

role of potable water, sanitation and sustainable energy

Stock Exchange where he will be honoured with the

68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly

will also confer with the United Nations Secretary-

leaving New York for Abuja on Wednesday.

Nine die as security forces, Boko Haram clash in Abuja

By Joe Nwankwo, Rotimi Akinwumi and Hassan Zaggi, Abuja

A SHOOTOUT in Nigeria's capital between security forces and suspected Boko Haram Islamist gunmen early on Friday killed at least nine people and injured several, according to *Saturday Independent* sources.

The police confirmed that only seven persons were killed.

Assistant Commissioner of Police in Charge of Abuja Metro Area Command, Mr Sunday Odukoya, confirmed this to journalists in Abuja on Friday.

Our Correspondent learnt that the victims who were all males included artisans, labourers and petty traders.

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has condemned attack, just as it observed that the absence of adequate legal framework to confront the culture of impunity and provide remedies to victims of human rights violations fur-

ther compounds the problem of peace building especially for the less privileged and vulnerable members of the society.

Battleground was an uncompleted building at the back of Apo Legislative Quarters the official quarters of federal lawmakers.

However, the Department of State Services (DSS) in explaining what transpired denied any death on both sides.

Marilyn Ogar, Deputy Director, Public Relations, DSS said that the offensive was started by members of the sect who opened fire on the security operatives who were in the area in furtherance of investigation into the activities of the sect.

The statement reads; "In the early hours of today 20th September, 2013, about 0030 hours a combined security team went for an operation behind the Apo legislative quarters.

"The operation was sequel to information obtained from two (2) Boko Haram el-

ements Kamal ABDULLAHI and Mohammed ADAMU, who had earlier been arrested for terrorist activities.

"They led the security team to uncompleted buildings where arms were purported to have been buried underground.

"No sooner had the team commenced digging for the arms, than they came under heavy gunfire attack by other Boko Haram elements within the area, which prompted immediate response from the security team.

"As a result, some persons were injured and twelve (12) others have been arrested in connection with the incident, and are making useful statements.

"Normalcy has returned to the area. Members of the public are advised to go about their normal businesses, as appropriate security measures have been emplaced to ensure the safety of citizens in the FCT.

"We want to reiterate the need for all Nigerians to be vigilant of their immediate

environment and promptly report suspicious activities to security agencies."

On the allegation that soldiers killed the victims, Odukoya said, "I have not heard something like that."

An eyewitness who spoke with *Saturday Independent* on condition of anonymity said that the shooting lasted for about two hours.

He disclosed that more than 10 people who sustained various degrees of injuries were taken to Asokoro General Hospital along with the nine who were died on the spot.

In a statement in Abuja on Friday signed by its Director of Publicity and Communication, Muhammad Nasir Ladan, the NHRC stated that the Executive Secretary of the Commission, Prof. Bem Angwe, has enjoined all the stakeholders involved in the Nigerian peace building process to work together and pave way for a conducive atmosphere for peaceful coexistence and sustainable development as the world

marks International Day of Peace.

The UN General Assembly in 1981 set aside September 21 every year to commemorate and strengthen the ideals of peace among all nations and people.

Prof. Angwe who made this call on the eve of the celebration noted that Nigeria like many other countries of the world is facing some security and economic challenges that have resulted in various forms of human rights violations.

He observed that the absence of adequate legal framework to confront the culture of impunity and provide remedies to victims of human rights violations further compounds the problem of peace building especially for the less privileged and vulnerable members of the society.

Angwe however said that this ugly trend could be addressed through constructive dialogue that will identify and address the root cause of the problem.

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