

WORKING DRAFT RESEARCH AND POLICY BRIEF:

Countering Boko Haram? Incorporate the Women, Peace and Security Agenda

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Introduction

This paper provides an analysis on how to deal with Boko Haram by utilizing the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda. It particularly serves to remind policy makers, both national and international, of the commitments Nigeria has made to the provisions of the United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolutions that comprise the WPS agenda. It also serves to remind the international community to incorporate this comprehensive political framework within which women's protection and their role in peace processes can be addressed, while countering the immediate and long-term threat of Boko Haram in Nigeria and the neighbouring states. This paper comes at a time when policymakers from Benin, Canada, Cameroon, Chad, France, Niger and Nigeria, as well as representatives of the European Union, the United Kingdom and the United States are set to meet again in London on 12 June 2014² to further discuss the security threats in Nigeria and to review their action plan, as a follow-up to their meeting in Paris in May 2014.

Background Information on Boko Haram

Jama'atu Ahlus- Sunna Lidda'Awati Wal Jihad, or better known as Boko Haram, was founded in 2002 in Maiduguri, Nigeria by the now deceased Mohammed Yusuf. Translated

¹ With edits and contributions made by Dr. Abigail Ruane, PeaceWomen Programme Manager. For more information on the PeaceWomen Programme, visit: www.peacewomen.org.

² Reuters. Britain to Host London Summit on Tackling Nigeria's Boko Haram. 5 June 2014. Retrieved from: http://uk.reuters.com/article/2014/06/05/uk-britain-nigeria-security-idUKKBN0EG2A920140605

into English, the name of the group means "People Committed to the Prophet's Teachings for Propagation and Jihad". Boko Haram is seeking to establish an Islamic state in the north of Nigeria and supports Islamic education. 4

In 2009, the Nigerian Government raided Boko Haram's headquarters, following Boko Haram's attacks on police stations and other government buildings in Maiduguri.⁵ After Mohammed Yusuf was killed at this raid, Abubakar Shekau began leading Boko Haram.⁶ Under his lead, Boko Haram has carried out violent attacks, using terrorist tactics.⁷ While Boko Haram is based in northeastern Nigeria, it has also operated in Cameroon and has been active in Chad and Niger.⁸ At the Paris Summit on the Security in Nigeria in May 2014, Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan noted that Boko Haram is not just an organization concerned about the influx of Western education, but that it is most definitely now the Al-Qaeda of West Africa.⁹

Attacks by Boko Haram

Some of the major attacks for which Boko Haram is responsible include, among others, the following:

- 9 June 2014: The kidnapping of approximately 20 girls in the village of Garkin Fulani 10
- 5 May 2014: The attack on a staging base for the rescuers of the more than 300 schoolgirls, which killed 310 people in Gamboru Ngala, Nigeria.¹¹
- 14 April 2014: The abduction of approximately 300 schoolgirls from Chibok, Nigeria.¹²

⁹ Présidence de la République française. *Conférence de presse du sommet de Paris pour la sécurité au Nigéria.* 17 May 2014. Retrieved from: http://www.elysee.fr/conferences-de-presse/article/conference-de-presse-du-sommet-de-paris-pour-la-securite-au-nigeria/

³ United Nations News. Security Council Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee Adds Boko Haram To Its Sanctions List. 22 May 2014. Retrieved from: http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs//2014/sc11410.doc.htm

⁴ Al Jazeera America. Nigeria Army Says It Knows Location of Kidnapped Girls, Rules Out Force. 26 May 2014. Retrieved from: http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/5/26/nigeria-girls-found.html

⁵ United Nations News. Security Council Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee Adds Boko Haram To Its Sanctions List. 22 May 2014. Retrieved from: http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs//2014/sc11410.doc.htm

⁶ United Nations News. Security Council Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee Adds Boko Haram To Its Sanctions List. 22 May 2014. Retrieved from: http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs//2014/sc11410.doc.htm ⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰ The Wall Street Journal. *Boko Haram Kidnaps More Girls in Nigeria*. 9 June 2014. Retrieved from: http://online.wsj.com/articles/boko-haram-kidnaps-more-girls-in-nigeria-1402336940

¹¹ United Nations News. Security Council Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee Adds Boko Haram To Its Sanctions List. 22 May 2014. Retrieved from: http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs//2014/sc11410.doc.htm ¹² Ibid.

