

# INSTABILITY IN NIGERIA: THE DOMESTIC FACTORS



**SELECT CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS FROM  
“THREATS TO NIGERIA’S SECURITY:  
BOKO HARAM AND BEYOND”**

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**The JAMESTOWN**  
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*Select Panel Summary*

**“Instability in Nigeria: The Domestic Factors”**

*From the Conference:*

**Threats to Nigeria’s Security: Boko Haram and Beyond**

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# Domestic Factors of Instability in Nigeria

*Edited by Caitlin Alyce Buckley*

**Threats to Nigeria's Security: Boko Haram and Beyond**  
**Jamestown Foundation Conference, Washington D.C. - June 19, 2012**

## Panel One: Domestic Factors of Instability in Nigeria

### **Jacob Zenn**

“Instability in Northern Nigeria: The View from the Ground”  
*Jamestown Analyst for West African Affairs*

### **Dibussi Tande**

“Beyond Boko Haram: The Rise of Radical/Militant/Extremism Islam  
in Nigeria & Cameroon”  
*Journalist & Blogger on Nigerian Security Issues*

### **Dr. Andrew McGregor**

“Central African Militant Movements: The Northern Nigeria, Niger,  
Chad, and Cameroon Nexus”  
*The Jamestown Foundation Editor in Chief, Global Terrorism Analysis*

### **Mark McNamee**

“The Niger Delta & The Movement for the Emancipation of the  
Niger Delta (MEND)”  
*Analyst, The Jamestown Foundation*

## Executive Summary

Though Nigeria adopted a constitution in 1999, the country remains plagued with domestic instability and violence perpetrated by militant groups. Increased media attention has been given to a militant group that the media named Boko Haram. The group, which calls itself Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wal-Jihad. According to the classical narrative the group emerged in protest of social inequality, political marginalization and economic neglect. Boko Haram is just one of many militant groups such as MEND, which belong to Nigeria's long history of military Islam. At least since the 1970s, after Nigeria was granted autonomy from British rule, militant groups have used violence as a tool to spread their message.

To better understand the threat posed by militant groups such as Boko Haram to Nigeria's security as well as the bases for domestic instability in Nigeria, The Jamestown Foundation held a conference entitled, "Domestic Factors of Instability in Nigeria" as a component of its conference focused on Boko Haram on June 19, 2012 at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. The panel briefed the audience on terror-related issues in Nigeria, covering the following topics:

- Jacob Zenn highlighted the bases for instability in northern Nigeria based on his interactions with people in the country and neighboring states. He described the regional, ethnic and other divisions prevalent within Nigeria as well as the potential for Boko Haram to expand beyond northern Nigeria.
- Dibussi Tande described the origins of radical, militant, extremist Islam in Nigeria and Cameroon using the classical and alternative narratives. He also stressed the necessity for the militant groups' underlying grievances to be addressed.
- Dr. Andrew McGregor challenged the audience to understand the motivations of militant groups in Nigeria. He also provided a snapshot of the history of terrorism in Nigeria since the latter part of the 20th century to point out that the religious debate in northern Nigeria is the same now as it was in the early 19th century.
- Mark McNamee focused on MEND, a militant group which preceded Boko Haram and which has received scarce media attention despite ongoing terrorist attacks. He also alerted the audience to the environmental degradation and significant economic losses that are largely a result of mismanagement of oil resources.

Some of the main points made by the panel include.

- Like other militant groups in Nigeria, Boko Haram was founded upon a number of grievances such as environmental degradation, an abundance of corruption, political and economical disenfranchisement, and feeling robbed of the region's oil wealth. Enacting measures to managing the militant groups as issues is insufficient. The only way for leaders to affect long-term progress is to address the underlying grievances and sources of instability.

## Summary of Presentations

### Jacob Zenn

#### *Instability in Northern Nigeria: The View from the Ground*

The Borno Elders Forum of Nigeria held a meeting during the summer of 2012 after which they requested the Nigerian government reduce its troop presence and mutually requested Boko Haram cease their attacks. The Elders, like many Nigerians question whether the military response to Boko Haram is the right response or will just exacerbate tensions, given that it is an urban insurgency with roots in anti-state and anti-government ideology. As a result of the military response, Maiduguri is frequently under curfew and the people feel alienated, and Kano is heavily militarized.

Nigeria's neighbors - Chad, Cameroon and Niger - call Boko Haram Nigeria's problem. However, Boko Haram has members from these countries and is increasingly becoming a regional issue, for example, there was an attack in Banki on the Cameroon border in which victims had to be transferred to hospitals in Cameroon.

Another item of concern are the al-Majiri student-beggars who are particularly rampant in Borno. Borno has the lowest school enrollment of any state in Nigeria, at only 28 percent. There are an estimated 10 million al-Majiri student-beggars in Nigeria itself. The al-Majiri students come from poor families who don't have enough money to take care of them, so they send their children to study under an Islamic scholar. During the day they go out and beg for money, and that money goes to the Islamic scholar. So some of the first recruits to Boko Haram are these young boys, who are easily vulnerable to their scholar, to whom they depend on for their living. When these scholars are bought out by Boko Haram, they bring their students into the Boko Haram fold.

The literacy percentage and the unemployment percentage in the twelve Shari'a states in northern Nigeria are dismal. There is a striking disparity in wealth, literacy, and unemployment between the Shari'a states and the southern states.

There are hundreds of ethnicities in Nigeria but these four ethnicities form the core: the Hausa, the Fulani, the Kanuri and the Shuwa Arabs. The main language of northern Nigeria is Hausa. The Fulani, derive from North Africa; the Fulanis can communicate with each other throughout West Africa. It's considered the most widespread language in sub-Saharan Africa that is mutually intelligible. The Hausa dominate, linguistically and ethnically, southern Niger and northern Nigeria. And the Kanuri people dominate the Borno State, which is the heart of the Boko Haram insurgency. The Kanuri people descend from the Kanem-Borno Empire which lasted from the 13th century up until the 19th century and they're somewhat distinguishable today from the Hausa. What's important to note is that the ethno-regional networks extend northward whereas Boko Haram's attack trajectory is southwards. There fewer regional networks for Boko Haram in southern Nigeria.

One of the intentions of Boko Haram is to enforce Shari'a as the national way of life and legal system across Nigeria. Thus far, Shari'a has only been implemented in twelve states in the northern part of the country. Many Nigerians expressed dissatisfaction with this "half-Shari'a" and insisted that

Shari'a cannot be implemented across the state if it is only accepted in half the county; it must be implemented in the remaining 24 states of Nigeria to be legitimate. Shari'a is largely embraced in the north which has an Islamic identity while the south is largely Christian. Southerners feel that the country is being sabotaged by the northerners who want a Muslim president. Southerners have alleged that the northerners want to make Nigeria ungovernable and unstable so Nigeria will be forced to elect a Muslim President. There has been some discussion of the country splitting into North and South Nigeria but a split would not be simple chiefly because the oil is in the south so even Boko Haram supporters do not desire a split.

Boko Haram was a name given to the militant group by the media, but in fact they call themselves Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wal-Jihad. They usually begin their statements by saying, we are not Boko Haram, this was a forbidden name given that was given to us by the media. Boko Haram have said they are against education within the context of a non-Shari'a State, although in principle they would not be against certain forms of Western knowledge.

Boko Haram has various sources of funding. There is a tradition in Nigeria for politicians to hire gangs to support them during election season. Boko Haram was also probably originally formed as part of this, sponsored by politicians who want people, such as the Majiri students, to go around as gangs supporting them during an election period. There have also been reports of United Kingdom and Saudi-based charities funding them, as member donations. In addition there have been 100 bank robberies in Nigeria in 2011, 30 of which, according to the head of the central bank, were related to Boko Haram. There are also recent reports that AQIM is paying Boko Haram.

The media are the most recent additions to Boko Haram's list of targets. If the media doesn't report about Boko Haram the way that they want, they have threatened to attack the media. Foreigners are another new addition to the list; it's been reported that al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb is paying Boko Haram to kidnap foreigners.

The 2015 elections will be critical. It is yet to be seen if a Christian president will win again and how Boko Haram will respond.

## **Dibussi Tande**

*Beyond Boko Haram: The Rise of Radical/Militant/Extremism Islam in Nigeria & Cameroon*

According to the classical narrative Boko Haram's creation was fueled by social inequality, political marginalization and economic neglect. The alternative narrative holds that Boko Haram did not happen in a vacuum. It happened in a particular environment that facilitated its actions.

Nigeria has a long tradition of militant Islam. Violence and sectarian conflict preceded Boko Haram. In Nigeria, Islamic groups have historically used violence as a tool to spread their message. According to some estimates, between 1970 and 1990, approximately 50,000 people lost their lives in various types of sectarian violence. There is a climate in Nigeria that enough attention has

not been paid to and that must be reformed. To understand this we need to take a step back and look at some of the major Islamic ideologies and see how Nigeria fits into that pattern. The two major ideologies are Sufism and Salafism. Sufi Islam is a moderate, tolerant and adaptable version of Islam that easily adapts to local environments. Sufism is the most popular form of Islam in West Africa because it incorporates traditional African practices and forms a synergetic religion that is both Islamic and traditional. In contrast, Salafism abides by a strict interpretation of Islam and the Quran. In addition to the underlying grievances that the government of Nigeria has not addressed, the contrasting ideologies fuel the various militant movements in Nigeria

The rise of Islamic extremism in Nigeria can be summarized in three phases. In the 1970s, before the birth of the second republic, violence came out of the traditional Islamic schools, such as the Maitatsine riots. There was also the increasing influence of the Wahhabis. Then in the 1980s, Iranian revolution played a very critical role in Nigeria. And then in the 1990s, the fourth republic emerged with the adoption of Shari'a. Shari'a came into being because of an unlikely coalition of local politicians who were interested in using the Shari'a debate as a stepping stone to power. And these factors led to the birth of, or imposition of, Shari'a in Northern Nigeria.

In reaction to the imposition of Shari'a by the state, a number of radical groups emerged. Either they wanted to ensure that Shari'a was strictly applied according to their definition, or they wanted to challenge those states and politicians that were not implementing it the way they saw it should be implemented. Boko Haram is actually one of the groups that emerged because of this circumstance. At one point Boko Haram was allied to the state's local politicians but fell out of favor with the state once it believed that Shari'a was being implemented in a way that was not in accordance with their beliefs, hence, the targeting of state government officials, the police, and traditional Islamic rulers in Nigeria.

There are many radical groups in northern Nigeria besides Boko Haram. There are hundreds, if not thousands of groups, some of them only come to light when there is violence. An example would be the Kala Kato group which in 2009 caused serious riots in Bauchi state, leading to the deaths of about 70 people. It's believed to be an offshoot of the Maitatsine group; it has the same ideology, the same antigovernment philosophy. There is also the Izala group. This was one of the groups that promoted Shari'a law, or the Shari'a debate in 1970, and played a fundamental role in raising awareness about Salafist ideology in Nigeria. It has the strong backing of Saudi Arabia and it was created specifically in opposition to certain Sufi brotherhoods. Its official name is Society for the Removal of Innovation and Reinstatement of Tradition. Another group is the Islamic Movement of Nigeria. This group is distinct because it embraces Shia Islam. In the 1990s, it carried out a series of attacks, the most gruesome being the beheading of Gideon Alakuta, an Igbo trader who was accused of desecrating the Quran.

Nigerian universities have always been a hotbed of Islamic extremism. Most of the leaders, who are today at the forefront of the radical extremism in northern Nigeria, have their roots in the universities. Mohammad El Zakzaky, who formed the Islamic Movement of Nigeria, was a student leader at Ahmadou Bello University. Many of the university campuses in the north are hotbeds of Islamic extremism; they are able to give theoretical cover to their radical Islamic ideas and they use this to spread their message.

Saudi Arabia and Iran have also been very fundamental in spreading radical Islamic philosophies in Nigeria which they have been able to do this with funding as well as through social programs.

