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On

The U.S. Role in Helping Nigeria Confront Boko Haram and Other Threats in Northern Nigeria

Before the

Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations

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Rep. Christopher H. Smith, Chairman

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Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member and Members of the Subcommittee: Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today on addressing the critical humanitarian crisis caused by the deadliest terror group in the world.

I especially want to thank you, Chairman Smith, for your consistent leadership on this issue and your travels to Nigeria to further assess the situation. Today, I would like to share some crucial points concerning the current security situation in Nigeria in the light of renewed international interest to address a terrorist insurgency that has not only metastasized but has evolved into a sub-regional challenge.

A. UPDATE ON PROFILES OF TERROR

The threat matrix in Nigeria has been complicated by an admixture of diverse factors and actors which include sects, foreign, federal and state governments amongst others.

1. The State of the Boko Haram Insurgency

"The People for the Propagation of the Prophet's teaching and Jihad", also known as Boko Haram was once described as "one of the most vicious terrorist organizations in the world" by President Obama. The President's words proved prophetic. The Nigerian Jihadist group ranked the deadliest terrorist group worldwide two years in a row, even exceeding ISIS' murders according to multiple groups tracking terrorism.

In April 2014, Boko Haram perpetrated an atrocity that shocked the world beyond even its heinous bloodbaths when it abducted 276 schoolgirls from their campus in Chibok, northern Nigeria; 219 of whom are still unaccounted for presently. It was a watershed moment in global perception and awareness of Boko Haram.

Horrified, even terror group Al Qaeda to whom Boko Haram was then affiliated, denounced the abductions of the mostly Christian girls captured as "slave brides." While this served as a surprising ideological shift from the least expected source, it was to be the beginning of an unusual alignment with another.

Inspired by Boko Haram's actions, ISIS abducted scores of Christian and Yazidi women in Iraq the following month thus also subscribing to Boko Haram's theology of weaponized rape, abduction, forced conversions and marriage.

Eleven months after the Chibok abductions, ISIS and Boko Haram pledged loyalty to each other with the latter assuming the name "Islamic State of West Africa Province." One year later, this new moniker has been true to its name as Boko Haram aka ISWAP which had a limited operational history in Mali, now has unleashed significant attacks in the West African countries of Niger, Chad and Cameroon. (See Appendix 1 Timeline of ISWAP Attacks.)

Approximately 1200 Cameroonians have lost their lives and many more thousands have been displaced from their homes. In addition, Cameroon is host country to refugee inflows from CAR and northern Nigeria. The UNHCR camp in Minawao has 60,000 refugees up exponentially from

the 2,000 it held when I visited two years ago in May 2014 – increasing by an average of 500 refugees each week.

The United States recently deployed about 300 special troops to Cameroon to provide intelligence and surveillance to an existing anti-Boko Haram task force created by Cameroon, Nigeria, Chad, Niger and Benin. Specifically, the force will conduct airborne intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance operations in the region (*BBC News*, 2015).

According to news reports, intelligence sharing has been a major problem within the international partners. One recent clear example was the reported capture of an alleged Chibok schoolgirl on a suicide bombing mission in Cameroon. Nigerian officials proposed an unwieldy plan to send family representatives all the way from Nigeria to Cameroon to verify her claim by physical identification – something that could have been done in hours if the necessary databases were in place and properly coordinating.

The US also commendably designated Boko Haram an FTO after initial steep resistance by the Administration. **Although the US has recognized ISIS atrocities as “genocide,” there has been no similar recognition for Boko Haram or ISWA even though it is now the same organization and has killed more people. It is hoped that there will not be a protracted battle again to achieve what should clearly at this point be a logical conclusion. The evidence is glaring.**

Since Boko Haram emerged around 2002 as a self-styled “Nigerian Taliban” in direct response to the US invasion of Afghanistan and the dislodgment of the Taliban, Boko Haram has evolved into a lethal terror group after its role model in just a decade.

From the time it issued an ultimatum, shortly after blowing up churches on Christmas day, asking Christians and southerners to leave Northern Nigeria in January 2012 or die, Boko Haram has prosecuted a pernicious and systematic campaign of extermination. Funerals for randomly killed non-Muslim “others” have been attacked, companies have been raided, and non-Muslims summarily executed by shots to the head. Buses have been stopped with the occupants separated and systematically slaughtered. **More Christians were killed in northern Nigeria in 2012 than throughout the rest of the world**¹. Despite a military offensive to rout out the insurgents from swathes of territory in Nigeria’s northeast, a government source says they have only liberated about 75% of territory previously lost to Boko Haram. In my recent trip to the northeast, it was clear that Boko Haram is still operating in the mountain ranges of Gwoza for four years straight based on interviews with a recent escapee who had been besieged on a mountain since 2014. These types of incidents scarcely make it into the local news.

Mr. Chairman, you will recall that during your visit to Nigeria in June 2014 after the Chibok abductions, we were shown a distress text message of 1000 people stranded on the Mountains of

¹World Watch Monitor, *Widest Church Groupings Raises Funds for Boko Haram’s almost 800 Victims in 2012*, March 8, 2013, <http://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2013/03-March/2331194/>

Gwoza under siege by Boko Haram suffering starvation and snake bites. Mr. Chairman recommended a humanitarian corridor to allow food aid in but Boko Haram isn't amenable to such norms of civilized conduct. Upon returning to the US, I reached out to relief organizations who were involved in airlifting aid to the stranded Yazidis and Christians on Iraqi mountains after ISIS replicated Chibok style mass abductions of women. US groups declined to help because Nigeria was "too dangerous." Subsequently, I monitored reports that food aid sent by the Nigerian government was ambushed by the terrorists. Some people who came down from the hill to phone for help were killed by the terrorists.

Last year we learned about the sighting of bodies strewn on the mountain. Finally, two weeks ago, I met a man who had survived on the mountain from 2014 till 2016. His account is riveting:

About 304 of them were still alive and living in hiding atop the Gwoza Mountain until they were attacked by Boko Haram on April 14 of this year. In that ambush, he believes at least 15 of his fellow survivors were killed. The ambush led many to flee from the mountain downhill to the valley villages where he ultimately found the Nigerian army. He does not know who is left on the mountain.

They survived by eating grass, shrubs, roots and whatever vegetation they could find regardless of whether it was poisonous. For water, they drank mud, rain water and even urine to survive. His young son whom he reunited with in an IDP camp hours before, was struggling to recognize his dad who had shrunk in size from years of living in the wild. Peter showed me his calloused hands from striking rocks to make fire. Boko Haram had indeed shoved the people of Gwoza into the stone age and for the past two years, these Internally Besieged Persons (IBPs) were simply cut off from our civilization and not impacted by our debates on the causes and cures of Boko Haram.

Last year, there were sustained levels of targeted attacks in spite of the increased counterinsurgency offensive. In 2015, there were 4,028 killings of Christians and 198 church attacks that Open Doors was able to record. The figures recorded for the previous year were 2,484 killings and 108 church attacks. One American-affiliated church denomination, EYN alone has lost over 10,000 members, with over $\frac{3}{4}$ of a million displaced and over 1,200 church buildings destroyed in half a dozen years – apocalyptic figures quite comparable to the erosion of Christians in Iraq. EYN incidentally was the original owner of the Chibok school built by American missionaries. The daughter of one of the Americans who built the school was herself serving in northern Nigeria until she had to be evacuated because of the Boko Haram onslaught. Over 170 of the abducted schoolgirls are members of EYN.

Far from being technically defeated, Boko Haram is alive even if ailing, and has a larger operational theater than previously. The good news is that there is a concerted Multi-National Joint Taskforce taking the battle to the insurgents.

2. An Emergent Threat - Fulani Herdsmen

While there is some comfort in the successes of the comprehensive counteroffensive against Boko Haram, what many in Nigeria consider a clear and present danger to national peace and security is the atrocities perpetrated by Muslim herdsmen of the Fulani tribe.

The Agatu Massacre: Journey to the Land Inhabited By Cows

Days after bands of Fulani nomads launched systematic attacks on villages in the overwhelmingly Christian Benue state in north central Nigeria, we conducted a fact-finding mission. Victim after victim displaced by the herdsman, part of the estimated 20,000 IDPs, recounted how the attacks began on the night of February 21 in Okokolo village in Agatu local government area and then continued daily in neighboring villages leaving them nowhere to run. 11 days later, the first civilian fact-finding mission, comprised of relief workers and media, ventured under heavy security escort into the zone of what has locally been termed the "Agatu massacre." The sight was unnerving. The tales of victims could not possibly capture the extent of the devastation. Traveling on end, mile after mile on bumpy dirt roads, there were no humans to be seen in village after burnt down village - actually just dead ones. In Adagbo, what turned out to be the charred corpse of a man on the floor of his living room hinted at his own story. He was probably undressed and asleep in bed when his house was set ablaze. When he came to his living room, he was probably shot and fell there, slowly eaten alive by the flames. With but half a torso, and one arm stretched out toward the door, that's all there was to make of this mystery.

In Okokolo, a full decomposing body lay spread-eagle on the school lawn. Not far away was the lawnmower. Possibly he had been mowing in the night, escaping the scorching African heat, when he was hacked to death with machetes as gashes in his legs, bare back and hands showed. A textbook of a high school student lay on the lawn.

