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P R O C E E D I N G S

DR. FELBAB-BROWN: Welcome to today's Brookings Event on "Insecurity in northeast Nigeria and Beyond." I am Dr. Vanda Felbab-Brown, senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, and director of Initiative on Nonstate Armed Actors, and co-director of the Africa Security Initiative.

The Brookings Initiative on Nonstate Armed Actors seeks to advance policy relevant knowledge of Nonstate Armed Actors and illicit economies in the United States, and around the world. The Brookings Africa Security Initiative specifically focuses on a variety of threats and security challenges, as well as fees dynamics in Africa.

As with all of Brookings work, the predominant focus is on independent objective in depth research that informs policy options and develops policy recommendations. For over a decade, Nigeria has struggled to address devastating jihadi insurgencies and terrorism by Boko Haram, in the Islamic State, and West African Provence, as well as other Boko Haram options, like Ansaru. Victory against those groups remains elusive, and security in northeast ern Nigeria has significantly deteriorated since 2017.

Insecurity is also intense in northwest Nigeria, where the farmers-herders conflict has generated vast death, perhaps up to 8,000, often exacerbating -- exacerbated by intensifying effects of global warming, and despite a series of ceasefires, deals, amnesties, and promises to address issues of particularly the herder's community. Many of the conflict dynamics perhaps remain merely dormant, rather than resolved.

Militias abound in the northwest, just as they abound in the northeast , where groups like the Civilian Joint Task Force, CGTF, are key features in the struggle against jihadi insurgencies, such as Boko Haram and ISWAP. Both groups, as well as Ansaru, also have developed a presence in the northwest of Nigeria, where criminal gangs, robberies, cattle wrestling, smuggling, kidnapping, all are very important features of the conflict, just as illegal economies and captured economies play a significant role in the conflict in the northeast .

These dynamics, in the north of Nigeria, are taking place, as insecurity has also intensified in various other parts of the country, where the Nigerian military deploys to the vast majority of

Nigerian states, yet when Nigerians are demanding meaningful human security, as well as accountability from the often brutal military and law enforcement forces, most visibly and dramatically manifested in the movement against the Special Anti-Robbery Squad, and a desire for its operation and broader reform of the security sector. Layered over these issues are issues of poverty, inequality, like our jobs, now also gravely compounded by the Coronavirus pandemic.

To discuss all of these issues, with predominant focus on the north and northeast , but going beyond that, I am joined today by a terrific panel. Ambassador John Campbell is the Ralph Bunche senior fellow for Africa Policy Studies, and the Council on Foreign Relations. After a very distinct -- or including as part of his very distinguished career in Foreign Service, he was also the ambassador to Nigeria, the U.S. ambassador to Nigeria, from 2004 to 2007. Ambassador Campbell is the author of new superb book, that is just newly out, “Nigeria and the Nation-State: Rethinking Diplomacy with the Postcolonial World,” that I highly recommend, and I look forward to the ambassador’s insight, based on the book and his very vast and distinguished experience.

Dr. Takwa Suifon is a senior peace and development advisor to the resident coordinator in the United Nations Country Team in Nigeria. In that role since 2014, Dr. Suifon has dealt with a wide range of security and humanitarian issues in Nigeria, including providing technical support in the establishment of the Nation Peace Committee, as well as leading, on behalf of U.N., the governance and peace component of the Joint Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessment of the northeast , and prior to those appointments, he worked at the African Union Commission. He also has an extensive publication record, that I also highly recommend.

I am very thrilled, as well, that Ms. Sophia Michael has been able to plug into the conversation. Ms. Michael is a humanitarian worker in northeast Nigeria, having worked for the past five years with the Norwegian Refugee Council there. With a background in journalism, she has focused extensively and primarily on emergency humanitarian sector and has a great experience in deep field operations in northeast Nigeria. I should remind all of us that perhaps at least 800,000 people in northeast Nigeria are not living in areas that are accessible to the Nigerian government, and/or many humanitarian actors, and Ms. Michael has been dealing with many of those communities deep and far away, from places like Maiduguri, and she’s also a liaison representative for building relationship between

the Norwegian Refugee Council, community leaders, and government agencies.