In conclusion, while economic and political factors can explain the rise of fundamentalist Islam in Nigeria, there are other internal factors to the rise of Islam in Nigeria as well as the role played by external powers. If we do any study of Nigeria, or we're looking for solutions, we cannot ignore this fact. We ignore this at our peril.

## **Dr. Andrew McGregor**

*Central African Militant Movements: The Northern Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroon Nexus*

Movements like Nigeria's Boko Haram have an inherent dual nature; to outsiders, they represent a type of incomprehensible fanaticism, while to their followers, their precepts and activities may seem perfectly logical, necessary and in tune with historical precedent. The trick, then, for outsiders, is to understand the motivations of Boko Haram's members.

The religious debate in northern Nigeria is essentially the same today as it was in the early 19th century. One group of faithful believe that they have a mission to redeem and purify Islam, while charging the others with being Kuffar bil Takhlit, or "Unbelievers by Syncretism," in other words, the Islam of the latter has become compromised and corrupted by the inclusion of pre-Islamic beliefs. It is the same charge leveled in Borno State and the other northern states today by the leaders of Boko Haram.

Twelve northern Nigerian states introduced Shari'a between 1999 and 2001 in defiance of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution, which specifies the secular nature of the Nigerian state. As in Somalia, Sudan and elsewhere, the implementation of Shari'a in the states of northern Nigeria failed to immediately solve all the ills of society. The conclusion of the radical Islamists was not that Shari'a was in itself unable to transform society, but that its implementation was done incorrectly or insufficiently and those responsible for the implementation were insincere Muslims, if not complete apostates. It was this evaluation of the situation that was at the core of Boko Haram ideology at the time of its establishment in 2002.

Extremists in groups such as Boko Haram typically have little interaction with other Muslims outside their movement, and tend to regard such as potential enemies rather than potential allies. This "with us or against us" mentality is common not only to both Salafists and Mahdist millennial movements, but to fundamentalist or individualist interpretations of other religions such as Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism.

In examining the cross-border activities of Boko Haram, it is worth noting that most of these activities take place within the boundaries of the 19th century Bornu Empire. These boundaries encompass northeastern Nigeria, the northern tip of Cameroon, southwestern Chad and northeastern Niger. After the 2009 rising in Maiduguri, security forces claimed that documents found on the



bodies of dead militants indicated that many of them had come from Niger and Chad.

In the areas encompassed within the boundaries of the old Bornu Empire, residents continue to share a largely common Islamic culture, but which lately also includes widespread poverty, government corruption, political instability and underdevelopment. There have been numerous reports of Boko Haram members using Niger and Cameroon as safe havens.

In northern Cameroon, Boko Haram has made its presence known by issuing threat to local converts to Christianity to return to the Islamic fold or face "Allah's wrath." Such threats are rare in Cameroon, where Christians form a majority and Muslims form only some 25% of the population.

Cameroon faces similar problems to Nigeria in terms of corruption and a monopolization of wealth and power. The governor of Cameroon's largely Muslim Far North Region has described the threat posed by Boko Haram as "very critical" and has placed security forces and religious leaders on alert. Residents of impoverished northern Cameroon have reported strangers giving fiery anti-Western sermons and offering large cash payments to new recruits.

In neighboring Chad, President Idris Dèby, has warned of the insecurity in the Lake Chad region posed by what he describes as "the permanent threat" posed by Boko Haram and al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and has demanded the creation of a joint deterrence force formed from the military forces of the nations of the Lake Chad Basin Commission, including Nigeria, Chad, Niger, Cameroon and the Central African Republic. However, Cameroon has shown itself to be uninterested in joint security efforts and even Nigeria's response has been disappointing, despite being the hub from which all Boko Haram activities radiate.

In January, the Nigerian government ordered the temporary closure of its borders with Cameroon, Chad and Niger to prevent cross-border activities of militants belonging to Boko Haram and other groups, including roving bands of Chadian deserters and former rebels who have made the region south of Chad their base of operations. While closing the borders may contribute to security in the short-term, it ultimately creates conditions favorable for the growth of extremism by severing trade and further reducing already small local incomes. Food shortages have already begun and the approach of waves of locusts threaten to turn the situation into a life-threatening crisis. In the meantime, Boko Haram has taken steps to assert its control of the border with Cameroon, including an April attack on a border town that destroyed a bank, reduced a Nigerian police station to ashes and left 12 people wounded. Residents of the border region have begun moving elsewhere, leaving the area open to Boko Haram activities.

Charges that Boko Haram is in collusion with al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb or even the Shabaab movement in Somalia, are as yet short of full verification, though a UN Security Council report issued in January said that some West African governments believed Boko Haram members from Nigerian and Chad received training from al-Qaeda in Mali last year. However, such unsubstantiated reports may also be part of local efforts to ensure a steady supply of funds, arms and security assistance from Western nations concerned with transnational terrorist movements such as al-Qaeda.

Elders in Nigeria's northern states have gathered to complain of the methods used by the counter-terrorist Joint Task Force, most notably extra-judicial executions, torture, arson, illegal detentions and various other abuses. While unsympathetic to Boko Haram's aims, the elders have called for talks with the group as the only way out of a steadily deteriorating situation. A government White Paper released in May suggested a re-examination of the rules of engagement to reflect the low intensity of the conflict and the replacement of the JTF with troops familiar with the region and the socio-cultural values of its residents.

The belief of Boko Haram or the followers of Maitatsine that they are capable of succeeding in a military struggle with one of the most powerful armed forces in Africa certainly speaks to confidence in the divine powers of a Mahdist style leader or the expectation of millenarian miracles. As we have seen, this is a trend that has historical precedence in this geographical area, with major jihad movements like that of 'Uthman Dan Fodio inspiring a wave of jihadi, neo-Mahdist and millenarian movements set on reforming Islam, eliminating corruption and deposing immoral political leaders. Though, it is not unreasonable to suggest that Islamic extremism in northern Nigeria relies on its own momentum and precedents rather than external influences like al-Qaeda or the Saudi-funded spread of Salafist ideology. Given the highly localized inspiration for these movements and the strong possibility that they are manipulated to some degree by local politicians, it seems unlikely that al-Qaeda will ever be able to impose its will on the cyclical nature of Islamic extremism in the modern remnants of the old Bornu Empire and Sokoto Caliphate.

## **Mark McNamee**

### *The Niger Delta & the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND)*

Three years ago, Boko Haram was not on anyone's radar. The primary security concern was MEND. While Boko Haram has received heightened media attention, MEND's activities have been vastly underreported and overshadowed by all the activity in the north.

MEND is an umbrella group that was created out of various disparate and sometimes hostile rebel groups and armed militias. Just as the media named Boko Haram, leaders in the 1990s needed to ascribe an identity to the group so they could create a policy toward the group. The movement was thus named the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND). In fact, MEND is a far more amorphous and ambiguous group than the title MEND would lead you to believe.

MEND was founded upon a collection of grievances, based more or less on extreme environmental degradation and generally speaking, political and economical disenfranchisement, feeling that their oil wealth in the region had been stolen from them. Nine states comprise the Niger Delta in the south. The Niger Delta still remains today the largest single source of greenhouse gas emissions due to the gas flaring coming out of the region. Likewise, according to the Nigerian government, from 1970 to 2000, on average, there were 250 oil spills which, doing the math, comes down to about 5 oil spills per week in the region. The UN has said to begin operations just to clean things

up, it would take an initial investment of \$1 billion and many billions more over the course of 30 years. Clearly the environment is a significant and legitimate grievance. The unemployment rate in the region remains high and there is a glaring lack of infrastructure and development because the government instead directs the money toward building palaces in Abuja or creating offshore bank accounts.

The radicalization is based on these grievances and were initially peaceful protests. The government smashed down the nonviolent demonstrations which led to the radicalization of the movement in 1995 with the death of Ken Sarowila. He was the human rights leader of the Ogoni people who had been, in particular, very disenfranchised and marginalized by the government. And his execution, much like that of, Mohammed Yusef of Boko Haram in 2009, in a lot of the same ways sent the same message to the people: that trying to work through the political process in a nonviolent way is not going to get you anywhere with the federal government. The federal government is not interested in your concerns, and will repress you violently. And thus radical Islam expanded. While the people in the region feel that they don't have anybody truly representing their interests, the militant groups are much more aligned with their dissatisfaction.

In some respects, the situation has improved since the amnesty in 2009 but generally speaking, the crisis remains largely unchanged because leaders have still failed to address the underlying sources of instability, the grievances: the corruption, the lack of development, the lack of infrastructure, marginalization of religious and ethnic groups, and so on.

MEND and other militant groups often attack the oil pipelines. According to estimates, between 150,000 and 200,000 million barrels are cut in production each day because of militant activity. Despite the immense economic impact, the pipeline attacks are significantly underreported, as is piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. Many analysts estimate that two-thirds - to 75% - of the piracy that occurs offshore now goes unreported.

Though militant activity carried out by MEND decreased following the 2009 amnesty, there is nothing that Nigerian leaders can take from the MEND model and apply to the north that will have sustainable, positive consequences. The government must address the grievances that provoked the creation of Boko Haram to solve the issue. And afterward, they should do the same with MEND: address the underlying grievances.

## **Appendix One, Full Text:**

**Jacob Zenn**

*Instability in Northern Nigeria: The View from the Ground*

There has not been a more opportune time to discuss Boko Haram than right now, given the events in northern Nigeria. I returned just this past week from a field research trip to the region, in which I visited Chad, northern Cameroon, southern Niger, and focused my energies on northern Nigeria. I would like to begin today by sharing some insights from my trip there, especially about the human terrain in the region and perceptions of the security situation in the region that I gained from the people there themselves and from various indigenous sources.

So I will begin in the first part of my presentation by sharing insights from the ground, in northern Nigeria, the most current up-to-date insights, and then I would like to use those insights from local perceptions to discuss Boko Haram and its most recent activities as well as discuss its origin and evolution. And then finally I will conclude, discussing how these current developments relate to projected activities of Boko Haram.

While in the field over the past few weeks, I made five key observations. The arrows point to the general route I took in the region. The first is that borders of Borno and Yobe are currently closed to international traffic. It is important to note though that Nigeria shares a 1700 km border with Cameroon, a 1500 km border with Niger and a 900 km border with Chad which also goes over the shrinking Lake Chad. And that even though Nigeria has closed the borders to international traffic, and formal traffic in Borno and Yobe, there is tons of informal traffic; this doesn't stop people from crossing border to border, and given the location of the heart of the Boko Haram insurgency in Borno there is still the ability for people from Chad, Cameroon, and Niger to enter Borno as well as the possibility for Boko Haram members from Borno to seek refuge in the border regions. The borders became closed to international traffic only several months ago and this was as a result of an attack by Boko Haram on Banki, which is the main border post between Borno and Cameroon, in which several customs and immigration officials were killed. So now customs and immigration officials actually are wearing regular clothing instead of security clothing because they don't want to stand out to Boko Haram attackers.

The second insight that I made was that Maiduguri is frequently under curfew, sometimes enforced in certain areas of the city, usually a dawn to dusk curfew. Kano is heavily militarized but life continues as usual in the cultural capital and there are frequent road checkpoints throughout the country. While it is important that a military response is used against Boko Haram, this has also been somewhat alienating, for example people in Maiduguri claim that they are not allowed to sleep outside anymore with the hot weather and this has been difficult for them. And also people question whether the heavy military response, as opposed to an intelligence gathering response, is the right approach to Boko Haram, given that it is very much an urban insurgency and, more feet on the ground from federal troops against an insurgency which has its roots in anti-state and anti-government ideology could exacerbate tensions. Nonetheless, this is one of the dilemmas the Nigerian government needs to face with how many troops to send versus on the ground intelligence

gathering. The Borno Elders Forum just held a meeting a few days ago in which they requested that the Nigerian government reduce its troop presence and at the same time asked Boko Haram to return to its families and stop their attacks.

