

HUMANITARIAN AID RELIEF TRUST (HART)

Briefing on Nigeria, covering December 2014 – February 2015

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Background

2014 was considered to be one of the **bloodiest** years since Boko Haram launched their insurgency campaign of **bombings, abductions and assassinations** in the name of overthrowing the government and creating a caliphate (Islamic state) under its interpreted version of Islam. It is unlikely that 2015 will be any different. Indeed, the year could, in many ways, turn out even bloodier than the last, unless regional forces alongside their Nigerian counterparts are finally able to decisively challenge Boko Haram's reign of terror in the northeast of Nigeria. Coupled with staggering levels of abject poverty and high levels of corruption, there is a lot of progress to be made on many different fronts.

As acknowledged by Mr. Sambo Dasuki on 22nd January 2015, currently National Security Adviser to incumbent President Goodluck Jonathan, there are three contentious issues surrounding **Nigeria's security** today: the Boko Haram insurgency; tackling corruption; and the 2015 General Elections. This briefing will highlight key developments in two (insurgency and elections) of the three security-related areas from the period of December 2014 until mid-February 2015, with cases of corruption falling under the respective category. All three areas are interlinked with each other and through reliable news sources, the briefing will demonstrate the way changes in one unavoidably affect the other areas.

The crucial question is whether Nigeria can make 2015 the year that stabilised the nation. The current government has already created various strategies on how to tackle the country's issues as Mr. Sambo Dasuki **notes** – *"We have developed a new national security strategy that puts our people at the heart of our efforts, a national counterterrorism strategy that employs both hard and soft power, and an economic revitalization plan that will bring succour to those most vulnerable and those affected by violence."*

*Disclaimer: This briefing contains key developments and does not cover all news related to the subject matter.

Important developments

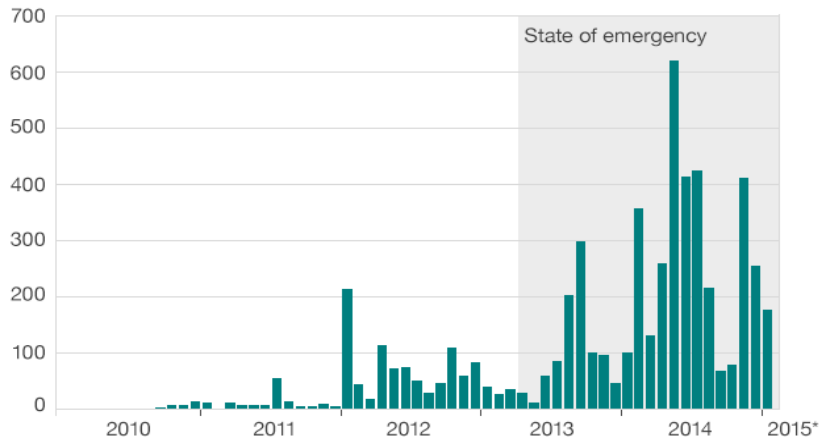
- On 3rd January Boko Haram launched **fierce attacks** on the towns of Baga and Doron Baga. Estimates of those killed range from 150, according to Nigeria's government, to 2,000 people, according to a local official. The attack forced more than 14,000 to **seek refuge** in neighbouring Chad.
- Chad's military **enters the fight** against Boko Haram on the 15th – 16th January, with **initial reports** from Cameroon's President Paul Biya and the Chadian army, confirming but not specifying how many soldiers are sent or what their role is. On 10th February Nigeria, Niger, Chad, Cameroon and Benin send a joint **force of 8,700 troops** to fight Boko Haram in Nigeria. The UN Security Council is **continuously vocal** in condemning in their strongest terms attacks by Boko Haram against Chadian soldiers.

- Postponement of the elections, a decision made in order to allow for the government to retake areas controlled by Boko Haram, has [produced mixed reactions](#). There is disbelief that Nigeria's military will be able to solve the Boko Haram problem in the northeast in time for the newly set election date of 28th March. The move to postpone the elections [appears to solve nothing](#), and instead will most likely plunge the country into more civil strife.