Finally, but certainly not last, I am thrilled that Dr. Siobhan O'Neil is able to join the conversation. She is the project director of the United Nations University Initiative on Managing Exists From Armed Conflict. A multiyear, multi-urgency collaboration, the initiative studies individual exits from armed conflict, and evaluates policy intervention, to support those exits and conflict mitigation. She has a stellar and tremendous record at UNU, where she directed other projects, such as on children and extreme violence, and desired and demobilization, and reintegration. I had the pleasure to work with her, in some of these projects. And prior to joining UNU, Dr. O'Neil held a variety of management and analysis position on the matter of U.S. Homeland Security. She, too, has a very extensive publication record, that I highly recommend.

Ambassador Campbell, let me turn to you for the keynote opening remarks. Can you please situate what's going on in the northeast , northwest, with anti-SARS protests, in the broader picture of developments in political and state building developments, in Nigeria, over the past 20 years, and longer? How does this fit the pattern insecurity? How does this fit into broader trends in the country?

AMB. CAMPBELL: Thank you very much, Vanda, it's a pleasure to be with you. I've been asked to look at the situation in Nigeria, from -- as it were 30,000 feet, and I should also comment that what I am doing is looking at it from the perspective of the United States and Washington, not the prospective of Lagos, Abuja, or Port Harcourt.

The first point I would like to make is that Nigeria, and in fact Africa in general, is becoming more and more important to the United States. Africa is more salient to the United States now, than probably it ever has been in the history of American relations with Africa. Some indicators of that increased importance. I chose five. There are more that I could have talked about. Demography, security, disease, economic opportunity, and democracy in the rule of law.

Demography. Africa and specifically Nigeria is undergoing a huge population boom, and, in fact, U.N. experts estimate that, by 2050, Nigeria may well displace the United States, as the largest country in the world -- third largest country in the world, by population. This huge increase in population, combined with poverty, is likely to fuel migration out of Nigeria, both elsewhere in Africa, but also for the revealed, demography.

Secondly, security. Jihadist groups are established in northern Nigeria, the Western Sahel, the Horn, and now Mozambique, and the links among them are controversial, and by no means clear. I would suggest that, at present, these jihadist groups do not pose a threat to the security of the United States, but they may well, at some point in the future, just as al-Qaida in -- used Afghanistan as a jumping off point for 9/11. So, demography, security.

Thirdly, disease. The destruction of the rain forest in Africa will facilitate the jump of diseases, from animals to humans. We have already seen this occur in the case of Ebola and also HIV. It has to be anticipated that this process will continue.

Economic opportunities, with this increase -- huge increase in population, clearly there are potential markets for trade, investment, and participation in Africa's economic development. And, finally, democracy in the rule of law, under any administration and American preoccupation, there is the potential, in some African countries, for a positive trajectory, but if Africa and Nigeria's importance to the United States is growing, in the shorter term, the paradox is Nigeria is less important to the United States, now, than it was in the first decade of the 20th Century.

Then, the U.S. imported a million barrels of oil a day, from Nigeria, and successive Nigerian governments gave assurances, that should Middle East supplies of oil be interrupted for political reasons, Nigeria would do what it could to help fill, fill the void. Now, the United States imports virtually no oil at all, from Nigeria, largely because of fracking and because of Western Hemisphere sources. Then, Nigeria was a major source of peacekeepers, for U.N. and A.U. Peace Keeping Missions, particularly important where the United States could not and would not participate in peacekeeping missions.

Now, because of internal security threats, Nigeria's peace keeping rule is sadly much dimensioned -- diminished. Then, the first decade of the 21st Century, Nigeria's 1999 transition from military to civilian rule promoted an optimism about the future of Nigeria's governance, and as a model for the rest of the continent. Now, even though governance is civilian, and had been for some 20 years, corruption remains endemic, and the government provides few, if any, services for the general population. Nigeria, as a democratic lonestar for Africa, is no longer really very credible. Well, what happened? While the declining importance of oil, and the fall in international price of oil are certainly important, I

would suggest that internal developments, within Nigeria, are more significant for the country's declining role on the world stage.

