of explosives, particularly in complicated VBIEDs, signifies the work of bomb-makers in addition to suicidal recruits.

It is important to note that suicide bombings are not “indigenous” to Nigeria.⁷⁵ The June 2011 car-bomb explosion at police headquarters in Abuja is believed to be Nigeria’s first suicide bombing.⁷⁶ According to security intelligence analysts at Stratfor, the complex bombs used in the suicidal attacks on the UN compound and Abuja police headquarters are “good evidence that there is a foreign hand involved in training Boko Haram.”⁷⁷ The explosives employed in the bombs are the type used in mining and construction, which are abundant in Northern Nigeria.⁷⁸ A country with no history of suicide bombings would probably not generate experienced bomb makers, thus requiring foreign involvement of some capacity. A radical Islamic sect in Western Africa is now utilizing the deadly weapon of choice for many Middle Eastern terrorist groups, which poses the question of whether or not foreign influence and support are at work in Nigeria.

Another concern of Boko Haram’s methods involves their use of media and suicide bombers. The Islamic sect adopted the use of video cameras, YouTube, DVDs, and recording martyrs before they sacrifice themselves.⁷⁹ These utilizations of media for propaganda purposes are pervasive among well-known terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda and Al-Shabaab.⁸⁰

UPDATE

June 6, 2013: Members of Boko Haram attacked a school in Potiskum and killed a teacher and 22 students. They lined up the schoolchildren, executed them, and subsequently set fire to the bodies. This was the fourth attack on a school in a period of four weeks. As a result, parents are pulling their children out of northeastern Nigerian schools, further contributing to the social and economic decline.⁸¹

July 31, 2013: Suspected Boko Haram militants stole 275 lbs. of dynamite and hundreds of detonators from a construction site in northern Nigeria. That same weekend, Reuters journalists were shown videos made by Boko Haram that shows viewers how to make suicide vests and VBIEDs.⁸²

August 11, 2013: Suspected Boko Haram members entered a mosque and killed 44 Muslim worshippers. The terrorists were “heavily armed” and “dressed in military camouflage uniforms.”⁸³

⁷³ Walker, 1.

⁷⁴ Walker, 1.

⁷⁵ Cook, 20-21; Pham, 5.

⁷⁶ *Spiraling Violence*, 94.

⁷⁷ Walker, 6.

⁷⁸ IBID, 6.

⁷⁹ Cook, 22-23; Walker, 7.

⁸⁰ Cook, 22-23.

⁸¹ Abrak, Isaac. “Insight: Nigeria Islamists hit schools to destroy Western ideas.” 14 July 2013.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/07/14/us-nigeria-schoolkillings-idUSBRE96D01X20130714> (accessed 18 August 2013).

⁸² “Suspected Islamists steal 125 kg of dynamite in north Nigeria.” *Reuters*. 31 July 2013.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/07/31/us-nigeria-islamists-idUSBRE96U15K20130731> (accessed 18 August 2013).

⁸³ “Over 40 people killed while praying in Nigeria mosque – security forces.” *Russia Times*. 12 August 2013.

<http://rt.com/news/nigeria-killed-mosque-praying-405/> (accessed 18 August 2013).

Al-Qaeda Connections

There are increasing concerns of possible connections between Boko Haram and branches of Al-Qaeda including Al-Shabaab in Somalia and Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), which operates in Northern Africa.⁸⁴ Mamman Nur, Boko Haram's third ranking leader, supposedly went to Somalia with several Boko Haram members, trained in Al-Shabaab camps, and "forged links with transnational jihadist networks."⁸⁵ African Union forces in Somalia have confirmed a connection between Boko Haram and Al-Shabaab.⁸⁶ There is also a publicized connection with AQIM, where leaders from both groups have pledged logistical and ideological support to one another.⁸⁷ The following statements solidify Boko Haram's desire to have Al-Qaeda connections:

*We are ready to train your children to use weapons and will supply them with all we can, including support and men, weapons, ammunitions and equipment, in order to defend our people in Nigeria and respond against the aggression of the Christian minority. – Emir Abu Musab Abdel Wadoud Abdel Malek in a message to the Nigerian people.*⁸⁸

*Boko Haram is just a version of the Al Qaeda, which we align with and respect. We support Osama bin Laden, we shall carry out his command in Nigeria until the country is totally Islamized which is according to the wish of Allah. – Sani Umar temporary leader of Boko Haram, August 9, 2009.*⁸⁹