- 29 September 2013: The attack on an agricultural school in Yobe, Nigeria, which killed 50 students.¹³
- July 2013: The attack on a school in Mamudo, Nigeria, which killed at least 42 people, of which the majority were students.¹⁴
- June 2013: Attacks on schools in Maiduguri and Damaturu, Nigeri, which killed at least 22 children. 15
- January 2012: A series of bombing in Kano, Nigeria, which killed more than 180 people.16
- 26 August 2011: The attack on the UN Headquarters in Abuja, Nigeria, which killed 21 people and wounded many others. 17
- 25 December 2011: The attack on Saint Theresa Catholic Church in Madalla, Nigeria, which killed approximately 37 people and injured 50 others. 18

As a result of the escalating violence, the Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan had declared Nigeria a state of emergency in May 2013 in the three northern states of Nigeria where Boko Haram is the most active, namely Borno, Yobe and Adamawa. 19 Since early 2013, more than 300 000 people in these states have fled their homes, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance. 20 Since the abduction of the schoolgirls in April 2014, over 470 civilians have been killed by Boko Haram.²¹

Evidence has also shown that Boko Haram's tactics increasingly include targeting women, through gender-based violence²², kidnapping²³, sexual slavery²⁴ and forced marriage.²⁵ It is

¹⁹ BBC Africa. Who Are Nigeria's Boko Haram Islamists? 20 May 2014. Retrieved from:

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¹³ Ibid. 14 Ibid. 15 Ibid. 16 Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13809501 ²⁰ Human Rights Watch. Nigeria: Boko Haram Attacks Cause Humanitarian Crisis. 14 March 2014. Retrieved from: http://www.hrw.org/news/2014/03/14/nigeria-boko-haram-attacks-cause-humanitarian-crisis

²¹ Al Jazeera America. Nigeria Army Says It Knows Location of Kidnapped Girls, Rules Out Force. 26 May 2014. Retrieved from: http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/5/26/nigeria-girls-found.html

²² Elizabeth Pearson and Jacob Zenn. Women, Gender and the Evolving Tactics of Boko Haram. *Journal of* Terrorism Research, 5(1), 5 February 2014. Retrieved from: http://ojs.standrews.ac.uk/index.php/jtr/article/view/828/707

²³ Boko Haram has reportedly started to use kidnapping as a tactic since April 2013. See: The Guardian, French family seized in Cameroon by suspected Boko Haram Islamists freed. 19 April 2013. Retrieved from: http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/apr/19/french-family-kidnapped-cameroon-freed

²⁴ Elizabeth Pearson and Jacob Zenn. Women, Gender and the Evolving Tactics of Boko Haram. Journal of Terrorism Research, 5(1), 5 February 2014. Retrieved from: http://ojs.standrews.ac.uk/index.php/jtr/article/view/828/707

²⁵ Ibid.

argued by some scholars that this change in tactic is a result of corresponding tactics by the Nigerian security forces²⁶ – an alarming violation against women's rights in Nigeria.