Local officials told me that inadequate security kept them from coming to bury the bodies still littered in the villages. It was easy to see why. In a couple of the villages that I had visited earlier, cattle roamed free - the only living things in sight, except for a couple of lurking herdsman who had taken off at our approach heralded by plumes of convoy dust. As we drove further into the held territory, swarms, droves and then herds of thousands of cows, flanked by the killer herdsman, came into plain view. They were still on the scene of the crime - this was still an active and ongoing flammable situation. The two prior official trips by the army and police had ended with nothing being done, except the firing of warning shots, we were told.

The narrative of the herder/farmer conflict is common but underneath it is the subterranean stream of a bitter religious battle for domination that takes no prisoners. The Fulani herdsman are Muslim and the Agatu farmers are mostly Christian. In a startling conversation with the attackers, Ibrahim a minority Muslim from Agatu, revealed what appears to be a clear religious angle for the attacks. Ibrahim testified that the Fulani herdsman in the Agatu massacre spared him after he recited a Qur'anic verse. They claimed they were told in neighboring Nassarawa state that Agatu people did not support Islamic worship. He denied this and showed them his mosque, his mum and brother who, like him, were Muslims. The mosque was spared but village churches were burnt. As we drove through, we saw a huge building untouched by the mayhem. It was indeed a mosque. Ibrahim could well be the most powerful witness yet, who saw the herdsman and was spared and talked with them to understand their rationale. Although personally spared, he and his family still fled, unable to fathom deadly attacks on his friends, family and community in the name of his religion.

The day after our tour, the Inspector General of Police visited the state but did not reach Agatu. Soldiers were deployed in there just in time to forestall another attack on March 5 where herdsmen set fires to yet another village.

According to local media reports, spokespersons for the herdsmen's association told the police chief that their action was provoked by the Agatu people killing "10,000 cows" although we saw no signs of dead cows (only dead people) during our tour. The claim is highly improbable. Indeed, we saw as many as 10,000 live cows.

This sort of impunity flummoxes Akpa Idu, a community leader and chair of the Peace and Reconciliation Committee set up by Benue State to, alongside Fulani community leaders, stem the attacks. "Why is the government not doing anything about it? Are they above the law or do they allow them continue jihad? The herdsmen were told to move their cows out of the state to pave way for peace talks. Instead more are coming. They move at will with sophisticated weapons."

Akpa Idu recalled the last major attack on March 15, 2015 when 80 of his people were killed during a 5 a.m. attack as they celebrated early morning mass at the local Catholic Church. Incidentally, the worst Fulani massacre was about this time 6 years ago when an estimated 500 Christian villagers were slaughtered in Dogo Na Hawa, Plateau State on March 6, 2010. It was the worst single mass murder globally that year.

The current Agatu massacre is likely the worst since Dogo Nahawa, but Idu said it will take a while to ascertain the real casualties. In Odugbeho, the most recently attacked village we visited, local watchmen told how a police inspector who came to check on his community was killed along with 12 others.

Idu said that, privately, Fulani leaders on his peace panel complain about unknown herdsmen amongst them who are not amenable to suasion but he remains unconvinced. Other leaders have told him that contributions were taken and cows sold to raise an offering to fund the attacks on Agatu. "This is not about grazing. This is about a takeover for their empire. They will plant their flag like Boko Haram," he cautioned. At another peace meeting with the Fulani leaders, they returned two children who had been abducted weeks earlier during the massacre as a "good faith" gesture. (See Appendix 3: The Month-Long Occupation of Agatu.)

Historical Jihadi Antecedents

The history of Fulani jihad in Nigeria adds fodder to conspiracy theories and in some cases legitimate concern. The story is told of how King Yunfa, the Hausa Chief in Gobir (now called Sokoto) hosted a Fulani immigrant called Usman Dan Fodiyo and his group in February 1804. Following a successful jihad against his Muslim hosts for a "purer" version of Islam, since 1808 the whole of the northern region lost its kingdoms, which were replaced by Fulani emirates. King Yunfa is said to have been killed in 1808 and the Fulani warrior (Usman Dan Fodiyo) established Sokoto caliphate, making himself Sultan. Gradually, other Hausa kingdoms were pillaged and taken over by the Fulani emirs. The ethnic groups in the core north were the first

victims of Fulani imperialism, a venture that occurred because the people were given access to grazing land as a result of the hospitality of the hosts.

However, they failed to overrun the Bornu kingdom, so the Shehu of Bornu remains paramount until today. It should be noted that the Kanuris of Borno are the ethnic driving force behind Boko Haram. Therefore the Kanuri and the Fulani are two different Ethnic groups with separate spheres of Islamic influence.

The Afonja dynasty in the Yoruba Oyo Empire allowed a Fulani warrior known as Janta Alimi to settle in Ilorin. The Fulani killed Afonja in 1824 and Ilorin, a Yoruba town under the Oyo Empire, fell into Fulani hands, becoming an emirate under Sokoto caliphate till today. Attempts of the O'odua People's Congress (OPC), a Yoruba rights group, to revert to status quo ante and crown an Oni (Yoruba chief) of Ilorin failed and the Yorubas in Ilorin remain in north central Nigeria under Fulani emirs. The Yoruba warriors defeated the Fulani jihadists in Osogbo in 1840 otherwise there would most likely have been Fulani "emirs" as rulers in Oyo Alaafin, Ibadan, Owo, Osogbo, Ede, Ado, and Igede Ekiti in southwest Nigeria today. If the Bini Kingdom in Nigeria's Midwest did not fight and repel the jihadists, they would likely have penetrated the Niger Delta region beyond the present day Edo North which gave in and allowed the jihadists to overrun and Islamize them.

If the early jihadists were able to make major incursions into the south of Nigeria, the question arises as to why they didn't succeed in conquering the non-Muslim minorities of the north.

Apart from resistance by the northern tribes, Dr. Bala Takaya, a knowledgeable expert on Islam in northern Nigeria shares a revealing historical perspective on another reason the non-Muslim tribes escaped Islamization. According to him, a Muslim researcher stumbled upon a fatwah or religious advisory that cautioned the jihadists from conquering the pagan tribes of the north. The rationale was that, if they were Islamized then the Muslims could not raid their villages to loot them and capture their women as slave brides.

This insight is particularly telling as it provides a contextual framework for understanding much of what is happening in northern Nigeria today. The Chibok schoolgirl abductions are entirely consistent with this doctrine of dhimmitude – tolerate the infidels for so long as you have use for them and they pay tributes as vassals. **Aside from Boko Haram's mass abductions of thousands of girls, this year, news broke of a Christian girl who had been abducted from as far south as Bayelsa state and trafficked up north for forced conversion and marriage with the full knowledge of the police and the Emir of Kano since 2015.**

The #FreeEse campaign championed by civil society, social media and Nigeria's *Punch* newspaper finally resulted in the release of 15-year-old Ese to her family. It was a warning shot that power-sanctioned abduction, trafficking, pedophilia, slavery and forced conversion cannot continue with impunity in today's Nigeria. This happens frequently in northern Nigeria but rarely receives media, which is why millions of young Nigerians were outraged by the case of Ese.

Ironically, one of the earliest such cases, the abduction and conversion of Jummai Abashiya, a Nigerian American teenager in the '80s was boldly celebrated on the front page of the government-owned *New Nigeria* newspaper to humiliate her father who was a prominent Fulani Christian professor. Today, at least three girls have now been rescued. This doctrine of pillaging the infidels is also believed to be the theological underpinning for attacks by Muslim Fulani herdsmen on the communities and farms of overwhelmingly non-Muslim communities.

A Fulani and Boko Haram Collaboration?

In the rural village of Agatu, someone had successfully installed a solar panel in his home before suspected Muslim Fulani herdsmen razed scores of villages in northern Nigeria's most Christian state. The contrast between one community modestly reaching, literally, for the stars and modern advancement, and another bogged down in medieval practices could not be sharper.

The northern Fulani tribe herds their cattle traversing the length of a country the size of Texas, as their fathers have done for centuries - on foot. The only discernible change in this age-long practice is that many have traded the iconic nomadic staff for AK47s. As vectors of a jihad, two centuries ago that shaped contemporary Islam in Nigeria, it is uncertain if the automatic rifles are for tending cows or a necessary jihadi upgrade.

The Idoma people of Agatu till the land, as did their forbears for eons. But schools have dotted the landscape, clinics and churches too as they have embraced Christianity and western education, turning away centuries before from Fulani Islamic jihad. Huts have turned to houses, and far more young people drift to cities to live and work than remain home to farm.

Fulani attacks worse than Boko Haram

Yet Benue state in Nigeria's middle belt, where Agatu is located, is the nation's undisputed "Food Basket." It provides food to both the north and the educationally advanced south. But now it is the latest battleground in what former US Ambassador John Campbell termed a looming "religious war" and a situation the US Commission for International Religious Freedom warned had claimed as many lives as Boko Haram terrorists had killed in one period under review. "Religiously-related violence has led to more deaths in northern Nigeria than have Boko Haram attacks," said U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) Chair Dr. Katrina Lantos Swett in an April 2013 press statement, following attacks by Fulani herdsmen.

The parallels with Boko Haram – the world's deadliest terror group - go further. Like Boko Haram, the Fulani are Muslim. Similarly, their victims are overwhelmingly Christians and non-Muslims. They cry "Allahu Akbar" (God is great) during their attacks, and they leave horrendous atrocities in their wake.

Benue State Governor Samuel Ortom said the impact of the herdsmen's attack was probably "worse than Boko Haram" in the northeast. "When Boko Haram captures a town, they kill some people, recruit some people and occupy the town. But the herdsmen spare no one. My own house was burnt. Kids haven't been to school in two years."

