

# Boko Haram: A Militant Leadership Monitor Special Report

## *Personalities Behind The Insurgency*

**SPECIAL REPORT - JANUARY 2012**

### THE SYRIAN OPPOSITION: A FOCUS ON PARTIES AND LEADERSHIP

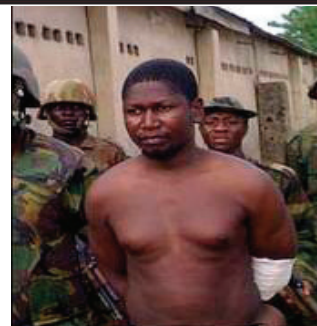
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### Introduction

In this "Special Report on Boko Haram: Nigeria's Islamist Movement," we examine the rise of Boko Haram's elusive leader Abu Shekau and the policies of the group's charismatic former leader, Mohammed Yusuf, whose death in 2009 led to Abu Shekau's rise. We focus on the insurgent movement's activities under the leadership of Shekau.

Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa. Its most violent insurgent movement, Boko Haram, primarily draws its recruits from the large swathe of poorly governed territories in the predominantly Muslim northern Nigeria. The crisis in Northern Nigeria is worsening. In early 2012 a standoff has arisen between Nigerian security forces and Boko Haram, which means "Western Civilization is Forbidden," while an impending oil crisis and nascent protest movement from the Nigerian public threaten the stability of the country.

The security situation in Nigeria leads to the question of whether the al-Qaeda movement has spread beyond Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) to sub-Saharan Africa and become embedded in Boko Haram's ranks. Meanwhile, the political situation in Nigeria threatens the ability of the government to combat Boko Haram while it expends resources to deal with the demands of the protestors. If Abu Shekau has his way, attacks on Christians and on government and international institutions will divide Nigeria along sectarian lines and delegitimize the state until Nigeria collapses. This, according to Shekau's plans, would pave the way for Boko Haram to impose Shari'a Law throughout the entire country.



Muhammed Yusuf

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