First of all, insecurity. We're going to be talking this afternoon a great deal about the various jihadist movements in the northeast , which we lump together, usually under -- under the label Boko Haram. I would point out, however, that this insecurity in the northeast , is also spreading to the northwest. It's no longer concentrated, in the northeast . Vanda has already made reference to the Middle Belt, where quarrels over land and waters exacerbate religious and ethnic conflicts, but then there is also the endemic low-level insurrection in the oil patch, something which I don't think we're paying enough attention to because, in fact, more than 90% of the Nigerian government's revenue still comes from oil, and if there is a significant shutdown of the oil production, how the government can fund itself becomes questionable.

But then, for many Nigerians, perhaps what comes closest to home is the nationwide crime wave. This really covers the entire country, and it is particularly focused on kidnapping. I find it interesting that Kaduna is 180 kilometers away from Abuja and is a superhighway that connects the two. Kidnapping has become so ubiquitous along that highway, that Aero Contractors, a Nigerian airline, now flies a regular shuttle service between the two cities because people are afraid to travel by road.

Taken all together, Nigeria is no longer able to fulfill a key requirement of sovereignty, that is to say providing security for its citizens. That, in turn, begs another question. Why? At one level, Abuja's -- the Abuja government lacks a strong well-funded military or security services, in general. For example, the police number, only 377,000, and the army number is perhaps a million, I'm sorry, a 100,000. Together, there are -- there is one security person for about every 4,500 Nigerians.

The U.N. standard is one security person, roughly, for every 500 citizens, so that if you like, Nigeria is under policed, in comparison with the U.N. standards, but it goes deeper than that. Many, perhaps most, Nigerians avoid any contact with the police or the army, if they possibly can. There is plenty of anecdotal evidence that, in the northeast , people are as afraid of the security services as they are of Boko Haram. It is, I think, symbolic, if nothing else, that, in 2011, when Boko Haram emerged as an active terrorist organization, one of its earliest targets was the National Police Headquarters, in Abuja, the Louis Edet Center.

But perhaps, even more fundamentally and more generally, the Nigerian government is largely and increasingly alienated from the Nigerian people. The reasons for this are complex, and they are predominately historical. It starts with the fact that Nigeria is an artificial creation by the British, largely for their own bureaucratic convenience, in which they lump together some 350 radically different ethnic groups into a single entity, largely for convenience of administration.

Further, unlike in other African countries, such as Algeria, or Kenya, the independence movement in Nigeria never broke out of ethnic straightjackets. In other words, there was a Yoruba independence movement, an Igbo independence movement, and so forth, but the -- as it were fathers of Nigerian independence were mostly against colonialism, against racism, but without a clear vision of what a united Nigeria would be, and, of course, independence was followed by civil war and then a generation of military rule, which further isolated the government from the people. Nigerians will often say to you that the country remains essentially a colonial entity, that the only difference is the British had been replaced by indigenous elutes.

Finally, just a few very specific comments, or more specific comments about Boko Haram and the jihadist -- jihadi movements in the North, some issues that I find quite intriguing and have no answers to.

The first is that having survived for a decade, Boko Haram and other jihadi groups clearly must have some popular support, but how much is very hard to know. It draws on the Islamic revival in the north, but even if active support for Boko Haram is only 5% of the north's population, that would still be five million people, which means that there are plenty, plenty of people for Boko Haram to recruit from.

Second point, the relationship between Boko Haram the Islamic State and al-Qaida are very much debatable. To my mind, the resilience that Boko Haram shows would imply that it is predominately an indigenous movement, rather than one that is fueled from the outside.

And, finally, government policy, which is essentially the hammer, has, I think, been a failure, but the government is involved in no other approach at present. You put all this together, and it's hard to resist the conclusion that the jihadist insurgency will continue indefinitely, in one form or another. Thanks very much.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Oh, thank you, Ambassador for those extraordinarily rich

comprehensive, and, at the same time, pithy comments. Much to explore there. Dr. Suifon, if I can turn to you to follow up where Ambassador Campbell just left off, to hone in on the northeast . If you can please give us a picture of the difficult security situation, and its humanitarian dimensions, and also, just -- I would really like to thank Ambassador Campbell for bringing in the issue of pandemic, and tropical forest destruction in Nigeria, and also, I would raise the issue of wild meat consumption in Nigeria, something that frequently receives very little to no attention, yet it's very complex, more with respect to the need to assure livelihoods of local people, but also prevent catastrophic global effects.