Boko Haram insurgency – Timeline of attacks and related news

- December 11th – BBC World Service and King's College London released investigation findings on '[Jihadism: Tracking a month of deadly attacks](#)', determining the number of worldwide jihadist-related deaths during the month of November. The findings: 27 jihadist-related attacks took place in Nigeria in November, killing 786 people.
- December 14th – Boko Haram insurgents [kidnapped](#) 185 women and children and killed 32 in a raid in the village of Gumsuri, north of Chibok.
- December 28th – 29th – A coordinated attack by Boko Haram on five towns and villages near the Cameroonian border leaves [41 militants dead](#) – areas successfully defended by the Cameroonian army.
- January 3rd - Boko Haram launched [fierce attacks](#) on the towns of Baga and Doron Baga killing between 150 and 2,000 people. The attack forced more than 14,000 to [seek refuge](#) in neighbouring Chad.
- January 9th – As a result of the Baga attack, more than 7,000 refugees [fled](#) to neighbouring Chad, according to UNHCR. UNHCR also detailed the massive displacement issues in the north-east's states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe – *“In all, the conflict in north-east Nigeria has led to the exodus of 135,000 people – around 35,000 Nigerians to Cameroon and 10,000 to Chad – and the displacement of at least 850,000 people within Nigeria's Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states.”*
- January 10th – At least 19 people were [killed](#) and several injured by a bomb strapped to a girl reported be around the age of 10, in a market in the town of Maiduguri.
- January 12th – A Boko Haram attack on a military camp in Cameroon was [successfully repelled](#); 143 Boko Haram fighters were killed.
- January 13th – The increasing [difficulty in obtaining reliable information](#) about events happening in Nigeria is a sign of weakening humanitarian efforts from Nigeria's government, highlighted by the BBC. Graph below shows us the reported civilian deaths, in most cases estimates and provisional findings due to lack of quick and reliable information sources. (Graph source: BBC News)

Reported civilian deaths by Boko Haram, Sept 2010-Jan 2015



Note: Fatalities up to 10 Jan, includes provisional 150 deaths for attack on Baga

Source: Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project, created by Prof Clionadh Raleigh, Uni of Sussex

- January 16th – 17th - Chad's military [enters the fight](#) against Boko Haram. The UN Security Council is [continuously vocal](#) in condemning in their strongest terms attacks by Boko Haram against Chadian soldiers.
- January 25th – Boko Haram [attacks](#) the strategically important city of Maiduguri in north-eastern Nigeria. The [city's significance](#) lies with the birth of the organization.
- January 28th – Amnesty International says there is [evidence](#) that Nigerian authorities were repeatedly warned of imminent attacks on Baga and Monguno, but failed to their duty to protect the civilians.
- February 11th - Allegations of [rape and child trafficking](#) have emerged in IDP camps in Nigeria as a result of the Boko Haram insurgency. The [initial report](#) released by ICIR (International Centre for Investigative Reporting) identified government officials as those responsible for trafficking of children from the IDP camps.
- February 11th – WFP continues [to provide assistance](#) to Nigerian refugees in Niger and reports from 15,000 refugees in October last year, the number has now grown to 125,000 across 140 sites and villages.
- February 12th – Suspected suicide bomber [kills](#) at least 6 in a market in Biu, Borno State.
- February 13th – Boko Haram militants have carried out an [attack on Chad](#) overnight, the first such assault on Chadian soil.
- February 15th - A teenage suicide bomber [blew herself](#) up at a crowded bus station in Damataru, capital of Yobe state.

Elections 2015

- February 7th – Nigeria [postpones elections](#) as plans under way for an offensive against Boko Haram's insurgency.
- February 8th – The Washington Post [argues](#) that Nigeria's government has lost its credibility as the INEC (Independent National Electoral Commission) decides to postpone the elections. Some of the main reasons include the inability of the government to deal with the Boko Haram insurgency over the last 6 years and their current stance on managing to secure the

north-eastern part of Nigeria in a matter of 6 weeks before the new election date on 28th March.

- February 12th – [Blog analysis](#) from the International Crisis Group on the postponement of the 2015 elections. There is ‘a growing risk of instability [that] could have profound security, humanitarian and economic implications.’
- February 12th – Goodluck Jonathan [denies](#) role in poll delay, says he was not consulted about postponement.
- February 16th – [Criticism](#) continues to pour over the alleged reasons for the postponement of the elections. *“Any argument to delay the vote might be more credible if President Goodluck Jonathan’s government had not spent much of the past year playing down the threat posed by the militants and if there were a reasonable expectation that the country’s weak military has the ability to improve security in a matter of weeks.*

It appears more likely Mr. Jonathan grew alarmed by the surging appeal of Muhammadu Buhari, a former military ruler who has vowed to crack down on Boko Haram. By dragging out the race, Mr. Jonathan stands to deplete his rival’s campaign coffers, while he continues to use state funds and institutions to bankroll his own.” These forms of criticism have [echoed](#) the continued disengagement from reality of the current regime through [various](#) sources.

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