

three weeks. The Chadian hostage was shot and wounded during his capture and died shortly afterwards.

International justice

In May, the authorities expressed their readiness to examine the Libyan authorities' request to hand over several high-ranking Libyan officials from the government of former President Mu'ammarr al-Gaddafi, who had sought refuge in Niger.

■ In February, under an Interpol operation, Saadi al-Gaddafi, son of the Libyan former leader, was put under house arrest in Niamey, the capital, after he appeared on Arab television and threatened Libya with an imminent uprising. He was still subject to restrictions to his movements and communications at the end of the year.

Amnesty International visits/reports

🚗 Amnesty International delegates visited Malian refugee sites in Niger in April.

NIGERIA

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Head of state and government:

Goodluck Jonathan

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The situation of violence and insecurity for Nigerians intensified, with at least 1,000 people killed in attacks by Islamist armed group Boko Haram in central and northern Nigeria. Police and other soldiers carried out unlawful and summary killings with impunity. Thousands of people were forcibly evicted from their homes in different parts of the country. Unlawful detention and arbitrary arrests were commonplace.

Background

In January, the Nigeria Labour Congress, other trade unions and civil rights organizations declared a nationwide strike action in protest against proposals to remove fuel subsidies. The mostly peaceful protests began on 2 January and involved tens of thousands of people across many states. In several cases, police fired at protesters, and at least three people were

killed and 25 injured across Kaduna, Kano and Lagos states. In January, one police officer was reportedly arrested and detained in relation to the use of force but no further action was known to have been taken against the officer by the end of the year.

On 20 January, at least 186 people were killed in Kano City when members of Boko Haram attacked security forces at eight different locations. The bombings were followed by an exchange of gunfire between Boko Haram and security forces lasting several hours. Among those killed were police officers, their relatives and residents living nearby. A journalist with the news station Channels, Enenche Akogwu, was also shot dead.

In the same month, President Jonathan declared a state of emergency in 15 Local Government Areas across four states, which elapsed after six months.

Renewed tensions emerged in the Niger Delta when some former members of the armed group MEND (Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta) claimed they were not receiving their monthly "amnesty" stipends – part of an agreement with the government. The group also said it was dissatisfied with the operation of programmes set up to reintegrate militants into society.

Between August and October, the country's worst flooding in decades killed more than 300 people and displaced a million more, across 15 states.

Boko Haram

Boko Haram attacks

More than 1,000 people were killed in attacks by Islamist armed group Boko Haram, which claimed responsibility for bombings and gun attacks across northern and central Nigeria. The group attacked police stations, military barracks, churches, school buildings and newspaper offices and killed Muslim and Christian clerics and worshippers, politicians and journalists, as well as police and soldiers. In November, the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court announced there was a reasonable basis to believe Boko Haram had been committing crimes against humanity since July 2009.

■ In April, at least 20 people were killed in Kaduna city on Easter Sunday as a suicide car bomb exploded near two churches.

■ On 26 April, Boko Haram bombed the offices of the Nigerian newspaper *Thisday* in Abuja and a building housing three newspapers in Kaduna. At least seven

people died. On 1 May, Boko Haram issued a warning to 11 national and international media houses.

■ On 17 June, Boko Haram bombed three church services in Kaduna, killing at least 21 people. Revenge attacks between Christians and Muslims resulted in the death of at least 70 more people.

Responses by the police and security forces

Nigeria's security forces perpetrated serious human rights violations in their response to Boko Haram – including enforced disappearance, extrajudicial executions, house burning and unlawful detention.

Scores of people were unlawfully killed by the Joint Task Force (JTF) – army, police and other security forces – set up to deal with the violence, or police; others were subjected to enforced disappearance from police or JTF custody.

People in at least five communities in Maiduguri had their houses burned down by the JTF, often following raids and arrests in the areas and in some cases seemingly as a punitive measure.

Hundreds of people accused of having links to Boko Haram were arbitrarily detained by the JTF. Many were detained incommunicado for lengthy periods without charge or trial, without being brought before any judicial authority, and without access to lawyers. Hundreds of people were detained without charge or trial at Giwa Barracks, 21 Armoured Brigade, Maiduguri, in harsh conditions that may amount to inhuman and degrading treatment.

Independent and impartial investigations were rarely carried out into allegations of human rights violations by the security forces and, when they were, the findings were not made public.

■ On 9 March, Ali Mohammed Sadiq, Ahmed Yunusa, Auwalu Mohammed and two others – all staff or customers at a petrol station at Rijiyar Zaki, Kano State – were shot and killed when the JTF opened fire following an attack on a nearby police station. Ali Mohammed Sadiq was shot five times, including once in the head. No investigation was conducted and no officer was known to have been held responsible for the killings. The JTF Commander in Borno made a public apology on radio to the families of the victims.