The third insight is that among Nigeria's neighbors, the people call Boko Haram Nigeria's problem. They say this has nothing to do with us and this is what I noticed in Chad, Cameroon and Niger. At the same time, there are numerous members of Boko Haram from neighboring countries, and this is in stark contrast to the leaders of those countries such as President Biya of Cameroon and President Debi of Chad as well as recently the leading diplomats of Niger who are all beginning to orchestrate regional mechanisms to attack Boko Haram, recognizing that Boko Haram, though all of its attacks have been in northern Nigeria, it is increasingly becoming a regional issue, especially as I said there was an attack in Banki on the Cameroon border in which victims had to be transferred to hospitals in Cameroon. The spillover effect has not really happened yet, but potential for this to happen is very much there.

Fourth, many international organizations are beginning to leave the north; some of the main American NGOs are leaving. We don't have an embassy in Kano although we used to. And southerners, which means people whose ancestors come from the south even if they grew up in the north, and Christians, are slowly beginning to move from the north when their churches get attacked, sometimes they move in groups as communities, and people who I spoke with said that they are prepared to move to the south if it must be this way.

Fifth, one inevitable thing that anyone who travels in northern Nigeria witnesses, is the al-Majiri student-beggars who are particularly rampant in Borno. Borno has the lowest school enrollment of any state in Nigeria, at only 28 percent. There are an estimated 10 million al-Majiri student-beggars in Nigeria itself. The word Majiri derives from Hijra, the Hijra in Arabic, which means "to migrate." And essentially the al-Majiri students come from poor families who don't have enough money to take care of them, so they send their children, mostly boys from age 7 to 15 to study the Quranic studies under a Malam or an Islamic scholar, and during the day they go out and beg for money, and that money goes to the Islamic scholar. So some of the first recruits to Boko Haram are these young boys, who are easily vulnerable to their scholar, to whom they depend on for their living: he gives them shelter, he gives them studies, and if some of these scholars can get bought out by Boko Haram with their funds, they can easily bring their students into the Boko Haram fold and this is just something that is everywhere, these young children, begging.

I would also like to point out something related to al-Majiri, the literacy percentage and the unemployment percentage in the 12 Shari'a states in northern Nigeria, which are incredibly stark. While there is poverty in the north, it is not as stark as the difference between the south and Shari'a states in terms of literacy and unemployment. I ranked the thirty-seven states, including Abuja Federal Capital Territory, in terms of state GDP, literacy and unemployment, and you can see that [referring to slide] while the 12 Shari'a states in the north are poorer than the south, their ranking in terms of literacy percentage is comparatively much lower, as well as in terms of unemployment, than the rest of the country. For example almost all of the lowest ranked states in literacy percentage are the Shari'a states – the last state, the second to last, third to last rank, fourth to last rank. Same with unemployment percentage. And the literacy percentage is really closely related to the

al-Majiri system – students who study Arabic and Quranic studies, they don't study English, they don't study literature, and this has made them vulnerable to exploitation.

In terms of unemployment, one of the urban legends, which is based on reality, but not 100 percent true, about the founding of Boko Haram, is that university students from the University of Maiduguri graduated from their university in the early 2000s, they found no employment and they blamed the government. They felt the government was taking away their money from the country's resources, and therefore they were taking away jobs, and the reason why they were unemployed after graduation is because of the government. These students from the University of Maiduguri in the early 2000s burned their diplomas, said we don't want this Western education that the government has deprived us of, and then they also became some of the intellectuals that joined Boko Haram in the early 2000s. And these intellectuals are dangerous because they're able to shape Boko Haram into an ideology that is attractive to the mainstream. Whereas on the other end there are the al-Majiri students who don't have much education, who don't have much literacy, and who are easily susceptible to becoming the rank and file members.

Now I would like to move to the human terrain analysis of Northern Nigeria, in terms of my experience there. These are the languages I heard, the people I met. There are hundreds of ethnicities in Nigeria. There are also hundreds of ethnicities in northern Nigeria. But these four ethnicities form the core. There is the Hausa, the Fulani, Kanuri and Shuwa Arabs. The main language of northern Nigeria is Hausa, which is pretty much a language that everyone speaks. Interestingly, if you look at these four ethnicities, most of their ethno-regional links point northward. For example the Fulani, they derive from North Africa; they migrated down from North Africa to Central and Western Africa. And in the 19th century they set up jihadi states or Islamic emirates within Western Africa. As a result, the Sultan of the Sokoto Caliphate's legacy is still very influential in northern Nigeria. There were other Fulani states in what is now Timbuktu and Mali as well as Senegal. So the Fulanis can communicate with each other throughout West Africa. It is considered the most widespread language in sub-Saharan Africa that is mutually intelligible. So the Cameroonian Fulanis can generally understand the Burkina Faso Fulanis, who can generally understand the Senegalese Fulanis which are also called Pool or Pular depending on the region.

The Hausa dominate, linguistically and ethnically, southern Niger and northern Nigeria. And the Kanuri people dominate the Borno State, which is the heart of the Boko Haram insurgency. The Kanuri people descend from the Kanem-Borno Empire which lasted from the 13th century up until the 19th century and they're somewhat distinguishable today from the Hausa. They have their own ethnic identity and this has played a role in Boko Haram actually because there have been reports from detained Boko Haram members who have said that the Kanuris seek power within the group and that They have sold out people from other groups, especially from minority ethnicities. For example Abu Qaqa was a spokesperson from Boko Haram who claimed that the Kanuris were selling out people from lower minorities.

At the same time it is important to note that in terms of regional networks, the Hausas, Fulanis -- and the Shuwa Arabs, who dominate northern Cameroon where Arabic is the main working language, as well as parts of north eastern Nigeria, and of course Chad which speaks Arabic as one of the official languages and Arabic is the working language. What's important to note is that

the ethno-regional networks extend northward whereas Boko Haram's attack trajectory is heading southwards. There are much fewer regional networks for Boko Haram in say southern Nigeria, than there is in Niger or even parts of Mali. As Boko Haram moves southward, it is going to have difficulty establishing cells because they don't have the same networks in southern Niger.

Moving ahead, key northern perspectives: I found many people complaining about half-Shari'a. I thought half-Shari'a would have meant that it is not strong enough, it is not severe enough, but no. Most people in Northern Nigeria that I spoke with about this half-Shari'a concept felt that Shari'a cannot be implemented if it is only within half the country. It needs to be within the entire emirate or the entire country, and these were just regular people. And they feel that because it is only been implemented in 12 states, it needs to be implemented in the other 24 states for Shari'a to be real. Until then the Shari'a is not worth it. And this is a strand of thought where the mainstream and Boko haram both have the same goal to extend Shari'a throughout the entire country, or else it is illegitimate.

Since 2009, even Abu Shekau, the leader of Boko Haram, has used this term, Islamic revolution, I also heard people referring to Iran, I know this will be discussed more in Dibussi's presentation, the concept of the Islamic revolution, Islamic government, derives much from Iran, there is influence there in northern Nigeria.

Northern Nigeria has an Islamic identity. Two-thirds of the population is Muslim – this is obviously a misconception, but most people favor Shari'a in the north.

Key southern perspectives: some people have used the idea of South Sudan; that Nigeria can split like South Sudan, that the south could be wealthier without the north. That being said, Nigeria is a regional powerhouse, people have a lot of patriotism, but at the same time, the people in the south would be wealthier if the north were to leave. And I was surprised to hear people mention that.

They believe that since President Jonathan is a Christian southerner, that the northerners want to make Nigeria ungovernable, make it unstable and therefore Nigeria will be forced to elect a Muslim President in which case the country can return to normalcy. So the southerners feel that the country's being sabotaged. Both groups feel that they are the majority in the country. In fact, it is roughly 50-50. And this is one reason that the elections don't work out well because the Muslims in the north can not understand how the Christian president got 58 percent of the vote if the Muslims, according to what they believe, make up 67% of the population.

Just to highlight, a split would not be simple. There are tons of ethnicities. The oil is in the south, the north would be left without oil, and this is one of the reasons why, even the backers of Boko Haram don't support a split. It would not be pretty. This is majority a Muslim area, this is majority Christian area, there is a lot in between, a split is not easy to do.

Finally I would like to discuss Boko Haram as a source of instability. It might be called Boko Haram by the media, but in fact they call themselves Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wal-Jihad. Boko Haram was a name given to them by the media. They usually begin their statements by saying, we are not Boko Haram, this was a forbidden name given that was given to us by the media. You see

in 2004 when the group was young, in a BBC article, the group was referred to as Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna so the name Boko Haram hadn't even emerged yet. The name Boko Haram came from that story I told you about the University of Maiduguri students burning their diplomas and people believing they are anti-education. In fact many statements by Boko Haram have said we are against education within the context of a non-Shari'a State, although in principle they would not be against certain forms of Western knowledge. In fact they did not begin burning down schools, in terms of operations, until last month when President Jonathan tried to implement a program to bring those Quranic al-Majiri schools into the main fold of the country and give these students a more comprehensive education. And since Jonathan is trying to get rid of these Majiri schools or at least make the more comprehensive, Boko Haram in retaliation said, now we are going to start attacking any school that has Western education, in revenge for Jonathan's program.

I would just like to point out that these are the milestone attacks in terms of looking at Boko Haram's origins. The first attacks with the government began around 2003 on Christmas Eve, in 2009 there were some confrontations in four states in which the then-leader Mohammed Yusef was killed. From 2009 to 2010 the group was on a general hiatus. 800 members had been killed in 2009, many of them escaped to the borderlands. And then in 2010 there was a prison break in Bauchi in which Boko Haram freed more than 100 of its members. Since then Boko Haram has been on a rampage: Christmas day attacks in Jos; election season while the Muslims and Christians were rioting, Boko Haram seized on it to orchestrate a bunch of attacks in the election season. They bombed the UN headquarters in Abuja in August 2011; that showed influence of tactical knowledge gained from outside, perhaps Somalia, where they used a suicide bomber which had been a foreign concept. Christmas Day attacks again. Christmas Kano attacks, mass killings in January 2012. Churches were just bombed last Sunday; this is the third or fourth week in a row that churches have been bombed. In particular they bombed Wusasa which is the first church in Hausaland's history. So this is kind of like a Taliban mentality – get rid of any historical trace of Christianity. It is only a matter of time before they attempt to attack the Yorubaland in the south.

Recently there was a fellow named Suleiman Mohammed who was believed to be a Yoruba, who was captured in Kano with a bunch of weapons in his home. Upon interrogation he admitted that Boko Haram needs to attack the south because as I said, there are some internal factions within Boko Haram, in terms of Kanuris, and others. If they can attack a Yorubaland in the south, they can portray themselves as a national movement, Nigeria movement, and pan-ethnic movement. The base of Maiduguri is 100 miles from three different countries. They have been funded by politicians. Since the beginning, there is a tradition in Nigeria, a very bad (un)democratic tradition, where politicians hire gangs to support them during election season. Boko Haram was also probably originally formed as part of this, sponsored by politicians who want people, these kind of Majiri students, to go around as gangs supporting them during an election period.

There have been reports of United Kingdom and Saudi-based charities funding them, member donations. There have been 100 bank robberies in Nigeria in 2011; 30 of them according to the head of the central bank, were related to Boko Haram. It is unclear whether these are criminals that the government says are Boko Haram, or whether they are criminals that claim they are Boko Haram. But certainly bank robberies, just as they have been a way of fundraising for Jamaah Islamiya in Indonesia, They have also been a way of fundraising for Boko Haram. There are also recent reports



that AQIM is paying Boko Haram. Boko Haram holds no territory, so just in terms of my traveling there, it is not like going into Somalia where you actually have al-Shabaab controlling land or the Taliban where they actually control territory. Boko Haram is within cities; they're amorphous, you don't know where they are.