*Our jihadists have arrived in Nigeria from Somalia where they received real training on warfare from our brethren who made that country ungovernable. – Boko Haram Statement, 2011.*⁹⁰

U.S. intelligence is concerned that Al-Qaeda affiliated groups pose a threat, especially if AQIM and Boko Haram work together, which could expand their areas of operation.⁹¹ This concern is fostered by the fact that "contact between members of the groups is increasingly frequent,"⁹² according to U.S. officials. Ambassador Anthony Holmes, Deputy to the Commander for Civil-Military Activities of United States Africa Command (AFRICOM) said that Boko Haram militants receive training from AQIM.⁹³ The Commander of U.S. Africa Command considers it a threat after seeing reports that Boko Haram and AQIM are sharing explosives and funding.⁹⁴ Boko Haram's attacks are also becoming more sophisticated, possibly due to outside support.⁹⁵ General Carter Ham, commander of U.S. AFRICOM, showed concern about Boko Haram becoming the network that links Al-Shabaab and AQIM across northern Africa.⁹⁶ The possibility of an Al-Qaeda chain across North Africa increases every day as Boko Haram fighters connect with AQIM members, and travel through Chad and Niger.⁹⁷ Although the main faction of Al-

⁸⁴ Pham, 4; "Al-Qa'ida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)." Department of Energy: Hanford. Counterintelligence Briefing Center. http://www.hanford.gov/c.cfm/oci/ci_terrorist.cfm?dossier=174, (accessed 25 February 2013).

⁸⁵ Pham, 6.

⁸⁶ IBID, 6.

⁸⁷ IBID, 5.

⁸⁸ "Al-Qa'ida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)."

⁸⁹ Cook, 13-15.

⁹⁰ Pham, 4.

⁹¹ "Boko Haram: Emerging Threat to the U.S. Homeland." Statement of Lauren Ploch, CRS-3 – CRS-4.

⁹² "Boko Haram: Emerging Threat to the U.S. Homeland." Statement of Lauren Ploch, CRS-4.

⁹³ "Boko Haram: Emerging Threat to the U.S. Homeland." U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence. Rep. Patrick Meehan, Chairman and Rep. Jackie Speier, Ranking Member. 30 November 2011, 2.

⁹⁴ Ploch, "Nigeria: Current Issues and U.S. Policy." 11-12.

⁹⁵ IBID; "Boko Haram: Emerging Threat to the U.S. Homeland." Statement of Lauren Ploch, CRS-4.

⁹⁶ Pham, J. Peter. "The Islamist Threat to Africa's Rise in 2012." Atlantic Council. 03 January 2012. http://www.acus.org/?q=new_atlanticist/islamist-threat-africas-rise-2012, (accessed 16 February 2013).

⁹⁷ "Boko Haram: Emerging Threat to the U.S. Homeland." Statement of Lauren Ploch, CRS-3.

Qaeda has not publicly endorsed the Nigerian sect, Boko Haram has the qualifications to be an Al-Qaeda franchise. Sean Gourley states

Boko Haram's initial stated goal of the abolition of secular apostate governments and a return of Shariah fits into the al Qaeda strategy. Al Qaeda has succinctly stated its goals for Africa; some of those goals entail the removal of apostate regimes in Muslim nations, targeting Nigeria's petroleum infrastructure to damage the international system, and striking governments that are allied with the West. Given that those goals dovetail with Boko Haram's stated goals, and with Boko Haram having since adopted an international outlook, the potential for synergy is there.⁹⁸

The United States government should consider Gourley's analysis of potential for synergy in its response to the Islamic movement.

UPDATE

According to Jason Burke at *The Guardian*, "Bin Laden appears to have been in direct or indirect communication with Nigerian-based militant group Boko Haram..."⁹⁹ This is based on documents recovered from the Bin Laden raid in 2011. It appears that Boko Haram leaders had been in contact with high-level al-Qaida officials for 18 months.¹⁰⁰

