

Beyond Military Action: Protecting Civilians from Boko Haram in Nigeria

Summary

KEY POINTS

1. Boko Haram attacks are considered to pose a significant threat to civilian safety in the Lake Chad Basin.

2. It appears that the effectiveness of current civilian protection and regional security measures remains limited.

3. To improve the protection of civilians, it is recommended to strengthen early warning systems, regional cooperation,

Boko Haram is one of the major long-standing security threats in Nigeria. The attacks of the organization, which is especially effective in the northeast of the country, against civilians have led to security problems and this has negatively affected the stability in the region. This terrorist organization, which has gained strength since the beginning of the 2000s, has become a threat that has spread to Nigeria as well as other countries in the Lake Chad Basin over time.

Within the scope of combating the organization, various military operations are being conducted by the Nigerian government and other countries. However, despite existing security measures, Boko Haram attacks have not been completely eliminated. Moreover, as a result of conflicts, the life and property security of civilians remains under threat, which leads to an increase in humanitarian problems.

Therefore, military methods alone are not sufficient to reduce the influence of the Boko Haram terrorist organization. There is also a need for policies aimed at protecting civilians, maintaining local order, preventing the participation of young people in armed groups, and increasing economic and social opportunities.

Nigeria became an independent federation in 1960, separating from British rule. Various tensions have been experienced between different religious and ethnic groups in the country, which gained independence after many years of British Decolonization. These tensions have led to an increase in political and social instability in the country. Following the first coup in 1966, political and administrative problems persisted in the country for many years.

The Boko Haram organization emerged in northeastern Nigeria in the early 2000s. Initially, the organization carried out educational and social activities for unemployed and poor youth and advocated the reduction of unemployment and poverty. Over time, the main goal of the organization has been to distance Nigerian society from Western culture and shape society in accordance with its own religious understanding. Boko Haram has gradually moved its activities outside of Nigeria and has become a regional security threat that also affects other countries in the Lake Chad Basin.

Within the scope of the fight against Boko Haram, various military operations are being conducted by Nigeria and other regional countries. However, the failure to completely terminate the organization's activities demonstrates that military methods alone are not sufficient. The security of civilians' lives and property remains under threat due to the conflicts, and humanitarian problems such as displacement, poverty and access to basic services arise.

Therefore, in addition to military measures to reduce the impact of Boko Haram and protect civilians, policies such as developing early warning systems, strengthening regional security cooperation, supporting local communities, and increasing educational and employment opportunities for young people should also be implemented.

Key idea to stress out

In addition to security policies, humanitarian aid and long-term social policies must also be implemented to protect civilians. Education and public health services should be improved. The Boko Haram threat should not be approached only from a military point of view, but also policies aimed at improving the safety of civilians and social conditions in the region should be implemented.

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