

## GROUP PROFILE

**NAME OF THE GROUP** Boko Haram

**SYMBOLS**

**OTHER NAMES/ALIASES** Jamaatul Ahaliss Sunnah Lid Daawa wal Jihad; Yusifiyya Movement

**GROUP TYPE:** Extremist Political

**AREA OF OPERATION:** Nigeria. Specifically it enjoys popular support in the predominantly Muslim northern regions of the country. These states include Bauchi, Kano, Yobe and Borno. Most of its attacks were in the city of Maiduguri.

**LEADERSHIP:** The founder of Boko Haram, Mohammad Yusuf led the group from its creation in 2002 to his televised execution in August 2009. In an interview with Nigerian government forces immediately prior to his execution he mentioned his second-in-command was Abubakar Shekau. He is rumoured to be leading the group as of September 2011. Abu Dujana is supposedly a senior member of the group, possibly its spokesman. Abu Kaka is another possible spokesman. A man by the name of Sheikh Yahaya Jengre was supposedly in touch with two major financiers of Boko Haram operations.

**POLITICAL OBJECTIVES:** Boko Haram desires to establish sharia law over Nigeria. The translation of the group's name is "Western Education is Sinful," indicates its objectives.

## GENERAL

**GROUP AFFILIATIONS:** Many experts on Boko Haram note that the group's suicide bombing on 26 August 2011 that destroyed the UN building in Nigeria's capital, Abuja, reveals a link with al-Qaeda in the Maghreb (AQIM). Before the attack an internal Nigerian intelligence document had discussed possible links between Boko Haram and AQIM. General Carter Ham, the general in front of United States African Command (AFRICOM) speculated that Boko Haram might want to establish a partnership with the Somali terrorist group, al-Shabaab, in addition to AQIM. In January 2010 the leader of AQIM, 'Abd al-Malik Droukdal, released a statement offering to provide training and material assistance to Boko Haram. These connections notwithstanding, as of September 2011, several experts doubt the actualized alliance between the two groups, noting the lack of public hard evidence linking Boko Haram and AQIM.

**ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

**COMMAND AND CONTROL STRUCTURE**

**HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT:** While most reports date Boko Haram's genesis in 2002, the group's main progenitor was called "the Nigerian Taliban" which emerged in Yobe and Borno. In 2002 a young radical preacher, Mohammed Yusuf, formally established Boko Haram, and, according to an Nigerian intelligence document, shortly thereafter dispatched lieutenants to procure weapons. In 2007 some members travelled to Afghanistan and received training in

constructing improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and suicide-bombs. According to a Council for Foreign Relations report, the group did not seek the violent overthrow of the Nigerian government until 2009. In July 2009 civil disobedience by Boko Haram members conflagrated into a full-scale conflict between the group and the Nigerian government, in the states of Borno, Yobe and Kano. Over 800 people were killed in the fighting. After the fighting, Nigerian government forces captured Yusuf and summarily executed him. Also in 2009 Boko Haram established relationships with members of AQIM and in the following year began training with AQIM in northern Mali.

## ORGANISATIONAL CHART

## FINANCIAL

### SOURCE OF SUPPLY

### EXTERNAL SUPPORT

### ANNUAL BUDGET

## OPERATIONAL

**STRATEGY** In order to reach an internet savvy audience Boko Haram operates a blog at <http://yusufislamicbrothers.blogspot.com/> where it extols the virtues of jihad.

### MILITARY CAPABILITY

**TACTICS** A 15 March 2011 BBC article stated that Boko Haram's main tactic is a drive-by assassination using a motorbike. The 26 August 2011 suicide car-bombing was the first successful suicide bombing in Boko Haram's history.

**TARGETS** The group has primarily targeted Nigerian policemen. It has shown no compunctions killing traditional leaders who Boko Haram considered informants. Its blog has also triumphantly praised attacks on Nigerians who have visited drinking bars and those who publicly criticize it.

**TRAINING** Nigerian news outlets have claimed that as many as 800 Boko Haram members were trained by AQIM in Somalia and Sudan. Boko Haram's website verifies claims of its members receiving training in Somalia. The mastermind behind the 26 August 2011 UN bombing was an al-Qaeda-trained Boko Haram member named Mamman Nur.

## POLITICAL

**IDEOLOGY** The group's name translates into "(Western) Education is Sinful" and is dedicated to establishing sharia law in Nigeria. In an interview with BBC before Yusuf was killed, he claimed that the world is flat, deined the theory of Darwinism, and other scientific facts.

## POLITICAL AFFILIATIONS

**SUPPORT BASE** Boko Haram draws its support from an aggrieved Muslim population in Northern Nigeria. In all of Nigeria over half of the population lives under \$2USD a day, and poverty is most commonly found in the north-eastern reaches of the country, where Boko Haram is from. In the northern half of Nigeria, 72% of the population lives in poverty compared to only 27% in the southern half. Nigerian police forces are known for their indiscriminate brutality and extrajudicial implementations of the law. This has bolstered indigenous support for the group.

Despite operating from and feeding off of an aggrieved support base, many of the operational members of the group were university students and jobless graduates. Mohammed Yusuf himself, was believed to have received a Western style education and was reported living a lavish life, including driving around in a Mercedes. The Nigerian police reference Yusuf's lifestyle in the interrogation before the latter's execution. Furthermore, some reports claim that influential politicians support the military arm of Boko Haram as a way of maintaining relevance and wielding influence. These reports mention the former governor of the Borno State, Senator Ali Modu Sheriff, who has since renounced his relationship with Boko Haram.

## STATE RESPONSE

**STATES RESPONSE:** Kashim Shettima, governor of the Borno state, proposed an amnesty program immediately upon assuming office in May 2011. Boko Haram rejected the offer out of hand, saying "We don't need amnesty from anybody..We have gone beyond the stage of dialogue and negotiation with government." However, any amnesty offer by the government will be significantly hamstrung by a significant percentage of the Nigerian population that opposes negotiations with terrorists.

## ASSESSMENT

**SIGNIFICANT EVENTS:** In September 2010 Boko Haram orchestrated a complex prison break that resulted in the freedom of roughly 700 convicts in the state of Bauchi, where the organization enjoys much support. One prison-guard, one policeman and two civilians were killed.

In October 2010 Boko Haram conducted several high-profile assassinations of security officials in Maiduguri

On 26 August 2011 a suicide car-bombing attacking the UN building in the Nigerian capital, Abuja, resulted in the death of 23 people and the injury to scores of others. This was the first time Boko Haram targeted a non-exclusively Nigerian target.

On 5 September 2011 a family of eight and an Islamic scholar were killed. Early indications pointed to Boko Haram

## RECENT ACTIVITIES

**PROJECTED ACTIVITIES**

**REFERENCES**

**REFERENCE:** <http://thewasat.wordpress.com/2011/08/20/on-boko-haram-and-aqim/>  
<http://sahelblog.wordpress.com/2011/08/19/response-to-nyt-article-on-boko-haram/>