Members from Niger, Chad and Cameroon, I haven't heard reports of members from any other country but those three. Attacks, interestingly, only in Nigeria, zero attacks elsewhere. This just goes to show that Boko Haram is very much a Nigerian movement, as tempting as it might be to look at them as an international movement. You see their attacks are dominated by Borno, these are the major attacks that I recorded. And it is only been Kogi and Taraba in the south within the past two months that They have went south. [Refers to slide] This was a kidnapping of a foreigner [in Kwara State]. And it is only a matter of time, as I am saying, that they attempt to get Lagos. [Refers to slide] These are the targets. Media houses are most recently on the list. If the media doesn't report about Boko Haram the way that they want, They have threatened to attack the media. Foreigners are newly added to the list since it is been reported that al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb is paying Boko Haram to kidnap foreigners. And you see the relative proportion; each target has been attacked about the same amount. No hotels, but that is a type of target that would not be out of the question especially if they hit the commercial capital of Lagos.

In terms of conclusions, we need to look at the ethno-regional networks. We are talking about Libya arms filtering through these porous borders in Nigeria. It is been reported that Hausa speakers and Fulani speakers have been found in Gao. Keep in mind this Azawad entity, which is only 200 miles from northeastern Nigeria, there have been Hausa speakers there. It is more difficult for the Hausa, Fulani, and Kanuris to move south in Nigeria than it is to mix with their ethnic kin up there in West Africa. Lake Chad is eroding; this has caused Nigerians as well as Chadians to lose their livelihood which has forced migrants into Nigeria. Migrants have become a source of recruits for Boko Haram. Borderlands are amorphous.

Targets: heightened threat to foreigners, with al-Qaeda and Islamic Maghreb, money from kidnappings. There have been key arrests of sponsors; there is Kabiru Sokoto who was the United Nations headquarters bombing mastermind in August 2011. He also masterminded the Christmas Day attack in 2011 in Niger State. He was also seen in Lagos in between that time, and that just goes to show that they're contemplating targets in Lagos. Two spokespersons have been captured, Abu Qaqa one and two. Leading politicians that supported Boko Haram are currently on trial. Nigeria claimed they killed five Shura Council members. It might not be true but there have been key arrests of sponsors. In terms of areas of operation, there are continued attempts to strike south. This could lead to Southern or Christian retaliation, in which case this will give Boko Haram more of an excuse to continue the cycle of violence.

Finally, al-Majiri needs reform. 2015 elections will be critical. Will a Christian president win again? How will the country respond? How will Boko Haram take advantage of this? Finally, just this past week, a group called "the Society is of the Muslims in Black Africa" emerged. They say they're different than Boko Haram and that they support an internationalist ideology and they will attack beyond borders. And it is important to look at them as we consider a factionalization within Boko Haram and those who want to continue the anti-government jihad versus those want to look at a

more international approach and maybe blend in with the events in Mali. So this is their second statement, their first was in January 2012.

## Jacob Zenn - Slides “Instability in Northern Nigeria: The View from the Ground”

*Instability in Northern Nigeria: The View From the Ground*  
Jamestown Foundation: June 19, 2012  
Presentation by: Jacob Zenn, Analyst for W.African Affairs

**Part 1:** The View From the Ground in Northern Nigeria

- Five Key Observations from the Field
- No. Nigeria's Human Terrain & Ethno-regional Networks
- Northerners' Perspectives
- Southerners' Perspectives

**Part 2:** Boko Haram as Source of Instability in Nigeria

- Boko Haram Origins, Evolution, and "Milestone Attacks"
- Typology and Targets of Attacks
- Expansion from Northern Nigeria

**Part 3:** Current Developments and Conclusions

### Key Observations from the Field

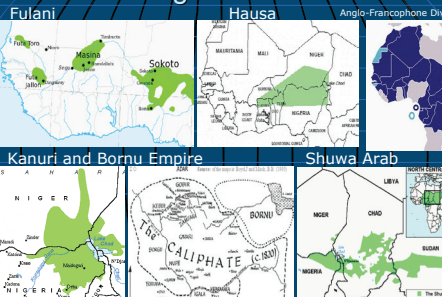


- Borno/Yobe borders closed to formal international traffic
- Maiduguri curfew; Kano militarized; Frequent road checkpoints
- Nigeria's Neighbors call BH "Nigeria's problem," but leaders disagree
- INGOs, foreigners, and "Southerners"/Christians leaving North
- Al-Majfri student-beggars rampant in Borno and rest of North

### Literacy, Unemployment Distinguish 12 Sharia States in State Rankings

State GDP			Literacy %		Unemployment %	
Rank	State	GDP (PPP)	Rank	State	Rank	State
5	Kano State	12,393,103,864	10	Gombe State	4	Kaduna State
29	Kaduna State	10,336,763,785	16	Zamfara State	1	Kofo State
17	Karara State	6,022,655,197	19	Kano State	10	Zamfara State
18	Niger State	6,002,007,080	28	Kofo State	24	Sokoto State
20	Borno State	5,175,165,142	29	Kaduna State	25	Jigawa State
22	Sokoto State	4,818,615,261	31	Sokoto State	26	Yobe State
23	Bauchi State	4,713,858,180	32	Jigawa State	37	Kano State
28	Zamfara State	4,123,829,498	33	Niger State	28	Borno State
31	Kofo State	3,290,847,166	34	Yobe State	29	Niger State
33	Jigawa State	2,988,014,405	35	Borno State	33	Gombe State
36	Gombe State	2,500,467,306	36	Bauchi State	35	Bauchi State
37	Yobe State	2,011,499,081	37	Karara State	36	Kaduna State

### Northern Nigeria Human Terrain



**Fulani** | **Hausa** | **Anglo-Francophone Divides**

**Kanuri and Bornu Empire** | **Shuwa Arab**

### Key Northern Perspectives

- Inadequacy of "half-Sharia;" Iranian "Islamic Revolution" seen as model
- Nigeria has an Islamic identity; "2/3 of the population is Muslim"
- Gov't stealing from people

Top National Problem	Corrupt pol. leaders	%
Nigeria	82	
Czech Repub.	78	
Bangladesh	76	
Argentina	75	
Indonesia	75	
Lebanon	75	
Peru	73	

**71% of Nigerian Muslims Favor Sharia**

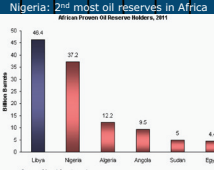
**82% of Nigerians viewed corrupt political leaders as top national problem**

Country	Free	Open	EU Index	Comp
Cambodia	10	46	1	100
Chad	12	16	1	100
DR Congo	11	17	0	100
Dominic	12	18	4	100
Egypt	10	13	1	100
Ghana	18	41	2	100
Ghana Bina	27	48	4	100
Guinea	16	18	3	100
Guinea	12	14	1	100
IMB	18	11	1	100
Indonesia	10	11	4	100
Nigeria	11	27	2	100
Nepal	10	12	2	100
Tanzania	17	16	4	100
Togo	10	16	3	100
Turkey/Mexico	10	16	3	100

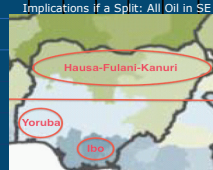
### Key Southern Perspectives

- South would be wealthier without the North; "Nigeria can split like South Sudan"
- The north's goal is to make Nigeria ungovernable; "They want the Christian President to fail"
- Believe Christians are the majority in Nigeria

**Nigeria: 2<sup>nd</sup> most oil reserves in Africa**



**Implications if a Split: All Oil in SE**



## Boko Haram as Source of Instability

- *Jama'atu AhliSunna Lidda'awati WalJihad* (People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad)
- Origins and main AO in Yobe/Borno
- Funded by politicians, *hawalas*, donations, bank robberies, and now AQIM
- "Jihadi" Faction led by Abubakr Shekau
- Holds no territory; ops in borders/urban areas
- Members also from Niger, Chad, Cameroon
- **Attacks only in Nigeria and only a particular set of targets; South now in BH's range**
- International Relationships Developing



**BBC Article, January 14, 2004**

Last updated: Wednesday, 14 January 2004, 06:42 GMT  
 Email this to a friend or print this version

**Tracking down Nigeria's 'Taliban' sect**

By Anna Borzelle  
 BBC, Kannyama, Yobe State, north-eastern Nigeria

Kannyama is a quiet village with sandy streets - at the end of a bumpy three hour car journey along a dirt track.

It is hard to believe that on New Years Eve, this place - close to the border with Niger - was the site of an attack by an Islamic sect.

The group - which the authorities believe is part of the world-wide movement, Ahlu Sunna WalJama, is also known locally as the Taliban - because of its admiration for the former administration in Afghanistan.

The group, who were camped in the thorny bush two kilometres outside Kannyama, attacked the village, destroyed government buildings and killed a policeman.

Over the next few days they went on to attack three more police posts across the district.

"I think they were only interested in attacking the authorities. That's why they didn't harm the local people," said Kannyama district official Al Haji Umar Goni.

## "Milestone" Attacks

- Confrontation begins, Christmas eve 2003 (Yobe)
- Yusuf killed in 4-day battle, 7/2009 (4 states)
- Prison Break, 9/2010 (Bauchi)
- Christmas Day Attacks, 12/2010 (Jos)
- Election Season Attacks, 8/2011 (Jos, Borno)
- UN Headquarters VBIED, 8/2011 (Abuja)
- Christmas Day Attacks, 12/2011 (Niger State)
- **Mass killing of 200+ people, 1/2012 (Kano)**
- Churches, 6/2012 (Kaduna-Wusasa)
- Lagos, Ibadan, "Yorubaland" next?

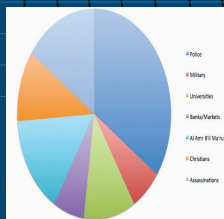


## Attacks Have Begun in the South; Still None Abroad



## Targets of Attacks

- Political/religious leaders
- Gov't, military, and police institutions
- Banks
- Beer/poker halls
- Schools/Universities
- Churches
- **Media Houses**
- Foreigners



## Conclusions: Current Developments

- **Ethnoregional networks:** Libya arms, Mali (base in Gao?), Lake Chad, Borderlands
- **Targets:** Heightened threat to foreigners
- **Arrests of Sponsors:** (K. Sokoto, Suleiman Mohamed Abu Qaqa I & II, Sen. Ali Ndume, 5 Shura members)
- **AO:** Attempts to Strike South & Southern/Christian Retaliation
- **Recruits:** Need Al-Majiri Reform
- **Civic:** 2015 Elections critical
- **Evolution:** *JamatuAnsarul Muslimina fiBiladis Sudan*



## Northern Nigeria in current West African Context



## Appendix Two, Full Text:

### Dibussi Tande

*Beyond Boko Haram: The Rise of Radical/Militant/Extremism Islam in Nigeria & Cameroon*

Hello everyone, my name is Dibussi Tande. My presentation is looking at Islamic fundamentalism in Nigeria, going beyond Boko Haram. I will be looking at the classic narrative about the emergence of Boko Haram, which Jacob has talked about, and then give an alternative perspective, pointing out a few issues, which I think are critical for understanding what's going on in Nigeria, but which have been ignored because the focus is so much on that classical narrative.

According to the classical narrative about the origins or emergence of Boko Haram, it is been fueled by social inequality, political marginalization and economic neglect. As long as these issues are addressed, then you solve the problem. Of course this is largely true, but there is also a component that is been ignored and that is what I call the alternative narrative. That alternative narrative stems from a tradition within Nigeria, that Boko Haram did not happen in a vacuum. It happened in a particular environment that facilitated and even served as a catalyst for its actions, and this goes back to the fact that Nigeria has a long tradition of Muslim or Islamic fundamentalism, a militant Islam. And this has been fueled by two factors: the first that you have an ideology, a Puritan Islam ideology, that is literal, that reads the Quran in a very literal manner, and this has caused conflict. You also have an increasing intolerance in terms of the role that Islam plays within a secular state. These two factors, beyond the economic factors, beyond the political factors, have been very critical in the Islamic radicalization in Nigeria.

