Strategic Approaches to Counter Terrorism and Violent Extremism in Africa
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Session 5: Understanding Root Causes and Drivers of Violent Extremism in the Lake Chad
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The Boko Haram Insurgency in the Lake Chad Basin
The Lake Chad Basin Region

Lake Chad

Vanishing act

1960s
- Spread of the lake in 1963: 23,000 km²

1970s
- Spread of the lake in 1973: 17,000 km²

1980s
- Spread of the lake in 1987: 1,800 km²

Violent conflicts ensued between Nigeria and Niger over ownership of islands in the lake.

1990s
- Spread of the lake in 1997: 2,000 km²

Clashes broke out between communities in Nigeria and Niger over lake water resources.

2000s
- Spread of the lake in 2001: 1,400 km²

Ethnic conflicts took place over the right to control wells in the basin and lake resources.

Lake Chad has shrunk by 90% in 50 years, resulting in frequent conflicts in the region.
Economic Significant of The Lake Chad Basin

- History of Violent Criminality - Smuggling, Cattle Rustling, Corruption and Extortion by Government Agencies, Traditional Authorities and ‘Mafia gangs’.
- Proven Hydrocarbon Deposits in the Region of Commercial Significance
Background to the Crisis

**Nigeria’s Boko Haram crisis**

Timeline of escalating attacks by Islamic extremists

13,000 people killed, 1.5 million displaced in northern Nigeria since 2009

- **Deaths**
- **Abductions of women, children**
- **Location**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Start of armed rebellion</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Abuja: UN HQ, Kano: Police, Damaturu: Churches, tankers, police</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Chibok: Borno High school, 276</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Gumusuri: Borno Village, 185</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Hundreds*</td>
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**Boko Haram Leader Abu Bakar Shekau**

- Born in Yobe state, Nigeria
- 2009: Yusuf killed. Shekau takes over the group

- April 2011: Launches attacks on schools and churches, strikes at the UN headquarters in Abuja
- January 2012: Leads a war against Christians in Nigeria and the country's president Goodluck Jonathan
- 24 March 2014: Organizes a break-out of 2,000 prisoners in the town of Gwoza
- More than 200 school girls kidnapped

- 2 October: Nigerian army says Shekau is dead
- 24 September: Video released showing 'Shekau alive'

**Mohammed Yusuf**

**Abu-Musab al-Barnawi**
Influence of ISIS in the Crisis

The spreading influence of ISIS jihadists
25 organisations are allied with the Islamic State group and 10 others support it*

*As of June 19. The size of these groups and the strength of their allegiance to IS varies considerably.

Source: IntelCenter

Islamic State militants have established footholds across Africa
Updated December 2018
Portraying the threat as predominantly ideological and branding the insurgency as violent extremism activity or as a jihadist terrorism, risk moving the focus away from the nexus of crime, [which is about] socio-economic deprivation, poor governance and environmental degradation, which when instrumentalized, drives violence, conflict and fragility in the Lake Chad Basin.

Gregory Connor, Violent Extremism in the Lake Chad: Understanding the Drivers of the Boko Haram Insurgency. NUPI, 2017
Extremism Causes and Effects Matrix

Source: UNDP – Preventing and Responding to Violent Extremism in Africa: A Development Approach
The Sokoto Caliphate and Borno Empire
Domination of the Lake Chad Basin by the Abu-Musab Al-Barnawi Group
Regional Military Deployment around the Lake Chad

A regional offensive against Boko Haram
Troops from Niger and Chad are attacking militants from southern Niger

City
- Controlled by Boko Haram
- Control claimed by the Nigerian army
- Chadian army presence

City re-taken from Boko Haram, March 9

Offensive
- Chad and Niger
- Nigeria (end Feb)

Sources: Nigeria, Chad, Niger govs, Stratfor

Note - Militarization of the Region due to the Violent Insurgency
Major Multilateral Organizations in the Lake Chad Region

Political and Socio-Economic

Military
Conclusions

• Development and Implementation of a holistic strategy that responds to the manifestation and the drivers of the insurgency in and around the Lake Chad Basin by addressing crime, justice (Transitional Justice), good governance and local and regional economic development on national (e.g. North East Development Commission- Nigeria) and multi-lateral platforms (LCBC) and the Lake Chad Basin Governors Forum.
• Enhance military cooperation (Multinational Joint Task Force, G5S, et la) across borders to understand and combat the various factions of Boko Haram and related criminological aspects.
• Reestablish comprehensive formal and traditional government institutions across the region.
• Dredge and Recharge the Lake Chad and establish agro-allied industrial hubs, with a military strategy around securitizing the projects.
• Leverage support of International partners to achieve above.