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**Before**

**The Committee on Homeland Security:  
Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence**

**Hearing: “Boko Haram: Emerging Threat to the U.S. Homeland”  
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Chairman Meehan, Ranking Member Speier, and distinguished Members of the House Subcommittee, thank you for inviting CRS to testify today regarding the threat posed by Boko Haram, a violent Islamist group in northern Nigeria that has grown increasingly active in the past year. While Boko Haram has remained primarily focused on a domestic agenda, there are indications that some elements of the group may be expanding ties with more developed violent Islamist groups in Africa, particularly the regional Al Qaeda affiliate, Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).

Boko Haram emerged in the early 2000s as a small, radical Sunni Islamic sect that advocated a strict interpretation and implementation of Islamic law for the country. Calling itself *Jama'a Ahl as-Sunna Li-da'wa wa-al Jihad* (JASLWJ; roughly translated from Arabic as “People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet’s Teachings and Jihad”), the group is more popularly known as Boko Haram (“Western education is forbidden”), a nickname given by local Hausa-speaking communities to describe the group’s view that western education and culture have been corrupting influences in Nigeria. Periodic skirmishes with police occurred in Boko Haram’s formative years, but the group’s activities were limited in scope and contained within several highly impoverished states in the predominately Muslim northeast. Until this year, the Nigerian government appears to have primarily considered Boko Haram to have been merely a nuisance, particularly in comparison to secular militant groups threatening oil production in the southern Niger Delta region.

In July 2009, the Nigerian government’s attempts to stop Boko Haram’s attacks on police stations and other government buildings resulted in at least 700 deaths. In the course of that violence, the group’s leader, Mohammed Yusuf, a charismatic young cleric who had

studied in Saudi Arabia, was killed while in police custody.<sup>1</sup> A sizeable number of Yusuf's followers were also killed or arrested.

Boko Haram appeared to dissipate after the heavy-handed security crackdown, but reemerged a year later, orchestrating a large-scale prison break in September 2010 that freed 700 prisoners, including more than 100 of its own members. The group's attacks have since increased substantially in frequency, reach, and lethality, now occurring almost daily in northeast Nigeria. They now periodically reach as far as the capital city of Abuja. The group has primarily focused its attacks on state and federal targets such as police and military facilities and other government buildings, but has also targeted civilians in churches, mosques, and beer halls. Bank robberies have also been attributed to the group and may contribute to its financing, although Nigerian authorities warn that criminal groups may also be opportunistically posing as Boko Haram militants.

By most accounts, Boko Haram is not a monolithic organization. As it has evolved, it appears increasingly diffuse. Its cells appear to operate largely autonomously under state or regional-level leadership, although leadership is generally attributed to Yusuf's former second-in-command, Abubakar Shekau. According to U.S. government sources, the core group of Boko Haram militants may number in the hundreds, but the group also draws support from a broader following of several thousand Nigerians, primarily from the northeast. Some observers suggest that attacks attributed to Boko Haram may actually be the work of several different groups, noting variations in the tactics and bomb-making styles employed in recent attacks. Others suggest Boko Haram may be susceptible to fracturing, with a segment of the leadership working to build ties with the international Al Qaeda franchise while most other elements of the group remain focused exclusively on a local agenda.

Since its reemergence, Boko Haram has appeared increasingly committed to acts that aim to discredit and delegitimize the Nigerian state by exposing the weakness of its security apparatus and creating generalized insecurity. Targeted shootings from motorbikes have been a hallmark of Boko Haram, although attacks attributed to the group since 2010 have increasingly featured improvised explosive devices (IEDs), car bombs, and, more recently, suicide attacks.<sup>2</sup> In a region where small arms are fairly easy to acquire, the low-cost use of gunmen to intimidate opponents, instill fear, and create a heightened sense of insecurity has been remarkably effective. The state of Borno, where many of Boko Haram's attacks have occurred, is now described by some observers as a police state, albeit an ineffective one. On November 4, armed men claiming affiliation with Boko Haram committed the group's most deadly spate of bombings and shootings to date, killing as many as 130 people in attacks against government buildings, banks, churches, and mosques in the northeastern state of Yobe. According to Human Rights Watch, more than 425 people, including politicians, community and religious leaders, members of the security forces, and civilians have been killed in attacks attributed to Boko Haram.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Islamic Death 'Good for Nigeria'," BBC, July 31, 2009.