We should keep in mind that before Boko Haram, you had lots of violence, lots of sectarian conflict. You had Islamic groups that were using violence as a tool to spread their message. There are some figures that say from the '70s to the 1990s, close to 50,000 people lost their lives in various types of sectarian violence. So if we go by those figures we can conclude that it is not just about Boko Haram. There is a climate that exists out there that enough attention has not been paid to. And to basically understand this we need to take a step back and look at some of the major Islamic ideologies and see how Nigeria fits into that pattern, and here we'll be talking about Sufism and Salafism, in very layman's terms because this is a topic on its own.

In very basic terms, Sufi Islam is a moderate, tolerant and adaptable version of Islam that easily adapts to local environments. It is the most popular form of Islam in West Africa because it was able to incorporate traditional African practices and form a synergetic religion that is both Islamic and traditional.

Salafism on the other hand is radical, intransigent and goes by a strict interpretation of Islam and the Quran. In Nigeria, Sufism is traditionally the dominant ideology and it is represented by two main brotherhoods: the Qadariyya and Tijaniyya. And what has happened? The rise of radical Islam, going back to the 1970s, is a direct reaction to these two philosophies: the emergence of a Wahhabi-based or Saudi Arabia-based Salafism that sought to challenge the dominance of the Sufis. And in the 70s and 80s, there were lots of violent confrontations between both groups, and

as we'll see in the rest of this paper, it is very critical in understanding what's going on in Nigeria. Without Boko Haram, Nigeria still will be an outpost of Islamic extremism in Africa, and we should pay attention to that fact.

A quick run down of the different phases. This is not linear because some phases overlap. Basically you have three main phases when you talk about the rise of Islamic extremism in Nigeria. You have the 70s with the Shari'a, the first Shari'a debate, before the birth of the second republic, you have the violence that came out of the traditional Islamic schools, like Jacob talked about, the Maitatsine riots in the 1980s. You had the increasing influence of the Wahhabis. And then you have the 1980s, the role, the very critical role that the Iranian revolution played in Nigeria. This is something that a lot of people are not aware of. And then you have the 1990s, or the fourth republic, with the adoption of Shari'a. So we'll quickly look at these, hopefully this will be within our time constraint.

In the second republic, one of the first key things when the second republic in Nigeria is a civilian regime came in 1979 and lasted until 1983. Before it came into being, there were constitutional discussions as to what a Nigerian civilian regime would look like, and one of the key elements of that debate was the role of Islamic law within the state, and the general consensus – there was a movement called the Islam Only Movement, and this movement argued that Muslims in Nigeria could not be governed by non-Islamic laws, by laws that were alien to Islam. And one of the requirements of the moderate fringe was that a Federal Islamic Court of Appeals should be created. This was rejected. You had a more radical fringe, making Islam an official religion or imposing Shari'a across the land. This debate was so polarizing in the 1970s and led to the emergence of the first real extremist or fundamentalist groups in Nigeria. The first was the Izala group, funded, supported and sponsored by the Saudis. And then you had a radical fringe emerging from within the Muslim Student Society of Nigeria which also played a key role. The main lesson out of this was that, it heightened Islamic identity in Nigeria in the 1970s, heightened Muslim identity, gave those groups that supported the Islam Only ideology or concept, a solid base within Nigeria. This was the first real foundations of what would follow later. And it also set the stage for the more bloody debate about Shari'a that would take place in 1999 with the advent of the fourth republic.

During this period we also saw the rise of the Maitatsine movement. This movement was formed by a Cameroonian malam, who had been based in Nigeria since the 1950s. He had always had problems with the Nigerian authorities, but in 1972, he actually created a movement made up of students from these Islamic, Quranic schools. And he was obsessed with purifying Islam from all Western influences. He was against the use of technology and forbade his followers to read any book apart from the Quran. In fact, those followers who read other books were considered infidels or who did not buy into his idea. The main clash came in December 1980, when, in an attempt to curb the activities of the movement, it led to widespread riots in Kaduna, Maiduguri and Kano. At the end of it all, you had officially, about 4,200 dead. But people estimate that the real number is 7,000. This was the first major action by an Islamist group in Nigeria to cause real violence. A lot of people say the Maitatsine movement was a precursor to Boko Haram, in terms of its anti-Western ideology, its penchant to use violence to resolve its issues, and this again created that environment where Salafist groups would emerge in Nigeria. And this was seen in the second phase, which was in the 1980s with the Iranian revolution.

What happened in 1980, in 1979 Ayatollah Komeni succeeded in creating an Islamic state in Iran and immediately he had converts and adherents in Nigeria who saw Iran as a model of what the Islamic state in Nigeria should be. And at the forefront of this was a group called Islamic Movement of Nigeria, also called the Muslim Brothers, who wanted to create an Islamic state in Nigeria. And this was a very violent group, we'll discuss them later, but one of the particularities of this group was that it was the first Nigerian group to embrace the concept of Martyrdom that people were allowed, were in fact encouraged to die for their religion. This group actually has an annual Martyrs day, which they celebrate annually. The most recent just took place over this weekend. And they are still having clashes with the Nigerian security forces. The most recent one took place in May, at the end of May, with about four people being killed in northern Nigeria. This doesn't usually make it in the media because it is not Boko Haram, it is not flashy, it doesn't catch the headlines. But underneath Boko Haram, you have a lot of radical Islamic action going on in Nigeria.

During the 1980s also, you had a continuation of the Maitatsine riots, up until 1985 when the military regime finally succeeded in crushing the movement. And at the same time you also had further polarization with Nigeria's entry into the organization of Islamic states, which radical Islamic groups assumed was the first stage in setting up an Islamic state in Nigeria. And this also led to a lot of sectarian violence back then.

And of course in the 1990s, after 1999, with the fourth republic, where we see a significant fundamentalist drift in Nigeria. This is not the place to go into great detail, or the reasons that led to the adoption of Shari'a. It is worth pointing out that Shari'a came into being because of an unlikely coalition of local politicians who were interested in using the Shari'a debate as a stepping stone to power, traditional Muslim elites who did not want to be irrelevant and joined the Shari'a bandwagon, the Islamic groups that saw it as a first step of creating the Islamic state, and then the public of course, which understood Shari'a as a counterbalance against a weak central government, corruption, and a counterweight to the insecurity that reigned in northern Nigeria. And these factors led to the birth of, or imposition of, Shari'a in Northern Nigeria.

But the consequence of this was that a lot of radical groups emerged in reaction to Shari'a. Either they wanted to ensure that it was strictly applied according to their definition, or to challenge those states and politicians that were not implementing it the way they saw it should be implemented. And Boko Haram is actually a group that emerged because of this circumstance. A group that at one point was allied to the state's local politicians but fell out of favor with the state once it believed that Shari'a was being implemented in a way that was not in accordance with their beliefs, hence, the targeting of state government officials, the police, and traditional Islamic rulers in Nigeria.

We'll quickly look at some of the radical groups in northern Nigeria, apart from Boko Haram. It is a very complex tangle because names change. The same group that was called for example, Al Sunna Wal Jamma, ten years later you discover that this could very well be Boko Haram. The same group that was called Nigerian Taliban, turns out to be another group. So it is sometimes difficult to separate them. But there are some major ones that are easily identifiable and they operate at the local level, at the regional level, or have a national reach. And a lot of these groups are always ignored. All the focus is on Boko Haram, but they are operating in an environment that facilitates this radical Islamic ideology. These are just some of the groups that operate in northern Nigeria, there are

hundreds, if not thousands of groups, some of them only come to light when there is violence. An example would be the Kala Kato group which in 2009 caused serious riots in Bauchi state, leading to the deaths of about 70 people. It is believed to be an offshoot of the Maitasine group, it has the same ideology, the same antigovernment philosophy.

Well I have two minutes so I will rush through. We have talked about the Izala group. This was one of the groups that promoted Shari'a law, or the Shari'a debate back in 1970, and played a very fundamental role in raising awareness about Salafist ideology in Nigeria. It has the strong backing of Saudi Arabia and it was created specifically in opposition to the Sufi brotherhoods that I mentioned earlier, and its official name is Society for the Removal of Innovation and Reinstatement of Tradition. Again, while there might be an underlying economic reason for some of this, but its target was not the state, its target was not the Christians, its target was the Muslim Brotherhoods that were not Salafist in nature.

I've mentioned the Islamic Movement of Nigeria. This group is distinct because of its embrace of Shia Islam. It is one of the groups that is noted for violence in Nigeria. In the 1990s, it carried out a series of attacks, the most gruesome being the beheading of Gideon Alakuta, an Igbo trader who was accused of desecrating the Quran. He was taken into protective custody and Islamic Movement militants attacked the police station, pulled him out, beheaded him, and paraded his head throughout the city of Kano. And nobody was ever arrested for this. So before we even talked about al-Qaeda beheadings, we already had this in Nigeria. But a lot of this is not known, a lot of this is ignored, and this group still exists. Like I said, on May 28, they had a major clash with security forces in Nigeria. They are still very active, still tied to Iran. You can see from the pictures, this is one of their demonstrations. They have military type parades and they're portrayed, this is the picture of the leader of Hizbollah and the Iranian spiritual leader. They don't make any secret about their links to Iran.

Some key factors promoting Islamic extremism in Nigeria, Jacob talked extensively of the Almajiri school system, so I will not go into detail but they are very vulnerable because of the circumstances in which they operate and they have been used as foot soldiers in lots of battles. In 2000, during the Shari'a debates in the north, they played a front line role, lots of them died. During the 2002 Miss World pageant debate in Kano, they were used again as foot soldiers for all the radical groups. Boko Haram uses them as foot soldiers. They number anywhere between 7 and 10 million in northern Nigeria. This is an army waiting to rebel. This is an army that is ill equipped to deal with the complexities of Islam or the modern state.

Nigerian universities have always been a hotbed of Islamic extremism. Going back to the 70s, spearheaded by the Muslim Student Society, which has a radical fringe. Most of the leaders, who are today at the forefront of the radical extremism in northern Nigeria, have their roots in the universities. Mohammad El Zakzaky, the guy who formed the Islamic Movement of Nigeria, was a student leader, a Secretary-General of this organization at Ahmadou Bello University. A lot of the university campuses in the north are hotbeds of Islamic extremism like Jacob pointed out, they are able to give theoretical cover to their radical Islamic ideas and they use this to spread their message.

You also have the role played by foreign states, Arab states, Iran and other countries. Saudi Arabia

and Iran have been very fundamental in spreading radical Islamic philosophies in Nigeria, and They have been able to do this, not just with funding but through social programs: building schools, giving scholarships, training imams with that specific philosophy, and those imams are sent back to the same mosques that have been built and these ideas keep on propagating.

So to end this. True, economic and political factors explain the rise of fundamentalist Islam in Nigeria. However, there are other internal factors internal to Islam in Nigeria. And you also have the role played by external powers, starting in the 1970s that cannot be ignored. If we do any study of Nigeria, or we are looking for solutions, we cannot ignore this fact. We ignore this at our peril.



# Dibussi Tande

## “Beyond Boko Haram: The Rise of Radical/Militant/Extremism Islam in Nigeria & Cameroon”



**Threats to Nigeria's Security: Boko Haram and Beyond**

Washington, DC  
June 19, 20-12

**Beyond Boko Haram:  
The Rise of Militant Islam in Nigeria**

Dibussi Tande

### Boko Haram – An Alternative Narrative

“Boko Haram emerges from a tradition of intense and often violent religious fervor among Nigerians” *Comfort Ero*

- Boko Haram a product of an age-old tradition of Islamic fundamentalism in Nigeria fuelled by:
  - Increasingly puritan views about Islam, and
  - Increasingly intolerant views about the role and place of Islam in a modern secular state
- Nigeria would still be an outpost of Islamic fundamentalism even without Boko Haram



Photo source: AP

3

### Phases of Islamic Radicalization in Nigeria

- 1970s
  - The Sharia debate in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic
  - The Maitatsine Riots
  - Increasing Influence of the Wahhabi
- 1980s and 1990s
  - Ayatollah Khomeini and the Iranian Revolution
  - Continued debates over role of Islam in national life and Nigeria's place within the Muslim World
  - An upsurge in sectarian violence
- Post-1999
  - The 4<sup>th</sup> Republic and the Sharia Law
  - Creation of Sharia-inspired extremist groups
  - Arab Awakening and emergence of Jihadist Ideology

5

### 1980s Rise of Fundamentalist Violence

- The Iranian Revolution and Islamic radicalization.
  - Birth of radical pro-Iranian Shiite group, the Islamic Movement of Nigeria (IMN)
- Continued religious polarization & escalation of sectarian violence
  - Maitatsine riots continue
  - Controversy over Nigeria's entry into Organization of Islamic States



Picture source: [Mottobooks.com](#)

1

### Classic Narrative about Religious Violence and Emergence of Boko Haram

- Social inequality, political marginalization, economic neglect the driving force behind the birth & growth of Boko Haram.



