



BOKO HARAM LEADERSHIP CONFLICT CRISIS BETWEEN ABUBAKAR SHEKAU, AL-BARNAWI AND MAMMAN NUR

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ABSTRACT: The crisis of Boko Haram has led Nigerian security forces launched a military offensive targeting Boko Haram on May 2013, as a security project called "safe havens places" after Former President Goodluck Jonathan declared a state of emergency in some states which includes Borno, Yobe and Adamawa in the Northeastern Nigeria. Despite an initial reduction in Boko Haram attacks, the militant group reestablished a base in Borno State, along Nigeria's border with Cameroon, and killed more civilians than in any period since its first attack under leadership of Abubakar Shekau in September 2010. Although Shekau is Boko Haram's most visible leader, after the killing of Muhammed Yusuf by security personnel's in Maiduguri. However, some group members of Boko Haram split and formed Ansaru group factions whose suggest that Shekau is not the only leader of Boko Haram. This Paper examines other militant leaders who contributed to the operational and ideological development of Boko Haram and Ansaru group, but specifically focuses on Abubakar Shekau, Khalid Al-Barnawi and Mamman Nur. The paper has a findings that Khalid Al-Barnawi and Mamman Nur are uniquely capable leaders whose expanded Boko Haram's international connections to al-Qa`ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Al-Shabab, the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO), Mokhtar Belmokhtar's factions, Al-Qa`ida core and other militant groups in Africa. At the local level, Al-Barnawi and mid-level commanders from Ansaru are likely operating with Shekau and Boko Haram, but Nur's ideological disagreements with Shekau and have instructed his followers from not collaborating with Boko Haram on nature of operational attacks to civilians rather than the security operatives and other government functionaries. The paper has recommended that for security to be maintain in Nigeria, there is need for Nigerian Government to uses the division and crisis of leadership between the Boko Haram leaders to end the insurgent attacks embarks by Boko Haram groups to civilians and established collaborative security operative network between the neighboring countries of Cameroon, Chad and Niger Republic to end the Boko Haram menace.

Keywords: Insurgents, Boko Haram, Terrorism leadership, Power Crisis

INTRODUCTION

Abubakar Shekau, has led Boko Haram sect since 2009 after the demise of the first founding leader Muhammed Yusuf, Shekau has declared the Boko Haram militant group's allegiance to IS in March 2015. At that time, Shekau announced that Boko Haram should be known as the Islamic State's West

Africa Province. South African security analyst Ryan Cummings told DW that co-operation between the jihadi groups of Boko Haram and IS could be purely nominal. "We have no evidence that Islamic State has been providing any form of logistical or operational patronage to Boko Haram," he argued that.

Shekau led the group in an insurgency that has left 30,000 people dead and forced 2.6 million people to flee their homes. A Nigerian security analyst told the news agency AFP that Shekau was seen as disorganized and unreliable, and that IS's announcement of a new leader may be an attempt to clean up Boko Haram's reputation among jihadists. (Jacob, 2013)

The conflicting ideologies group's barbaric actions under Shekau's leadership sparked a breakaway faction of Ansaru. Al-Barnawi was assumed to be allied to Ansaru, which split from Boko Haram in 2012 because it disagrees with the indiscriminate killing of civilians, especially Muslims. Al Barnawi said he would end attacks on mosques and markets used by ordinary Muslims, instead threatening to kill Christians and bomb churches. From the above explanation we can understand a different leadership ideology express by Shekau and the other factional leaders in the name of Al-Barnawi and Maman Nur.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Mohammed Yusuf founded the terrorist sect that became known as Boko Haram in 2002 in Maiduguri, the capital of the North-Eastern state of Borno. He established a religious complex and school that attracted poor Muslim families from across Nigeria and neighbouring countries of Chad, Cameroun and Niger Republic. The center had the political goal of creating an Islamic state, and became a recruiting ground for jihadis in Nigeria and African continent at large. By denouncing the police and state corruption as mean of current status of abject poverty and political inequality this has led Yusuf attracted followers from unemployed youth across the North East axis.

According Morgan, W (2015) has argued that Muhammed Yusuf has reported been used the existing division of Izala group in Borno and refers to the name of his group as (Jama'at Izalatil Bidiawa Iqamatus Sunnah), a popular conservative Islamic sect, to recruit members, before breaking away to form his own faction. The Izala were originally welcomed into government, along with people sympathetic to Yusuf. Boko Haram conducted its operations more or



less peacefully during the first seven years of its existence, withdrawing from society into remote North-eastern areas. The government repeatedly ignored warnings about the increasingly militant character of the organization.

Glenn, K (2014) has described how the Council of Ulama of Maiduguri, advised the government and the Nigerian Television Authority not to broadcast Yusuf's preaching, but their warnings were ignored. Yusuf's arrest elevated him to hero status. Borno's former Deputy Governor Alhaji Dibal has reportedly claimed that al-Qaeda had ties with Boko Haram, but broke them when they decided that Yusuf was an unreliable person. Stephen Davis, a former Anglican clergyman who has negotiated with Boko Haram many times blames local Nigerian politicians for supporting local bandits like Boko Haram in order for them to make life difficult for their political opponents. In particular Davis has blamed the former Governor of Borno State Ali Modu Sheriff, who initially supported Boko Haram, but no longer needed them after the 2007 elections and stopped funding them. Sheriff denies the accusations. From the above overview we can understand that the formation of terrorist group has been publicly become known to peoples during the first tenure of former Governor of Borno Ali Modu Sherrif and they have been used in so many instances to fight back some political opponents but latter in the second tenure they have been disengage by Borno political class and declared them as criminals but other connection within and out of the State they continues preaching for their ideology engaging large number of unemployed and uneducated youth who has join the movement rifling down both political and socio-economic structures in the North East states namely Borno, Yobe and some part of Adamawa State.

Research Questions

The Paper has the following question to ask:

- i. What is the ideological philosophy of Boko Haram sect
- ii. What causes the leadership crisis between Shekau, Al-Barnawi and Maman Nur
- iii. Can Government use the leadership crisis of Boko Haram Leaders to end the barbaric attacks lunched by the groups.

Research Objectives

The paper has the general objectives of investigating the leadership crisis between Boko Haram leaders, with the following specific objectives

- i. To examine the ideological philosophy of Boko Haram sect
- ii. To investigate the causes of leadership crisis between the Shekau, Al-Barnawi and Mamman Nur.
- iii. To find out the ways government would use the Boko Haram leadership crisis to end the menace of insurgent's attacks.

Research Methodology

The paper has uses secondary data of information using various relevant literatures on the leadership and ideology of Boko in Africa.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF BOKO HARAM LEADERS

Muhammad Yusuf's Disciples

Before 2009, Abubakar Shekau was the deputy of Boko Haram leader Muhammad Yusuf, while Mamman Nur, who reportedly introduced Shekau to Yusuf. The three met as theology students in Borno. Yusuf admired the Taliban, Usama bin Ladin and al-Qa`ida (particularly AQIM), while Shekau preached takfiri (excommunication) ideology, but they both focused on their native Nigeria. Nur, who is Cameroonian, may have had an incentive to regionalize Boko Haram's ideology, and he was the mastermind of the bombing of the UN Headquarters in Abuja on August 26, 2011. Nigerian security forces killed Yusuf and 800 of his followers, who called themselves "Yusufiya," in clashes in July 2009. After this, AQIM leader Abdelmalek Droukdel offered his "Salafist brothers" in Nigeria "men, weapons, and ammunition to gain revenge on Nigeria's ruling Christian minority" for killing "the martyr Shaykh Muhammad Yusuf" and the deaths of Muslims in clashes with Christians in the Middle Belt (Pisa, 2015).

Dozens of Yusuf's followers fled Nigeria, including the group commander in Kaduna, Abu Muhammed, who trained in Algeria under the Nigerian Khalid al-Barnawi, the latter of whom was Mokhtar Belmokhtar's longtime kidnapping and smuggling accomplice. Another follower, Adam Kamar, who was arrested in Kano in 2007 after training with AQIM in Algeria, met Al-Barnawi in Algeria in 2011, but became the leader of an AQIM training camp. Nur was one of Yusuf's few followers who fled to East Africa (reportedly to Somalia) and trained with al-Shabab and AQIM militants. Kamar was based in Kano, served as the "main link" between Boko Haram and AQIM and al-Shabab, and also financed training for Nigerians with AQIM in Mali for attacks on "Western interests" in Nigeria that Nur would later carry out.