Dr. Suifon, away from the tropical forest, to the forest of Sambisa, in the northwest, what's happening with security there? Dr. Suifon, your mike might be off.

MR. SUIFON: Good afternoon, Vanda, and thank you very much for this opportunity. Sorry for the little hitch. I know that I have five minutes, and the story of the northeast can take a whole day, but I will be very snappy, to just say that from where Ambassador Campbell has ended, that the northeast has become a very challenging part of the country, and is no longer the northeast, as you've rightly said, because it looks like the (inaudible), that has -- that headed the northeast, is shifting to other parts of the country.

And in the northeast for 11 years, the country has been grappling with an insurgency, whose drivers and rules deep into many sort of societal issues that we can think about. We have economic drivers for this crisis. We have social crisis drivers. We do have sociocultural drivers. We have religious driver, to this, and dimensions of security, and that begins to define what Boko Haram is all about.

When people have talking, usually I always want to share this, that my knowledge initially was focusing more, only on the jihadist group, but having stayed in Nigeria for now, you can rightly talk of an opportunistic Boko Haram. You talk of a criminal Boko Haram. You can talk of political Boko Haram, if you want to, and you talk of a religious Boko Haram, and it's like a conference of a group, an interest that are then capitalizing on the weaknesses that are already in society, and then perpetrating itself for 11 years.

The humanitarian situation is still very huge. I was part of the northeast Recovery and Peace Building Assessment, that was generally undertaken by the United Nations, and the European

Union, and the World Bank, and it came out with a very interesting, you know, revelations, which are on our B level here, because I've already highlighted. We're showing this PowerPoint, so people can peek, peek after this, but we still have a huge population displaced.

More than 11 years, people have been internally displaced in their own country, and is very, very hurtful, of course, tens of thousands in the neighboring countries, Niger and Cameroon, grappling with their own issues, but, yes, also hosting a good number of refugees that moved into those countries because of the Boko Haram insurgency. We're also talking about a disclaimants map, which I want to share with you, from my screen. But before, you got to look and see, that this map of underdevelopment and inequalities is very revealing, and we cannot have -- we cannot have time to discuss all this, but just to tell you that the economic indicators, in the northeast , before the outbreak of this crisis, were very poor.

This could have been one of the poorest, of the poor, of poorest parts of the country, but I also want to announce it by saying that some reports are showing that the northwest was almost worst the northeast, in terms. That means we are talking a region that is vulnerable, and if the justification of the insurgency in the northeast is because of their deep poverty, development deficit that we're all talking about, then we have a reason to be worried, that the northwest, if the ongoing mandatory act, which of course, we -- we are just lacking a word to say mandatory because when you see a group of 200 or 100 people, in motorbikes, in AK-47s, invade a village, and ransack it, and go, without -- I don't think we can call that (inaudible). It's something that we don't have a name for it now, but it is pinpointed to something more serious than this. Of course, activities of kidnapping for ransom have all heard the country post it. I have talked about the media drivers, as I mentioned a while ago, and I will not belabor on that because they are all here, and we share, but, again, I want to share another pack map, just to let you know one of the problems I'm talking about, the environmental driver.

The lake chart, which the water's lost its size, almost a shadow of itself, over the years, has been also, you know, regarded as one of the drivers, that has pushed a lot of other things to before that particular region, including criminality, lack of agriculture, extensive work, which was facilitated by huge irrigation farming's, that took place in that part of the country when the lake was in its full state. We are now also talking about pastureland that has become more and more scarce, and then cattle because

they're moving sidewards, and are gravitating the former side as crisis that we've talked about, which of course, is very predominate in the northwest -- I mean, northcentral, sorry, and not at the Middle Belt part of the country.