Response from the Nigeria's Government

The Nigerian Government has employed military-style, reactionary approaches to counter Boko Haram. ²⁷ At the Paris Summit on the Security of Nigeria, President Goodluck Jonathan affirmed his commitment to locate the girls and to ensure their safe return to their families. ²⁸ He also noted that Nigeria has deployed 20 000 troops to the north of Nigeria as of May 2014 in order to combat Boko Haram. ²⁹ Reports have also emerged indicating that the Nigerian Government is seeking to negotiate with leaders of Boko Haram in order to secure the safe surrender of the abducted schoolgirls. ³⁰

Nigerian civil society has been extremely active and has spoken up against the attacks of Boko Haram. On 30 April 2014, hundreds of people, including the mothers of the abducted girls, marched to the National Assembly in Abuja, handing over a letter requesting the Nigerian authorities to take more action to ensure that the abducted Nigerian schoolgirls be released.³¹

Yet, reports now demonstrate that Nigeria's own military officers are sabotaging the mission to counter Boko Haram.³² According to Nigerian news reports, ten generals and five other seniors have been found guilty of providing Boko Haram with ammunition and confidential information about the strategies of the Nigerian military.³³ Moreover, the Nigerian security forces allegedly failed to act on warnings that Boko Haram would carry out the abduction of

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Comfort Ero, Program Director for Africa at the International Crisis Group in an interview with the Global Observatory on 22 May 2014. See: http://theglobalobservatory.org/interviews/745-international-sanctions-needed-for-boko-haram-but-weakest-link-is-at-regional-level.html

²⁸ Présidence de la République française. *Conférence de presse du sommet de Paris pour la sécurité au Nigéria.* 17 May 2014. Retrieved from: http://www.elysee.fr/conferences-de-presse/article/conference-de-presse-du-sommet-de-paris-pour-la-securite-au-nigeria/
²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Mail and Guardian. *Boko Haram Holds World to Ransom*. 6 June 2014. Retrieved from: http://mg.co.za/article/2014-06-05-boko-haram-holds-world-to-ransom

³¹ Amnesty International. *Nigeria: Campaign of Violence and Abductions Agaisnt Civilians Must End.* 2 May 2014. Retrieved from: http://www.amnesty.org/en/news/nigeria-campaign-violence-and-abductions-against-civilians-must-end-2014-05-02

³² The Globe and Mail. Nigeria Says Military Infiltrated by Boko Haram Sympathizers. 3 June 2014. Retrieved from: http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/nigerian-generals-officers-found-guilty-of-aiding-boko-haram-report/article18959056/

³³ Ibid.

the more than 200 schoolgirls in Chibok.³⁴ Amnesty International claims that a list of Nigerian officials was alerted about the attack taking place at the Government Girls Secondary School.³⁵ The Nigeria's military strategies have proven to be ill-equipped and simply put, the Nigerian military has not been able to effectively halt further attacks by Boko Haram on innocent civilians.

Response from the International Community

With the rise in global awareness of Boko Haram and its perpetrations against civilians, and most notably, with the movement on social media with the hashtag #BringBackOurGirls to safely return the abducted schoolgirls, the international community has responded widespread to Boko Haram's actions with condemnation.³⁶ Following the abduction of the schoolgirls, the UN Security Council released a press statement strongly condemning the abduction by Boko Haram and underlining the need to bring perpetrators to justice.³⁷

The UN, however, has been condemning Boko Haram long before the April 2014 abductions – to no avail unfortunately. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay had suggested in January and June 2013 that attacks carried out by Boko Haram may constitute as crimes against humanity. Moreover, a report released in August 2013 by the International Criminal Court (ICC) Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda suggests that there is reason to believe that Boko Haram has carried out crimes against humanity, namely murder and persecution. Referring to the abduction of the schoolgirls, the Office for the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights suggested that acts conducted by Boko Haram involving sexual slavery might also be considered to be crimes against humanity. Programment of the schoolgirls against humanity.

