Terrorism in Nigeria: The Case of Boko Haram

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• Research trip to Nigeria, sponsored by Joint Special Operations University
• Interviews with government, academics, non-government orgs
• Focus: Identify ways in which local community leaders were responding to threat of terrorism
ATTACKS

Proportion of Terrorist Attacks in Nigeria Attributed to Boko Haram

Source: Institute for the Study of Violent Groups, 2011

ATTACKS

Terrorist Incidents Attributed to Boko Haram, 2009-2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>All incidents (incl. robberies)</th>
<th>Bombings</th>
<th>Bombing Casualties</th>
<th>Armed Assaults</th>
<th>Armed Assault Casualties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>587</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Institute for the Study of Violent Groups, 2011
HISTORY OF BOKO HARAM

• Sokoto Caliphate, Usman dan Fodio
• Hausa-Fulani, Kanuri
• Maitisine riots
• “Nigerian Taliban”
• Mohammed Yusuf
  – Salafist prayer and self-isolation
  – Promote Islam and Sharia law, Ibn Taymiyya
  – Refusal to obey traffic laws seen as refusal of authority
    provokes heavy handed response . . .
  – Yusuf publicly executed in the street
  – Campaign of BH attacks (bombings, motorbike
    assassinations, etc.) against Christians and Muslims
MAJOR GRIEVANCES

• Religious insecurities
  – Being a Muslim in Nigeria used to bring power and prestige

• Political insecurities
  – Politicized religious and ethnic identity
  – Conspiracy theories driven by fear and reinforced by a heavy-handed security response to protests

• Economic insecurities
  – Socio-economic isolation

CURRENT BOKO HARAM STRATEGY

• Provoke sectarian violence
• Provoke heavy-handed government response
• Ultimate goal: Mobilize Nigerian Muslims to revolt against status quo
• Media strategy
• Suicide bombings
• Links with al Qaida?
• Conflicting Factions
COMMUNITY RESPONSES - RELIGIOUS

Interfaith Mediation Council. Started by James Wuye, a Christian pastor, and Mohammed Ashafa, an Imam

Sultan Abubakar Saad, has denounced Boko Haram's actions as un-Islamic

COMMUNITY RESPONSES - TRADITIONAL

- Over 350 ethnic groups in Nigeria
  - Each has its own system of authority structures, culture and ancestry

- Traditional authorities like the Ooni of Ife, Aareonokankafo of Yorubaland, Deji of Akure, Bobagunwa ilu Egba, and Alaafin of Oyo have a great deal of respect, influence and power among particular communities of Nigerians

- Some have condemned Boko Haram; others are afraid
COMMUNITY RESPONSES – LOCAL NGO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>City/Region</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>City/Region</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African Foundation for Prevention and Protection Against Child Abuse &amp; Neglect</td>
<td>Rivers</td>
<td>Greenwatch Initiative</td>
<td>Benue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baobab for Women’s Rights Borno</td>
<td>Maiduguri</td>
<td>Human Rights &amp; Community Development Initiative</td>
<td>Kano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borno Coalition for Democracy and Progress</td>
<td>Maiduguri</td>
<td>Justice, Development &amp; Peace Commission</td>
<td>Abuja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Action for Popular Participation</td>
<td>Abuja</td>
<td>Living in the Environment</td>
<td>Benue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre for Campaign Against Drug Abuse &amp; Trafficking</td>
<td>Sokoto</td>
<td>Mobgal Hore Women Development Association</td>
<td>Adamawa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre for Peace Projects &amp; Development</td>
<td>Kaduna</td>
<td>National Youth Council of Nigeria Ogun State</td>
<td>Ogun</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SUMMARY

- Whole of government approach to CT necessary but insufficient

- Need to have “whole of country” approach, involving local non-governmental entities seen as legitimate, influential

- Limitations to what outsiders (like U.S.) can do to assist in the effort to combat Boko Haram, but we should not focus our assistance exclusively at the government level
Confronting the Terrorism of Boko Haram in Nigeria

Notes
- Complete (178-page) monograph was released by JSOU Press in May 2012
  • http://jsou.socom.mil/Pages/Publications.aspx
- Contact: james_forest@uml.edu