- Tackle these issues and militant Islamic groups such as Boko Haram will lose their appeal.

2

### Nigeria Within the Context of Leading Islamic Ideologies

- Sufism
  - A moderate, tolerant, adaptable movement popular among Sub-Saharan Muslims since the 17<sup>th</sup> century.
- Salafism
  - A radical and intransigent movement with a literalist, strict, and puritanical view of Islam
- Sufism vs. Salafism in Nigeria
  - Sufi dominant group represented by *Qadariyya* and *Tijaniyya* brotherhoods
  - Rise of Islamic fundamentalists in Nigeria largely a reaction to Sufism



Picture source: [Nigeriansufism.com](#)

4

### Phase 1 (1970s) Radicalism on the Rise

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic and the Sharia debate
  - First concerted attempt by Islamic fundamentalists to challenge secular nature of Nigerian state
  - Effort spear-headed by the Izala movement and the radical fringe of the Muslim Students' Society (MSS)
- The Maitatsine Movement
  - Obsessed with purifying Islam from Western influences
  - Considered the Koran as the only source of Islamic jurisprudence
  - Rejected the Sunna/Hadiths (Sayings, acts or acknowledgments of Prophet Muhammad)
  - In 1980 launched an armed insurrection, the Maitatsine Riots, in Kano that left nearly 4200 dead

6

### Post 1999 – Fundamentalist Drift Under the 4th Republic

- Zamfara State adopts Sharia in October 1999. 11 other Northern States soon follow suit.



- More radical Islamist groups emerge to ensure full implementation of Sharia.
- Global Jihadist ideology as a source of inspiration

Picture source: [The Guardian](#)

8

## An Overview of Some Radical Islamic Groups in Nigeria

"There are local flavors to radicalization in Northern Nigeria and these can sometimes be complex to untangle"

- A complex web of radical Islamic groups across Northern Nigeria with a local, regional, and/or national reach.
- Group evolution and metamorphosis sometimes difficult to follow
- Common thread among groups is a fundamentalist view of Islam

Isawa Movement  
Islam in Africa Organization  
Hezbollah Movement Nigeria  
Tablib group  
Kala Kato

Yan Izala  
Islamic Movement of Nigeria  
Nigerian Taliban  
Al Sunna Wal Jamma  
Boko Haram

9

## Major Radical Sects – Izala

"There are local flavors to radicalization in Northern Nigeria and these can sometimes be complex to untangle"

- An anti-Sufi-movement established to fight against the bid'ah (innovation) practiced by the Sufi brotherhoods
- Officially known as *Jama'atul Izalatul Bid'ah Wa'ikhamatul Sunnah*
  - Name means "society for the removal of innovation and reinstatement of tradition"
- Goal to strip Islam of all impurities, of all alien ideas and practices
- Receives funding and training from Arab countries, particularly Saudi Arabia
- Involved in anti-Sufi violence in the 1970s and 1980s

10

## Major Radical Sects – Islamic Movement in Nigeria (IMN)

- Predominantly Shiite organization dedicating to promoting Islamic revolution in Nigeria similar to Iran's.
- Contempt for symbols of statehood, legal system, and law enforcement agencies.



- Noted for street-level violence in the 1990s
  - EX: The beheading of Gideon Alakuta in 1994 for desecrating Koran.
- First Nigerian Islamist group to celebrate Martyrdom

Picture source: [lapool](#)

11

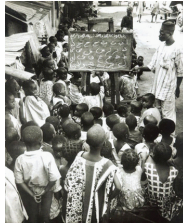
## Major Radical Sects – Kala Kato or the Reincarnation of the Maitatsine

- Considered an offshoot of Maitatsine and rooted in traditional Islamic education.
- Believe Islamic jurisprudence derives solely from the Qur'an.
- Share Boko Haram's rejection of the Western education.
- Responsible for the Kala Kato Riots of December 2009 in Bauchi which led to the killing of 70 people.

12

## Factors Promoting Islamic Extremism – The Almajiri System

- Almajiri schools form the primary level in traditional Islamic education,
  - focus on Arabic literacy and memorizing the Qur'an
- Students support themselves by begging for alms
- About 7-10 million Almajirai in Northern Nigeria
- Vulnerable and easy prey to Islamist groups



Picture source: [Southworld](#)

13

## Factors Promoting Islamic Extremism – Universities as Hotbeds of Islamic Radicalism

- Northern Nigerian universities campuses bastions of Islamic radicalism and violence.
- Muslim Students Society – active in spreading radical Islamic views.
- Many fundamentalist leaders and groups have roots in, and strong ties to Nigeria's tertiary institutions.



14

## Factors Promoting Islamic Extremism – Foreign Influences and Radicalization

- Radical Islamist groups inspired and backed by Arab states



- Radicalization and Conflict
  - Growth of puritan versions of Islam less disposed toward compromise and conciliation
  - Violent challenge of mainstream Islam and secular foundations of the state

© Zakzaky in Iran © BBC

15

## End Note – Boko Haram the Tip of the Islamist Iceberg

- Economic and political factors behind rise of fundamentalist Islam cannot be denied.



- Fundamentalist groups operate in an environment that facilitates entrenchment of Islamic extremism in Northern Nigeria.

- We ignore this at our peril!

Picture source: (AP)/Shah van Zuydam

16

## **Appendix Three, Full Text:**

**Dr. Andrew McGregor**

*Central African Militant Movements: The Northern Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroon Nexus*

Movements like Nigeria's Boko Haram have an inherent dual nature; to outsiders, they represent a type of incomprehensible fanaticism, while to their followers, their precepts and activities may seem perfectly logical, necessary and in tune with historical precedent. The trick, then, for outsiders, is to understand the motivations of Boko Haram's members, and to this end, I would like to begin by trying to place the movement in some sort of historical and religious perspective by establishing Boko Haram's ideological roots in jihadi and Mahdist movements of the 19th and 20th centuries.

### **Bornu and the Fulani Jihad**

In the late 18th century, an ethnic Fulani religious scholar living in what is now northern Nigeria became dissatisfied with the state of Islam as practiced and enforced in the region. Inspired to reform Islam in the area, Sheikh 'Uthman Dan Fodio led a largely Fulani jihad that spread through northern Cameroon and northern Nigeria, deposing corrupt elites who had strayed from Shari'a rule on his way to establishing the powerful Sokoto Caliphate.

The Fulani jihad appeared ready to sweep the 800-year-old Sayfawa dynasty from Bornu until the kingdom's ruler (Mai Ahmed) sought the help of the Libyan-born religious scholar Sheikh Muhammad al-Amin al-Kanemi. Al-Kanemi reversed the tide with the help of his Kanembu and Shuwa Arab supporters and initiated an extraordinary exchange of letters with Dan Fodio and later his son Muhammad Bello in which al-Kanemi attempted to refute the religious grounds for the Fulani jihadis' attack on the ancient Muslim kingdom of Bornu, which were based on charges of unbelief and apostasy. In one notable exchange, al-Kanemi asked Muhammad Bello: "If saying the daily prayers and paying the zakat tithes and knowing Allah and fasting in Ramadan and preserving the mosque are unbelief, then what is Islam?"

Muhammad Bello's response reminds us of the English Puritan view of Roman Catholicism: "Knowledge of Allah and daily prayers and zakat and fasting and preserving mosques will not prohibit fighting you nor be of benefit to you in this world or the hereafter because of the establishment of your apostasy from Islam, if indeed you were previously good Muslims!"

Now, why bother with this history lesson? It is simply this; that the religious debate in northern Nigeria is essentially the same today as it was in the early 19th century. One group of faithful believe that they have a mission to redeem and purify Islam, while charging the others with being Kuffar bil Takhlit, or "Unbelievers by Syncretism," in other words, the Islam of the latter has become compromised and corrupted by the inclusion of pre-Islamic beliefs. It is the same charge leveled in Borno State and the other northern states today by the leaders of Boko Haram, though no-one of the stature of al-Kanemi has stepped forward today to defend traditional Islamic practices in the region.

Twelve northern Nigerian states introduced Shari'a between 1999 and 2001 in defiance of the 1999

Nigerian Constitution, which specifies the secular nature of the Nigerian state. As in Somalia, Sudan and elsewhere, the implementation of Shari'a in the states of northern Nigeria failed to immediately solve all the ills of society. The conclusion of the radical Islamists was not that Shari'a was in itself unable to transform society, but that its implementation was done incorrectly or insufficiently and those responsible for the implementation were insincere Muslims, if not complete apostates. It was this evaluation of the situation that was at the core of Boko Haram ideology at the time of its establishment in 2002 and is itself a direct reflection of the approach taken by 'Uthman

### **Dan Fodio's Jihad in the Early 19th Century.**

Extremists in groups such as Boko Haram typically have little interaction with other Muslims outside their movement, and tend to regard such as potential enemies rather than potential allies. This "with us or against us" mentality is common not only to both Salafists and Mahdist millennial movements, but to fundamentalist or individualist interpretations of other religions such as Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism. In Islamic groups this trend often constitutes a kind of "intellectual hijra," a flight from prevailing forms of Islamic practice in favor of a "purified" version allegedly based on scripture, but often largely of their own creation. This phenomenon is apparent in Boko Haram's rejection of Western science and ideology. We must remember, however, that though attacks on churches and the northern Christian community receive considerable media attention, it must be recognized that the vast majority of victims of Boko Haram attacks are themselves Muslims, which is again common to both Mahdist and Salafist militant groups, who display little or no tolerance for Muslims who decline to abandon their traditional forms of faith.

For those unfamiliar with the concept, the Mahdi is a messianic and divinely guided deliverer of Islam who will appear at the end of time to redeem the world of Islam and purge it of sin before the Day of resurrection, but who will be preceded by al-Dajjal, a type of Islamic Anti-Christ, and the Nabi Isa, or Prophet Jesus, who will slay al-Dajjal. The belief is not supported by Quranic texts, but has deep roots in Shiite Islam and in African Sunni Islam, where the best-known Mahdi was the Sudanese Sufi Muhammad Ahmed, who conquered the Sudan through jihad before his death in 1885.

### **Maitatsine – A Latter-Day Mahdist**

In the 1980s, Alhaji Muhammadu Marwa, better known as Maitatsine, led a series of millenarian uprisings that left over four thousand dead as his followers spread out from Borno state into the other states of northern Nigeria. Maitatsine ("the one who damns") was originally from northern Cameroon, but was driven out of that nation for his provocative religious views and landed in Kano State, where his views became even more extreme. The holy man who saw himself as the successor of Dan Fodio began to attract militants from Chad and Niger, many of whom believed he could supply them with charms to protect them in battle.

Maitatsine's approach to Islam was novel, to say the least, as he rejected both the Hadith and the Sunna, acknowledging only the Quran as a legitimate source of Islamic theology. In time he rejected the prophet-hood of Muhammad while proclaiming that he himself was a prophet. Some Muslims, however, feared that Maitatsine was actually al-Dajjal, the false messiah expected at end times. Maitatsine's rejection of the West went so far as to condemn the use of watches, bicycles, au-

tomobiles and radios. His followers, known as the Yan Tatsine, began to attack police and religious figures, leading to a confrontation in which over 4,000 people, including the would-be prophet Maitatsine, were killed.