■ A court order issued on 4 January for the production of Goni Ali, who was arrested by members of the JTF at his home in Maiduguri on 16 October 2011 and taken to Giwa Barracks and who had not been seen since, was ignored by the JTF. By the end of the year his family still had no information about his whereabouts.

■ On 1 May, following a killing by a suspected member of Boko Haram in Kawar Maila, JTF soldiers made women and children living nearby leave their homes before setting approximately 33 houses on fire. An Islamiyya school attended by local children was also burned down by the JTF. The building was unoccupied at the time.

Unlawful killings

Unlawful killings were carried out by the police across Nigeria. In March 2012, the Chairman of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) Governing Council said an estimated 2,500 detainees were summarily killed by the police every year.

■ On 8 April, Blessing Monday, a 16-year-old boy living on the streets around the Abali Park Flyover in Port Harcourt, was shot and killed by police officers from Mile 1 Police Station who suspected he had stolen a bag. The police later discovered that Blessing Monday had not stolen the bag.

■ On 24 May, Goodluck Agbaribote, a former resident of the demolished Abonnema Wharf in Port Harcourt, was killed by officers from the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) while he was bathing in a communal well. The police claimed he was an armed robber.

■ In November, the Nigerian Police Force eventually told a High Court in Port Harcourt that Chika Ibeku, who had “disappeared” in 2009 following his arrest and detention by the police, was in fact killed by the police in a “shootout”. The family, through a local NGO, filed a lawsuit requesting the autopsy report.

Torture and other ill-treatment

Torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment of criminal suspects and detainees, perpetrated by the security forces, remained widespread.

■ On 9 January, Alexander Nworgu was arrested in Owerri, Imo State, and taken to the police anti-kidnapping unit in Rivers State. He claims that, while in custody, he was regularly beaten with a machete and suspended from the ceiling by his feet every other day. After spending more than a month in police detention he was remanded in prison on 15 February before eventually being released on bail on 6 July. The charges against him were changed to theft while he was in police detention.

Justice system

Widespread corruption and disregard for due process and the rule of law continued to blight Nigeria's criminal justice system. Many people were arbitrarily arrested and detained for months without charge. Police continued to ask people to pay money for their release from detention. Many detainees were kept on remand in prison for lengthy periods and in harsh conditions. Court processes remained slow and largely distrusted. According to the Executive Secretary of the NHRC, over 70% of people in detention were awaiting either trial or sentencing. Court orders were often ignored by police and security forces.

■ On 30 April, Patrick Okoroafor was released from prison after 17 years. He had been unfairly sentenced to death for robbery, at the age of 14, after an unfair trial.

Children's rights

Twelve states failed to enact the federal Child Rights Act into law. The country's remand homes remained overcrowded and under-resourced. Police continued to detain children in police cells with adults.

Communal violence

Inter-communal violence continued in the Middle Belt region of Nigeria and claimed the lives of more than 100 people.

■ In March, renewed clashes over land between ethnic groups in Benue State displaced up to 15,000 people.

■ More than 60 people were reportedly killed between 6 and 7 July in clashes between Fulani herdsmen and villagers in Riyom, Barkin Ladi and other Local Government Areas in Plateau State. On 8 July, mourners, including Senator Gyang Dantong and Majority Leader of the Plateau House of Assembly, Gyang Fulani, who were attending the funeral of some of those killed, were attacked by unidentified gunmen. On 10 July, clashes continued between Christians and Muslims in nine different communities in Plateau State, leaving about 50 people dead.

Death penalty

In September, the High Court of Lagos State declared the mandatory imposition of the death penalty to be unconstitutional, in a case brought in 2008 by the Legal Resources Consortium (LRC), assisted by Nigerian NGO LEDAP (The Legal Defence and Assistance Project).

But the death penalty remained mandatory in Nigeria's penal laws for a wide range of crimes. There were approximately 1,002 inmates on death row by the end of 2012 including people who were juveniles at the time of the crime. Many were sentenced after blatantly unfair trials or after spending more than a decade in prison. The Federal Government said in 2012 that the moratorium on the death penalty in place the previous year was "voluntary". Courts continued to pass death sentences.

■ In October, the Governor of Edo State signed the death warrants of two death-row inmates in Benin Central Prison in Benin City, Edo State, despite an ongoing appeal. The executions were still pending at the end of the year.

■ On 13 July, Olatunji Olaide was released from the Kirikiri Prison in Lagos after spending 23 years on death row for car robbery. The Court of Appeal declared him innocent on 5 June, and acquitted him.