<sup>2</sup> The June 2011 attack on the National Police Headquarters in Abuja is reported to be Boko Haram's first use of a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device.

<sup>3</sup> Human Rights Watch (HRW), "Nigeria: Boko Haram Attacks Indefensible," November 8, 2011.

## Is Boko Haram Evolving from a Domestic to a Transnational Threat?

The August 24 suicide bombing of the United Nations building in Abuja has put Boko Haram under increased international scrutiny. The targeting of the United Nations by a suicide bomber marks a major departure from the group's previous focus on domestic targets. Likewise, it was Boko Haram's first clearly intentional suicide bombing.<sup>4</sup> Spokesmen for the group have claimed responsibility for the attack, declaring it to be retribution for the state's heavy-handed security response against its members. They have also have referenced U.S. and international "collaboration" with the Nigerian government and its security apparatus as rationale for targeting the United Nations.<sup>5</sup> As the group's first known operation against an international target, the U.N. bombing may indicate an aspiration by some in Boko Haram to move beyond local and national politics toward an international jihadist agenda, or it may be part of an effort to elicit backing from international groups for its domestic agenda.

Media reports suggest that, in the wake of the July 2009 crackdown against Boko Haram, some of its members and senior leaders may have dispersed to neighboring countries to regroup and receive paramilitary training at AQIM camps. Cross-border transit by Boko Haram militants to and from neighboring Chad and Niger remains a serious concern. Experts have noted that Boko Haram's attacks show increasing coordination and sophistication and that their tactics at times resemble those of Al Qaeda and its affiliates. The U.N. attack is reminiscent of the deadly 2007 attack by AQIM on a U.N. building in Algeria. That attack, conducted in coordination with bombings of several government buildings, marked a shift in AQIM's tactics to large-scale suicide attacks after the Algerian militant Islamist group formerly known as the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC) changed its name to AQIM.

In congressional hearings earlier this year, Director of National Intelligence James Clapper highlighted a range of security concerns in Nigeria as potential threats to U.S. national interests, touching on political and sectarian violence and militancy in the Niger Delta as well as in the northeast, where Boko Haram was becoming increasingly active. In his testimony, he suggested that although Boko Haram appeared to remain largely focused on domestic issues, "it may be pursuing interests it shares with" AQIM.<sup>6</sup> More recently, CIA Director David Petraeus named the group during a joint hearing of the House and Senate Intelligence Committees on threats to the United States.

U.S. intelligence officials continue to warn that despite the reportedly degraded capacity of Al Qaeda to carry out attacks against the U.S. homeland, Al Qaeda sympathizers and affiliated groups still pose a significant threat. As CRS has noted in its coverage of Al Qaeda's affiliated groups, AQIM continues to pose the main transnational terrorist threat in North Africa and the Sahel, but to date none of AQIM's actions indicate a clear threat

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<sup>4</sup> Some refer to a June 2011 bombing of the police headquarters in Abuja as a suicide attack, but others suggest the bomber's death may not have been intentional.

<sup>5</sup> "Alleged Islamic Sect 'Spokesman' Claims Deadly Attack on U.N. in Nigeria," AFP, August 26, 2011; and "Nigerian Islamists Claim Responsibility for U.N. Building Blast," Xinhua, August 28, 2011.

<sup>6</sup> See the February 2011 hearings by the House and Senate intelligence communities on worldwide threats. See also a joint hearing by the House and Senate Select Intelligence Committees, "Threats Against the United States Since September 11, 2001," held on September 13, 2011.

to the U.S. homeland.<sup>7</sup> AQIM does, however, continue to threaten U.S. and Western targets in Algeria and the Sahel, and if it were to work together with Boko Haram the groups could expand their operational reach. AQIM has expressed support for the creation of an Islamic caliphate in Nigeria, and AQIM leader Abdelmalik Droukdel publicly offered Boko Haram assistance in early 2010.<sup>8</sup> In October 2010, AQIM's media arm published a statement by Shekau that is cited by analysts as the first time AQIM had disseminated an official message from another group.<sup>9</sup> AQIM and Boko Haram officials have referenced growing ties in public statements, although many observers suggest their relationship has been more "aspirational" than operational.<sup>10</sup> U.S. officials report that contact between members of the groups is increasingly frequent.<sup>11</sup>

If reports of AQIM providing weapons, personnel, and training are accurate, they warrant increased vigilance.<sup>12</sup> Boko Haram's explosives have reportedly grown increasingly sophisticated and by some accounts may bear hallmarks of bomb-making techniques used by Al Qaeda affiliates. Some analysts caution, however, that the groups' relationship may still be fairly limited in scope and that a nominal link between Boko Haram and AQIM may be mutually beneficial to both groups. Publicly linking the two may serve to enhance Boko Haram's credentials among radicals to facilitate recruitment and financial support.

