



# **Florence Model United Nations**

## ***Research Guide***

*Organized by the International School of Florence*

**Committee: DISEC**

**Topic 1: Supply of foreign weapons to arm Boko Haram**

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## I. Introduction

The issue of foreign weapons supply in Boko Haram is a critical security challenge in West Africa. Boko Haram is an Islamic extremist group founded in Western Nigeria, whose name roughly translates to “Western education is forbidden”. The group primarily operates in Northern Nigeria, but has activities extending into neighboring countries such as Cameroon, Niger and Chad. Since they emerged in the early 2000s, they have been responsible for widespread violence, including terrorism, kidnappings and destruction of communities. The organization’s access to foreign weapons exacerbates regional instability and undermines counterterrorism efforts.

## II. Definition of Key Terms

- **Porous Borders:** Refers to borders that are inadequately monitored or controlled, enabling the smuggling of goods such as weapons in this case.
- **Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF):** Regional coalition formed by Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, Niger and Benin to combat Boko Haram and other terrorist threats in the Lake Chad Basin. Established in 1994 and reactivated in 2015 under the African Union, it conducts joint military operations, secures borders and coordinates counterterrorism efforts with international support.
- **Arms Trafficking:** The illegal trading or smuggling of weapons, ammunition and related materials across national and international borders.
- **Non-State Armed Groups (NSAGs):** Organizations that use armed force but are not part of the formal military structure of a state.
- **Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW):** Conventional weapons that can be carried by an individual or light vehicle.

## III. General Overview

Sources of weapons:

- **Looting:** The group frequently raids Nigerian military and police installations to seize arms and ammunition.
- **Illicit Trafficking:** Weapons are smuggled into Nigeria from conflict zones like Libya and the Sahel region. The porous borders in northeastern Nigeria facilitate this flow. ❖
- **Black Market Purchases:** Boko Haram uses funds from criminal activities such as kidnapping for ransom to buy arms on the black market.
- **Improvised Weapons:** The group also manufactures explosives and modifies vehicles for combat purposes.

Impact

- Increased civilian casualties
- Regional instability
- Economic disruption
- Humanitarian crisis

## IV. Major Parties Involved and their Views

- **Nigeria:** The Nigerian government has struggled to secure its borders and prevent the diversion of arms from its stockpiles. Corruption within security agencies has also contributed to the problem.
- **Cameroon, Chad, Niger:** As neighboring countries, they are part of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) combating Boko Haram but face constant challenges in controlling cross-border arms trafficking.
- **Diplomatic Opinions:** Organizations like the United Nations Have emphasized the need for stricter arms control measures in the region. Some nations have provided intelligence and logistical support to counter Boko Haram.
- **United States:** Provides military training and intelligence support.

## V. Relevant UN Documents and Articles

- **UN Security Council Resolution 2349 (2017):**Addresses the threat posed by Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin region and calls for enhanced regional cooperation to prevent arms trafficking.
- **Arms Trade Treaty (ATT):** Aims to regulate international arms transfers and prevent weapons from reaching non-state authorities like Boko Haram.

## VI. Questions to Consider

- What measures can be implemented to secure Nigeria's borders against illicit arms trafficking?
- How can international cooperation be strengthened to disrupt Boko Haram's supply chains?
- What role does corruption play in enabling the diversion of weapons, and how can it be addressed?
- How effective are current regional initiatives like the MNJTF in combating arms trafficking?

## VII. Conclusion

The supply of foreign weapons to Boko Haram remains a significant unsolved issue that is an obstacle for peace in West Africa. Addressing this issue requires a multifaceted approach involving improved border security, stricter regulation of arms transfers, international cooperation and tackling corruption within security forces.

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