Kambar may have facilitated Nur's meeting with the two African al-Qa`ida affiliates, as well as Nur's return to Kano in early 2011. Lambie, L (2019) has cited *that* Shekau was shot and detained during the July 2009 group clashes, which allowed Nur to become leader until Nur left Nigeria and Shekau was released from custody. In July 2010, Shekau announced from a hideout in Borno that he succeeded Yusuf and formed Jama`at Ahl al-Sunna li al-Da`wa wa al-Jihad, although it was commonly known as "Boko Haram." Shekau pledged loyalty to "the amir of al-Qa`ida in the Islamic Maghreb," Usama bin Ladin, Ayman al-Zawahiri and the "Islamic states" in Iraq and Somalia, declaring "Oh America, jihad has just begun."

Leadership of 'Boko Haram' after Muhammed Yusuf

Shekau was born in Shekau town, in Tarmuwa local government, Yobe state; his exact date of birth is unknown but is said to be between 1965 and 1975. Shekau is an ethnic Kanuri, and also speaks Hausa, Fulani, Arabic, and English.

David, C (2019) has traced the history of the Shekau search for education since in 1990 he moved to the Mafoni area in Maiduguri and studied under a traditional cleric before entering the Borno College of Legal and Islamic Studies (now called Mohammed Goni College of Legal and Islamic Studies). Shekau left the college for ideological reasons and without earning a certificate. He later met, Mohammed Yusuf, the founder of Jamaat Ahlus Sunnah li Dawah wal Jihad, and became one of his deputies. Shekau was appointed the leader of the group in July 2009, after the death of Yusuf in the 2009 Boko Haram uprising. Shekau survived being shot in the leg during the 2009 attempt on his life by Nigerian security forces. He is married to one of Muhammad Yusuf's four widows. His nickname is "Darul Tawheed", which translates as "specialist in tawheed", the Islamic concept of oneness of Allah. While he was respected as a leader in the beginning, by 2011 Shekau had begun to display signs of religious extremism. He received a letter from al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb giving him advice but he did not heed it. As a result of his erratic leadership, in 2012 a faction of the group broke off to form Jamaat Ansar al-Muslimin fi Bilād as-Sudan (Ansaru). This faction included his military commander Abu Muhammad al-Bauchawi, and religious advisor Sheikh Abu Osama al-Ansari Muhammad Awal al-Gombawi. Despite this, many soldiers and commanders stayed with Shekau, including military commanders Abu Sa'ad al-Bamawi and Muhammad Salafi. With his group

mostly intact, Shekau engaged in conflict with Ansaru, killing their leader Abu Osama al-Ansari. As a result of this, and other arrests of Ansaru leaders by the Nigerian government, Ansaru did not pose a further threat to Shekau's leadership of the jihadi movement in Nigeria, and the group became defunct by 2015.

Following on from this, Shekau's soldiers were undisciplined and abused the population, resulting in the establishment of civilian militias such as the Civilian Joint Task Force to fight them. Shekau, increasingly falling into extremism, began to kill his own religious advisors, including Sheikh Abd al-Malek al-Ansari al-Kadunawi and Abu al-Abbas al-Bankiwani (Jack, 2015). Philip, O (2015) has cited how on June 2012, the United States Department of State designated Shekau as a terrorist and effectively froze his assets in the United States. Since June 2013, the Department has had a standing reward of US\$7 million for information leading to Shekau's capture through its Rewards for Justice Program. In addition, the Nigerian army has offered a ₦50 million reward (approximately US\$300,000) for any useful information that may to arrest of Shekau.

It has been circulated through videos Shekau posted online, where he was boasted often about his invincibility; mocked various armies; and stated that he "cannot be stopped" and "cannot die except by the will of Allah". He has also boasted of being in possession of armoured tanks and other combat vehicles. His online videos frequently depict anti-American rhetoric, and he has made multiple threats to attack the U.S. In one of the prominent incident, he took credit for the kidnapping of over 200 school girls in April 2014. Shekau also announced that the kidnapped girls have been converted to Islam. He has claimed to be waging a jihad against Christianity (Nnenna, 2015).

With the rise of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria during 2014 and 2015, Shekau faced pressure from his commanders and soldiers to pledge his allegiance to IS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. A history of the group says that Shekau "was compelled to give allegiance, and that was through a coming together of the military commanders, and after he became convinced that the matter was about to go out of his hand, and that his throne would be shaken and emptied of him if he did not give allegiance.



“ It appears that Shekau was reluctant to pledge allegiance because he feared being replaced as leader by Islamic State, once they discovered his extremism. Indeed, Shekau had previously killed many of his own soldiers who had asked him to give allegiance, such as Abu Anisa Ali al-Gombawi, Malim Omar, Mujahid Abu Hanifa, Hadhiq Kaka al-Hajj and Mustafa al-Chadi (killed variously in May/November 2014). On 7 March 2015, Shekau pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi against his will.” (Nnenna, 2015).

However, due to the continuation of Shekau's extremism, in declaring takfir on the Muslims and killing them, in August 2016, ISIL appointed Abu Musab al-Barnawi as the leader of the group in place of Shekau. Shekau refused to recognise Barnawi's authority and split off part of the group under its original name of Jamaat Ahlus Sunnah li Dawah wal Jihad, while Barnawi lead the Islamic State's West African province. While Shekau continues to lead his group, he has only 1,500 soldiers, whereas Barnawi has 3,500. Shekau has been widely denounced as following the ideology of the Khawarij by the Islamic State and West Africa province in Nigeria.

Following the split, many clashes occurred between Shekau and Barnawi's soldiers throughout the month of August and the following months in 2015. On 12 September 2016, 30 of Shekau's soldiers were killed and 40 captured by IS-West Africa. In October 2016, Shekau's soldiers attacked the Karino area south of Lake Chad with 350 men seizing the village of Tunubuma. Then Barnawi's soldiers counter-attacked, killing more than 75, including the leader Muhammad Bakr.

Nur's Break with Shekau

Paul, N (2013) has cited that after returning to Nigeria, Mamman Nur masterminded the UN bombing on August 26, 2011, which killed 21 people in Abuja. Nur coordinated the attack from a base in Kano with two Nigerians who trained with Kambar in Algeria, and a Nigerian militant, Habibu Bama. Bama also carried out the Christmas Day 2011 church bombing near Abuja with Kabiru Sokoto, the commander that Muhammad Yusuf appointed for Sokoto State. Kabiru received his funding from a terrorist group based in Algeria, which possibly came from Khalid al-Barnawi. This funding likely contributed to Nur's attack on the United Nations and some of the more than

10 church bombings in the Middle Belt in 2012 that, according to Nigerian security forces, bore the “hallmark of al-Qa`ida” and followed Droukdel’s offer of support for attacks on Christians in the Middle Belt. Nur has also been taken part in the Federal Police Headquarters attack in Abuja on June 16, 2011. This attack, which was the first suicide bombing in Nigeria’s history, was claimed by the same intermediary to Agence France-Presse who claimed the UN bombing, employed the same tactics as the UN bombing, involved Kabiru Sokoto and Habibu Bama, and was forewarned by a Boko Haram spokesman who one day before the attack said that “brothers who arrived from Somalia,” possibly referring to Nur, would launch “fierce” attacks in Abuja. There were rumors that some militants believed Nur’s al-Qa`ida connections made him a more competent leader than Shekau. Shekau’s reported favoritism of ethnic Kanuris of Borno also may have driven Hausas, non-Nigerians and other non-Kanuris to ally with Nur, who was also non-Nigerian. Shekau, however, ordered the “death penalty” for anyone who did not follow his orders and killed defectors. This may have been the origin of the split between Boko Haram and Ansaru in 2012.

Al-Barnawi’s Unsuccessful Collaboration with Shekau

Concurrent fights with Nur’s operations, Khalid Al-Barnawi’s trainee, Abu Muhammed, masterminded northern Nigeria’s first terrorism-related kidnapping of foreigners, a British and Italian engineer, in May 2011. The operation was claimed by “Al-Qa`ida in the Lands Beyond the Sahel” a name that reflected the vision of Belmokhtar and his Malian brother-in-law and MUJAO spokesperson, Oumar Ould Hamaha, to expand their zone of operations “throughout the entire Sahara” to Nigeria. Boko Haram’s denial of this kidnapping was likely related to Shekau’s feud over control of funding with Abu Muhammed.