A Shift in the Population

Recently, there has been a shift in Nigeria's population regarding Boko Haram. While Boko Haram is anti-Western in ideology and has a hatred of the Nigerian government, the militants have killed more Muslims than Christians,¹⁰¹ prompting a response from the Muslim communities. Because of a significant amount of attacks on Muslim and Christian civilians, citizens have formed government-approved vigilante groups to fight back against the Islamic militants. While the federal government has not armed these groups, they have acquired their own weapons, from machetes to firearms. According to Adam Higazi, an Oxford Analytica researcher, "unprecedented mass popular action against the group is the most serious setback to its armed campaign against the Nigerian state...since the military crackdown in July 2009."¹⁰² Nigerian citizens, both Muslim and Christian alike, are angry over terrorist tactics and now inform on Boko Haram militants and even assist the military at checkpoints. Although this has been an effective tactic against the extremist group, there is the risk that these groups could turn against the government itself after defeating Boko Haram in addition to the risk of human rights violations against detainees.¹⁰³ However, at least for now, the greater risk is a terrorist group with Al-Qaida connections and support.

Proposed Nigerian Government Response

There are two core factors that have led to a destabilized Nigeria. The first is religious differences as Nigeria's population is evenly split between Muslims and Christians. A majority of

⁹⁸ Gourley, Sean M. "Linkages Between Boko Haram and al Qaeda: A Potential Deadly Synergy." *Global Security Studies*, Summer 2012, Vol. 3, Iss. 3. <http://globalsecuritystudies.com/Gourley%20Boko%20Haram.pdf> (accessed 15 February 2013), 9.

⁹⁹ Burke, Jason. "Bin Laden files show al-Qaida and Taliban leaders in close contact." *The Guardian*. 29 April 2012. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/apr/29/bin-laden-al-qaida-taliban-contact> (accessed 19 August 2013).

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Umar and Faul. "Nigerians want weapons after deadly mosque attack."

¹⁰² Cocks, Tim and Lanre Ola. "Analysis: Nigeria backlash against Boko Haram spurs risky vigilante war." *Reuters*. 11 August 2013. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/08/11/us-nigeria-vigilantes-analysis-idUSBRE97A04120130811> (18 August 2013).

¹⁰³ Ibid, Faul, Michelle. "Nigerian Vigilantes Take on Islamic Extremists." 14 August 2013. <http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/backlash-vigilantes-nigerian-islamists-19957068> (accessed 18 August 2013); "Boko Haram War Moves To The Border." *StrategyPage*. 28 June 2013. <http://www.strategypage.com/qnd/nigeria/articles/20130628.aspx> (accessed 18 August 2013).

the Muslims reside in the north and the Christians in the south. The other dividing factor is attributed to natural resources. Nigeria's oil fields are located in the south, which fosters jealousy and corruption. Boko Haram utilizes this religious divide and resentment over natural resources to further destabilize the nation and attack government forces. However, there are a number of actions that the Nigerian government can utilize to combat Boko Haram. Several actions can be implemented to directly oppose the progression of terror movements in Nigeria's states (priority actions in bold):

- Better cooperation and intelligence-sharing between states
- **Increase Human Intelligence (HUMINT) efforts**
- **Work with local leaders in the Muslim north to gain their trust, thus expanding HUMINT and increasing stabilization**
- **Make it a priority to unite the moderate Muslims and the Christians, as stabilization and unity will combat Boko Haram's influence and willpower**
- **Implement a ground-up policy to determine the security and basic needs of those in at-risk states.** Discuss those needs with local leaders, and report up the chain of command to see what is needed to best provide direct assistance to the affected population. The key is to provide direct protection, support, and basic-needs assistance to the villages and cities that are under constant threat of attack from Boko Haram. This will increase citizens' willingness to inform on/combat Boko Haram members and strengthen the relationship between the public and the federal government.
- **Seal the borders between Nigeria, Chad, and Niger to stop the flow of weapons and fighters**
 - Improve relationships between police and local communities through community policing efforts
 - Enforce human rights during arrests and detainment
 - Cease all harassment and property damage against civilians
 - **Increase protection for schools at risk of attack**
 - Prosecute police and government officials guilty of corruption and supporting Boko Haram¹⁰⁴

Implementing these suggestions would help to stabilize the tension between the Muslims, Christians, and federal government, and would have a negative effect on Boko Haram's support base. Nigerian Army Captain Umar Aliyu's suggestions coincide with the presented actions; he stated that Nigeria needs "better intelligence and a plan to help alleviate poverty..." and also "to gain the trust of the population in order to gather intelligence that could prevent Boko Haram members from going underground during the offensive."¹⁰⁵