In 19 -- in 2018, it was so difficult, that deaths from farmer-herders crisis almost over shadowed deaths from Boko Haram insurgency. If I can go again, I could show you another map of the country map and displacement. The was map was done in 2016, but when I looked at the current dynamics, it has barely changed. It's -- all the key issues are still there. People are still internally displaced, and we are having secondary and tertiary displacements. People have been in refugee camps, hoping that they were about to settle, and there was already talk whether they could be settled, even in the semi-opened areas, pending final liberation of the terrorists, where -- or make it more, you know, safe for habitation. Then there were attacks, and so on, and so forth. We have also learned of attempts by the north, the Borno State governor, to settle the population, because he believes that IDPs are becoming a perpetual issue, but we seem to be looking only at the software's, without addressing the rules. Why, it is that way? And, I think, that is a type of discussion we need to talk about. I have figures here, statistics from OSHA, giving us no more people, not only displays, more than 1.9, but also people in need of a nutrition assistance, and we already know what just happened last week -- last weeks in Borno State, again, where the (inaudible) -- some community, in the Jere-Lokoja government area was attacked, and groups, you know, slaughtered human beings like fowls, in their numbers.

Of course, there was a problem of what is the exact number, but that's not the issue. People were slaughtered in broad daylight, and people abandoned their farms, and so, when we talk of food shortage in the northeast , it's not because there is no food at all, but because people cannot even go to the farms. So, you have these statistics, also, displacement, people who have returned, yet there's -- you still have a huge number that is still not settled yet. Of course, all these have been compounded, Vanda, before -- my five minutes are almost up, now, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, and I must say that, when you have few numbers of COVID in that part, you have a sizable number coming up in Borno because humanitarian workers and the rest of the people are encouraged to test -- do testing before any or nothing, but small numbers do not, in anyway, reflect a total reality because there is almost very little testing, and, so, we cannot know how many, the casualties of this.

We're just happy that the pandemic has not been very, very deadly in Nigeria, as anticipated by analysts. So, you can see the map, if you look at the map before COVID in Nigeria, you see they're not -- it's almost looking like, oh, there's no COVID in the northeast, but the areas where you have a tic in numbers showing is the fact that there have been lots of testing's in those areas. I will stop here and follow up later on. Thank you so much, Vanda.

MS. FALBAB-BROWN: Excellent, thank you, Takwa, so much for the very useful review, and particularly highlighting how dire and difficult both the security and humanitarian situations continue to be in the northeast, and spread. Before I hand it over to Sophia, let me make few remarks about the reasons why the security situation remains so difficult.

And I'm really reflecting, in very few brief comments, two reports of mine, one called "Militias and Militancy in Northeast Nigeria: Not Going Away," that came out this year, in 2020, and a prior report of 2018, called "The Nigeria: We Don't Want Them Back." What really we have been is seeing is a fundamental difficulty for the Nigerian military of holding areas that our nominally cleared of Boko Haram, particularly in the 2015-2016 period, after years of the Nigerian government having a very lukewarm and minimal response to the critical situation in the north, significant amount of clearing operations were, in fact, mounting, and often involved international corporation, particularly from the Lake Chad area, but also, to some extent, beyond.

And nonetheless, many of these clearing operations essentially consisted of the Nigerian security services, particularly the military hauling of entire cleared villages into detentions, sometimes into so-called "black prisons," where people may be languishing, still today, years later, other times in prolonged detention. There were many reasons why this tragedy took place, but at the core is the problem still today, the inability to effectively hold the cleared areas, let alone build them up.

Now, this has become quite compounded to -- since 2017 because of several developments, the most important of which is the split off of a branch of Boko Haram, that now calls itself the Islamic State West African Province, which formally is also the name of the group that we often think of as Boko Haram, led by Shekau. But the Islamic State West Africa Province, based particularly in the Lake Chad area, has been both very effective, in terms of battlefield, learning, to some extent, from ISIS units and members, in other parts of Africa, such as Libya, but also much more focused on building

political capital among global populations.

And building political capital by delivering, at least minimal services, I -- during my trips to the northeast, I would hear of women being escorted by ISWAP to hospitals to give birth, something that neither the government nor anyone else provided them, and this is contrast to the brutality of Boko Haram, the original faction that chose to rule essentially soulless through blunder and brutality, often imposing very significant hardships on populations.

