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Press releases

9 January 2015

Nigeria: Massacre possibly deadliest in Boko Haram's history

Following reports of the massacre of large numbers of civilians by armed group Boko Haram in north east Nigeria, Amnesty International has expert spokespeople available to comment.

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"The attack on Baga and surrounding towns, looks as if it could be Boko Haram's deadliest act in a catalogue of increasingly heinous attacks carried out by the group. **If reports that the town was largely razed to the ground and that hundreds or even as many as two thousand civilians were killed are true, this marks a disturbing and bloody escalation of Boko Haram's ongoing onslaught against the civilian population," said Daniel Eyre, Nigeria researcher for Amnesty International.**

"We are currently working to find out more details of what happened during the attack on Baga and the surrounding area. This attack reiterates the urgent need for Boko Haram to stop the senseless killing of civilians and for the Nigerian government to take measures to protect a population who live in constant fear of such attacks," said Daniel Eyre.

Background:

Boko Haram militants reportedly attacked Baga and surrounding towns on Saturday 3 January.

Since 2009, Boko Haram has deliberately targeted civilians through raids and bomb attacks with attacks increasing in frequency and severity.

The effects on the civilian population have been devastating with thousands killed and abducted and hundreds of thousands forced to leave their homes.

Evidence gathered by Amnesty International indicates that Boko Haram have committed war crimes and crimes against humanity. The Nigerian government must investigate these violent abuses and ensure that those guilty of committing them are brought to justice.

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