Although the UN's tactic of naming and shaming Boko Haram's perpetrations has not slowed the group down, the UN has nonetheless provided support to Nigeria and the families of the abducted schoolgirls. After the visit by high-level representative of the Secretary-General, Said Djinnit, to Nigeria in mid-May 2014, the UN confirmed it would be

³⁶ UN News Centre. Nigeria: UN Envoy Urges National Actors to 'Close Ranks' to Ensure Release of Schoolgirls. 9 June 2014. Retrieved from:

³⁴ Amnesty International. *Nigerian Authorities Failed to Act on Warnings about Boko Haram Raid on School.* 9 May 2014. Retrieved from: http://www.amnesty.ca/news/news-releases/nigerian-authorities-failed-to-act-onwarnings-about-boko-haram-raid-on-school

³⁵ Ibid.

http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=47993&utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+ungen+%28UN+gender+equality+news+feed%29#.U5ZBaxaEBfM

³⁷ UN News Centre. Security Council Press Statement on Attacks in Nigeria. 9 May 2014. Retrieved from: http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2014/sc11387.doc.htm

³⁸ UN News Centre. *Nigeria Attacks by Boko Haram Could Be Crimes Against Humanity, Says ICC Prosecutor.* 5 August 2013. Retrieved from: http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=45565#.U4TgRZRdV7d ³⁹ UNiFEED. *Geneva/Boko Haram.* 6 May 2014. Retrieved from:

http://www.unmultimedia.org/tv/unifeed/2014/05/geneva-boko-haram/

providing the UN Integrated Support Package for the victims and families of the mass abduction. ⁴⁰ The UN's support to the families of the abducted schoolgirls and to Nigeria's efforts to secure the release of schoolgirls was renewed following Djinnit's visit in the beginning of June 2014. ⁴¹

Meanwhile, on 17 May 2014, the Heads of State of Benin, Cameroon, Chad, France, Niger and Nigeria and representatives from the European Union, the United Kingdom and the United States met for an exclusive meeting at the Paris Summit for Security in Nigeria to discuss ways to combat Boko Haram.⁴² In the Summit's conclusions, the countries agreed on action points – on bilateral and multilateral bases – to combat Boko Haram and locate the abducted schoolgirls.⁴³ These discussions were solely high-level and did not involve civil society stakeholders.

On 22 May 2014, the UN Security Council's Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee approved the addition of Boko Haram to its list individuals and entities that are subject to targeted financial sanctions and an arms embargo.⁴⁴ Pursuant to paragraphs 2 and 3 of resolution 2038 (2012), Boko Haram is associated with Al-Qaida for "participating in the financing, planning, facilitating, preparing, or perpetrating of acts or activities by, in conjunction with, under the name of, on behalf of, or in support of" Al-Qaida and the Organization of Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb.

In addition to international sanctions, actions are also taken bilaterally. In order to find the abducted schoolgirls, the US has dispatched drones over Nigeria and has sent 80 soldiers to safeguard the drone base in Chad. ⁴⁵ While the leaders of Cameroon and Chad have declared "war" on Boko Haram, the French have ruled out any direct military intervention by the West. ⁴⁶

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⁴⁰ UN News Centre. Boko Haram, Nigerian Group that Kidnapped Schoolgirls, Put on UN Terror Sanctions List. 23 May 2014. Retrieved from: http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=47874#.U4X_u5RdV7c

⁴¹ UN News Centre. Nigeria: UN Envoy Urges National Actors to 'Close Ranks' to Ensure Release of Schoolgirls. 9 June 2014. Retrieved from:

http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=47993&utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&ut m_campaign=Feed%3A+ungen+%28UN+gender+equality+news+feed%29#.U5ZBaxaEBfM

⁴² Présidence de la République française. Paris Summit for Security in Nigeria – Conclusions. 17 May 2014. Retrieved from: http://www.elysee.fr/declarations/article/paris-summit-for-security-in-nigeria-conclusions/
⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ United Nations News. Security Council Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee Adds Boko Haram To Its Sanctions List. 22 May 2014. Retrieved from: http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs//2014/sc11410.doc.htm

⁴⁵ The Wall Street Journal. Boko Haram Kidnaps More Girls in Nigeria. *9 June 2014*. Retrieved from: http://online.wsj.com/articles/boko-haram-kidnaps-more-girls-in-nigeria-1402336940

⁴⁶ BBC News Africa. *Africa Leaders Declare 'War' on Nigeria Boko Haram.* 17 May 2014. Retrieved from: http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-27451966

Women, Peace and Security Agenda

The Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda refers to the international policy framework established through the UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2009), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2010), 1960 (2011), 2106 (2013), and 2122 (2013). These resolutions guide work to promote and protect the rights of women in conflict and post-conflict situations. Supporting reference documents include the Beijing Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. It is widely agreed that women's participation in peace negotiations is crucial in achieving and sustaining peace.