Concerns have been raised that Boko Haram may follow through on threats to target Nigeria's oil infrastructure, although many analysts argue that it would have a difficult time operating in the south, where the oil is produced. The May 2011 kidnapping of British and Italian citizens from northern Nigeria highlights a threat to foreign citizens in the region, and some experts speculate that Boko Haram may try to fundraise through kidnappings-for-ransom, a hallmark of AQIM and other Nigerian militant groups. Also of concern is the possibility that Boko Haram or AQIM may try to acquire weapons systems from former Libyan stockpiles, including surface-to-air missiles, which according to some reports may be flowing south through Niger.<sup>13</sup> Nigeria is one of only a handful of West African countries to which U.S. airlines may fly directly from the United States.

Given the jurisdiction of your committee, I understand that the attempted terror attack in December 2009 by a Nigerian passenger, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, on an American airliner en route to Detroit heightens concerns regarding radicalization within Nigeria's sizeable Muslim population and raises questions as to whether one of Boko Haram's followers might attempt something similar. Abdulmutallab, the son of a respected Nigerian banker and former government minister, had no known ties to Boko Haram; instead reports suggest that he became radicalized while living abroad. He received

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<sup>7</sup> CRS Report R41070, *Al Qaeda and its Affiliates*, by John Rollins et al.

<sup>8</sup> "Fertile Ground: The Potential for Jihad in Nigeria," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, September 2010.

<sup>9</sup> Open Source Center, "Terrorism – AQLIM Publication of Boko Haram Statement Indicates Ties," *OSC Report* FEA20101020010563, October 19, 2010.

<sup>10</sup> See, e.g., "Boko Haram 'Spokesman' Claims Al-Qa'ida Links," AFP, November 24, 2011.

<sup>11</sup> Paul Cruickshank and Tim Lister, "Al Qaeda-Linked Group Finds Fertile Territory in Nigeria as Killings Escalate," CNN, November 18, 2011.

<sup>12</sup> Robyn Dixon, "Nigeria Militant Group Boko Haram's Attacks Attract Speculation," *Los Angeles Times*, September 13, 2011.

<sup>13</sup> See, e.g., "Report Reveals Inflow of Arms Into Northern Nigeria Through Niger, Chad Borders," *Nigerian Tribune Online*, October 3, 2011.

training and sponsorship in Yemen from Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). Nevertheless, the expansion of groups like Boko Haram in northern Nigeria have raised concerns that other Nigerians may be susceptible to recruitment by Al Qaeda or other groups hoping to use violence against government or civilian targets in Nigeria or abroad.

### **Boko Haram in the Context of Nigeria**

Understanding Boko Haram's appeal among some citizens in Nigeria's far north requires an examination of the underlying development challenges facing northern Nigeria, where high rates of poverty and unemployment are exacerbated by extreme population growth and low levels of literacy. These factors, combined with weak governance, rampant corruption, and inadequate public service delivery, have contributed to widespread disaffection that some suggest may facilitate Boko Haram recruitment. Some observers contend that elements of the northern political classes have "tolerated" Boko Haram out of frustration with the government and sympathy for some of the group's political aims.

Nigeria is Africa's most populous country, with over 150 million people, roughly half Muslim and half Christian. It is also Africa's second-largest economy, after South Africa, and its largest producer of oil. Despite its oil wealth, Nigeria remains severely underdeveloped, and development indicators are lowest in the north (see attached maps). Poor governance and widespread corruption nationwide have severely limited infrastructure development and the provision of social services, thus hindering economic growth and leaving much of the country mired in poverty.