Proposed U.S. Government Response

Because Nigeria is currently unable to single-handedly put down the radical Islamic movement, outside assistance is required. The United States deems Nigeria a national interest due to its oil supply and partnership on the African continent.¹⁰⁶ However, the strategic African partner is particularly susceptible to terrorist and insurgent activity. The State Department has classified Nigeria as a "high or critical risk" of terrorist threat in more than a dozen

¹⁰⁴ *Spiraling Violence*, 16-17; Pham, 6-7; Walker, 12-13; "Border porosity and Boko Haram as a regional threat." *ISSAFRICA*. 28 May 2012. <http://www.issafrika.org/iss-today/border-porosity-and-boko-haram-as-a-regional-threat> (accessed 18 August 2013); conversation with Professor of Law Edna Udobong, July 2013.

¹⁰⁵ Murdock, Heather. "Nigerian Military: More Than 200 Boko Haram Captured." *Voice of America*. 20 May 2013. <http://www.voanews.com/content/nigerian-military-says-it-has-captured-more-than-two-hundred-boko-haram/1664850.html> (accessed 18 August 2013).

¹⁰⁶ Gourley, 10; Clapper, James R. Director of National Intelligence. 31 January 2012. Unclassified Statement for the Record on the Worldwide Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community for the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. http://www.dni.gov/files/documents/Newsroom/Testimonies/20120131_testimony_ata.pdf (accessed 01 March 2013), 19.

categories,”¹⁰⁷ according to Lauren Ploch. In addition, three members of Boko Haram, including Abubakar Shekau, were officially labeled as Specially Designated Global Terrorists.¹⁰⁸ Nigeria’s terror and violence problems are best described by Sean Gourley who said it is “a counterterrorism problem nested inside a counterinsurgency problem nested inside a governance problem.”¹⁰⁹ The United States must respond accordingly in ways that do not lean towards intervention but also do not include a foreign aid budget increase. According to 2010 estimates, USAID and the State Department allocated 614.159 million dollars to Nigeria, with a majority portioned out to the Global Health and Child Survival category.¹¹⁰

The United States also focuses on other forms of aid: promoting and funding reform in the Nigerian government to curb corruption, providing accountability, and protecting human rights.¹¹¹ To increase foreign aid without raising the budget, the United States could provide expertise on how to establish a more effective human intelligence network to locate Boko Haram cells and prevent terrorist attacks. It could also produce actionable intelligence on Boko Haram’s outside suppliers and funders to assist the Nigerian government in cutting off the movement’s sources and support.

However, the U.S. should tread carefully in assistance to its African partner. If militants of Boko Haram and their allies see an increase in U.S. involvement, they could possibly begin to target Western personnel and interests.¹¹² The stability of Nigeria is very fragile and needs not be upset by a drastic shift. Sean Gourley makes a moderate recommendation,

Counterterrorism operations should be highly discrete and intelligence driven targeting leadership nodes and the interdiction of explosives caches, with an eye on not disturbing the populace, which is the focus of nation strengthening and stability. These intelligence collection efforts should involve human networks as well as technical and open-source collection given that many of the upticks in violence were coordinated via social media and text message.¹¹³

Any U.S. involvement should be exercised carefully, as the stability and unity of Nigeria hangs in the balance.

FTO Designation

Members of Congress have asked that Boko Haram be designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO).¹¹⁴ The legal criteria for designation are:

1. It must be a foreign organization.
2. The organization must engage in terrorist activity, as defined in section 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.
3. The organization’s 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.¹¹⁵

¹⁰⁷ Ploch, “Nigeria: Current Issues and U.S. Policy”, 17.

¹⁰⁸ IBID.

¹⁰⁹ Gourley, 10.

¹¹⁰ USAID Nigeria Fact Sheet. FY 2008-11 USAID-State Foreign Assistance Appropriations. http://transition.usaid.gov/locations/sub-saharan_africa/countries/nigeria/nigeria_fs.pdf, (accessed 02 March 2013).

¹¹¹ Ploch, “Nigeria: Current Issues and U.S. Policy”, 17.

¹¹² Walker, 14.

¹¹³ Gourley, 11-12.

¹¹⁴ Ploch, “Nigeria: Current Issues and U.S. Policy”, 12.

¹¹⁵ Foreign Terrorist Organizations, U.S. Department of State. Bureau of Counterterrorism. 28 September 2012. <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/ris/other/des/123085.htm>, (accessed 20 February 2013).