However, one of Maitatsine's disciples, Musa Makaniki, assumed the leadership of the Yan Tatsine and thousands more would perish in riots and violence in the early 1980s. Makaniki escaped to Cameroon, but returned to Nigeria in 2004, when he was arrested. Surprisingly, Makaniki was acquitted and released just last month.

Though Boko Haram leader Muhammad Yusuf, who was killed by Nigerian police in 2009, was in many ways an ideological descendant of Maitatsine, he tended more to Salafism than Mahdism. Like the Salafists, his ideological hero was Ibn Taymiyah, the 14th century scholar who articulated the concept of fighting against Muslim rulers who were considered insincere or deviant in their faith. Yusuf even named his mosque in Maiduguri after Ibn Taymiyah. Unlike Maitatsine, Muhammad Yusuf did not enter the theologically dangerous territory of declaring himself to be a prophet or the expected Mahdi.

### **Cross-Border Activities of Boko Haram**

In examining the cross-border activities of Boko Haram, it is worth noting that most of these activities take place within the boundaries of the 19th century Bornu Empire. As you can see on the map, these boundaries encompass northeastern Nigeria, the northern tip of Cameroon, southwestern Chad and northeastern Niger. After the 2009 rising in Maiduguri, security forces claimed that documents found on the bodies of dead militants indicated that many of them had come from Niger and Chad.

In the areas encompassed within the boundaries of the old Bornu Empire, residents continue to share a largely common Islamic culture, but which lately also includes widespread poverty, government corruption, political instability and underdevelopment. Following pressure applied on the Boko Haram movement by security forces in Nigeria, there have been numerous reports of Boko Haram members using Niger and Cameroon as safe havens.

In northern Cameroon, Boko Haram has made its presence known by issuing threat to local converts to Christianity to return to the Islamic fold or face "Allah's wrath." Such threats are rare in Cameroon, where Christians form a majority and Muslims form only some 25% of the population.

Cameroon faces similar problems to Nigeria in terms of corruption and a monopolization of wealth and power. The governor of Cameroon's largely Muslim Far North Region has described the threat posed by Boko Haram as "very critical" and has placed security forces and religious leaders on alert. Residents of impoverished northern Cameroon have reported strangers giving fiery anti-Western sermons and offering large cash payments to new recruits.

Despite the deployment of some 600 troops along the border with Nigeria, Abuja has criticized Cameroon for acting too slowly to prevent the Islamist militants from taking refuge in the northern

area of the country to use it as a launching pad for attacks and a secure place for storing weapons. Nigerian authorities have intercepted shipments of weapons originating in Cameroon, Cameroon nationals have been killed in battles with Nigerian security forces, and Cameroonian religious leaders have confirmed the participation of some locals in senior roles in Boko Haram. Some of these individuals are reported to have returned to Cameroon after Nigerian president Goodluck Jonathan launched an offensive against Boko Haram after the Christmas Day church bombings last December.

In neighboring Chad, President Idris Dèby, has warned of the insecurity in the Lake Chad region posed by what he describes as “the permanent threat” posed by Boko Haram and al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and has demanded the creation of a joint deterrence force formed from the military forces of the nations of the Lake Chad Basin Commission, including Nigeria, Chad, Niger, Cameroon and the Central African Republic. However, Cameroon has shown itself to be uninterested in joint security efforts and even Nigeria’s response has been disappointing, despite being the hub from which all Boko Haram activities radiate.

In January, the Nigerian government ordered the temporary closure of its borders with Cameroon, Chad and Niger to prevent cross-border activities of militants belonging to Boko Haram and other groups, including roving bands of Chadian deserters and former rebels who have made the region south of Chad their base of operations. While closing the borders may contribute to security in the short-term, it ultimately creates conditions favorable for the growth of extremism by severing trade and further reducing already small local incomes. Food shortages have already begun and the approach of waves of locusts threaten to turn the situation into a life-threatening crisis. In the meantime, Boko Haram has taken steps to assert its control of the border with Cameroon, including an April attack on a border town that destroyed a bank, reduced a Nigerian police station to ashes and left 12 people wounded. Residents of the border region have begun moving elsewhere, leaving the area open to Boko Haram activities.

Charges that Boko Haram is in collusion with al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb or even the Shabaab movement in Somalia, are as yet short of full verification, though a UN Security Council report issued in January said that some West African governments believed Boko Haram members from Nigerian and Chad received training from al-Qaeda in Mali last year. However, such unsubstantiated reports may also be part of local efforts to ensure a steady supply of funds, arms and security assistance from Western nations concerned with transnational terrorist movements such as al-Qaeda.

### **Non-Religious Factors in the Boko Haram Conflict**

Elders in Nigeria’s northern states have gathered to complain of the methods used by the counter-terrorist Joint Task Force, most notably extra-judicial executions, torture, arson, illegal detentions and various other abuses. While unsympathetic to Boko Haram’s aims, the elders have called for talks with the group as the only way out of a steadily deteriorating situation. A government White Paper released in May suggested a re-examination of the rules of engagement to reflect the low intensity of the conflict and the replacement of the JTF with troops familiar with the region and the

socio-cultural values of its residents.

The Nigerian government's Galitmari Commission on Boko Haram found that Boko Haram and other Borno State militias had their origins in the lead-up to the 2003 general elections, when they were formed and armed for use as political thugs by various politicians. Following the election, these militias were left to their own devices with many of them turning to religious extremism. Having found new sources of funding, these militias now have access to sophisticated weaponry and explosives.

Allegations of ongoing political support for Boko Haram from various political figures have been reinforced by the arrest of Senator Muhammad Ali Ndume last November on charges of having supported the movement and President Jonathan's January admission that members of his own government were supporters or sympathizers of the movement. Other evidence has been gathered pointing to the payment of protection money to the movement from state governors in the Nigerian north.

## **Conclusion**

The belief of Boko Haram or the followers of Maitatsine that they are capable of succeeding in a military struggle with one of the most powerful armed forces in Africa certainly speaks to confidence in the divine powers of a Mahdist style leader or the expectation of millenarian miracles. As we have seen, this is a trend that has historical precedence in this geographical area, with major jihad movements like that of 'Uthman Dan Fodio inspiring a wave of jihadi, neo-Mahdist and millenarian movements set on reforming Islam, eliminating corruption and deposing immoral political leaders. Although the modern radical Islamist movements in northern Nigeria did derive some inspiration from the Iranian Revolution of 1979, it is not unreasonable to suggest that Islamic extremism in northern Nigeria relies on its own momentum and precedents rather than external influences like al-Qaeda or the Saudi-funded spread of Salafist ideology. Given the highly localized inspiration for these movements and the strong possibility that they are manipulated to some degree by local politicians, it seems unlikely that al-Qaeda will ever be able to impose its will on the cyclical nature of Islamic extremism in the modern remnants of the old Bornu Empire and Sokoto Caliphate.

**Dr. Andrew McGregor**  
 “Central African Militant Movements: The Northern Nigeria,  
 Niger, Chad, and Cameroon Nexus”


**THE FULANI JIHAD IN NORTHERN NIGERIA**



**SHOULD MUSLIMS BE THE TARGET OF JIHAD?**


**SHEHU AL-HAJJ MUHAMMAD AL-KANEMI**

“If saying the daily prayers and paying the zakat tith and knowing Allah and fasting in Ramadan and preserving the mosque are unbelief, then what is Islam?”



**SHEHU AL-KANEMI REJECTS JIHAD AGAINST THE MUSLIMS OF BORNU**

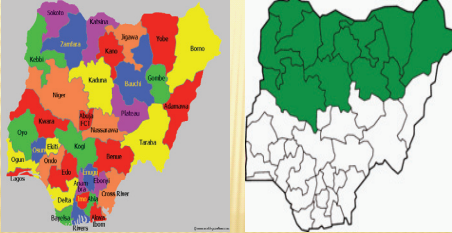
**UTHMAN DAN FODIO (1754–1817)**



Knowledge of Allah and daily prayers and zakat and fasting and preserving mosques will not prohibit fighting you nor be of benefit to you in this world or the hereafter because of the establishment of your apostasy from Islam, if indeed you were previously good Muslims!”

**RESPONSE OF MUHAMMAD BELLO, SON OF ‘UTHMAN DAN FODIO**

**THE SHARI'A STATES OF NORTH NIGERIA**



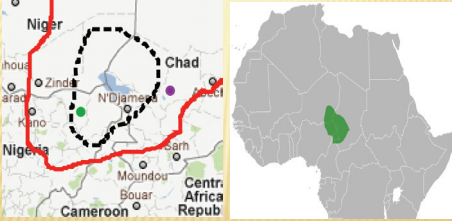
**MAITATSINE - 'THE ONE WHO DAMNS'**

- > A Native of Cameroon
- > Inspired by the Jihad of 'Uthman Dan Fodio
- > Rejected the Hadiths and the Sunna
- > Rejected Western Education and Technology
- > Initiated a Wave of Violence that Continued after his Death in 1980



**MAITATSINE (AL-HAJJ MUHAMMADU MARWA)**

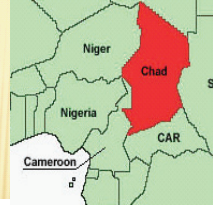
**THE BORDERS OF THE BORNU EMPIRE APPROXIMATE THE OPERATIONAL ZONE OF BOKO HARAM**





CHADIAN PRESIDENT IDRIS DEBY ITNO

CHAD EXPELS MILITANTS WHO CREATE INSECURITY IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES



ESTABLISHING SECURITY IN THE LAKE CHAD REGION

PEOPLE COMMITTED TO THE PROPAGATION OF THE SUNNAH AND JIHAD

جماعة أهل السنة للدعوة والجهاد

JAMA'ATU AHLIS SUNNA LIDDA'AWATI WA'L-JIHAD



### CONCLUSIONS

- > Local Jihadi and Millenarian Traditions are as Influential as imported Salafism
- > Boko Haram is not "spreading" so much as operating within pre-colonial borders
- > Boko Haram is the latest of a series of regional Islamic reformist movements and would likely exist with or without the influence of al-Qaeda



## Appendix Four, Full Text:

Mark McNamee

*The Niger Delta & the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND)*

It is appropriate that I am speaking last because clearly the primary security issue today in Nigeria is Boko Haram. This is fairly interesting because we could have been sitting here three, four years ago and the conversation could have been exactly the opposite. The primary security concern was clearly MEND and even at that point, pre-summer 2009, Boko Haram wasn't really on anybody's radar, to be perfectly honest. It wasn't violent, it hadn't become radicalized or militarized, and was just a potentially threatening movement that had developed over several decades, as Jacob, Dibussi, and Andrew explained.

The point I want you all to take home from this though is that MEND is still there. It has just been simply overshadowed by all the activity in the north. And there has been consistent activity since 2009 in the south, though albeit at a much lower level. That said, looking in the other direction, none of us should be surprised if in a year from now, we are sitting in the same room and we are talking about the nightmare scenario, where Abuja is looking at Boko Haram which has continued violence in the north, and there has been a resurgence of activity in the south, based upon the level of activity that is occurred since 2009. So that is the point at the end of the day, the potential spoiler that MEND can be in all this because Abuja, Nigeria, and Johnson's administration haven't addressed the underlying sources of instability, as Dibussi pointed out.

Moving on. I will not dwell too long on the history but I think it is instructive to understand the origins of MEND, where it is come from, its development to where we are today, and outlook for the future. Put simply, MEND is an umbrella group at best. Even former MEND militants and the leadership - Dokubu Asari, General Boyloaf - have said, in no uncertain terms; MEND in the way that we conceive it doesn't exist. MEND was created in 2006 out of various disparate - sometimes hostile - rebel groups and armed militias that had developed since the early 1990s and, the West, Abuja, and the presidential administration, needed a way to conceive of it in some way in order so that they could address it properly and create policy toward the group. So then we created this name, this movement, this catchall phrase called Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta. But even its leaders said its just a figment of the imagination, a catchall term to try to encompass all the regional instability and insecurity down in the Niger Delta region. So keep that in mind also because when we talk about these issues, especially here in the United States, it is easy to have this idea, as we did in the case of al Qaeda, to see these structured, hierarchical organizations with a definitive amount of members on a certain date. Instead, it is a far more amorphous and ambiguous group than the title MEND would lead you to believe.

