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COI QUERY RESPONSE

NIGERIA – KIDNAPPING OF SCHOOL CHILDREN

In March 2024 the *United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights* comments on: “Children...abducted from schools...”¹

UNICEF in April 2024 comments on: “...disturbing trend of targeted abductions of learners...”²

A report published by *Human Rights Watch* in April 2024 states that: “Ten years after the abduction of over 200 schoolgirls in Chibok, Nigerian authorities have failed to put in place and sustain crucial measures to provide a secure learning environment for every child...”³

In April 2024 the *Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project* points out that: “...there have been over 85 abduction events targeting school children since the Chibok kidnapping; the latest kidnapping for ransom involved about 280 school children in Chikun, Kaduna state, on 7 March 2024...”⁴

A report issued in April 2024 by the *Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect* states that: “...schoolchildren remain vulnerable to kidnapping, particularly in the northwest.”⁵

¹ United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (15 March 2024) Nigeria: UN Human Rights Chief appalled by recent mass abductions

² UNICEF (April 2024) Minimum Standards for Safe Schools in Nigeria, p.9

³ Human Rights Watch (11 April 2024) Nigeria: 10 Years After Chibok, Schoolchildren Still at Risk, p.1

⁴ Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (16 April 2024) A Decade After Chibok: Assessing Nigeria’s Regional Response to Boko Haram, p.8

⁵ Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect (17 April 2024) Atrocity Alert No. 391: Attacks and kidnappings continue unabated in Nigeria

In May 2024 the *Associated Press* notes that: “At least 1,400 students have been taken from Nigerian schools since the 2014 kidnapping of 276 schoolgirls by Boko Haram militants in the village of Chibok...”⁶

A report issued in June 2024 by the *European Union Agency for Asylum* includes commentary on: “...armed gangs kidnapping large numbers of schoolchildren...”⁷

Amnesty International in June 2024 notes that: “For the last decade, Boko Haram has devastated the lives of people across north-east Nigeria, treating anyone in government-controlled areas as the “enemy”, and often making no effort to distinguish civilians from Nigerian forces. The group has killed thousands of civilians during attacks on government-controlled towns and villages and carried out widespread abductions, especially of girls, boys and younger women...Attacks on schools, teachers and students, including their abduction, have been committed so as to prevent people, especially children, from receiving what Boko Haram considers a “Western” education...”⁸

Agence France Presse in June 2024 states that: “Gunmen from criminal gangs killed 26 people, including four policemen, and kidnapped dozens more in a raid on a northwestern Nigerian village, the latest in a spate of attacks, police and a local official said. Katsina is one of several states in northwestern and central Nigeria terrorised by heavily armed gangs, who carry out mass abductions for ransom as well as burning and looting homes. The gangs, who maintain camps in a huge forest straddling Zamfara, Katsina, Kaduna and Niger states, have also undertaken large-scale kidnappings of pupils from schools in recent years”⁹

In July 2024 the *United Nations Security Council* states that: “Attacks on schools occurred in 2022 (5) and in 2023 (1) and involved arson (5), destruction (4), attacks against school personnel, including abduction (1), or a combination thereof.”¹⁰

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⁶ Associated Press (21 May 2024) Hundreds of hostages, mostly women and children, are rescued from Boko Haram extremists in Nigeria

⁷ European Union Agency for Asylum (June 2024) Nigeria – Country Focus, p.22

⁸ Amnesty International (9 June 2024) “Help Us Build Our Lives”: Girl Survivors of Boko Haram and Military Abuses in North-East Nigeria, p.19

⁹ Agence France Presse (11 June 2024) Nigeria gunmen kill 26, kidnap dozens

¹⁰ United Nations Security Council (17 July 2024) Children and armed conflict in Nigeria, p.7

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