By definition, Boko Haram meets all three requirements for FTO designation. They assuredly meet criteria one and two, while the third can be met with a two-fold threat: attacks on the aviation and hotel industries.

Nigeria's oil industry is now a declining U.S. economic interest, and therefore not included in the third criteria's threat assessment. However, a significant attack/s on the oil pipelines would cripple Nigerian GDP, and foster the support and growth of Boko Haram, as citizens would lose all faith in their government and economy. The United States was responsible for 35% of Nigerian oil exports in 2011; it dropped by 40% in 2012.¹¹⁶ If U.S. oil imports from Nigeria continue to decline, it will cease to be a significant economic interest. As a result of declining U.S. oil imports from Nigeria, a Boko Haram attack would cause a temporary price increase on gas, but would not impair the U.S. economy. However, it would severely hurt the Nigerian government's revenue, thereby contributing to more economic problems.

Because the U.S. is increasing its domestic energy sources and relying less on Nigerian oil, the Nigerian oil industry may be forced to shift its focus to Asian consumers. However, East African oil producers are close to rivaling Nigeria's production, as the country "has failed to meet reserve growth and production targets for many years."¹¹⁷ They also have a better niche because of their location to Asian markets. A decline in exports to the U.S. and the difficulty in reaching Asian buyers could pose a drastic problem to Nigerian GDP, which is significantly reliant on oil exports. This will only compound Nigeria's already-slow development and lack of social services, which makes them more vulnerable to Boko Haram.

Boko Haram also poses a threat to the aviation industry, which, if attacked, would result in the deaths of U.S. nationals. According to a report from the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Homeland Security, "Nigeria is a major destination for Western travelers."¹¹⁸ An attack on an airport terminal full of Westerners is likely attainable for a terrorist group with sophisticated bomb techniques.

Lately, Boko Haram has shown interest in hotels that cater to international guests such as "Western business travelers, diplomats and intelligence officers."¹¹⁹ The U.S. Embassy received intelligence and issued a warning concerning possible Boko Haram bomb attacks on the Sheraton, Nicon Luxury, and Hilton hotels in Abuja on November 5, 2011.¹²⁰ As a result, security at those specific targets, and similar locations, has been increased. Hotels that host many Westerners are easier to attack than a U.S. or UN compound, which has more security measures in place.¹²¹ A direct attack on Western travelers at hotels would have the same effect as attacking them in international facilities, making Western hotels legitimate, if not likely, targets.

Conclusion

Boko Haram is an Islamic extremist group that commits acts of terror against Nigerian civilians and government personnel, leading to a destabilization of Nigeria. While current capabilities may limit Boko Haram to northern Nigeria, its increased lethality of attacks and possible partnerships with more established terror groups gives the United States reason for

¹¹⁶ Brock, Joe. "Analysis: Nigeria losing ground in changing oil world." Reuters.com. 25 February 2013. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/02/25/us-nigeria-oil-idUSBRE91O0QF20130225>, (accessed 26 February 2013).

¹¹⁷ Brock.

¹¹⁸ "Boko Haram: Emerging Threat to the U.S. Homeland." U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence, 19.

¹¹⁹ Stewart, Scott. "The Rising Threat from Nigeria's Boko Haram Militant Group." Stratfor Global Intelligence. 10 November 2011. http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/20111109-rising-threat-nigerias-boko-haram-militant-group?0=ip_login_no_cache%3D4586cd6e93336e1c3361fe11773d17d5, (accessed 1 March 2013); Unclassified Statement for the Record on the Worldwide Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community for the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, 19.

¹²⁰ Stewart.

¹²¹ IBID.

concern. Boko Haram has attacked a UN target already, has made intentions of bombing Western-filled hotels, and poses a threat to the oil and aviation industries, which would have both direct and indirect impacts on United States citizens. Their extreme ideology, improved tactics, lethal weaponry, and synergy with Al-Qaeda groups also support the merit of an FTO designation. But an opposing viewpoint is concerned about labeling Boko Haram as an FTO, because it would possibly legitimize the movement in the eyes of international terror groups, which could prompt new streams of revenue and recruitment.¹²² In light of this concern, the group poses too much of a threat to leave undesignated and unchecked. Therefore, the United States government should designate Boko Haram as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in order to assist the Nigerian government in curbing outside support and training. At the same time, the Nigerian government must focus on uniting the population and stabilizing its economy. According to Kole Shettima, a Nigerian pro-democracy activist, "The major focus should be on securing the local population. It is popular legitimacy that will provide the intelligence necessary to fight insurgency and terrorists."¹²³ Instead of only focusing on the militant group, the Nigerian government needs the support of its citizens, and thus should also focus on uniting a broken Nigerian populace to fight terror.