A tour of the capital city of Makurdi showed exactly that – churches, homes, clinics destroyed from prior Fulani attacks in 2014. The Makurdi local government chairman told me how a few brave students still congregate in a burnt-out school building, but most moved away to a neighboring hamlet that doesn't have a school.

It was the same for Guma local-government chairman. During a damage assessment, he was shocked to learn from religious leaders that they had lost 70 churches as the Catholic Church reported in the news in 2014. The Secretary to the Catholic Bishop of Makurdi Diocese, Moses Mbachie, was quoted as saying then that “more than 70 Churches” had been destroyed and described the situation as “very sad.”

Researchers at the Self-worth Development Initiative, a local Non-governmental organization in Benue state are all too aware and believe the public doesn't realize how bad the devastation has been. Their in-depth research revealed that nine Local Government Areas in the state had been impacted in the 2014 attacks – 80 percent of the Agatu Local Government Area, and for the Guma Local Government Area, 10 out of 10 wards. More than 50,000 people were displaced from Agatu, which represented about 10 percent of the 430,000 people affected by attacks between 2011 and 2014 in Benue State. **These startling figures show a humanitarian crisis akin to Boko Haram's insurgency in the northeast. The striking animus of the attackers toward churches, schools, homes and farms is another indication that the terror group and the nomads share similar methods and even a common ideology – except that the Fulani take no prisoners.** But here is how the nomads are different, and possibly more problematic. They are a tribe and not a terror group. This means they can't simply be outlawed and treated as a terrorist organization. This also means that the government response has been muted compared to the declared war on Boko Haram.

Secondly, the Fulani attacks are more brutal. Where Boko Haram would sort through victims to separate Muslims from Christians, women from men and children from adults, most often killing the latter and sparing the former, the nomads hack and burn babies, slash the bellies of pregnant women and generally leave a less methodical and more gruesome aftermath. Boko Haram seizes and occupies towns to administer them. The Fulani destroy communities and their cattle graze on the farms of those displaced or killed.

Similarly, the Fulani operate in plain sight. They have a public organization, the Miyette Allah Cattle Breeders Association, that routinely issues press statements rationalizing their attacks and even filing lawsuits in court. Generally, the theme of their defense is that their cattle were rustled. Justifying the present Agatu massacre, they claim 10,000 cows were killed by the locals. Yet, members of the first assessment mission said they saw no dead cows at all, and no one has been arrested. Boko Haram remains a non-juridical entity, does not have a public presence, and does not participate in litigation.

Most troubling of all, the Fulani have free rein to travel all over Nigeria, actually West Africa. They are found in several African countries including some of those to which the Boko Haram insurgency has spread, and are able to move freely across national borders with their cattle and arms.

A week after the attacks began, President Muhammadu Buhari ordered an investigation. On 19 March, Members of the Benue parliamentary caucus in the House of Representatives issued a blunt statement: “We decry the lukewarm attitude of the Federal government towards this ‘jihad’ being waged against our people by the herdsmen.” The 11 lawmakers accused President Buhari of downplaying what they characterized as “a genocide that, typical of the Nigerian state, has been downplayed or ignored until it spirals out of control. After the Agatu mass massacre, a few headlines were recorded, a few sympathetic comments in high places but concrete moves to stop the killings have not been made.”

Available data show there have been 10 Fulani herdsmen attacks in Benue state alone, an average of one a month since President Buhari took office last year. In a July 2015 statement, USCIRF said, “hundreds more have been killed since President Buhari’s election this past April in violence by predominately Muslim herders against predominately Christian farmers throughout the Middle Belt.” This is a consistent average for the last three years, including during the previous administration. There were about 40 documented attacks in 35 months in Benue state. Ironically, members of Nigeria’s Senate blamed the attacks on Boko Haram and not the herdsmen in a move seen as an effort to exculpate the Fulanis but also an implicit admission that their atrocities are now at par with those of the more infamous terror group. According to media reports, the Nigerian Senate, said crimes of mass murder across Nigerian communities were committed by “overpowered” Boko Haram insurgents, not Fulani herdsmen.

“There is a change of tactics by insurgents who now parade as herdsmen to make it difficult for the public to identify them,” Senator Emmanuel Bwacha said. Even if this were true, it does not account for the history of Fulani attacks. (See **Appendix 2: Timeline of Fulani Herdsmen Attacks in Benue.**)

While individual Fulani herdsmen captured by the authorities have claimed membership of Boko Haram, a most intriguing connection occurred in July 2012 when a massacre that led to the deaths of a Senator and a Representative was claimed by Boko Haram but disputed by Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN), the Fulani herdsmen’s organization.

The Islamic sect in a statement purportedly issued by its spokesman, Abu Qaqa claiming responsibility for the killings said: “Jama’atu Ahlissunnah Lidda’awati Wal-Jihad wants to inform the world of its delight over the success of the attacks we launched on Barkin Ladi and Riyom in Plateau State on Christians and security operatives, including members of the National Assembly. We will continue to hunt government officials wherever they are; they will have no peace again.” <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2012/07/plateau-massacre-we-did-it-boko-haram/>

According to the chief of Agatu, Fulani herdsmen attacks have occurred in about 23 of Nigeria’s states. Compared to Boko Haram’s attacks, which have reached less than half this number of states, if indeed the Fulani herdsmen are Boko Haram’s cavalry charged with the southern flank of their offensive, **this could be an infinitely more deadly and insidious terror alliance with a network that traverses all of Nigeria and several West African countries.**

3. A Latent Threat – The Shiite Massacre

On another front, there was an altercation in December 2015 between the Nigerian army and Iranian-backed Shias in northwest Nigeria. Hundreds of Shiites were reported dead making it the first official massacre under the new president.

The Iranian government summoned Nigeria's ambassador over this incident as well as issued statements condemning the attack. The Shiites are a very well-armed sleeper group that have intimidated but not terrorized Kaduna state for years, but not by mass violence. In 2014, they also clashed with the army during a pro-Hamas protest that resulted in the death of a Lebanese-trained Shiite.

In Nigeria, there is widespread alarm that the heavy-handed Nigerian army response could lead to a wider Shiite revolt akin to the Boko Haram insurgency. What is intriguing is that the government has not publicly produced the captive Shiite leader.

President Buhari, himself a Muslim, had nominated a Muslim into his cabinet and after it turned out that he had written texts in support of Shia doctrine, dropped the nominee. This was the first overt act of Muslim vs. Muslim religious discrimination by the new administration. The massacre of the Shiites is even worse. It is to be noted that Sunni/Shia conflict is not something that the Nigerian public is familiar with. This is a new dimension for many as only astute observers of the situation in the north are even aware of this.

The Shiites are heavily funded and armed by Iran, but generally non-violent though confrontational. There are reports that in the past, Shiite elements who were dissatisfied with the non-violence defected to Boko Haram.

If Boko Haram and the Shiites converge, it will create a major terrorist hub in the northwest close enough to the capital of Abuja that will completely dwarf anything Boko Haram has done in the past dozen years. Indeed, if the Shiites go violent on their own, they have far greater potential capacity than Boko Haram. It is unclear if the 13 container loads of arms from Iran which Nigeria confiscated were meant for the Shiites or Boko Haram.

4. Looming Threat – Religious Restriction Laws

Kaduna state has generated tension with an unconstitutional law regulating preaching illustrating how states can instigate religious crisis such as the sharia violence which engulfed northern Nigeri in 2000. According to Bishop Matthew Kukah, “if you look at Boko Haram, it is also based on the fact that the way the state has treated Christianity predisposed Boko Haram to exploit that narrative. If you are refusing to give Christians land to build churches; if you are refusing to give Christians land to build schools; if you are refusing to allow Christian religious education to be taught in schools... what you’re really saying is that these people are second-class citizens and that their religion is merely being tolerated.”

B. PARTIAL COURSE CORRECTION: HOW THE U.S. HAS REFRAMED THE ISSUE

Prior to the Chibok abductions which is now a bellwether on international perceptions of Boko Haram, the State Department's response had been to deny the religious motivation of a rabid jihadist group that had repeatedly declared its goal of overthrowing the state and establishing an extremist Muslim theocracy; to downplay the repeated threats to America going back several years by claiming this is all "local"; presenting arguments rationalizing terrorism by citing emotional disconnect between the central government and northern Muslims; pressing the government to throw money at the problem with no emphasis on victim compensation, and being more critical of the military counteroffensive than of the terrorists' atrocities.

The US now is actively advocating for victims and more has been spent on humanitarian efforts now which is to be commended. The US has finally conceded that enough has not been done about Boko Haram and actually urged Nigeria to do more after years of messaging not to "over react."

However, the US is still reluctant to see the insurgency as religious and as part of a global jihad. The poverty argument remains a prominent driver in the US narrative on northern Nigeria. Here is why it is faulty.

Local versus Global

Four key international incidents played significant roles in the spread and potency of Boko Haram's jihad.

First, according to an analyst at CSW, many Nigerians were lured to Sudan while Al Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden was resident there with a promise of scholarships. Whilst there, some were recruited into terrorism and jihadi schools. When the US launched strikes against Sudan forcing Bin Laden to flee, some returned to Nigeria while others went with him as part of his foreigner fighters to Afghanistan.

Secondly, the US invasion which toppled the Taliban led to a further displacement of these Nigerian-born foreign fighters who are believed to have returned to Nigeria thus bringing with them sobriquets such as "Nigerian Taliban" and "Kandahar" which was Boko Haram's original name and the name of one of their mountainous operational bases respectively.