As a result of the feud, Boko Haram reportedly informed on Abu Muhammed’s shura (council) to the Nigerian security forces, who killed Abu Muhammed and several shura members in Kaduna on March 7, 2012, and uncovered the mortally wounded British and Italian hostages in Sokoto. In addition, this information led security forces to the location of a German engineer who was kidnapped by a Mauritanian-led AQIM cell in Kano in January 2012, which was broken up in May 2012, and to Kamar, who was killed in Kano in August 2012. Other militants connected to Abu Muhammed’s shura, including Kabiru Sokoto and Habibu Bama, were also arrested or killed



in 2012. Due to the break-up of Abu Muhammed's shura, the three main Nigerian leaders in Boko Haram's network were Shekau in Borno, and al-Barnawi and Nur in the Middle Belt and Kano (Paul, 2013)

Local Defections and Ansaru's Formation

Bartolotta, C (2011) has highlighted how Shekau feuded with other factions, there was also growing local discontent with Shekau. In July 2011, a new group called the Yusufiya Islamic Movement (YIM) released flyers in Borno "distinguishing" the YIM from "evil" Boko Haram, showing concern for the deaths of civilians, and proposing "reconciliation" with the government. The YIM, however, may have been forced out of Borno by Shekau's killing of defectors and resurfaced as part of Ansaru after Shekau ordered attacks in Kano on January 20, 2012, which killed nearly 200 people, mostly Muslims. Within weeks of the attack, Shekau fled to Gao, Northern Mali, which was then governed by MUJAO, after information gleaned from the arrest of one of Shekau's "new recruits" led security forces to his hideout in Kano. On January 26, 2012, Ansaru released flyers in Kano announcing its "public formation" and saying it was a "humane" alternative to Boko Haram that would only target the Nigerian government and Christians in "self-defense." Subsequent Arabic-language Ansaru videos in June 2012 dubbed in Hausa and English and statements to Kaduna-based Desert Herald showed Ansaru employed a pan-West African narrative similar to Mamman Nur and MUJAO. Ansaru also displayed the "setting sun" logo of AQIM's predecessor before 2007, the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC), whose commanders included Droukdel, Belmokhtar, al-Barnawi, Kamar, Oumar Ould Hamaha and other future MUJAO leaders. Like the YIM, Ansaru condemned Boko Haram's killing of Muslim civilians and defectors. In line with Droukdel, Ansaru demanded revenge for the "Christian government's" violence against Muslims in the Middle Belt, while Ansaru's charter checked the power of its amir to prevent the emergence of another Shekau.

Barnaby, P (2000) has pointed that Ansaru's first high-profile operations included a prison break in Abuja in November 2012, kidnapping a French engineer in Katsina in December 2012, an ambush on Mali-bound Nigerian troops in Kogi in January 2013, and kidnapping and killing seven foreign engineers in Bauchi in February 2013. Ansaru justified the operations as retaliation for the French-led intervention in Mali and "Western atrocities" in

Afghanistan. These operations and justifications carried the “signature” of al-Barnawi, who previously carried out kidnappings with Belmokhtar. Moreover, an Ansaru militant interviewed by the *New York Times* in 2013 claimed that al-Barnawi was Ansaru’s leader.

Ansaru, therefore, likely represented the revival of Nigerian GSPC militants in Kano. It enjoyed the parentage of Droukdel via Kamar and Nur ideologically, and Belmokhtar via al-Barnawi operationally, combined with resentment toward Shekau of defectors who, like the GSPC, did not tolerate the killing of innocent Muslim civilians. In contrast to the grassroots base of Boko Haram in Borno, Kano was suitable for Ansaru’s internationalist militants because Kano was the hub for funding from al-Qa`ida in Pakistan for the training of Nigerian militants in the mid-2000s when Muhammad Yusuf and his deputies were sending followers to the Sahel and Afghanistan. Kano also hosted AQIM operatives like Adam Kamar, the AQIM cell that kidnapped the German engineer on the same day as Ansaru’s formation in January 2012, and the AQIM-trained accomplices of Mamman Nur in the UN Headquarters bombing. Moreover, the city was the base for regional deputies under Yusuf who had a “global network” and later became suspects in the Federal Police Headquarters bombing in June 2011. In 2013, there were still anonymous factions in Kano that opposed Shekau’s leadership, supported negotiations with the government, targeted “Western” interests such as anti-polio non-governmental organization workers—and carried out sophisticated attacks on Christian targets.

Al-Barnawi’s Renewed Role in Boko Haram

Adesoji, A (2015) has cited how despite al-Barnawi’s suspected role in Ansaru, there is circumstantial evidence to suggest that al-Barnawi also operates with Boko Haram. First, Shekau promoted one of al-Barnawi’s deputies, Habibu Yusuf (“Assalafi”), to lead Boko Haram operations in Sokoto in 2012. The Nigerian government’s “most wanted” list, released in November 2012, included al-Barnawi and Assalafi as the first and second ranking members in Shekau’s shura.

Secondly, only since the French-led intervention in Northern Mali in February 2013 Boko Haram’s new “special kidnapping squad” taken hostage dozens of government officials and their female family members in Borno and released them for imprisoned militants and ransoms that fund more operations. Al-



Barnawi's kidnapping squad has taking hostages and Boko Haram is providing them with safe haven, this has resemble the agreement between Al-Barnawi's trainee, Abu Muhammed, made with Shekau in 2011 for Boko Haram to provide cover for his kidnappings before that cooperation was undermined by their feud over funding.

Thirdly, the money Boko Haram received in ransom for the release of a seven-member French family kidnapped in Northern Cameroon in February 2013 has override any grievances between Al-Barnawi and Shekau over Shekau's feud with Abu Muhammed. While the kidnapping of the French family was not claimed by Ansaru, it was distinctly characteristic of Ansaru to kidnap foreigners, especially an engineer (the father of the family), operate outside of Nigeria's borders, speak Arabic and justify the kidnapping as revenge for France's "war on Islam" in Mali, demand millions of dollars in ransom and the release of imprisoned militants, and negotiate not with the Nigerian government like Boko Haram, but with the highest levels of the Cameroonian government. It was likely that Ansaru transferred the family from Northern Cameroon to Boko Haram in Borno, where they were later released for \$3.14 million and in exchange for 19 Boko Haram prisoners in Cameroon. Fourthly, since the French-led intervention in Mali, Ansaru has claimed no attacks, except for one Ansaru militant who appeared in a video in which Belmokhtar and MUJAO claimed suicide bombings at two French mines in Niger Republic in May 2013. The intervention led to the elimination of key couriers connecting Ansaru to MUJAO, the killing of AQIM's southern commander, Abu Zeid, who possibly trained some Ansaru militants, and the retreat of Belmokhtar. Ansaru is likely isolated from its Sahelian networks and has a weakened network in Northwestern Nigeria due to the demise of Abu Muhammed's shura, so Ansaru may be able to operate more effectively with Boko Haram in Borno and northern Cameroon. At the same time, Shekau's shura was depleted when Nigerian security forces killed Assalafi in March 2013, his successor in April 2013, and Shekau's shura's fourth and fifth ranking members in the lead-up to and during the state of emergency. Shekau has benefited from Ansaru's Sahelian connections, regionally diverse membership and experienced militants to train new Boko Haram recruits smuggle weapons into Borno and carry out his latest threats to launch "retaliatory" attacks in Cameroon and the oil-rich Niger Delta (Adesoji, 2015).

The reconciliation process between Ansaru militants and Boko Haram may have begun in Gao, Mali, where Shekau, Belmokhtar, MUJAO and Boko Haram and Ansaru militants were reportedly based or seen in 2012. In November 2012, for example, an Arabic-language video posted on the Ana al-Muslim network featured Shekau for the first time in a desert with armed militants offering “glad tidings to soldiers of the Islamic State of Mali” and opening with a narration praising Ansaru’s attack on a prison that freed Boko Haram militants in Abuja three days earlier. Subsequent Boko Haram training videos in March 2013 also for the first time opened with photos of al-Shabab leaders, had a higher quality that appeared similar to Ansaru’s videos, were uploaded on popular al-Qa`ida online forums instead of YouTube, and featured a mid-level commander in Ansaru’s network, Mummodo Abu Fatima. Fatima is a specialist in suicide operations, and he claimed the Federal Police Headquarters attack in June 2011. He also told *Desert Herald* in June 2012 that Boko Haram and Ansaru have different interpretations of Islam but may cooperate in the future. (*Chothia, 2012*).