Forced evictions

Forced evictions and illegal demolitions continued across Nigeria. The homes of tens of thousands of people in four different communities in Port Harcourt, Lagos and Abuja were demolished in 2012. Hundreds of thousands remained at risk as state governments continued to issue threats of mass demolitions.

■ In July, between 10,000 and 20,000 people were forcibly evicted from their homes in Abonnema Wharf in Port Harcourt, when the settlement was demolished without adequate notice or consultation, or compensation or provision of alternative housing. Residents had to sleep in cars, with friends or by the side of the road. Hundreds remained homeless.

■ On 16 July, dozens of houses and structures were demolished in Makoko settlement in Lagos, with more than 2,000 people displaced with no alternative accommodation or adequate compensation, according to Nigerian NGO SERAC (Social and Economic Rights Action Centre). One person was killed when police opened fire at a peaceful protest against the demolitions. The officer was reportedly arrested.

■ On 16 August, Mpape settlement in Abuja was partly demolished without adequate notice or consultation, despite an ongoing High Court case to prevent the demolitions. Mpape is one of 19 communities to be demolished as part of the "Abuja Master Plan". NGOs estimated that one million people could be made homeless if the plan goes ahead.

Freedom of expression

Intimidation of and attacks against human rights defenders continued.

■ On 26 January, human rights defender and labour leader Osmond Ugwu was granted bail by the Enugu State High Court. Osmond Ugwu had been arrested on 24 October 2011 by a heavily armed group of soldiers, police officers, and members of the State Security Service (SSS) at a peaceful trade union prayer session in Enugu after campaigning for the implementation of the Minimum Wage Act. He was subsequently charged with conspiracy to murder.

■ On 6 September, a journalist for the *Leadership* newspaper was beaten by soldiers and his equipment confiscated for covering a demolition exercise in Anambra State.

■ On 24 December, Musa Mohamed Awwal and Aliyu Saleh, two journalists working for the Hausa language newspaper, *Al-Mizan*, were arrested in Kaduna State and detained for one week by officers from the SSS.

Women's rights

Nigeria continued to have one of the highest maternal mortality ratios in the world. According to the World Health Organization, 14% of all maternal deaths worldwide happen in Nigeria.

Violence against women and girls, including rape, sexual assault and domestic abuse, remained serious problems.

Rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people

Human rights abuses continued against people suspected of having same-sex relationships or non-conventional gender identity. The Same Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Bill, approved by the Senate in December 2011, passed its second reading in the House of Representatives on 13 November. The Bill imposes a 14-year prison sentence on anyone who "[enters] into a same sex marriage contract or civil union". The Bill, if passed into law, would criminalize freedom of speech, association, and assembly.

Oil pollution in the Niger Delta

Oil pollution and environmental damage continued to wreak havoc on people's lives and livelihoods in the Niger Delta. Environmental laws and regulations were poorly enforced. Recommendations on the clean-up of the Ogoniland region of the Niger Delta, made by the UN

Environment Programme in a major study published in 2011, were not implemented by the end of 2012.

■ On and around 21 June, an oil spill was discovered in the Bodo community in the Niger Delta. The leak was only stopped on 30 June. The pipeline was the responsibility of Shell. An investigation into the cause of the spill was delayed and had not completed by the end of the year, nor had the spill been cleaned.

On 11 October, a court case instituted against the oil company Shell by a group of farmers from the Niger Delta began at The Hague in the Netherlands.

On 14 December, a landmark judgement by ECOWAS found the Nigerian government had failed to prevent oil company operations from damaging human rights, and required the government to enforce adequate regulation of oil operations.

Amnesty International visits/reports

✈ Amnesty International delegates visited Nigeria seven times between February and November.

📖 Nigeria: Forced eviction of Abonnema Wharf waterfront – "Pack and go!" (AFR 44/034/2012)

📖 Nigeria: Another Bodo oil spill – another flawed oil spill investigation in the Niger Delta (AFR 44/037/2012)

📖 Nigeria: Oil spill investigations in the Niger Delta – Amnesty International memorandum (AFR 44/042/2012)

📖 Nigeria: Trapped in the cycle of violence (AFR 44/043/2012)

NORWAY

KINGDOM OF NORWAY

Head of state:

King Harald V

Head of government:

Jens Stoltenberg

Concerns about reception conditions for children seeking asylum continued. Protection and access to justice for survivors of rape and sexual violence remained inadequate.

Refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants

On 8 June, the government published proposals to address the needs of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and children of asylum-seekers. NGOs criticized the proposals for over-emphasizing returns and for not focusing sufficiently on the rights of the child.