The US NATO action in Libya led to arms proliferation into Nigeria as well as the return of Nigerians who had military and terror training in Libya. Finally, the US-French roll-back of the MUJAO jihadists in northern Mali led to similar influx of arms and foreign fighters to swell Boko Haram's Nigeria ranks. (Escapees have told of light-skinned men with long flowing hair in the camps where Boko Haram kept people captive.)

Boko Haram itself has admitted to training in Somalia alongside Alshabab and there are documented reports of Egyptians, Pakistanis and Frenchmen providing assistance way before ISIS urged sympathizers to go to Nigeria to join the fighters. Indeed, a prominent ISIS fugitive in

Syria was captured on his way to Nigeria on a fake passport while the son of a prominent Nigerian jurist was reported to have successfully left Nigeria to join ISIS.

Boko Haram leaders have been on exile in Mecca and also reportedly used the massive annual pilgrimage airlifts to mask movements of personnel and arms.

In addition, Boko Haram's funding has been traced to other Al-Qaeda linked organizations in the Middle East² including the Islamic World Society (with headquarters in Saudi Arabia), and the Al-Muntada Trust Fund (a Britain based organization).³ Boko Haram's worldwide sources of funding demonstrate that the group is more than a ragtag bunch of Nigerians.

As Nigerian Catholic Bishop Matthew Hassan Kukah said this month, the U.S. government should "take full responsibility for how it shapes leadership around the world," adding that international issues affect Nigeria and leave the country to suffer as "collateral damage."

Poverty and Marginalization

According to the World Bank, the poorest parts of Nigeria are in the northwest and not the northeast, which has better socio-economic indices. Yet the northwest is not the hub of the insurgency, as the northeast is, so domestically, this argument is not tenable. Internationally, Iraq, Syria and Nigeria – hot-beds of terrorism – are all oil-producing countries.

Regionally, poor people come from Niger and Chad to live in Northern Nigeria in search of better conditions. Indeed, governments of Kano and Katsina states are amongst states that have built schools and even government houses to help the poor country of Niger. Yet that country is not a hot-bed of extremism and terrorism even though they are poorer than northern Nigeria. Indeed, some of Boko Haram's first leader's (Muhammed Yusuf's) followers were foreigners who lived on his campus and foraged during the day for money in the community. At the time, they paid tributes to him for shelter from their takings. It is the current crop of mercenary terrorists from Niger who are reportedly hired by Boko to come in for occasional attacks and return home.

Locally, the same conditions of poverty apply to indigenes of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states. In fact, Christians in those states are particularly hard-hit because they are denied recruitment, and those in employment denied promotion on the basis of their faith in addition to numerous forms of discrimination, persecution and deprivation. Yet, they have not taken to violence or terrorism.

²<http://allafrica.com/stories/201202141514.html>

³Id. and http://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2012/02/13/Investigators-track-Boko-Haram-funding/UPI-25221329148725/

On a national scale, the Igbos of Southern eastern Nigeria suffered a grievous blockade and starvation which led to hundreds of thousands killed during the Biafran war. Today they have bounced back without any significant influence in subsequent governments since. Their cries of marginalization would appear more credible to Nigerian observers than cries from the north, which has held political sway for eons.

Under former president Goodluck Jonathan, the north occupied the majority of top government positions including 80% of the most senior positions – Senate President, House Speaker, Chief Justice and Vice President. Only the President was not from the north. Today, with a new elected government, little has changed. The President, Senate President, Speaker, Chief Justice are all from the north. Only the Vice president is from the south.

The fact remains that the backwardness of the north is a reality that dates back to British colonial rule and not any design or action of any of Nigeria's other federating units. Indeed, according to researcher Andrew Ajiji,, the core north received education much earlier than the northcentral and other sub regions. It was apparently reserved for children of the elite and not mainstreamed until much later. At a time, 14 out of 15 kids in school were princes while the colonial government restricted missionaries from providing education to the masses.

If anything, the continued backwardness of the north and its deindustrialization amongst others have occurred under the rulership of the north. Similarly, traditional practices such as the "Almajiri" culture (pan-handling internships) have put millions of able-bodied Muslim youths on the streets and not in homes or schools rendering them unemployed and unemployable. This practice which is of doubtful Islamic pedigree, and is neither practiced amongst southern Muslims or even most of the Mideast, potentially breeds social misfits and misanthropes in spite of the best efforts of all to educate northern children.

Indeed, northern states like Katsina built 34 mosques throughout the state with money allocated to it by the Federal Government, while one southern state was providing free feeding for school children with its own allocation.

The State Department's proposed solution for Nigeria to give more money and positions to the Muslim north which it specifically distinguished from central Nigeria and described as "Hausa Fulani" leaders is gradually taking shape. But this tribal-based assessment of the situation in Northern Nigeria, singled out the Hausa Fulani for rapprochement whereas the hub of the insurgency is the Kanuri tribe in the northeast. In fact, the Hausa Fulani are not only generally considered to have dominated minorities in the north but also the rest of the country as well!

America's missed opportunity in properly understanding and promptly responding to the Boko Haram threat misled the Government of Nigeria, weakened its response and resulted in numerous lives lost plus a highly evolved threat to the US and global community. Although, incumbent President Muhammadu Buhari overstated it during his first US visit in 2015 as "aiding and abetting" Boko Haram, I believe it was more a sin of omission and less of commission. As is often said in Washington, sometimes incompetence simply masquerades as a conspiracy and a pervasive perception in Nigeria that prior US policy was to fulfil a 2015 doomsday prediction on Nigeria is unfounded. **This time, I am of the view that State is on the path to redemption or**

at least course correction and welcome the breath of fresh air breathed into its Nigeria policy under the helm of Assistant Secretary of State for Africa Ambassador Linda Thomas Greenfield who has a palpable concern for a country in which she attended school and Secretary Kerry respectively.

Time for US Transparency

Regardless of what may have occurred by reason of negligence or bureaucracy, there remain some troubling incidents that cannot as easily be glossed over. In a letter, Senator Vitter has pointed out what he considers a watering down of intelligence reports and security analyses on Nigeria: “Inaccuracies within official documents make it clear that the State Department misled Congress and the American people. Evidence suggests that there was an internal decision by the Office of Coordinator for Counterterrorism to downplay official, legally required, intelligence data in order to purposefully avoid making the determination,” the Senator stated.

On my part, I remain concerned about my direct experience relating to American citizens attacked by Boko Haram. From my knowledge there have been at least half a dozen such Americans.

These include an American working as a diplomat at the United Nations building which was bombed in the worst attack on the UN ever. It includes an American law enforcement agent working as a diplomat at the US embassy. It includes American missionaries working with a charity in the core north as well as Americans in north central Nigeria. Yet, until this day, diplomats of the State Department have denied before this Congress that any Americans have been attacked by Boko Haram and there is no public record that the US government has acknowledged any of its citizens as mentioned in the instances above. In all cases, the Embassy was notified and aware, especially when their own personnel were involved. This borders on concealment more than negligence. It is time for the US government to be candid about the extent of Boko Haram’s impact on US citizens and officials.

C. HUMANITARIAN, GENERATIONAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC IMPACT

Not unlike Rwanda with a largely female population due to the deaths of many men during the genocide, northeast Nigeria faces a significant gender imbalance as Boko Haram systematically implemented the killing of males as standard execution procedure. But unlike Rwanda, this will not necessarily lead to greater female representation in politics or leadership (Rwanda has the largest female dominated parliament in the world) as religious barriers will almost certainly guarantee that majority women will be represented by minority men.

Then there are the children born of Boko Haram’s systematic deployment of sexual abuse as a theological weapon of war. The war in Liberia led to over a quarter of a million children born to Nigerian soldiers in the ECOMOG peacekeeping forces. However, these children were seen as anchor babies to the military leading to security, access to food and even potentially Nigerian citizenship and expropriation. The children borne of Boko Haram’s war crimes are not only not a scarlet letter, but they are a divisive phenomenon as communities

struggle to determine what to do with these “terrorist spawn” and the “tainted” women who bore them. Worse still, there is an even more immediate and insidious threat – in the northeast states, that a controversial sharia law system is operated. It prescribes death by stoning for pregnancy out of wedlock. Local community leaders have admitted that they struggle on whether to stone to death these rescued women and girls who return to their communities impregnated by the terrorists.

The ostracism is interfaith. One young man whose fiancée was abducted shortly after he had paid off her dowry in full told how he is no longer interested in her after her rescue. His problem is not the “taint”. He said, “What if they taught her how to kill and she kills me one day?” The poor car washer is giving up a \$1000 dowry for the fear of the unknown. Asked what the girl should do, he said, “If she wants, she can go back.”

Nigeria lacks any basic social protections for anyone – except the elite who earn multiple salaries, pensions, cars etc. Indeed, many in Nigeria live with social disabilities from religious and cultural practices that discriminate on the basis of gender and religion, especially in the north. The Boko Haram insurgency has made life inconceivably worse for people who were already the lowest rung of the social strata. The human response to the humanitarian crisis via adequate psycho-social support could be key to winning the war against the future way – the generational impact on survivors and their offspring and the innate propensity for bitterness, vengeance and repeat abuse.

In this regard, much needs to be done. A few days ago, in Nigeria, I met with a focus group of victims, most of whom we have worked with in the past (See Appendix 4: Stories of Victims.)