National Action Plan

In August 2013, Nigeria finalized and published its National Action Plan (NAP) for the Implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and Related Resolutions in Nigeria. A NAP demonstrates the government's commitment and accountability to "[ensure] the security of women and girls during armed conflicts and [enhance] their active and direct participation in conflict prevention and peace-building as well as post-conflict efforts." Nigeria's NAP is based on three priorities:

- 1) **Participation:** Increased political empowerment for women and engagement at all levels of decision-making;
- 2) **Justice, Protection and Peace:** A more effective and credible justice and security environment for women during and after conflict;
- 3) **Economic Resource and Support:** Allocation of greater and more sustainable financial resources to support women in recovery processes.

The strategic objectives for Nigeria's NAP are based on five pillars, namely: prevention, participation, protection, prosecution and promotion.

⁴⁷ Federal Republic of Nigeria. National Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 and Related Resolutions in Nigeria. August 2013. Retrieved from:

http://www.peacewomen.org/assets/file/NationalActionPlans/nigeria_nationalactionplan_2013.pdf

Policy Gaps

Both the Nigerian Government and the international community have sought to safely return the abducted schoolgirls, while terminating and preventing any future perpetrations of Boko Haram – all without success. The measures undertaken have so far lacked the foundation needed to create and realize sustainable peace: women's effective participation as established in the Women, Peace and Security Agenda. Specific gaps in current policies include:

- Lack of civil society engagement. Civil society organizations need to be engaged
 in all levels of decision-making to ensure that women are adequately represented and
 to effectively hold the Government of Nigeria accountable for any inaction. The
 high-level Summit scheduled to take place in London on 12 June 2014 will not
 involve any insight of local Nigerian non-governmental organizations, let alone civil
 society leaders.
- Lack of women. Nigerian women have spoken up. The world is hearing them. They started the global social movement of #BringBackOurGirls and they demand justice. 48 Yet they remain absent in all formal negotiations and policy discussions. Nonetheless, women's participation is vital in such discussions studies have demonstrated that women, and mothers specifically, are ones central to preventing radicalization. 49 Moreover, women are agents of change and proven successful negotiators. As such, their influence and insight is needed to prevent further exacerbation of the conflict.
- Lack of gender advisors. Nigeria and the international community have yet to build a team of experts to examine and tackle the intricate dimensions of the conflict in Nigeria. Given that Boko Haram's war tactics involve using women as weapons of war, it is crucial that at least one gender advisor becomes part of this team so as to integrate the gender perspective in policies and procedures on gender-related issues.
- Lack of protection against sexual violence. Boko Haram is using sexual violence as a tactic of war, which has not been stringently condemned nor prevented. As noted in Resolution 1325 and reinforced in Resolution 1820, sexual violence in conflict constitutes a war crime and calls on parties to immediately protect civilians from this horrid act.

⁴⁸ Punch Nigeria. Women Protest Boko Haram's Killings, Abduction. 7 March 2014. Retrieved from: http://www.punchng.com/metro-plus/women-protest-boko-harams-killings-abduction/

⁴⁹ Institute for Security Studies. *It Starts At Home: How Mothers Can Help in the Fight Against Terrorism.* 12 March 2014. Retrieved from: http://www.issafrica.org/iss-today/it-starts-at-home-how-mothers-can-help-in-the-fight-against-terrorism

• Lack of recognizing the root cause of violence and conflict: the global arms trade. While calls to action in the conclusion of the Paris Summit included garnering information on the trafficking of weapons and securing weapons stockpiles, the international community has failed to recognize that the global arms trade as a whole contributes to the insecurity of the region.