The cooperation between Boko Haram and kidnapping specialists in Ansaru was confirmed when Boko Haram’s intermediary to Agence France-Presse said the kidnapping of a French priest in northern Cameroon in November 2013 was “coordinated with Ansaru.” The priest, like the French family, was taken to Borno and exchanged one month later for a weapons smuggler that Cameroon President Biya freed from prison in Cameroon.

Mamman Nur’s Status

Lamb, C (2016) has highlighted the link for Shekau and al-Barnawi cooperation for the operation of Boko Haram’s future trajectory has depended on Mamman Nur alliance. Nur’s has ideological influence on Ansaru and operational connections to AQIM, al-Shabab and the late Kamar, Nur may be the “Boko Haram” leader communicating with AQIM, al-Shabab, al-Qa`ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) in Pakistan and other al-Qa`ida affiliates. Al-Barnawi has connections to Belmokhtar and MUJAO in the Sahel, but it is unclear whether al-Barnawi has Nur’s ability to connect to formal al-Qa`ida affiliates like AQIM and al-Shabab. Al-Barnawi, therefore, may be unable to unite Boko Haram with al-Qa`ida in the way Shekau sought since his first overture to al-Qa`ida in July 2010 and his more recent call after the state of emergency



for “brethren” in Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Syria to join “jihad” in Nigeria, to which no al-Qa`ida affiliate responded.

Nur and Ansaru are likely still in good standing with Al-Barnawi, whose kidnappings rarely harm Muslim civilians, but not necessarily with Shekau. Ansaru, for example, sent “greetings” to Al-Barnawi’s longtime co-kidnapper, Belmokhtar, and condemned the Egyptian military’s coup against Mohamed Morsi—as did AQIM and Belmokhtar. Yet in April and September 2013, Ansaru issued its first statements specifically concerning Borno, which condemned Boko Haram’s killing of civilians in attacks that Shekau claimed in Baga and Benisheikh as well as its wanton destruction of churches in Borno and “misunderstanding of the goals of Shari’a.” (*Wilson, 2018*)

Based on the above statement a Cameroonian, Nur as a leader may also have played a role in negotiations with the Cameroonian government after Ansaru “coordinated” the hostage-takings with Boko Haram in northern Cameroon. In addition, Nur may be the highest-ranking AQIM-connected militant in Ansaru’s network.

Violence attacks by Boko Haram Insurgent

Robyn, K (2018) in one of his interviews with CNN which cited that Boko Haram's attacks consist of suicide bombers as well as conventional armed assaults on both civilian and military targets. Following the 2014 kidnapping, a majority of Boko Haram's suicide bombers are female; some are as young as seven years old. Boko Haram jihadists rely on stealth, blending into local communities or hiding in the vast countryside. Critics accuse the Nigerian military of not properly equipping its soldiers to fight Boko Haram. This paper would trace some of the few attacks launched by the Boko Haram groups of Abukar Shekau, Al-barnawi and Mamman –Nur which has destroyed political, socio-economic situations in the Northern Nigeria, especially North East, North West and some parts of North Central.

2009

In 2008, police began an investigation into the group code-named Operation Flush. On 26 July, 2008 security forces arrested nine Boko Haram members with confiscated weapons and bomb-making equipment. Either this or a clash with police during a funeral procession led to revenge attacks on police and widespread rioting. A joint military task force operation was launched in response and by 30 July, 2008 more than 700 people had been killed, mostly

Boko Haram members, and police stations, prisons, government offices, schools and churches had been destroyed. Yusuf was arrested, and died in custody "while trying to escape". As had been the case decades earlier in the wake of the 1980 Kano riots, the killing of the leader of an extremist group would have unintended consequences. He was succeeded by Abubakar Shekau, formerly his second-in-command (*Nossiter, 2009*).

Borno political and religious leaders has asserted that the state and federal government responded appropriately and, apart from the opposition party, overwhelmingly supported Yusuf's death without misgivings over the extrajudicial killing. Security remained a concern in Borno, with residents expressing concern about importation of arms and exchanges of religious messages across porous international borders (*Jeo, 2012*).

According to the leaked document, there were reports that Yusuf's deputy had survived, and audio tapes were believed to be in circulation in which Boko Haram threatened future attacks. Nevertheless, many observers did not anticipate imminent bloodshed. Security in Borno was downgraded. Borno government official Alhaji Boguma believed that the state deserved praise from the international community for ending the conflict in such a short time, and that the "wave of fundamentalism" had been "crushed" (*Wilson, 2018*)

2010

In September 2010, having regrouped under their new leader, Boko Haram broke 105 of its members out of prison in Bauchi along with over 600 other prisoners and went on to launch attacks in several areas of northern Nigeria (*Piska, 2015*)

2011

Under Shekau's leadership, the group continuously improved its operational capabilities. After launching a string of IED attacks against soft targets and its first vehicle-borne IED attack in June 2011, killing 6 at the Abuja police headquarters, in August Boko Haram bombed the United Nations (UN) headquarters in Abuja, the first time they had struck a Western target. A spokesman claiming responsibility for the attack, in which 11 UN staff members died as well as 12 others, with more than 100 injured, warned of future planned attacks on U.S. and Nigerian government interests. Speaking soon after the U.S. embassy's announcement of the arrival in the country of the FBI,



he went on to announce Boko Haram's terms for negotiation, i.e. the release of all imprisoned members. The increased sophistication of the group led observers to speculate that Boko Haram was affiliated with Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), which was active in Niger. Boko Haram has maintained a steady rate of attacks since 2011, striking a wide range of targets, multiple times per week. They have attacked politicians, religious leaders, security forces and civilian targets. The tactic of suicide bombing, used in the two attacks in the capital on the police and UN headquarters, was new to Nigeria. In Africa as a whole, it had only been used by al-Shabaab in Somalia and to a lesser extent AQIM (Global Terrorism Index, 2015).

However, within hours of Goodluck Jonathan's presidential inauguration in May 2011, Boko Haram carried out a series of bombings in Bauchi, Zaria and Abuja. The most successful of these was the attack on the army barracks in Bauchi. A spokesman for the group told BBC Hausa that the attack had been carried out, as a test of loyalty, by serving members of the military hoping to join the group. This charge was later refuted by an army spokesman who claimed: "This is not a banana republic". However, on 8 January 2012 the president would announce that Boko Haram had in reality infiltrated the army and the police, as well as the executive, parliamentary and legislative branches of government. Boko Haram's spokesman also claimed responsibility for the killing outside his home in Maiduguri of the politician Abba Anas Ibn Umar Garbai, the younger brother of the Shehu of Borno, who was the second most prominent Muslim in the country after the Sultan of Sokoto. He added: "We are doing what we are doing to fight injustice, if they stop their satanic ways of doing things and the injustices; we would stop what we are doing" (Human Right Watch, 2012).

This was one of several political and religious assassinations Boko Haram carried out that year, with the presumed intention of correcting injustices in the group's home state of Borno. Meanwhile, the trail of massacres continued relentlessly, apparently leading the country towards civil war. By the end of 2011, these conflicting strategies led observers to question the group's cohesion; comparisons were drawn with the diverse motivations of the militant factions of the oil-rich Niger Delta. Adding to the confusion, in November the State Security Service announced that four criminal syndicates were operating under the name Boko Haram.

The common theme throughout the north-east was the targeting of police, who were regularly massacred at work or in drive-by shootings at their homes, either in revenge for the killing of Yusuf, or as representatives of the state apparatus, or for no particular reason. Five officers were arrested for Yusuf's murder, which had no noticeable effect on the level of unrest. Opportunities for criminal enterprise flourished. Hundreds of police were dead and more than 60 police stations had been attacked by mid-2012. The government's response to this self-reinforcing trend towards insecurity was to invest heavily in security equipment, spending \$5.5 billion, 20 percent of their overall budget, on bomb detection units, communications and transport; and \$470 million on a Chinese CCTV system for Abuja, which has failed in its purpose of detecting or deterring acts of terror.(Aliyu,2012).