II. The Chibok Girls

The somber two-year anniversary of the Chibok abductions is a time to wonder where the missing 219 schoolgirls are. However, it is also time to find out where some of the frequently forgotten 57 escaped Chibok schoolgirls are.

On my current fact-finding trip to Nigeria over the past month, we have determined that these young heroines are dispersed in northwest Nigeria and north central Nigeria courtesy of a scholarship from Borno state government. Some are in northeast Nigeria per kindness of the AUN and others are in the USA sponsored by Education Must Continue Initiative, a Nigerian charity of victims helping victims, with which I am personally involved on a pro bono basis.

Apart from these, there does not seem to be any systematic program of tracking and helping other escaped girls.

Specific Findings Include the Following:

1. At least two heroic escaped schoolgirls are now mothers after having had a child last year from unclear circumstances

2. Two schoolgirls withdrew from school in the northeast of Nigeria to get married recently
3. Some girls in the north central are struggling to stay in school given inadequate provision for their care
4. At least one Chibok girl who has not been in school for 2 years is returning to school in partnership with Education Must Continue Initiative
5. In spite of millions of dollars provided by donors to the Nigerian government for Safe Schools Initiatives, not one single escaped Chibok girl is known to have been sponsored back to school by the Government of Nigeria
6. Parents of abducted and now escaped Chibok schoolgirls are struggling to pay private school fees for their remaining children
7. In spite of a 2 million dollar commitment to rebuild the destroyed Chibok school from which the girls were abducted, the school remains uncompleted.
8. About 22 parents of Chibok schoolgirls have died - 18 of missing girls and 4 of escaped schoolgirls - many as indirect casualties of the insecurity.
9. 176 abducted girls are from the same church denomination
10. 31 of the schoolgirls are from one community.

Specific Recommendations:

More definitely needs to be done for the courageous young women who escaped and for the 1 million IDP kids in Nigeria. Only then will our tears for the missing mean something beyond mere sentiment. The US embassy continues to deny US visas to a bona fide Chibok schoolgirl who was the leader of the Chibok girls' escape plan, to go to school in the US or to speak at a United Nations event in New York. The wife of Nigeria's president launched a book on beauty tips on the 2nd anniversary of the abductions in an almost Marie Antoinisque fashion, sparking much criticism in Nigeria, but aides say she aims to utilize the funds raised for the benefit of the Chibok girls.

Specific recommendations follow:

1. The Nigerian government should release the report of the presidential panel that investigated the abductions in 2014 and provide a progress report on the quest for the girls in light of the proof of life video
2. The US government should give a progress report on the search by the US multidisciplinary team dispatched by President Obama to help find the girls in 2014
3. President Buhari should immediately announce his promised investigation panel and include stakeholders with genuine knowledge about the situation
4. The US should explain if and how any escaped Chibok girls are being supported by US AID
5. The Nigerian government should provide assistance to the escaped girls and scholarships for the siblings of the abducted girls
6. The French government should facilitate negotiations and action for the still kidnapped girls' release using its channels for securing freedom of French citizens kidnapped by Boko Haram
7. The US Embassy should issue visas to bona fide Chibok girls applying for student visas

8. The Nigerian government should have the culpable people held accountable for negligence in the abduction of the girls from their charge in a government boarding school.

III. Southern Borno

Much of southern Borno state is deeply neglected by the current relief, resettlement and reconstruction efforts. Indeed, only a couple of official IDP camps are reported to be in the south of Borno state and this is only due to a top army officer from the area. By contrast, the capital city Maiduguri has at least 28 camps. This is consistent with complaints of marginalization even in relief distribution by IDPs going back to 2013. Indeed, a top Borno official claimed there was no destruction in the south.

Education Must Continue Initiative, a local Nigerian charity of victims helping victims, started one of the only schools in that entire section of the state and in less than 6 months:

1. Provides education to over 2,000 children from KG to the middle school level. These are mostly children of families living at the frontline communities of the infamous Sambisa forest where the Boko Haram had established its major operational base. There have been no schools in the region for upward of 4 years.
2. School serves as a point of contact to share out some humanitarian assistance provided by some compassionate individuals and organizations. To date, not a single grain has been brought to this region by any of the numerous governmental agencies responsible for such relief services.
3. The children are receiving trauma therapy through counseling and activities provided by the school.
4. The school serves as a unifying base where some governance of the communities take place and the main symbol of authority and administration since essentially all other organs of government have been destroyed by the Boko Haram. The watchmen administer justice and peace to the people through adjudication over conflicts and build peace among aggrieved individuals in what is essentially an ungoverned territory.

D. GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The recent trip of America's UN ambassador Samantha Powell to the conflict zone is commendable. During her time as head of the White House Atrocities Prevention Board, I had the opportunity to share with the APB an early warning report on Boko Haram's pre-genocide – a situation she has now seen first-hand probably as the most senior US official to visit the northeast.

As Secretary Kerry himself heads out to a long overdue Security Summit in Nigeria this week, it is imperative that the US engages on the following:

- i. Urge the Nigerian Government to provide adequate medical doctors in Chibok and other Terrorism-Prone Zones (TPZs) of the northeast to minimize transit deaths

- ii. Urge the Nigerian Government not to close down IDP camps as planned, but rather improve security, safety and safeguards against abuse and trafficking
- iii. Urge the Nigerian Government and Aid groups to urgently facilitate victim resettlement in safe locations and to especially address the worrisome neglect of massively devastated communities in Southern Borno
- iv. Urge the international community to raise the \$500 million in resources the UN estimates is required to meet the needs of the approximately 3 million displaced
- v. Urge the international community to work concertedly to stamp out Boko Haram which has spread to Chad, Niger and Cameroon with global linkages to ISIS
- vi. Urge the USA to approve US resettlement for refugees of the insurgency
- vii. Urge the WHO to pay for their own staff furniture in Nigeria so that the government of Nigeria can redirect its funds to victim care for citizens.
- viii. Urge the UN to reimburse Nigeria for the \$30 million spent on repairing its offices bombed by Boko Haram.
- ix. Urge the international community to provide urgent assistance to enable the 20,000 UN estimated lost but found kids to trace and be reunified with their families.
- x. Urge the Nigerian government to prioritize the safety and security of all communities and the freedom of the abducted 219 Chibok schoolgirls and other captives.
- xi. Urge the international community, the UN, ICC, EU and US to recognize Boko Haram's actions as genocide and to declare it a level three humanitarian crisis.
- xii. Urge the countries of Chad, Cameroon and Niger to stop forced repatriation of refugees
- xiii. Urge Nigeria to respect the rule of law in dealing with the Shiite incident, the Biafra movement and the renewed Niger Delta militancy
- xiv. Urge Nigeria to stem the spreading attacks of armed Fulani herdsmen across the country and ensure justice and compensation for affected communities
- xv. Urge Nigeria to ensure food security by working urgently with farming communities affected by the terrorism and herdsmen attacks.

E. Conclusion

Clearly the Boko Haram has grown in capacity and lethality since we first advocated for its designation as a Foreign Terrorist organization. Global awareness of Boko Haram has also grown since the designation. The question is whether global action is commensurate with the heightened international profile of an ISIS-ISWAP alliance.

Congress has had multiple bills to address this issue. These include Rep. Wilson's H.R. 3833, companion legislation to S. 1632. And Rep. Jackson Lee's H.R. 528 to create a fund for victims of terrorism. This effort would create a Victims' Fund from forfeited Nigerian assets linked to the US. I support this move. Prior funds repatriated to Nigeria have been reported to have been re-looted. Current humanitarian efforts appear not to be impacting the neediest, and vast segments of IDPs are untouched by relief efforts while elites and diplomats are catered to.

A Victim Fund comprised of millions stolen from Nigeria's citizens would be both poetic justice and a shot in the arm for resettlement, as well as healing for numerous victims. Timely humanitarian assistance now will help stave a multi-generational conflict.

On behalf of victims I met last week and those who have preceded us to eternity, I thank you for your kind attention.

APPENDIX 1

TERRORISM TIMELINE: Lead Global terror group, Boko Haram

Although Boko Haram's first terror attack was on Christmas Eve, 2003, January 2012 marked the official launch of Boko Haram's final solution putsch on infidels in Nigeria. This was the formal announcement but not the commencement of the jihadi genocide.

January 2012, Boko Haram issued an ultimatum by leaflets asking all Christians and southerners to leave northern Nigeria in 72 hours. At the expiration of the 3-day deadline, Boko Haram struck a hotel in the northeast and killed Christian southerners. The following day, they struck again at the home where mourners gathered to console the bereaved with point blank kill shots to the head.

End of 2012, more Christians had been killed in northern Nigeria than the rest of the world combined. This was a record in the history of terrorism data collation.

2014: Boko Haram attacks in 2014 resulted in a 300% increase in terrorism in Nigeria. This was again a record in the history of terrorism data collation. The Baga Massacre which claimed 2000 lives in one incident (exceeding Boko Haram's total kills for the entire year of 2012) puts Boko Haram in line to again set a record for exponentially increased kills in 2015.

April 14, 2014: Kidnapping of 276 Chibok Schoolgirls brought international attention to the increasing Boko Haram Genocide.

2015

January 2015: Boko Haram perpetrated another extinction level attack on the town of Baga leaving an estimated 2000 residents dead. The Baga massacre is the worst terror attack after the September 11, 2001 attacks on New York which also recorded quadruple digit casualties.

MARCH 2015: BH-ISIS Alliance: Boko Haram's leader, Abubakar Shekau, [announced in an audio message](#) that the Islamist terror group was going to ally with ISIS. The offer was accepted by ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.

