

Nigeria and Boko Haram Likely to Reach Deal on Kidnapped Schoolgirls



Berlin, October 22 (RHC)-- The Nigerian government and the Boko Haram Takfiri militants are likely to reach a deal over the release of more than 200 kidnapped schoolgirls in the near future, the country's foreign minister says.

"I can say with some optimism, cautious optimism, that we are moving towards a situation where we'd be able to in the very near future to be able to get back our girls," Aminu Wali said in a joint press conference with his German counterpart, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, in Berlin on Tuesday.

"There is a tremendous amount of improvement in terms of the discussions that are going on now and also the possibility of having total cessation of hostilities and at the same time bringing back the girls and also normalcy in that part of northern Nigeria," Wali added.

Wali's statement came after sources close to the Nigerian government announced on Friday that the two sides have agreed to a truce to end hostilities and facilitate the release of abducted schoolgirls. Boko Haram has not confirmed the ceasefire, and at least five raids have been mounted since the announcement of the truce.

On April 14th, Boko Haram militants kidnapped 276 students from their secondary school in the northeastern town of Chibok. Reports say 57 of the girls managed to escape but 219 are still missing.

The abduction case has drawn national and international condemnation. The Nigerian administration has been heavily criticized for what is called failure to curb the rising violence in the African country.

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