

1. General description of the security situation

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Nigeria continues to face a variety of concurrent security challenges,16 each of them multifaceted and posing a serious threat to the country's stability. These challenges have kept the country in a state of security crisis for the past two decades.17

Northern Nigeria has remained affected by the decade-and-a-half-long Islamist insurgency.18 While such insurgency, led by Boko Haram and related al-Qaeda and Islamic State affiliates, had long been seen as the most significant threat to the country's stability, by early 2024 violence arising from banditry has become both more lethal and widespread. Perpetrated by groups described as 'highly fragmented' and diverse in terms of their capabilities and degree of organisation,19 banditry was reported in the country's North-West20 and North-Central zones,21 as well as in Lagos and other areas of the South-West.22

Meanwhile, tensions between herders and farmers over livelihoods23 remained an issue across the North-Central zone24 (also known as the Middle Belt)25 and other parts of the country.26 Some sources attributed these security challenges to ethno-religious tensions27 and, at times, also to criminal activity.28 Moreover, the reference period witnessed a continuation of Biafran secessionist activities in the South-East, criminality in the Niger Delta,29 activities of violent gangs centred around the South-South and the South-West,30 and pre-election-related violence in Edo state.31 These manifold security issues have left the country's military and police forces overstretched.32

The UN noted a rise in insecurity during the first half 2024.33 Several sources highlighted the volatility of the security situation in Nigeria's North-Eastern zone,34 the border zones between Nigeria, Niger and Benin,35 and across the Sahel region at large.36 The Global Terrorism Index (GTI) covering events of the year 2024 ranked Nigeria in sixth place among countries most impacted by terrorism (a deterioration by two places from 2023),37 based on a weighted analysis of terrorism incidents, fatalities, injuries and hostages taken.38 According to the Global Peace Index 2025, Nigeria ranked 148th out of 163 independent countries and territories surveyed (a deterioration by three places from the previous year).39 The Fragile States Index covering the year 2024 ranked Nigeria as the 15th most fragile country out of 179 countries

assessed.40

Nigeria has been marked by high levels of corruption, poverty, unemployment and underdevelopment.41 The government of Bola Tinubu, elected president in February 2023,42 has attempted to diminish corruption both in public and private institutions, but the issue remained pervasive, especially in the oil and security sector.43 Economic policies introduced by the government since 2023, including the removal of a petrol subsidy, cuts to subsidies on electricity prices, and currency devaluations, have resulted in high inflation rates.44 The country's political opposition has been weakened by defections to the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC).45 However, in July 2025, the leaders of the two main opposition parties joined forces to challenge Tinubu and the APC in the next election.46 For more general information on the country, including on latest political developments and human rights situation see EUAA COI Country Focus Report Nigeria, November 2025.

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