According *Adam , C (2015)* the election defeat of former military dictator Muhammadu Buhari increased ethno-religious political tensions, as it broke the terms of a tacit agreement that the presidency would alternate after two terms of office between candidates from the Christian south and Muslim north of the country. Sectarian riots engulfed the twelve northern states of the country during the three days following the election, leaving more than 800 dead and 65,000 displaced. The subsequent campaign of violence by Boko Haram culminated in a string of bombings across the country on Christmas Day. In the outskirts of Abuja, 37 died in a church that had its roof blown off. One resident commented, "Cars were in flames and bodies littered everywhere", a phrase commonly repeated in international press reports about the bombings. Similar Christmas events had been reported in previous years. Jonathan declared a state of emergency on New Year's Eve in local government areas of Jos, Borno, Yobe and Niger and closed the international border in the North-east.

2012

State of Emergency

In the first week of 2012 a series of mostly small-scale attacks on Christians and members of the Igbo ethnic group, causing hundreds to flee. In Kano, on 20 January, 2012 they carried out by far their most deadly action yet, an assault on police buildings, killing 190. One of the victims was a TV reporter. The attacks included a combined use of car bombs, suicide bombers and IEDs, supported by uniformed gunmen (Johnson, 2012/).



Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch published reports in 2012 that were widely quoted by government agencies and the media, based on research conducted over the course of the conflict in the worst affected areas of the country. The NGOs were critical of both security forces and Boko Haram. HRW stated "Boko Haram should immediately cease all attacks, and threats of attacks, that cause loss of life, injury, and destruction of property. The Nigerian government should take urgent measures to address the human rights abuses that have helped fuel the violent militancy". According to the 2012 US Department of State *Country Report on Human Rights Practices*:

Serious human rights problems included extrajudicial killings by security forces, including summary executions; security force torture, rape, and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment of prisoners, detainees, and criminal suspects; harsh and life-threatening prison and detention center conditions; arbitrary arrest and detention; prolonged pretrial detention; denial of fair public trial; executive influence on the judiciary; infringements on citizens' privacy rights; restrictions on freedom of speech, press, assembly, religion, and movement (Human Right, 2012).

On October 9, 2012 witnesses in Maiduguri claimed members of the JTF "Restore Order" a vigilante group, based in Maiduguri, went on a killing spree after a suspected Boko Haram bomb killed an officer. Media reported the JTF killed 20 to 45 civilians and razed 50 to 100 houses in the neighborhood. The JTF commander in Maiduguri denied the allegations. On November 2, witnesses claimed the JTF shot and killed up to 40 people during raids in Maiduguri. The army claimed it dismissed some officers from the military as a result of alleged abuses committed in Maiduguri, but there were no known formal prosecutions in Maiduguri by year's end. Credible reports also indicated ... uniformed military personnel and paramilitary mobile police carried out summary executions, assaults, torture, and other abuses throughout Bauchi, Borno, Kano, Kaduna, Plateau, and Yobe states ... The national police, army, and other security forces committed extrajudicial killings and used lethal and excessive force to apprehend criminals and suspects, as well as to disperse protesters. Authorities generally did not hold police accountable for the use of excessive or deadly force or for the deaths of persons in custody. Security forces generally operated with impunity in the

illegal apprehension, detention, and sometimes extrajudicial execution of criminal suspects. The reports of state or federal panels of inquiry investigating suspicious deaths remained unpublished.

There were no new developments in the case of five police officers accused of executing Muhammad Yusuf in 2009 at a state police headquarters. In July 2011 authorities arraigned five police officers in the federal high court in Abuja for the murder of Yusuf. The court granted bail to four of the officers, while one remained in custody. Police use of excessive force, including use of live ammunition, to disperse demonstrators resulted in numerous killings during the year. For example, although the January fuel subsidy demonstrations generally remained peaceful, security forces reportedly fired on protesters in various states across the country during those demonstrations, resulting in 10 to 15 deaths and an unknown number of wounded.

Despite some improvements resulting from the closure of police checkpoints in many parts of the country, states with an increased security presence due to the activities of Boko Haram experienced a rise in violence and lethal force at police and military roadblocks. Continuing abductions of civilians by criminal groups occurred in the Niger Delta and Southeast ... Police and other security forces were often implicated in the kidnapping schemes.

Although the constitution and law prohibit such practices and provide for punishment of such abuses, torture is not criminalized, and security service personnel, including police, military, and State Security Service (SSS) officers, regularly tortured, beat, and abused demonstrators, criminal suspects, detainees, and convicted prisoners. Police mistreated civilians to extort money. The law prohibits the introduction into trials of evidence and confessions obtained through torture; however, police often used torture to extract confessions.^[116]

2013

In Nigeria's Borno State, where Boko Haram is based, a joint Task Force at Lake Chad has been established to cover the borders of Nigeria, Niger Republic, Cameroon and the country of Chad. The conflict and refugees spilled over the national borders to involve all four countries.

In 2013, Boko Haram increased operations in Northern Cameroon, and were involved in skirmishes along the borders of Chad and Niger. They were linked



to a number of kidnappings, often reportedly in association with the splinter group Ansaru, drawing towards them a higher level of international attention. The U.S. Bureau of Counterterrorism provides the following summary of Boko Haram's 2013 foreign operations:

Onuoha, F (2014) In February 2013, Boko Haram was responsible for kidnapping seven French tourists in the far north of Cameroon. In November 2013, Boko Haram members kidnapped a French priest in Cameroon. In December 2013, Boko Haram gunmen reportedly attacked civilians in several areas of northern Cameroon. Security forces from Chad and Niger also reportedly partook in skirmishes against suspected Boko Haram members along Nigeria's borders. In 2013, the group also kidnapped eight French citizens in northern Cameroon and obtained ransom payments for their release.

Boko Haram has often managed to evade the Nigerian army by retreating into the hills around the border with Cameroon, whose army is apparently unwilling to confront them. Nigeria, Chad and Niger had formed a Multinational Joint Task Force in 1998. In February 2012, Cameroon signed an agreement with Nigeria to establish a Joint Trans-Border Security Committee, which was inaugurated in November 2013, when Cameroon announced plans to conduct "coordinated but separate" border patrols in 2014. It convened again in July 2014 to further improve cooperation between the two countries.

In late 2013, Amnesty International received 'credible' information that over 950 inmates had died in custody, mostly in detention centers in Maiduguri and Damaturu, within the first half of the year. Official state corruption was also documented in December 2013 by the UK Home Office:

The NPF (Nigeria Police Force), SSS, and military report to civilian authorities; however, these security services periodically act outside of civilian control. The government lack effective mechanisms to investigate and punish abuse and corruption. The NPF remain susceptible to corruption, commit human rights abuses, and generally operate with impunity in the apprehension, illegal detention, and sometimes execution of criminal suspects. The SSS also commit human rights abuses, particularly in restricting freedom of speech and press. In some cases private citizens

or the government brought charges against perpetrators of human rights abuses in these units. However, most cases lingered in court or went unresolved after an initial investigation (Zainab, 2014)

The state of emergency was extended in May 2013 to cover the whole of the three north-eastern states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe, raising tensions in the region. In the 12 months following the announcement, 250,000 fled the three states, followed by a further 180,000 between May and August 2014. A further 210,000 fled from bordering states, bringing the total displaced by the conflict to 650,000. Many thousands left the country. An August 2014 Amnesty International video showed Army and allied militia executing people, including by slitting their throats, and dumping their corpses in mass graves. According to Human Rights Watch, more than 130 villages and towns were attacked or controlled by the group (Amnesty International Report, 2015).

2014

Chibok Kidnapping

In April 2014, Boko Haram kidnapped 276 schoolgirls from Chibok. Shekau announced his intention of selling them into slavery. More than 50 escaped. The incident brought Boko Haram extended global media attention, much of it focused on the pronouncements of the U.S. Former First Lady Michelle Obama. Faced with condemnation for his perceived incompetence, as well as allegations from Amnesty International of state collusion, President Jonathan responded by hiring a Washington PR firm (World Bank, 2015).

Parents of the missing girls and those who had escaped were kept waiting until July to meet with the president, which caused them concern. In October, the government announced the girls' imminent release, but the information proved unreliable. The announcement to the media of a peace agreement and the imminent release of all the missing girls was followed days later by a video message in which Shekau stated that no such meeting had taken place and that the girls had been "married off". The announcement to the media, unaccompanied by any evidence of the reality of the agreement, was thought by analysts to have been a political ploy by the president to raise his popularity before his confirmation of his candidacy in the 2015 general election. Earlier in the year, the girls' plight had featured on "#BringBackOurGirls" political campaign posters in the streets of the capital, which the president denied



knowledge of and soon took down after news of criticism surfaced. These posters, which were interpreted, to the dismay of campaigners for the girls' recapture, as being designed to benefit from the fame of the kidnapping, had also been part of Jonathan's "pre-presidential campaign". In September, "#BringBackGoodluck2015" campaign posters again drew criticism. The official announcement of the president's candidacy was made before cheering crowds in Abuja on 11 November.