June 15: Suicide bombings in Chad: Two suicide bombings of police sites in [N'Djamena](#), the capital and largest city of Chad, killed 38 people. Boko Haram later claimed responsibility for these attacks.^[177] On 11 July, a male suicide bomber disguised in a woman's Burqa detonated his explosives belt in the main market of N'Djamena, next to the main mosque, killing 15 people and injuring 80.^[178] Several days after the bombing, Boko Haram claimed responsibility via Twitter, signing as "Islamic State, West Africa province."^[179]

July 1-2: Mosques massacres (Main article: [July 2015 Kukawa, Nigeria Massacre](#)): Boko Haram militants attacked multiple mosques between 1 and 2 July. Forty-eight men and boys were killed on the 1st at one mosque in [Kukawa](#). Seventeen were wounded in the attack. Ninety-seven others, mostly men, were killed in numerous mosques on the 2nd with a number of women and young girls killed in their homes. An unknown number were wounded.^[176]

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

September 20: (Borno): A series of bombings occurred in Maiduguri and Monguno. Further information: [September 2015 Borno State bombings](#). The attacks followed an announcement by Shekau refuting the army's claims of defeat.

September 25: (Niger) at least 15 civilians were massacred and stores were looted in a cross-border raid on a Niger village, according to anonymous military sources.^[225]

October 1: (Adamawa) villagers in Kirchinga, Adamawa complained of a lack of security personnel after 5 residents had their throats slit during an unchallenged early morning attack. The village borders Cameroon and the Sambisa forest.^[196]

On 18 October the village of Dar, Adamawa was attacked, killing 12 persons.^[197] On **20 October** there were reports of a military ambush in Madagali, assisted by vigilantes, in which over 30 militants were killed.^[198] On 21 October, according to vigilante reports, a joint operation in Madagali and Gwoza killed 150 militants and rescued 36 captives.^[199] On **23 October** a suicide bomb at a crowded mosque killed 27 in Yola, Adamawa's capital.^[200] On **17 November** an explosion at a food market in Yola killed 32,^[201] in the first Nigerian bombing since the 23 October attacks in Maiduguri and Yola.^[202] On the morning of **28 December** two female suicide bombers detonated their explosives at a crowded market in Madagali. According to a local resident at least 28 were killed.^[194]

October 2: Federal Capital Territory / Nasarawa: Two bombings on 2 October that killed 18 and wounded 41, one in [Nyanya](#) in [Nasarawa](#) and the other in [Kuje](#), FCT, were also claimed by Boko Haram.^[195]

October 2 (Niger) two soldiers died and four were wounded in a Boko Haram attack on a village near the Nigerian border in Niger's [Diffa](#) province. The militants also looted stores, according to Niger army officers.

October 4 (Niger) according to an aid worker, a policeman and five civilians were killed by 4 suicide bombers near the Nigerian border.

October 6 (Niger) three suspected Boko Haram militants accidentally blew themselves up while transporting explosives to [Bosso](#) town in Diffa.

October 6: (CHAD): Chadian army reported an attack in the border region of Lake Chad. 11 soldiers were killed and 14 wounded in the pre dawn cross-border infiltration, and 17 militants were also killed, according to an army spokesman.^[219] On 10 October 5 suicide bombers killed 33 in the market in Baga Sola, a camp for Nigerian refugees.^[220] On 1 November two dawn attacks on army posts occurred. Eleven militants and two soldiers were killed at Kaika, and in an attempted suicide bombing at Bougouma, "Two members of Boko Haram were neutralised and a third blew himself up, wounding 11 civilians", according to a government statement.^{[221][222]} A

state of emergency was imposed in the western Lake Chad region on 9 November, initially for 12 days, and extended by Chad's national assembly on 18 November to four months.^[223]

October 7: (Yobe): in [Damaturu](#), Yobe at least 15 people were killed by 3 suicide bombers.^[203] In Goniri, Yobe 7 soldiers and over 100 militants were killed, and a large arms cache was found, according to an army spokesman, who said that the recent apparent rise in suicide bombings was an indication of the success of military operations.^{[204][205]}

October 11 (Cameroon) in the far north region of Cameroon two female suicide bombers killed nine people in the town of Mora. On 18 October 10 militants were killed when they attacked a Cameroon military anti-terrorist division convoy close to the border, after a military vehicle became stuck in mud. One army commander later died of his wounds.^[207] On 12 October the first 90 of a proposed deployment of 300 US troops arrived in the region to assist with training, reconnaissance and airborne intelligence using [Predator drones](#).^[208] On 16 October more than six security vehicles were transferred to the Cameroon military. An [AFRICOM](#) spokesman said that increased cooperation had led them "to study the viability of ISR flights from a temporary location in Cameroon." The deployment is "totally separate and distinct" from operations in Chad and Niger, where 250 and 85 personnel, respectively, are conducting missions including [ISR](#) and training.^[209]

October 21 (Niger) near Diffa town two soldiers were killed by explosives while intercepting an attack. Diffa region hosts over 150,000 Nigerian refugees. It is under a state of emergency. On 14 October a curfew and movement restrictions were imposed.^[226] *At least 57 attacks occurred there from February to October 2015. More than 1,100 Boko Haram suspects have been arrested in Niger during 2015.*^{[227][228][229]}

October 21: Nganzai, (Borno): , According to a civilian vigilante, fleeing militants shot at four cars, killing the passengers, and burnt and looted the nearby village.^[184] On 23 October a suicide bombing occurred in a pre dawn attack at a mosque in Maiduguri. The [National Emergency Management Agency](#) (NEMA) put the death toll at 6, while hospital sources reported 19 deaths, and a vigilante claimed to have counted 28 corpses and two suicide bombers.^[185] On the following day four female suicide bombers claimed one victim after they were intercepted by the JTF in Maiduguri, according to a NEMA spokesman.^[186]

October 23 (Cameroon) Boko Haram fighters were driven out of Kerawa, a village of 50,000 in [Kolofata](#), a [commune](#) in the far north region. They had briefly occupied the village until the arrival of security forces. Reports of civilian casualties ranged from eight to eleven. An army spokesman claimed the militants suffered heavy casualties. The village's military base had previously been targeted by suicide bombers on 3 September, when 30 were killed.^{[210][211][212][213]}

October 27: (Borno) a military operation freed 192 children and 138 women being held captive in two camps in the [Sambisa](#) forest, and 30 militants were killed, according to a social media statement from the Defense HQ.^{[187][188]} None of the captives were those taken in Chibok in April 2014.^[189]

November 9 (Cameroon) two female suicide bombers killed three Nigerians during a security check in a truck full of Nigerian refugees.^[214] On 21 November a suicide attack in a suburb of [Fotokol](#) town killed four. An anonymous military official said: "The first kamikaze detonated his bomb in the house of the traditional chief of Leymarie. Five people died including the bomber. Several minutes later, three female bombers exploded their bombs close to the initial site but they didn't kill anyone else because they acted too quickly."^[215]

November 11: (Niger) Two Niger military officials described an attack on a village in Bosso district in which five civilians and 20 militants were killed. A senior government official later denied that the attack had occurred, according to *Reuters*.^{[230][231]} On 26 November Boko Haram launched a cross-border night raid on Wogom village in Diffa province. A government spokesman, Justice Minister Marou Amadou stated: "Eighteen villagers were killed, including the chief imam for the village whose throat was slit by his own nephew."^{[232][233]}

November 28: (Cameroon) two suicide bombers killed six near the military base in Dabanga, and in an attack in Gouzoudou five people were killed, according to a military spokesman.^[216] On 1 December two suicide bombers killed three, and a third bomber was killed before detonating explosives. On 2 December Cameroon's Defense Minister claimed that, at the end of November, 100 Boko Haram members had been killed and 900 hostages freed, and that a large stockpile of arms and munitions, and black-and-white ISIL flags had been seized.^[217] Information Minister Issa Tchiroma Bakari said that "The people that were freed are just villagers. The [Chibok] schoolgirls who are missing are not amongst the group."^[218]

November 30: (Kano) Boko Haram claimed responsibility for a suicide attack on a procession of Shi'ite Muslims killing at least 21, on 30 November near the village of Dakozoye. A week earlier two bombers had killed at least 14 in Kano city.^[206]

December 5: (CHAD): Three female suicide bombers killed about 30 at a crowded market on the island of Koufoua in Lake Chad.^[224]

December 25: (Borno) gunmen set fire to the village of Kimba, killing at least 14, according to vigilantes.^[190] On 27 December gunmen armed with [RPGs](#) battled with troops for two hours in Aldawari village in the outskirts of Maiduguri, according to NEMA. On the following morning a bombing at a nearby mosque killed around 20, according to NEMA.^{[191][192][193][194]}

December 31, 2015: Date that President Buhari had promised that the insurgency would end.

December 2015 Nigerian President [Muhammadu Buhari](#), the President of Nigeria, **claimed that Boko Haram was "technically defeated."**^[181]

2015 FACTS: *Killings increased 62% in 1 Year: 2016 World Watch List*
<https://www.opendoorsusa.org/christian-persecution/world-watch-list/nigeria/>

2.6 million internally displaced people, or IDPs, in northeastern Nigeria, according to the International Organization for Migration. In 2015, there were 4,028 killings and 198

church attacks that Open Doors was able to record. The figures recorded for the previous year were 2,484 killings and 108 church attacks. (Reported: March 2016)

2016

January 30, 2016 attack on Dalori bears hallmarks of BH's start of year extinction-level type attacks over the years. The massacre also targeted camps for Internally Displaced Persons who had fled areas overrun by Boko Haram. Previously, Boko Haram had on September 11, 2015 bombed an IDP camp for refugees recently returned from neighboring Cameroon. That camp had previously provided refuge for ~~held~~ hundreds of women and children rescued by the Nigerian army from terrorist captivity. The recent attack is a continuation of a new tactic of striking already vulnerable populations in their places of refuge.

