

West African Countries Declare "War" on Boko Haram



Paris, May 19 (RHC)--West African countries have declared a "war" on the militant group Boko Haram following last month's kidnapping of more than 200 schoolgirls. At a meeting in Paris, heads of state from Nigeria and its neighbors declared the Boko Haram a threat to all of Africa.

Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan likened the group to al-Qaeda. He told reporters: "Boko Haram is no longer the local terror group with some religious sentiment which started in Nigeria in 2002 to 2004. From 2009 to date, it has changed and is operating clearly as an al-Qaeda organization. It can better be described as al-Qaeda in west and central Africa and is no longer the Boko Haram that came with the sentiments that Western education is prohibited and that women must not go to school."

Jonathan has faced sustained calls to resign in the aftermath of the kidnapping. Protests continued over the weekend seeking accountability for the government's delayed response. Organizers of the "Bring Back Our Girls" campaign said their group will demand a face-to-face meeting with the Nigerian president.



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