In February 2016, the organizations International Alert and UNICEF published a study revealing that girls and women released from Boko Haram captivity often face rejection upon returning to their communities and families, in part due to a culture of stigma around sexual violence.

Northern Cameroon

In 2014, Boko Haram continued to increase its presence in northern Cameroon. On 16 May, ten Chinese workers were abducted in a raid on a construction company camp in Waza, near the Nigerian border. Vehicles and explosives were also taken in the raid, and one Cameroonian soldier was killed. Cameroon's anti-terrorist Rapid Intervention Battalion attempted to intervene but was vastly outnumbered. In July, the deputy prime minister's home village was attacked by around 200 militants; his wife was kidnapped, along with the Sultan of Kolofata and his family. At least 15 people, including soldiers and police, were killed in the raid. The deputy prime minister's wife was subsequently released in October, along with 26 others including the ten Chinese construction workers who had been captured in May; authorities made no comment about any ransom, which the Cameroon government had previously claimed it never pays. In a separate attack, nine bus passengers and a soldier were shot dead and the son of a local chief was kidnapped. Hundreds of local youths are suspected to have been recruited. In August, the remote Nigerian border town of Gwoza was overrun and held by the group. In response to the increased militant activity, the Cameroonian president sacked two senior military officers and sent his army chief with 1000 reinforcements to the northern border region (Peter, 2015).

Between May and July 2014, 8,000 Nigerian refugees arrived in the country, up to 25 percent suffering from acute malnutrition. Cameroon, which ranked 150 out of 186 on the 2012 UNDP HDI, hosted as of August 2014 107,000 refugees fleeing unrest in the CAR, a number that was expected to increase

to 180,000 by the end of the year. A further 11,000 Nigerian refugees crossed the border into Cameroon and Chad during August.

Expansion of Occupied Territory

The attack on Gwoza signaled a change in strategy for Boko Haram, as the group continued to capture territory in north-eastern and eastern areas of Borno, as well as in Adamawa and Yobe. Attacks across the border were repelled by the Cameroon military. The territorial gains were officially denied by the Nigerian military. In a video obtained by the news agency AFP on 24 August 2014, Shekau announced that Gwoza was now part of an Islamic caliphate. The town of Bama, 70 kilometres (45 mi) from the state capital Maiduguri, was reported to have been captured at the beginning of September, resulting in thousands of residents fleeing to Maiduguri, even as residents there were themselves attempting to flee. The military continued to deny Boko Haram's territorial gains, which were, however, confirmed by local vigilantes who had managed to escape. The militants were reportedly killing men and teenage boys in the town of over 250,000 inhabitants. Soldiers refused orders to advance on the occupied town; hundreds fled across the border into Cameroon, but were promptly repatriated. Fifty-four deserters were later sentenced to death by firing squad (BBC, News 2014).

On 17 October, the Chief of the Defence Staff announced that a ceasefire had been brokered, stating: "I have accordingly directed the service chiefs to ensure immediate compliance with this development in the field". Despite a lack of confirmation from the militants, the announcement was publicised in newspaper headlines worldwide. However, within 48 hours the same publications were reporting that Boko Haram attacks had continued unabated. It was reported that factionalisation would make such a deal particularly difficult to achieve.

On 29 October, Mubi, a town of 200,000 in Adamawa, fell to the militants, further undermining confidence in the peace talks. Thousands fled south to Adamawa's capital city, Yola. Amid media speculation that the ceasefire announcement had been part of President Jonathan's re-election campaign, a video statement released by Boko Haram through the normal communication channels via AFP on 31 October stated that no negotiations had in fact taken place. Mubi was said to have been recaptured by the army on 13 November. On the same day, Boko Haram seized Chibok, but two days later the army



recaptured the largely deserted town. As of 16 November it was estimated that more than twenty towns and villages had been taken control of by the militants. On 28 November, 120 died in an attack at the central mosque in Kano during Friday prayers. There were 27 Boko Haram attacks during the month of November, killing at least 786 peoples (Philip, 2015).

However, on 3 December, it was reported that several towns in North Adamawa had been recovered by the Nigerian military with the help of local vigilantes and Bala Nggilari, the governor of Adamawa state, said that the military were aiming to recruit 4,000 vigilantes. On 13 December, Boko Haram attacked the village of Gumsuri in Borno, killing over 30 and kidnapping over 100 women and children.

Attacks in Cameroon

In the second half of December, the focus of activity switched to the Far North Region of Cameroon, beginning on the morning of 17 December when an army convoy was attacked with an IED and ambushed by hundreds of militants near the border town of Amchide, 60 kilometres (40 mi) north of the state capital Maroua. One soldier was confirmed dead, and an estimated 116 militants were killed in the attack, which was followed by another attack overnight with unknown casualties. On 22 December, the Rapid Intervention Battalion followed up with an attack on a Boko Haram training camp near Guirdivig, arresting 45 militants and seizing 84 children aged 7–15 who were undergoing training, according to a statement from Cameroon's Ministry of Defense. The militants fled in pick-up trucks carrying an unknown number of their dead; no information on army casualties was released. On 27–28 December, five villages were simultaneously attacked, and for the first time the Cameroon military launched air attacks when Boko Haram briefly occupied an army camp. Casualty figures were not released. According to Information Minister Issa Tchiroma:

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

2015
Baga Massacre

David, C (2019) has cited that on 3 January 2015, Boko Haram attacked Baga, seizing it and the multinational joint task force military base. As the militants advanced the army fled. Some residents managed to escape to Chad. Although the death toll of the massacre was earlier estimated by western media to be upwards of 2000, the Defence Ministry dismissed these claims as "speculation and conjecture", estimating the figure to be closer to 150. On 25 January, the militants advanced to Monguno, capturing the town and a nearby military base. Their advance on Maiduguri and Konduga, 40 km to the southeast, was repelled. After retaking Monguno, the army expelled the militants from Baga on 21 February, 2015. The Baga massacre was one of the Nigerian army's biggest defeats in terms of loss of equipment and civilian casualties. Several officers were court-martialed. In October 2015, General Enitan Ransome-Kuti was dismissed from the army and sentenced to six months imprisonment. It was determined that he had failed in his duty to launch a counter-attack after retreating from the town.

West African Offensive

Map of Boko Haram's territorial control on 10 April 2015, over 2 months after the start of the 2015 West African offensive. Starting in late January 2015, a coalition of military forces from Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, and Niger began a campaign against Boko Haram. On 4 February, the Chad Army killed over 200 Boko Haram militants. Soon afterwards, Boko Haram launched an attack on the Cameroonian town of Fotokol, killing 81 civilians, 13 Chadian soldiers and 6 Cameroonian soldiers.

On 7 March 2015, Boko Haram's leader Abubakar Shekau pledged allegiance to ISIL via an audio message posted on the organisation's Twitter account. Nigerian army spokesperson Sami Usman Kukasheka said the pledge was a sign of weakness and that Shekau was like a "drowning man". On 12 March 2015, ISIL's spokesman Abu Mohammad al-Adnani released an audiotape in which he welcomed the pledge of allegiance, and described it as an expansion of the group's caliphate to West Africa (Jack, 2015).

However, on 24 March 2015, residents of Damasak, Nigeria said that Boko Haram had taken more than 400 women and children from the town as they fled from coalition forces. On 27 March, the Nigerian army captured Gwoza, which was believed to be the location of Boko Haram headquarters. On



Election Day 28 March 2015, Boko Haram extremists killed 41 people, including a legislator, to discourage hundreds from voting.

In March 2015, Boko Haram lost control of the Northern Nigerian towns of Bama and Gwoza to the Nigerian army. The Nigerian authorities said that they had taken back 11 of the 14 districts previously controlled by Boko Haram. In April, 2015, four Boko Haram camps in the Sambisa Forest were overrun by the Nigerian military who freed nearly 300 females. Boko Haram forces were believed to have retreated to the Mandara Mountains, along the Nigeria-Cameroon border.

Attrition of Catholic Diocese of Maiduguri

A report by the Catholic diocese of Maiduguri estimated that as of May 2015 over 5,000 Nigerian Catholics had been killed by Boko Haram. The diocese also reported 7,000 widows and 10,000 orphans among its laity. Furthermore, Boko Haram militants had taken over several parish centers within the diocese.