That said, the grievances the group was founded upon are absolutely legitimate. It is based more or less on extreme environmental degradation and generally speaking, political and economical disenfranchisement, feeling that their oil wealth in the region has been stolen from them.

As far as the environment, the numbers are really astounding. Nine states comprise the Niger Delta

in the south. The Niger Delta still remains today the largest single source of greenhouse gas emissions due to the gas flaring coming out of the region. Likewise, according to the Nigerian government, from 1970 to 2000, on average, there were 250 oil spills which, doing the math, comes down to about 5 oil spills per week in the region. The UN has said to begin operations just to clean things up, it would take an initial investment of \$1 billion and many billions more over the course of 30 years. Just think about those numbers and the type of damage that does. These are all poor people, living in the small lagoons and river waterways, relying on fishing frequently, and consider the type of degradation it is done to their livelihoods. Clearly the environment is a significant and legitimate grievance.

Likewise, economically the region still remains highly unemployed, with a complete lack of infrastructure, while the government doesn't provide for any development in the region and simply takes the money out and builds palaces in Abuja or creates offshore bank accounts in Switzerland. Nobody in the region sees the money.

That is how the movement really began, based upon these grievances. And now we are getting to the radicalization issue in 1995. It really began as nonviolent and then became radicalized, much like Boko Haram - these themes transcend boundaries. The government reaction to the nonviolent demonstrations was to smash it down as it has been with Boko Haram. This led to the radicalization of the movement in 1995 with the death of Ken Sarowila. He was the human rights leader of the Ogoni people who had been, in particular, very disenfranchised and marginalized by the government. And his execution, much like that of, Mohammed Yusef of Boko Haram in 2009, in a lot of the same ways sent the same message to the people: that trying to work through the political process in a nonviolent way is not going to get you anywhere with the federal government. The federal government is not interested in your concerns, and will repress you violently. This notion, in 1995, is what incites the people to understand their position: we have no one to represent our interests and we have no other way to express our grievances.

Slowly but surely, and I am skipping a lot of history here, but getting to the meat of it all, in the early 2000s, radicalized militant groups start to emerge. This is the beginning of the movement. From really a principled movement based on the economic and environmental factors I mentioned, into less about principles and more about money. These groups developed by the time of the amnesty, plain and simple, into protection rackets. Federal and state government officials are getting the money from the oil revenue, they more or less pay off these militia groups to stay calm, keep peace, stay quiet. This is how it works. While the people in the region feel that they don't have anybody truly representing their interests, the militant groups are much more aligned with their dissatisfaction. And with over 30 million people living in the Niger Delta, nearly to a man they support these groups against the federal government.

So moving on, as I said, MEND became radicalized and militarized in the early 2000s, and in particular the largest group arose in 2002-2003, led by Dokubo Asari, the Niger Peoples Delta Task Force. This group, numerous other smaller groups, as well as unaffiliated rebel militias located across the nine states in the south begin to become more and more active in the 2000s and come under this unified catchall phrase of MEND in early 2006. The group eventually reaches its apex in 2008/2009. And the numbers are pretty staggering: Nigeria roughly has the potential to produce 2.2

to 2.3 million barrels of oil per day. By 2008 at its apex, for several months, the oil bunkering and attacks on oil installations by MEND were cutting oil production by a million barrels a day. On average, over the course of a couple years, production was roughly cut by 25 percent. MEND was effectively able to move global oil prices.

Since the amnesty in 2009, things most definitely have improved and the overall point is that, while things have improved significantly, the crisis still lingers since that time. Regarding the amnesty, if you were in the Delta in 2008/2009 and had a crystal ball and saw from 2008 to 2009 to today, viewing the level of activity that has occurred and the return of oil production, you would have all been thrilled with the progress and would have called it a success. That said, at the end of the day, as Dibussi pointed out perfectly, all they did was simply manage the conflict. They did not hit the underlying sources of instability, the grievances: the corruption, the lack of development, the lack of infrastructure, etc., which are exactly the same themes resonating in the north with Boko Haram. And this is the recurring theme that we need to keep in mind: regarding Boko Haram and MEND, there is no current - today, June 2012 - resolution to these issues.

For true resolution to these issues, we need to go back to the fundamental grievances that have been there since 1960 with the foundation of the country of Nigeria: lack of development, marginalization of religious and ethnic groups, massive wide scale corruption, etcetera. Until you actually address those issues, MEND, Boko Haram, and insurgent activity will never end. It is not a matter of resolving these issues but instead managing them to a level that we can live with. Which, I believe Nigerians can live with the level of insurgency today in the Niger Delta. However, regarding Boko Haram - I do not believe they can live with that for the long term. Nonetheless, what they should be worried about today is the rise of activity in the south, which could become, not necessarily to the pre-amnesty level of 2008 2009, but significantly worse than today.

So currently they estimate that 150,000 to 200,000 million barrels are cut in production because of the militant activity, which indicates significant progress from the earlier, 700, 800, 900,000, a million barrels per day cut. But it also indicates the continued insurgency that exists there and the potential for increased activity. As for some of the more significant events: in 2010, on the nation's 50-year independence on October 1st, simultaneous twin bombings in Abuja - interestingly outside of the Niger Delta - occurred less than a kilometer from where President Jonathan then was giving a speech after an independence day parade. Pipeline attacks have continued, though nowhere near the level of frequency as back in the pre-amnesty days of 2007, 2008, 2009. But more frightening, overall, is the vast increase in piracy in the Gulf of Guinea.

Much like the pipeline attacks, which are significantly underreported, there has been massive underreporting of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. Many analysts estimate that two-thirds - to 75% - of the piracy that occurs offshore now goes unreported. The motivation for that, many people believe, is the government's tacit agreement with the media in early 2010 to try to limit the reporting of these events in order to brag about effectiveness the amnesty program. Likewise, on the other end, ships do not report many of these attacks that occur in order to avoid higher insurance premium fees. And the higher levels of piracy, moreover, are directly related to the amnesty because since middle to late 2009, piracy in the Gulf of Guinea has increased drastically. It is widely believed that the pirates are the former ex-MEND militants and lower level fighters, who have more or less

left the jurisdiction of their senior leaders who have been paid off, that have moved farther off the coast to continue their activities. Moreover, there have been numerous attacks off the coast of Benin, which for several years had not received pirate attacks. The same applies to Togo, and Ghana, and Cameroon, etcetera.

Moving on to the oil subsidy. Just keep this in mind. If you have been paying attention to the Nigerian news, President Jonathan has long promised to take away the oil subsidy. In January, he was met with massive protests to the implementation of this policy; however, he is still trying to take that away by the end of the year. This is not necessarily going to lead to a resurgence of MEND but it is another issue to fuel the narrative of the local population and to fuel the narrative of the militants in the region.

### **Government Response**

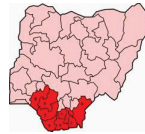
If you read a lot of the analysis today, clearly Boko Haram is the main security issue, and analysts cite the 2009 amnesty with MEND as a model for addressing the issues involving Boko Haram. Of course, everybody today would likewise love to have the same type of results and the same type of calm and decrease in militant activity that we saw with MEND following 2009 as we have with Boko Haram today. Going back to this point though – and I am really trying to hit this home because you can not belabor this long enough - nothing that they can take from the MEND model and apply to the north will have long term lasting positive consequences. And there are many reasons to think that there would not be any improvements as a result because many in Boko Haram would not be amenable to simply being paid off as these MEND militants and protection rackets were in the south. I think, in reality, the government should try to create a novel approach to the Boko Haram issue, which then in turn they can use to address and really try to solve the MEND issue in the south since this is the ultimate spoiler in it all. MEND is there, it has continued activity, and there is a lot of potential for the situation to devolve further. I will leave you with that.

## Mark McNamee

# “The Niger Delta & The Movement for the Emancipation

### MEND: Conflict in the Delta

- Umbrella Group
- Radicalization in 1995
  - Death of Ken Saro-Wiwa
- Apex in late 2000s
  - Production down by over 25%



### Amnesty to Today

- 2010 Independence Day bombings
- Pipeline Attacks
- Piracy in Gulf of Guinea
- Oil Subsidy

### Government Response...



- **Conciliatory Tactics**
  - Negotiation
  - Creation of rehabilitation program
  - Transferrable to BH?
- **Underlying Drivers Unchanged**
  - Lack of economic opportunity
  - Unequal development
  - Persistence of corruption
  - Stop-gap measure

## **Appendix Five, Closing Remarks**

### **Mark McNamee**

The single takeaway is that they're not going to make any real, long-term progress without addressing the underlying sources of instability. That said, what's more realistic is managing these issues. These are purely results of these long-term grievances that Nigeria has faced since its founding. Resolving it is not really realistic, managing it is - that is clearly possible. The very last thing to say: speaking to Nigerians on the ground and Nigerians in this country, none of them have the idea, regarding MEND specifically, that this has been resolved or that this is over. I recently talked with a colleague of mine who lives in Lagos. I said to him, what is one thing you'd like me to tell the people? For example, could we expect two years, three years down the line, that MEND's activities will return to the activity of the mid and late 2000s? He laughed and said; "Two years at the very latest! None of us would be surprised if it is six months down the road, a year at the latest."

So, imagine, combined with the Boko Haram security issue in the north, the nightmare for the Jonathan administration: to be looking at such insurgent activity in the north and south.

### **Jacob Zenn**

One main point to take away is that first Boko Haram is not called Boko Haram and it is not an organization that has membership cards, you can not count who they are, it is diverse they're really hard to pin down. It is evolved out of northeast Nigeria. To date its only been active in northern Nigeria but slowly its been starting to move down south and it envisions itself as a group that is anti-Nigerian government, that should be active in all of Nigeria, so it is only a matter of time before the group begins to develop the capabilities to move south. It is going to be difficult because they don't have the ethnic links down there to establish cells but we have already seen the first attacks in southern provinces and indications that they're targeting Lagos, from members that have been detained we have heard it is becoming an internationalist movement. The Boko Haram has been around for ten years has never attacks beyond the border even though it is attacked border posts itself. But what's happening in Mali, there are members of the group that are beginning to take an internationalist mentality to this, kind of like an al-Qaeda mentality and I showed the group at the end, the Supporters of Islam in Black Africa. It is very likely that some members from Boko Haram will leave this Nigerian fold and start to try to take what they're doing to a regional and national level. However, it is important to note that it is beyond their capacity to hit the West, but within the region, it is not unlikely.

### **Dibussi Tande**

The main takeaway from my presentation is simple, that beyond the social, economic and political issues, that explain the emergence of Boko Haram, we should not forget or we should not ignore the factors that are internal to Islam in Nigeria. And that factor is a critical one that should

not be ignored; it should be included in every analysis in the search for the solution to Islamic extremism in that country.

### **Andrew McGregor**

My main point is that when we are looking at the ongoing violence – political violence, religious violence – in northern Nigeria, we have to recognize that there is a real historical continuity to this. It did not just start yesterday. It is deeply rooted in various movements in the past that have been dedicated to the reform of Islam, the elimination of corrupt regimes, and the implementation of Sharia as the national way of life and legal system. And the other thing we have to remember is that many of these movements, including the present Boko Haram and some of the other movements, are not necessarily based on jihadi, Salafist norms, they are not what we have come to expect from areas under influence of al Qaeda movements. They are quite local in nature, they have their own traditions, and their own belief systems, and in this sense they are probably as difficult to manipulate for groups like al Qaeda, which have a very firm Salafist view point, as they are for systems such as the state government of Nigeria or any other external force that wants to try to bring these movements under some type of control.