Northern Nigeria was governed separately from the south under the British colonial administration. Military leaders from the north dominated Nigerian politics until the transition to civilian rule in 1999, but the north shows little sign today of having benefited from their influence in government. The north is predominately Sunni Muslim, and twelve northern states have adopted sharia law since 1999 to adjudicate criminal and civil matters for Muslims.<sup>14</sup> In some states, the introduction of sharia was a flashpoint between Muslims and Christians.<sup>15</sup> The State Department reports that sharia "technically does not apply to non-Muslims in civil and criminal proceedings," although observers note that Islamic mores are often enforced in public without regard for citizens' religion. In some areas, state-funded vigilante groups known as *hisbah* patrol public areas to enforce sharia rulings. Many analysts nonetheless see the interpretation and implementation of Nigerian sharia as moderate in comparison to that of some other Muslim-majority countries.

In Nigeria, divisions between ethnic groups, between regions, and between Christians and Muslims often stem from perceived differences in access to land and social and economic development. Clashes among communities in the culturally diverse "Middle Belt" (where north and south meet) in the past decade reflect tensions that are both religious and ethnic. These tensions stem from a competition over resources—land, education,

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<sup>14</sup> Nigerian law protects freedom of religion and permits states to establish courts based on common law or customary law systems. Non-sharia based common law and customary law courts adjudicate cases involving non-Muslims in these states, and sharia-based criminal law courts are elective for non-Muslims.

<sup>15</sup> In 2000, for example, an estimated 2,000 people were killed in Kaduna in clashes sparked by the introduction of Islamic law in the state.

government jobs—between ethnic groups classified as settlers or “indigene” (original inhabitants of the state), a designation that conveys political and economic benefits.<sup>16</sup> Some political elites fan communal resentments, leading periodically to considerable unrest and displacement. By some estimates, as many as 13,000 Nigerians have been killed in sectarian violence since the return to civilian rule. Some analysts warn that these tensions, if left unaddressed, may ultimately threaten both the stability of the state and the wider region. The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom suggests that the government has tolerated the violence by failing to prevent or respond to it.<sup>17</sup>

A history of poor governance, corruption, and flawed elections has undermined the authority and legitimacy of the Nigerian state. Elections in the 2000s were deemed progressively worse than the last. Most observers, including U.S. officials, consider the April 2011 elections to have been a significant improvement, but the elections were not without problems.<sup>18</sup> Supporters of the leading opposition candidate for the presidency, a former northern military leader, alleged that the ruling party had rigged the poll to favor incumbent President Goodluck Jonathan, a southern Christian.<sup>19</sup> The widespread post-election rioting and violence that broke out across the north in protest of Jonathan’s win highlighted mistrust and grievances that many northerners feel have yet to be addressed. During that violence, which occurred largely along religious and ethnic lines, at least 800 people were killed, and more than 65,000 displaced.<sup>20</sup>

According to the State Department, corruption in Nigeria is “massive, widespread, and pervasive.”<sup>21</sup> The country is a major drug trans-shipment point and a significant center for criminal financial activity. It is also considered by the State Department to be a major center for money laundering, and the government only recently criminalized terrorist financing.<sup>22</sup> Observers suggest Nigeria’s development will be hamstrung until it can reverse its perceived culture of impunity for political and economic crimes. Last week, Nigeria’s President replaced the head of the country’s anti-corruption agency, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), as part of his effort to “revitalize the fight against corruption.”<sup>23</sup> Critics remain skeptical of the agency’s effectiveness.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Communities classified as indigene vary from state to state.

<sup>17</sup> U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, *Annual Report 2011*, May 2011.

<sup>18</sup> See, e.g., the White House, *Statement by President Obama on Elections in Nigeria*, May 4, 2011; Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, *Press Release: Election in Nigeria*, April 19, 2011. Several political rallies were marred by bombings, predominantly in one of the Niger Delta states. There were at least six bombings in Borno state. Boko Haram claimed responsibility in January for the assassination of Borno’s leading gubernatorial candidate and several of his supporters. Responsibility for the bombing of the state election commission headquarters in Niger state remains in question.

<sup>19</sup> There has been an unwritten agreement since 1999 that the presidency should rotate among regions. The death of President Umaru Yar’Adua in office in 2010 complicated that rotation. Yar’Adua, a northerner, was succeeded by his vice president, Goodluck Jonathan, a Christian from the Niger Delta. Jonathan won the support of key northern ruling party leaders to stand as the party’s candidate in the 2011 elections, despite warnings that suspending the regional rotation could increase the potential for regional conflict.