July 2015, Mosques Massacres

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 (Rose, 2015)

Suicide Bombings in Chad

On 15 June 2015, two suicide bombings of police sites in N'Djamena, the capital and largest city of Chad, killed 38 people. Boko Haram later claimed responsibility for these attacks. 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. Several days after the bombing, Boko Haram claimed responsibility via Twitter, signing as "Islamic State, West Africa province". (Jack, 2015)

Claims of Defeat

The March 2015 general election was won by Buhari, who had vowed to remove inefficiency and corruption in the military. On 9 September 2015, the 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:

These terrorists have been subdued, even if they are adopting other means and as they are re-strategizing, we are also doing the same and pre-empting them. We have coordinated the air and ground assaults to make sure that these terrorists' hideouts are completely decimated. As I am speaking to you, all the terrorists' camps have completely been wiped out. So right now they are completely in disarray, have no command and control of where to plan. We have even taken over their camps that most of them abandoned and are attempting to blend into towns and communities. We have also apprehended some of them and very soon innocent Nigerians can move back to their communities. We are making a lot of headway, so people should know that Boko Haram is no longer strong enough to hold grounds. Very soon this issue of whether they are in control of any territory in Nigeria or not will come to the open. I am assuring you that they will never again recapture the territory taken from them because what is happening right now with the deployment of troops, equipment and morale will ensure that. (Adam, 2015).

Despite the above military chief claims the President Buhari has later reiterated in December 2015 that Boko Haram was "technically defeated" and declared in December 2016 that the group had been entirely ousted from its last stronghold of Sambisa Forest.

Borno

On 20 September, 2015 a series of bombings occurred in Maiduguri and Monguno and the attacks followed an announcement by Shekau refuting the army's claims of defeat. A military spokesman stated that the event showed the "high level of desperation" of Boko Haram. The Arewa Consultative Forum released a statement condemning the bombings and commending the military offensive:

The ACF condemns in strong terms the continued use of suicide bombers by Boko Haram terrorists to kill innocent people in the name of a religious war, as no religion condones such cruel and barbaric act. The ACF



wishes to commend the military and other security agencies for the continued onslaught on the terrorists' enclaves and hideouts, thereby dislodging them from their strong holds. The ACF urges the military not to be deterred by the cowardly act of the Boko Haram terrorists, as their renewed effort and determination will soon end the insurgency. The ACF also appeals to the military to intensify its synergy of sharing intelligence with the community. (Nnenna, 2015/

On 21 October, 2015 in Nganzai, Borno, according to a civilian vigilante, fleeing militants shot at four cars, killing the passengers, and burnt and looted the nearby village. 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. 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.

However, on 27 October, 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. None of the captives were those taken in Chibok in April 2014. More so, on 25 December, gunmen set fire to the village of Kimba, killing at least 14, according to vigilantes. 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.

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.

Adamawa

On 1 October, 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. On 18 October the village of Dar, Adamawe was attacked. Maina Ularamu, a former Chairman of Madagali Local Government Area, stated: "A large number of gunmen invaded the village, forcing residents to flee to a nearby bush. Two female suicide bombers disguised as fleeing villagers detonated explosives in the bush where many people were hiding, killing 12 persons". On 20 October, there were reports of a military ambush in Madagali, assisted by vigilantes, in which over 30 militants were killed. On 21 October, according to vigilante reports a joint operation in Madagali and Gwoza killed 150 militants and rescued 36 captives. On 23 October, a suicide bomb at a crowded mosque killed 27 in Yola, Adamawa's capital. On 17 November, an explosion at a food market in Yola killed 32, in the first Nigerian bombing since 23 October attacks in Maiduguri and Yola. 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. (*Martin, 2015*)

Yobe

On 7 October in Damaturu, Yobe at least 15 people were killed by 3 suicide bombers. In Goniri, Yobe 7 soldiers and over 100 militants were killed, and a large arms cache was found, according to an army spokesman, who said that the recent apparent rise in suicide bombings was an indication of the success of military operations.

Kano

Boko Haram claimed responsibility for a suicide attack on a procession of Shi'ite Muslims killing at least 21, on 30 November 2015 near the village of Dakozoye. A week earlier two bombers had killed at least 14 in Kano city.

Cameroon

On 12 January 2015, Boko Haram attacked a Cameroon military base in Kolofata. Government forces report killing 143 militants, while one Cameroon soldier was killed. On 18 January, 2015 Boko Haram raided two Tourou Cameroon area villages, torching houses, killing some residents and kidnapping between 60 and 80 people including an estimated 50 young children between the ages of 10 and 15.

On 11 October, 2015 in the far north region of Cameroon two female suicide bombers killed nine people in the town of Mora. On 18 October, 2015 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. 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. 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. (Robyn, 2018)

More so, on 23 October, 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.

On 9 November, 2015 two female suicide bombers killed three Nigerians during a security check in a truck full of Nigerian refugees. 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". On 28 November, 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. On 1 December, 2015 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. 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" (Robyn, 2018)

Chad

Adam, C (2015) has cited that on 6 October 2015, the Chadian army reported an attack in the border region of Lake Chad. 11 soldiers were killed and 14 wounded in the pre-dawn cross-border infiltration, and 17 militants were also killed, according to an army spokesman. On 10 October, 2015, 5 suicide bombers killed 33 in the market in Baga Sola, a camp for Nigerian refugees. 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 neutralized and a third blew himself up, wounding 11 civilians", according to a government statement. A state of emergency was imposed in the western Lake Chad region on 9 November, initially for 12 days, but extended by Chad's national assembly on 18 November to four months. However, again on 5 December 2015, three female suicide bombers killed about 30 at a crowded market on the island of Koulfoua in Lake Chad.

Niger Republic

On 25 September 2015, at least 15 civilians were massacred and stores were looted in a cross-border raid on a Niger village, according to anonymous military sources. While on 2 October, 2015 two soldiers died and four were wounded in a Boko Haram attack on a village near the Nigerian border in Niger's Differs province. The militants also looted stores, according to Niger army officers. On 4 October, according to an aid worker, a policeman and five civilians were killed by 4 suicide bombers near the Nigerian border. On 6 October, three suspected Boko Haram militants accidentally blew themselves up while transporting explosives to Bosso town in Diffa. On 21 October 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. At least 57 attacks occurred there from February to October 2015. More than 1,100 Boko Haram suspects were arrested in Niger during 2015.

David, C (2019) has cited that on 11 November 2015, 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. 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". On 13 March 2018 the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons (IDP), Cecilia Jimenez-Damary said "Since the first attacks in Niger by Boko Haram in 2015, the Diffa region, in the south-eastern part of the country, has been confronted with a continuing security crisis which has uprooted more than 129,000 internally from their homes, in addition to the arrival of 108,000 refugees from Nigeria, and has triggered a humanitarian crisis.^[247] He said that IDPs in Niger are posing huge challenges to the country and "require a strong and comprehensive response". He also said situation in the regions bordering Mali has led to the displacement of some 1,540 persons.

2016

Dalori Attack

On 30 January 2016, at least 86 people were killed and at least 62 more injured in an attack by Boko Haram militants on Dalori Village which is located 4 kilometers from Maiduguri, Nigeria. The Nigerian Army was unable to fight the militants until reinforcements arrived, causing Boko Haram to retreat.

Weakening and Split

Johns Hopkins University figures indicated that Boko Haram killed 244 people in the second quarter of 2016 – the lowest quarterly figure for five years. In early August 2016, ISIL announced that it had appointed Abu-Musab al-Barnawi as the new leader of the group. In a video released a few days later, Shekau refused to accept al-Barnawi's appointment as leader and vowed to fight him while stating that he was still loyal to ISIL's leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.

The group has since split into pro-Barnawi and pro-Shekau factions, with reports of armed clashes breaking out between them. Shekau has released videos since the split in which he refers to his group by its previous name of *Jamatu Ahlis Sunna Lidawatti wal Jihad*. On 23 August 2016, the Nigerian Army announced it conducted an overnight air-operation that was 'very successful' in killing the leadership of Boko Haram. Among those presumed killed was Abubakar Shekau, he died in an aerial bombardment in Taye village. The Nigerian Army claims that the disputed Boko Haram leader died from injuries to his shoulders while he was performing prayer. However, it was on

28 August, the Nigerian president Muhammadu Buhari, retracted the military's statement and claimed that the Boko Haram leader was 'wounded' but not killed in the air-strike. On 31 August 2016, Major General Lucky Irabor stated that the militants now only controlled a few villages and towns near Lake Chad and in Sambisa Forest. He further stated that the military expected recapturing the final strongholds of the group within weeks.