Three days before the Dalori Massacre, Boko Haram bombed the beleaguered town of Chibok using multiple suicide bombers. Chibok, made famous by the notorious abduction of almost 300 schoolgirls in 2014, has now been attacked multiple times since then. The combined three day total between the recent Chibok and Dalori attacks exceeds 100 lives lost.

February 1, 2016 – Boko Haram perpetrated a massacre in northeastern Nigeria that pushed its year-to-date kills into triple digits by January 31, just a month into the New Year.

Overview of Boko Haram Insurgency in Cameroon

While the ground zero for the Boko Haram insurgency has been in the Northeastern region of Nigeria in particular, Cameroon, Niger Republic, and Chad have seen significant incursions and attacks from this terrorist organization. As of January 2016, official records from the Cameroonian government indicate that nearly 1,200 people have been killed since 2013 when Boko Haram began attacking Cameroon's Far North region, an area that borders the Islamist group's stronghold in northeastern Nigeria. According to Cameroon's Communications Minister Issa Chiroma, a total of 1,098 civilians, 67 soldiers and 3 police officials have been killed in attacks by the Boko Haram terrorist group (Agence France Presse, 2016).

Children as Targets

What is disturbing and uniquely characteristic of the majority of the Boko Haram attacks in Cameroon is the involvement of children in the attacks. According to the Daily Beast (2016), Boko Haram uses the tactics of abducting, recruiting, and then deploying children to detonate suicide bombs in Cameroonian villages and towns bordering the states of the Boko haram stronghold in Nigeria. Just last January 2016, 32 people were killed when at least three suicide bombers blew themselves up at a local market in Bodo village in northern Cameroon, near the frontier with Nigeria, in one of the deadliest attacks in the Far North region since 2013. Cameroonian officials say there have been more than 30 suicide attacks blamed on Boko Haram, many of which are carried out by young girls and boys. Agence France Press reports that in July, 2015, a 12-year-old girl blew herself up in a bar, killing 20 people and injuring at least 79 in the regional capital city of Maroua. Four days before that, two girls detonated their suicide belts, killing 11 people and injuring 32 in twin attacks in the same city (The Daily Beast, 2016).

Cameroon reports over 22 suicide bombing attempts this year already. Since June 2014, Boko Haram has deployed over 100 female suicide bombers, mostly girls, across several countries – a record for any contemporary group.

According to the Daily Beast, boys and girls recruited into Boko Haram’s fold are initially forced and then indoctrinated. The Sect is using economic incentives as well, to persuade unemployed young people and former students to join its ranks.

APPENDIX 2:

TIMELINE OF FULANI ATTACKS ON BENUE STATE FROM 2013 – 2016

There have been at least 40 Fulani attacks in Benue state in 35 months. It's an average of one a month for the last three years straight.

Note: "LGA" is the acronym for Local Government Area, a subdivision of Nigerian government.

2013

1. April 23, 2013: 10 farmers killed, Mbasenge community in Guma LGA by suspected herdsmen.
2. May 7, 2013: 47 mourners gunned down in Agatu while burying two policemen killed the Tuesday before in Nassarawa.
3. May 14, 2013: 40 locals killed when over 200 herdsmen surround Ekwo-Okpanchenyi, Agatu LGA .
4. July 5, 2013: 20 killed in "conflict" between Tiv farmers & herdsmen at Nzorov, Guma LGA.
5. July 28, 2013: 8 killed when herdsmen invade 2 villages, Agatu LGA allegedly in retaliation for the killing of 112 cows
6. November 7, 2013: 7 killed, 6000+ displaced when attackers strike at Ikpele & Okpopolo communities.
7. Nov 9, 2013: 36 locals killed and 7 villages overrun in an attack by herdsmen on locals in Agatu LGA.
8. Nov 20, 2013: Attack on communities in Guma LGA, killing 22 locals and destroying properties worth millions of naira.

2014

9. Jan 20: Gunmen attack Agatu LGA, killing 5 soldiers and 7 civilians.
10. Jan 20: Attack on Adeke village, 3 dead.
11. 20-21 Feb 2014: Herdsmen attack Gwer West LGA. 35 killed. 80,000 displaced. 6 Council Wards Sacked.
12. Feb 24, 2014: Attack on a Tiv community along Naka road, Makurdi, killing 8 people.
13. March 6, 2014: 30 killed in Kwande, Katsina/Ala and Logo LGAs by attackers dressed in military uniforms. 6 villages sacked.
14. March 12, 2014: Raid on Ukpam village of Mbabaai in Guma LGA. 28 persons killed. Yam barns and farms burnt.
15. March 10, 2014: Former Governor Suswam's convoy attacked by herdsmen at Umenger. He and convoy manage an escape.
16. March 12, 2014: Herdsmen attack Suswam's village in Logo LGA. 22 slaughtered. Entire village sacked.
17. March 23, 2014: 25 killed and over 50 injured by herdsmen said to be bearing sophisticated weapons in Gbajimba, Guma LGA.
18. March 25, 2014: Police recover 7 corpses following an attack on Agena village by Herdsmen.
19. March 29, 2014: Herdsmen attack 4 villages in Agatu LGA. 19 people killed, 15 others abducted.
20. March 29, 2014: Suspected use of chemical weapons on Shengev community in Gwer West LGA leaving 15 people dead.
21. March 30, 2014: 19 locals killed and 15 abducted in Agatu LGA.

22. April 10, 2014: Over 100 herdsmen attacked 4 villages in Ukemberaga/Tswarev ward of Logo LG, 6 killed, properties lost.
23. April 15, 2014: Attack on Obagaji, Headquarters of Agatu LGA, 12 youths killed.
24. September 10, 2014: Herdsmen attacked five villages in Ogbadibo LGA leaving scores dead.
25. January 27, 2015: 17 persons killed in attacks on Abugbe, Okoklo, and Ogwule & Ocholoyan in Agatu LGA by herdsmen.
26. January 30, 2015: Over 100 attackers stormed 5 villages in Logo LGA, killing 9 persons in the attack.
27. March 15, 2015: Egba village in Agatu LGA sacked by herdsmen, over 90 locals, including women and children killed.
28. April 27, 2015: 28 persons killed by herdsmen in attack on 3 villages at Mbadwem, Guma LGA; houses and farmlands razed.
29. May 11, 2015: Ikyoawen community in Turan Kwande LGA invaded by herdsmen. 5 persons killed & 8 others wounded.
30. May 24, 2015: 100 killed in an attack by herdsmen in villages & refugee camps at Ukura, Gafa, Per and Tse-Gusa, Logo LGA.
31. July 7, 2015: 1 local killed and several others injured following an attack on mourners in Imande Bebeshi in Kwande LGA.
32. November 5, 2015: 12 persons killed, 25 others injured in Buruku LGA following an attack by suspected herdsmen.
33. Feb 8, 2016: 10 killed and over 300 displaced in clash between herdsmen and farmers at Tor-Anyiin and Tor-Ataan in Buruku LGA.
34. Feb 21-24, 2016: Over 500 locals killed and 7000 displaced in an attack on Agatu LGA by Fulani herdsmen. Over 7 villages razed.
35. March 9, 2016: 8 residents killed by herdsmen in attacks on Ngorukgan, Tse Chia, Deghkia and Nhumbe in Logo LGA.
36. March 11, 2016: Attack on Convoy of Senator David Mark by suspected herdsmen in Agatu LGA. No casualty recorded.
37. March 13, 2016: 6 people including an APC youth leader killed by herdsmen in an attack on Tarkaa LGA.
38. February 29, 2016: 11 killed in Edugbeho Agatu LG including a police inspector.
39. March 10, 2016: Two killed in attack on Obagaji Agatu.
40. March 5, 2016: Houses burnt in Agatu. Security forces prevented killings.

Adapted and updated from Benue Info

APPENDIX 3:

Agatu Month-long Fulani Occupation

At a town hall meeting in Nigeria's capital, Abuja, a charged crowd of several hundred comprised mostly of young people, gathered in an air conditioned tent to discuss the continuing occupation of their hometowns by Muslim Herdsmen.

They watched videos of deplorable conditions of tens of thousands of their displaced Idoma kinsfolk resulting from the Agatu massacre.

Someone in the crowd got up, agitated, when he saw a video of the burnt out villages. "See my hometown. That's my home," he lamented as people around calmed him down.

It was almost the tipping point of an emotional day when they heard from five victims who traveled to share their tales of horror and escape. A man saw their local Methodist church go up in flames. A lady lost five family members including her son - hacked by the Fulani herdsmen.

The meeting was meant to find a resolution to the occupation and to the ensuing humanitarian emergency. But matters were not helped when the member of parliament representing the Agatu area, Adamu Entonu, reported a fresh attack hours earlier on the capital of the county which had been considered a bastion from attack. At least two more people were reported killed.

"A small security presence has been deployed but they patrol and return to the main city instead of staying in the affected areas. They have not engaged and pushed out the herdsmen and their cattle from our villages. The killings continue even up to yesterday in Obagaji," he informed the crowd. "If the federal government cannot protect us, they should inform us what we need to do to defend ourselves."