<sup>20</sup> HRW, “Nigeria: Post-Election Violence Killed 800,” May 16, 2011.

<sup>21</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Nigeria,” *Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2009*, March 2010.

<sup>22</sup> U.S. Department of State, Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report*, Volume 2, March 2011, and *Money Laundering and Financial Crimes Country Database*, May 2011.

<sup>23</sup> “Nigeria’s Anti-Corruption Chief Farida Waziri Sacked,” BBC, November 23, 2011.

The Nigerian government faces mounting, and at times competing, internal and external pressures to implement reforms deemed key to addressing corruption and other development and security challenges. Its ability to address real grievances in both the restive Niger Delta region and in the populous north are critical to achieving the government's overall development goals and attracting much-needed foreign investment.

### **The Nigerian Response to Boko Haram**

Boko Haram is a threat that most observers agree must ultimately be dealt with by the Nigerian government, but many consider its responses to date to be ineffective. Indeed, some critics contend that the government has contributed to the problem. In September 2011, a commission appointed by President Jonathan to investigate the security challenges emanating from the northeast reported that security force lapses and heavy-handedness, weak governance, and underdevelopment had all contributed to the rise in violence in the region.

The commission also recommended that the government engage Boko Haram in a dialogue, in effect trying to replicate negotiations with Niger Delta militants that led in 2009 to an amnesty and rehabilitation program that has, to date, been fairly successful in quieting militia attacks. Views on the proposed negotiations are mixed, given Boko Haram's loose organizational structure and perceptions that the demands of the hardline leadership of the group are not open to compromise. The Jonathan Administration has been skeptical of negotiations, but has acknowledged the need to foster development in the north and address the perceived marginalization that has fueled periodic protests against the government. It is unclear, however, whether the Jonathan government has the political will or clout to affect major changes.

Some reports suggest that Boko Haram may receive political patronage and sponsorship from certain northern elites.<sup>25</sup> Nigerian police recently arrested a ruling party senator on suspicion of providing funding for the group, after an alleged Boko Haram spokesman, now in custody, reportedly linked him to the group. The motivations for certain elites to support the group are likely varied. Some may seek to embarrass President Jonathan or discredit the security services, while others may seek to use the group to serve local political ambitions or settle scores with opponents. The use of private militias by politicians has been an all too common occurrence in Nigerian politics.

While successive Nigerian administrations have been supportive of international counterterrorism initiatives, the government has been slow to adopt anti-terrorism legislation. The Nigerian parliament finally adopted long-debated anti-terrorism and money laundering laws earlier this year amid mounting political pressure after a series of

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<sup>24</sup> HRW, *Corruption on Trial? The Record of Nigeria's Economic and Financial Crimes Commission*, August 25, 2011.

<sup>25</sup> An alleged Boko Haram spokesman, Ali Sanda Umar Konduga, who was arrested in November 2011, has reportedly implicated Senator Mohammed Ali Ndume of the country's ruling party as a sponsor. Ndume is a member of a committee appointed by President Jonathan to consider peace negotiations with Boko Haram. Konduga may also have implicated other former members of the Nigerian government, including an ambassador who is now deceased and a former governor. "Arrest of Senator, Alleged Voice of a Radical Muslim Sect in Nigeria Brings More Questions," Associated Press, November 23, 2011.

bombings. If allegations of financing by northern elites are credible, the Nigerian government may benefit from technical assistance in forensic accounting. Given sensitivities regarding general corruption, however, it is unclear whether the government would welcome such an offer. Interested donors may also consider efforts to support the Jonathan Administration's attempts to increase interagency coordination and restructure the Nigerian security services to better respond to terrorist threats.

As the violence in the northeast escalated in mid-2011, the Nigerian government determined that the police lacked the capacity to counter the threat posed by Boko Haram and deployed a Joint Task Force (composed of military and police) to the northeast. The Task Force has established a heavy security presence in Maiduguri, the capital of Borno state, conducting house-to-house searches, and generating considerable ill-will among local communities for its at times aggressive and intrusive response. Several respected northern leaders have called on the government to withdraw the force. Nigerian security forces, particularly the police, have historically been accused of serious human rights abuses. Activists suggest that the government has done little to address issues of impunity and corruption within the police force. In 2007, the U.N. Special Rapporteur on Torture reported that "torture is an intrinsic part of how law enforcement services operate within the country."<sup>26</sup> The State Department's annual human rights reports on Nigeria document numerous serious abuses by security forces. Many Nigeria experts caution that if Nigerian security services continue their heavy handed response in the northeast, it may further alienate local communities.