Policy Recommendations

Boko Haram continues to attack civilians in Nigeria and the surrounding countries, while increasingly posing a greater threat to the region and the international community. To successfully counter Boko Haram, response measures must foster peace and prevent further violence by addressing root causes and upholding state obligations on Women, Peace and Security. States should take a holistic approach that addresses all four pillars of the WPS agenda - prevention, participation, protection, and relief and recovery - supported by Nigeria's NAP:

- 1) **Prevention:** Prevent future violence by Boko Haram and others by addressing root causes. Shift from a reactionary to a preventative approach in dealing with terror attacks, ⁵⁰ by alleviating poverty and fostering development, as called for by President Mahamoudou Issoufou of Niger at the Paris Summit on the Security in Nigeria in May 2014. ⁵¹ Because the arms trade exacerbates violence and is an obstacle to development, it is essential to stop the arms trade to Nigeria. President Hollande from France had indicated at the Paris Summit that many of the weapons that Boko Haram uses originate from Libya. ⁵²
- 2) Participation: Ensure women's full, effective, and meaningful inclusion in all levels in all activities of conflict prevention, peace-building and post-conflict recovery processes, including the high-level Paris Summit for Security in Nigeria and its follow-up meetings. Ensure qualified gender advisors are integrated into all mission and other work addressing Boko Haram to ensure local women's participation and rights in peace processes, protection of women and girls against sexual and gender based violence, and women's full and equal access to legal and judicial procedures.

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⁵⁰ Center on Global Counterterrorism Cooperation. *The Roles of Women in Terrorism, Conflict and Violent Extremism.* April 2013. Retrieved from: http://globalcenter.org/wp-

content/uploads/2013/04/13Apr11_Women-and-Terrorism-Prevention_Final.pdf

⁵¹ Présidence de la République française. *Conférence de presse du sommet de Paris pour la sécurité au Nigéria.* 17 May 2014. Retrieved from: http://www.elysee.fr/conferences-de-presse/article/conference-de-presse-du-sommet-de-paris-pour-la-securite-au-nigeria/

⁵² Ibid.

Strengthen women's participation by supporting the creation and strengthening of women's civil society organizations.

- 3) **Protection:** Provide comprehensive and accessible multi-sectorial and humanitarian services to those affected by the violence executed by Boko Haram, including for sexual and reproductive health and rights. Condemn and call for immediate cessation of violations and abuses committed against women and girls. Support implementation of useful protection measures such as Joint Protection Teams and Women's Protection Advisors.
- 4) **Prosecution:** Ensure equal access to justice for survivors of Boko Haram's crimes. Support strengthening of Nigerian justice system at court level in order to handle cases of gender-based violence through support for sexual and gender-based violence trainings, increasing women's leadership in the justice and security sectors, and enhanced integration of women's human rights into legal reform. If Nigeria is not able to prosecute perpetrators, support submitting the case to the ICC.
- 5) **Promotion**: Support action to strengthen community support for gender justice, equality, and peace. Strengthen and support women's civil society organizations. Engage men and boys to promote gender equality and women's rights. This could include support for interfaith dialogues which sensitize local leaders and communities to the effects of sexual violence and gender-based violence, girls education and child marriage, as suggested by Thomas Boni Yayi, the President of Benin at the Paris Summit on the Security in Nigeria in May 2014.⁵³

⁵³ Présidence de la République française. *Conférence de presse du sommet de Paris pour la sécurité au Nigéria.* 17 May 2014. Retrieved from: http://www.elysee.fr/conferences-de-presse/article/conference-de-presse-du-sommet-de-paris-pour-la-securite-au-nigeria/

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