2017

Rise in Child Suicide Bombing

UNICEF reported an increase in child suicide bombers with 27 incidents occurring in the first three months of 2017 in Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon and Chad, compared to 30 in the entire previous year, 56 in 2015 and 4 in 2014. Kidnapped children who escape from Boko Haram are often held in custody or ostracized by their community or family. Patrick Rose, a UNICEF regional coordinator, stated: "They are held in military barracks, separated from their parents, without medical follow-up, without psychological support, without education, under conditions and for durations that are unknown". According to the NGO: "Society's rejection of these children, and their sense of isolation and desperation, could be making them more vulnerable to promises of martyrdom through acceptance of dangerous and deadly missions". In addition to child suicide bombers and despite having been routed from key areas and significantly downgraded in their capacities, throughout 2016 and into 2017, Boko Haram in Nigeria continued to wage attacks against Nigerian security forces, the community-based Civilian Joint Task Forces (CJTF), and regular citizens, using improvised explosives devices (IEDs) and other crude weaponry. These were often deployed with suicide bombers; an increasing number of whom were women and girls recruited to attack markets, transportation depots, mosques, and IDP camps (Aliyu, 2014)

2018

Dapchi Kidnapping

Boko Haram kidnapped 110 schoolgirls from the Government Technical Girls College in Dapchi, Yobe, on 19 February 2018. Boko Haram reportedly released all but one of the girls by 21 March.

Maiduguri City Attack



On 2 April, a Boko Haram attack on the outskirts of Maiduguri resulted in the death of 18 people and another 84 wounded. This attack came just days after the government of Nigeria claimed there was a ceasefire with Boko Haram. The attack happened in the villages of Bale Shuwa and Bale Kura, close to both Maiduguri and the city's military camp.

Operation Lafiya Dole

On 18 May, 2018 the Nigerian Army killed 15 Boko Haram insurgents and rescued 49 persons in separate encounters between Boko Haram and Nigerian troops throughout the Southern Lake Chad Basin. The Nigerian troops killed 11 of the insurgents during a battle in Gamoran Village, while the remaining insurgents were killed trying to escape from the Army's efforts in Northern Borno. The Nigerian troops rescued 4 men, 33 women, and 16 children from the insurgent's hideouts in the area.

Attacks in north-east Nigeria

In December, Boko Haram launched a series of attacks in north-east Nigeria. Militants from Islamic State West Africa Province took over the town of Baga and seized the Multinational Joint Task Force base. The attacks took place two months prior to the presidential elections in Nigeria.

2019

Attack near Nigerian army chief of staff's family Home

In January, 6 Nigerian soldiers were killed and 14 injured by the Boko Haram jihadists during a raid at a village near the army chief's family home. Four military vehicles were also seized by the jihadists and two were completely destroyed.

Attack on Chadian security forces

On 22 March, Boko Haram militants killed at least 23 Chadian soldiers overnight, two Chadian security sources said on that day, in what appeared to be the deadliest ever such attack inside Chad by the Islamist militants. The raid occurred in the town of Dangdala, near the banks of Lake Chad. One of security sources added that the assailants were believed to have crossed the border from neighboring Niger.

Konduga Bombings

On 16 June, a triple suicide bombing occurred outside a television-viewing hall in Konduga, Borno State.

Nganzai Funeral Attack

On 27 July, civilians were massacred as they returned from a funeral in Nganzai, Borno State.

Attack on Nigerian Military Base

On August 15, 3 Nigerian soldiers were killed during a gun battle with Islamist militants in a village on the outskirts of Borno State capital Maiduguri.

Attack on Burkina Faso Military Base

On 20 September, ISISWAP/Boko Haram claimed that its fighters carried out an August attack in Koutougou in northern Burkina Faso that killed 24 soldiers, the country's worst-ever terrorist attack.

2020

Gamboru Bombing

On 6 January, 2020 a bombing occurred at a market on a bridge in Gamboru, Borno State.

CONCLUSION

Abubakar Shekau, Khalid Al-Barnawi and Mamman Nur are the three most influential leaders in Boko Haram's network. Nur is connected to al-Qa`ida affiliates in Africa and is an operational and ideological leader. He likely cooperates with al-Barnawi and Ansaru militants now in Boko Haram, but opposes Shekau's style of leadership in Borno. Nur, therefore, was likely based in Kano with former followers of Muhammad Yusuf, who were dissatisfied with Shekau and have an internationalist outlook. Nur could, however, become less relevant because some of his key contacts to AQIM, al-Shabab and al-Qa`ida core are dead or in prison, and al-Barnawi's suspected reintegration with Shekau may isolate Nur in Kano.

Khalid Al-Barnawi is regionally connected, but unless he cooperates with Boko Haram he will lack grassroots support in Nigeria because he operated for years in the Sahel and has few religious credentials. Al-Barnawi is likely willing to carry out kidnappings with Ansaru, Boko Haram, MUJAO,



AQIM or any other militant group regardless of ideology. He may have drifted from Ansaru toward Boko Haram or formed new cells under Shekau, similar to how Belmokhtar unilaterally “drifted” from AQIM’s central leadership in favor of “for-profit” kidnappings and smuggling.

Shekau is a divisive leader, but has legitimacy because he was Yusuf’s deputy and remained close to grassroots followers in Borno. He likely retains a core group of loyalists because many militants who opposed him, such as the YIM and Ansaru, already defected or were killed by Boko Haram, leaving only the more ruthless and indoctrinated militants with Shekau. If Shekau is killed, a scenario could emerge where al-Barnawi takes over Boko Haram operationally and Nur takes over ideologically, but this is unlikely because both Al-Barnawi and Nur lack sufficient grassroots networks in Borno, where Boko Haram carries out more than 80% of its attacks. Although Nur was close to Muhammad Yusuf and Al-Barnawi is a skilled kidnapper with Sahelian connections, Shekau’s current sub-commanders, whose aliases are not revealed publicly but are shared with Boko Haram internally, would likely compete to succeed Shekau.

At the same time, Shekau’s death has create opportunities for the Nigerian government to negotiate with former YIM, Ansaru or Kano-based militants, whose has an efforts to maintain dialogue are irrelevant as long as Shekau is opposed to reconciliation. Boko Haram’s informing on rival factions to security forces and negotiations with the Nigerian and Cameroonian governments over hostages suggest, however, that Boko Haram is not as “faceless” as the Nigerian government portrays, and that it is possible to communicate with Boko Haram’s leaders.

This leadership analysis also leads to the conclusion that Ansaru, with its most recent operations in Niger Republic, Cameroon and possibly Central African Republic, now functions like an “external operations unit” in its self-declared area of operations in “Black Africa” in a way that separates Ansaru from Boko Haram in Borno and avoids conflict with the group. The organizational structures of Boko Haram and Ansaru are permeable, which will allow mid-level militants to operate with Boko Haram, Ansaru and MUJAO as long as they do not run afoul of Shekau. The regionalization of Boko Haram and Ansaru, with hostage-takings of wealthy individuals and weapons smuggling in Nigeria and Cameroon, also risks creating a multi-

million dollar “terrorism economy” in the southern Sahel that fuels corruption and raises tensions between neighboring countries and the region’s Muslims and Christians.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The paper has the following recommendation for peace to maintain in West African countries:

- i. The West African countries need to investigate the source of funding and training of Boko Haram and alliances to curtail the escalation of the movement in Africa.
- ii. African leaders should stop playing politics with the issues of insecurity they need to take action of insecurity at infancy level before it could be mature and runs out of hand.
- iii. African countries need to have collaborative effort in working together to fight the menace of Boko Haram Insurgency in West Africa.
- iv. There is need for government to demonstrate a strong political will and commitment in the crisis states in Africa to look for avenue of negotiation and reconciliation with arms groups through using all the diplomatic means can only resume to fighting when the groups denial the peaceful resolution of the crisis.
- v. African countries need to provide highly equipped weapons and training to security personnel’s.
- vi. African countries need to provide policies that can help in addressing the level of poverty, unemployment, corruption and inequality in the region so that can compete with other region of the world.

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