It was a theme from their elected representative that resonated with the audience but had to be tempered by a member of president Buhari's cabinet who came and addressed them as well.

Agriculture minister Audu Ogbe, who represents Benue in the federal government, promised that no one would drive them from their land.

However he lamented that only in Nigeria and East Africa (the Masai) was grazing still the norm. It was time for paddocks and he would impress the urgency of the situation on key officials.

Ogbe insisted that the attacks were neither ethnic nor religious but "economic."

"They like our Fadama grass for their cattle", he said, referring to all season farming which the people of Agatu actively engage in.

Akpa Idu, chair of the peace committee, said this is the same sentiment expressed by the Fulanis during their dialogue.

As a precondition for peace talks, the Benue state government had ordered the herdsmen to move out of the occupied communities to the state across the river.

"However, they say the grass is better on our side so they don't want to move," Idu said of their latest peace talks although the Fulanis said in a prior meeting, they'd pull out two weeks prior.

"Our people won't go back with them still there. And they can't farm even though the first rains of the season have begun. This is a serious concern for their livelihood."

In Rop, Plateau State, a former member of parliament who doesn't want to be identified because of her ongoing work to resolve the situation, says her people have expressed similar concerns. Following several attacks, they fled their communities last year and in an unusual move the Fulanis moved in and stayed put.

Plateau state has borne the brunt of the Fulani attacks. In a five year period from 2010-2015, the middlebelt area including Benue and Plateau estimate over 6500 killed.

The most heinous attack, the Dogo Nahawa massacre of three hilly communities in Jos, Plateau State on March, 7, 2010 claimed over 500 lives garnering international attention and sparking the launch of the Justice for Jos Project which I founded.

The Fulani men who penetrated the mass murder of that year, confessed in media interviews with the New York Times that they had planned the attacks in a meeting they held in the neighboring state.

So committed were they to a suicide mission that they were caught wandering around with bloodstained clothes and machetes. There was never any issue of them bringing in cows and taking over the community. It was simply premeditated massacre.

"They seem more emboldened now. I wonder why", mused a respondent from Agatu.

In December 2010, 15 people were prosecuted, in court trials which the Justice for Jos Project monitored, and sentenced to 10 years for the DNH massacre - the first ever such convictions for Fulani attacks. Under sentencing guidelines, they will be out within a year.

The attacks continue, regardless, now with occupation. No arrests, no prosecutions while hapless farmers wonder what their response should be in the face of successive governments unwilling or unable to protect them.

One reason is that the newest narrative explaining away the herdsmen's attacks is "climate change." A new film funded by the European Union claims the shrinkage of Lake Chad due to desert encroachment has fueled both the Fulani and Boko Haram violence.

While this makes an interesting argument, a researcher who has studied the problem for years, says it is not the whole truth. "A northern governor boasted that he had more water reservoirs than his southern counterparts. You need lots of water to grow rice and sugarcane and that is precisely what is being farmed up north right now. The argument that the violence is due to drying up lakes just doesn't hold water."

The truth appears to lie elsewhere. After a gruesome attack in Agatu last year, Audu Ogbe gave deep insight into the sinister motives of the attackers.

According to media reports in March 2015, He said some of the herdsmen attackers who were apprehended do not seem to be Nigerians as they do not speak any of the Nigerian languages, adding that when interrogated, they confessed that they were mercenaries recruited to come and kill in name of Jihad.

“People have tried to resist them on their own but they always come with very heavy weapons, AK -47 and nobody really knows the source. Once many of them were caught and some of them are Mauritians and others who came into Nigeria speaking languages other than Nigerian. They speak neither Ffuldei nor Hausa but they were among the attackers. One of them said they were told that there was a Jihad and that they should come in and kill,” he said.

It is this history of unaddressed attacks in the case of public admissions of guilt or jihad that has pushed people in the middle belt to the protests and town hall meetings that have been holding in Nigeria, including even neighboring Ghana, US and UK. A mass movement called Movement Against Fulani Occupation has called for a beef boycott in Nigeria as tensions continue to build across the south.

The Inspector General of Police, Solomon Arase, in a highly criticized statement said, “Most of these herdsmen are not Nigerians. They are people from Mali, Chad, who came into our system. So, that is why we have to be very careful. Our borders are very porous. Predominantly our own herdsmen are law abiding people.

“But when people come from outside with their cattle, we should not deny them entry because of ECOWAS protocols, good neighborliness but, at the same time, we should not allow them to embark on criminal activities.

“I have taken suggestions about how we can develop big ranches so that they can stop grazing on farmlands.”

The police chief's inconsistent remarks claiming the herdsmen have been infiltrated by non-Nigerians comes after Nigerian herdsmen had already admitted in meetings with him that they perpetrated the attacks.

Worse still, even if it were true that foreign Herdsmen committed the attacks, it is noteworthy that they allegedly come from the same countries where Boko Haram has an operational footprint in the region and an embarrassing admission of failure to secure national borders or arrest foreign criminals.

Clearly Nigeria has as big a problem as Boko Haram on its hands and there appears to be no solution or strategy in place much less acknowledgement as the occupation continued for over a month before the herdsmen moved out of Benue state scot-free.

APPENDIX 4:

STORIES OF VICTIMS

Lisa we met during a CODEL in June 2014. Her case bears special mention. The sound of gunfire and explosions woke her up. In the corner she saw her husband pacing "before they kill me, I'll take as many of them as I can," said he. "What if it's just your fellow police officers shooting?" Lisa asked. The gunfire was right in the police barracks and Lisa still couldn't believe the Boko Haram terrorists had the nerve to attack here too. She was heavily pregnant (6 months

along) and could barely get up to rouse their kids while Peter cocked his rifle. He had 36 bullets. That would have to do even though Peter had been instructed not to engage the terrorists unless he received orders to fire by his commanding officer...The terrorists came to their door and ordered him to come out. When Peter didn't respond, they barged in. Pop! Pop! Pop! He squeezed the trigger as they streamed in. "How many did he hit?" I asked Lisa. "I saw several flee with injuries. The number I saw keel over dead were 8. Then he ran out of bullets." Boko Haram captured Peter and slit his throat till they completely severed his head.

They flung his decapitated head on the floor and asked her to lie on the ground beside it. She stooped as if complying then bolted for the door. She ran as fast as one could running for two. Three of the terrorists gave chase. One lashed out with a sword and slashed her arm. She pulled off her buttoned blouse and wrapped her arm to stem the blood flow while running. Another terrorist pushed her and she fell to the ground. They pulled knives from their legs and held her down. "Say "Allah Akbar"" they ordered. "Jesus, Jesus" were the last words she said before they slit her throat and left her body spread out on the ground. It began to rain and the wind swept dust and leaves on her. Mosquitoes swarmed her, drawn by the abundant cascading blood.

Two days later, officials came to pick the bodies for burial. Lisa lifted a feeble hand. This one is alive...She spent three months in the emergency room and over a year in the first of several hospitals. Her two kids' died - slit throats like their dad. She lost the pregnancy but Lisa is alive. As a widow of a valiant police inspector who put up a heroic fight to defend his barracks and was slain by the terrorists, Lisa was entitled to some social protection - on the books. Yet her in-laws stripped their home of all possessions including her only surviving child who was out of town during the attack. She never saw a dime of her husband's death benefit even though she was with him till death brutally did them part.

She was given an ultimatum to marry one of his brothers and be given her property back. She declined and returned destitute to live with her parents in her home state. Then Boko Haram captured their town and she and the parents who cared for her in hospital all became IDPs again. Congresswomen moved by her situation referred us to USAID. Nothing came out of our meeting. We provided Lisa \$250 seed money to raise chickens to support her son who has rejoined her but it is inadequate for rent, school fees and subsistence much less to visit her parents.

2. Timothy is in a special category. He was held captive by Boko Haram for 10 months before he escaped in 2014. It is exceedingly rare to see male Christian escapees who survived after so long as BH normally kills them off or converts and conscripts them as fighters. Timothy was previously handicapped from a car crash so the terrorist did not summarily execute him although he was a Christian. His experience was telling: "I was returning from Christmas holiday when our taxi was ambushed. Everyone else was able to flee except myself and a pastor. Another taxi ran into the ambush but since they were all Muslims, Boko Haram collected money from them as contributions to the jihad and let them go."

"They took me and a pastor to a neighboring village where a celebration broke out when they announced to the villagers that they had captured two kaffirs (infidels.)"

“One terrorist told me to follow him to the road. I knew instinctively I was going to be killed. BH has a strategy of killing people right by the roadside to inflict terror in road travelers who came by.

“I began to say my last prayers under my breath but he saw my lips moving.

"Infidel, why are you praying? Do you know God?"

"Yes," I replied. "He created you and me.””

He laughed derisively and abruptly changed his mind.

When the terrorists sorted through the wallets of the Muslim passengers they had extorted them from, they were angry to see that their ID cards identified some as school teachers. "We should have killed them instead of letting them go," they lamented.

Timothy has been free for over a year now. In spite of his invaluable insights as someone who was held captive for 10 months, he has not been offered a job. He is unemployed and recently returned to school where he is struggling to pay fees. He has not set his eyes on his mother who is a refugee in Cameroon. He can't afford to travel. He sleeps on the floor of someone's kitchen - a kind but also poor stranger whom he met while in hospital.

Apart from immediate accommodation and feeding when he was taken in by the army after a wild 5-day escape through the forest, Timothy has not benefited from any government assistance.