The State Department's 2009 human rights report noted serious abuses by both police and soldiers during the July 2009 Boko Haram uprising and cited "credible media reports" claiming that police executed Yusuf. Nigerian officials have acknowledged some abuses, and in July 2011 criminal charges were finally filed against five police officers, including three who hold fairly senior positions, for the killing of Yusuf and his followers. In August 2011, the military commenced the court marshal of a military commander in charge of forces responsible for the deaths of 42 militants during the June 2009 violence.

### **U.S. Interests in Nigeria and U.S. Engagement on the Boko Haram Threat**

The Obama Administration considers Nigeria to be one of its key strategic partners on the continent, and various U.S. government agencies appear to be considering the threat posed by Boko Haram through different lenses. The United States and Nigeria, which currently sits on the U.N. Security Council, often find common ground in international fora. The country plays a significant role in peace and stability operations across Africa and is a major troop contributor to U.N. peacekeeping operations around the world. Its geostrategic position in West Africa and its role as significant supplier of oil to the United States are also key considerations in U.S-Nigeria relations. Additionally, Nigerians comprise the largest percentage of African immigrants living in the United States.

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<sup>26</sup> U.N. Press Release, "Special Rapporteur on Torture Concludes Visit to Nigeria," March 12, 2007.

Given Nigeria's strategic potential, the United States provides the country with military training, emphasizing professionalism and respect for human rights and civilian authority through a range of programs. Efforts to enhance Nigeria's peacekeeping capabilities are a primary focus, as are initiatives to secure its land and maritime borders. Nigeria participates in the State Department's Trans Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP), a U.S. interagency effort that aims to increase border protection and regional counter-terrorism capabilities. However, it has historically played a comparatively minor role in that initiative in contrast to the Sahel states affected by AQIM. The Nigerian military has also received counterterrorism assistance through the Department of Defense, although the amount it has received is smaller than that received by the Sahel states or the East African countries neighboring Somalia. Human rights and corruption concerns have limited U.S. assistance for the Nigerian police.

The United States is the largest bilateral donor in Nigeria, providing over \$600 million annually in recent years to bolster democratic governance, agriculture and economic reform, education and health services, and to professionalize and reform the security services. The overwhelming majority of that aid is focused on health programs. The U.S. government has urged greater attention to development in the north, and USAID implements several "flagship" programs in two northern Nigerian states: Sokoto and Bauchi (the latter is located in the northeast and has suffered Boko Haram attacks in the past year). These programs, which are designed to concentrate resources and achieve maximum impact, aim to strengthen state and local government education and primary healthcare systems, and to build local public-private partnerships in an attempt to improve accountability and service delivery. Other programs that may benefit the north include U.S. efforts to support reforms to the country's power sector that may increase access to electricity. The Obama Administration is also initiating new conflict mitigation programs to address extremism in the north. The State Department maintains 10 "American Corners" (regional resource centers) in Nigeria to share information on American culture and values.

Cooperation on counterterrorism reportedly improved in the aftermath of the December 2009 airliner bombing attempt, although some government officials remain sensitive to perceived foreign intrusion in domestic affairs. The Nigerian government has coordinated with the Department of Homeland Security, the Federal Aviation Administration, and the International Civil Aviation Organization to strengthen security systems at Nigeria's international airports, and began using full body scanners in 2010. The Nigerian government has also reportedly been receptive to post-blast investigative support by the Federal Bureau of Investigation since the August 2011 U.N. bombing.

In approaching the threat posed by Boko Haram, the State Department has urged the Nigerian government to balance its security response with efforts to address some of the legitimate grievances voiced by northern communities. Obama Administration officials have recognized the need to help Nigeria bolster its counterterrorism capabilities and secure its borders, but will likely press for more effective responses from Nigeria's security forces and its federal and state government structures in responding to the Boko Haram phenomenon. Boko Haram may not find widespread support for its tactics in northern Nigeria, but it does enjoy some sympathy for its cause. Going forward, U.S.

policymakers must determine the various risks, benefits, and tradeoffs associated with the different counterterrorism and counter-radicalization measures in their toolkit and weigh their effects against other U.S. policy goals in the country and the wider region.