¹²² Ploch, "Nigeria: Current Issues and U.S. Policy." 12.

¹²³ Brock, Joe. "Insight: Nigeria's 'war on terror' wins tentative support." *Reuters*. 27 May 2013. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/05/27/us-nigeria-violence-insight-idUSBRE94P02W20130527> (accessed 18 August 2013).

Threat Assessment of Western Industries in Nigeria

In support of the third criteria of FTO designation – the threatened security of U.S. nationals

Threat:

Boko Haram

Threatened Facilities:

International Airports/Luxury Hotels

Nigerian International Airports:

Easy Access Issues

- There are previous reports at Nigerian airports of a stowaway in the wheel well of an aircraft and a madman walking on an active runway.
- Perimeter fences are not fully monitored or do not fully enclose the property, thus allowing outside entities easy access to airport facilities and runways.
- Nigerians illegally build their homes on airport property, which provides almost unlimited access to terrorists.¹²⁴

Overwhelming Force

- On March 13, 2013, a group of heavily armed men forced their way into Murtala Mohammed Airport Lagos and robbed the Bureau-de-Change center, successfully stealing “a huge amount of foreign currencies.”¹²⁵ A 30-minute shootout occurred between the robbers and airport security. Two policemen were killed and one robber was killed.

Nigerian International Airport Threat

- Boko Haram members have access to international airports in Nigeria and could target aircraft and terminals that hold U.S. nationals.

Nigerian Luxury Hotels:

Bomb Threats

- Luxury hotels in Nigeria, including the Hilton, Nicon Luxury, and Sheraton, were included in a bomb threat by Boko Haram on November 5, 2011. Westerners, who were told to avoid the hotels during the remainder of the threat, frequent these hotels.¹²⁶

¹²⁴ “Nigerian Airports Need Improved Security Given Increased Terror Attacks.” 28 December 2012. <http://www.thisdaylive.com/articles/-nigerian-airports-need-improved-security-given-increased-terror-attacks-/134688/>. (accessed 14 March 2013).

¹²⁵ “Robbers Invade Lagos Airport, Kill Two Policemen.” 14 March 2013. <http://news.naij.com/27304.html>, (accessed 14 March 2013).

¹²⁶ “Luxury Hotels In Nigerian Capital Deserted Over Threat Of Attack By Islamic Militants.” SaharaReporters, New York. 07 November 2011. <http://saharareporters.com/news-page/luxury-hotels-nigerian-capital-deserted-over-threat-attack-islamic-militants>, (accessed 14 March 2013); Gambrell, Jon. “Nigeria Bomb Attacks In Luxury Hotels Possible, U.S. Warns.” *Huffington Post*. 06 November 2011. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/11/06/nigeria-bomb-attacks-hotel_n_1078497.html, (accessed 14 March 2013).

Nigerian Luxury Hotels Threat:

- Luxury hotels that cater to Westerners were the subjects of a bomb threat by Boko Haram in late 2011. Hotels are easier to attack than a UN compound or U.S. embassy, thus providing a soft target for Boko Haram.

Possible Victims:

U.S. nationals (travelers, businessmen, diplomats), Nigerian civilians, Nigerian security personnel

Description of possible threat:

Threats and ideology of Boko Haram may warrant an attack in the near future on international airports and Western hotels.

Type of Threat:

Direct Attack

Reason for Threat:

- Ideology is extremely anti-Western.
- A Boko Haram spokesman labeled the United States as the number one target, but they planned on targeting Nigeria first.
- Boko Haram has already shown willingness and intent to target Western-related organizations/personnel in the UN compound bombing in August 2011. Additional bomb threat on luxury hotels that service Westerners.

Methods of Threat:

- Small arms attack
- Kidnapping
- Assassination
- Timed or remote-detonated bombs
- Suicide bombings – including VBIEDs

Levels of Threat:

Low

Boko Haram has the resources (armed militants, suicide bombers, bomb material), intent (previous attack on UN), and motivation (radical ideology/Al Qaeda affiliations) to carry out some form of attack on hotels or airports filled with Westerners, should they choose to do so.