And so, ISWAP was able to overrun a set of military bases, including some very important military bases, and the Nigerian military then shrank into a posture that's known as the "super camp" strategy, which essentially minimizes the presence of military units out among the population, but because, as a result, the Nigerian military is not able to provide security, it has often also forced local populations to collapse onto the camp, as well. That creates many problems, one of which is the inability to secure territory, another one, which is the inability to provide livelihoods, as people can go out and cultivate often only very short crops.

Short, so that the insurgents are presumably are not allowed to hide in the crops, and really not able to obtain livelihoods because they are not allowed to go beyond five kilometers or three kilometers beyond the super camp. Combined with this is the fact that all along, since 2009, but particularly in -- since about 2012, and continually since, the Nigerian military has extensively relied on the use of militias in the northeast that are many of groups, one of which is the so-called Civilian Joint Taskforce, itself, composed of very many groups.

They are really at the forefront of operations. They are often the cannon fodder. They are both the first line of defense, so that when ISWAP or Boko Haram attacks, they suffer casualties. They are at the lead of offensive operations, both because they perhaps sometimes know the local ground, but also, once again, because they are -- used to bear the brunt of causalities. At the same time, they have been appropriated by politicians in the north, for a whole variety of purposes, such as getting votes beyond the insurgency.

But we have to also appreciate that northeast governors and increasingly northwest governors see the militias as the only element they can control, otherwise having to beg Abuja to deliver either federal police forces or soldiers, and both often engaged in a bargaining relationship with state

governors to have discretionary fund of state governors to pay for federal police and military units. And this is indeed emblematic of the massive security issues across the country, where state governors do not have control of forces, are in this complex bargaining relationship over the use of discretionary funds and thus prefer to create militias, like the Bakassi Boys in the south, a whole variety of new militias managed to deal with the farmers-herders conflict, also present as far as Largos, Edo, and other parts of the country, that nonetheless come to create an own security challenge.

And these dynamics add an overlay in the northwest, both as Boko Haram and ISWAP have expanded that the banditry, cattle wrestling, criminal groups that operate there, and an intense, firmer had -- farmers-herders conflict dormant, perhaps, or partially addressed, perhaps as it is right now. I'll leave it at that, and turn to you Ms. Michaels, please, to give us a sense from the ground. What is it like to live in this situation for local people? How are they appreciating prioritizing, identifying, threats to them? What are priority issues, and how can the -- how is the humanitarian community responding in this challenge, and just one other comment here. We talk about the crisis in the northwest, we should appreciate that essentially the entire international humanitarian assistance is centered on the northeast, where the needs are still massive, but there is almost no international presence in the northwest, with respect to humanitarian issues. Sophia, over to you, please.

MS. MICHAELS: Thank, Dr. Vanda. Of course, it is general knowledge, as Suifon has already reiterated, in terms of the condition in the northeast, and over a big head of the security challenges. The insurgency has made infrastructure inaccessible by the IDPs, and also it has continued to be a potential threat to also humanitarian actors, as well as IDPs, who are also not only living in the deep field, but also in the heart of Maiduguri, which also makes it quite difficult to travel, beyond 15 -- 10 to 15 kilometers, outside the city, and return safely. Of course, as Suifon mentioned, the example is the recent killing of the farmers in the (inaudible) attack, that also followed three days after, which presented a very difficult situation, while the government was trying to also present assistance to the people of the area.

Of course, as he mentioned, also traveling to (inaudible) and other parts of the Lake Chad region is almost difficult, except with the support -- use of the United Nations Militaria Services. Quite a number of IDP's as to left in the camp, as well as those who have to try to return back to the

oasis, it still difficult for them to be able, also survive in the respective return areas of origin, because the key issues and key concerns by IDP's and the other host communities, also include the provisions of (inaudible) communities.

Like shelter, like food, security and livelihoods, which has necessitated the humanitarian actors to have to change the method, the strategy of response to a more dignified way of assistance, to the cash based transfer, which of course, that as we know, recently has proven more and more difficult by more of the policies, or more agencies that have been put up, that are managing the humanitarian organizations, in terms of movement of cash, by federal government agencies, where you have to seek your clearance, before your also able to move. Either at (inaudible) or assistance, also the deep field location.

So, access has also become a very, very key consent, to both the humanitarian actors, and also by the IDP's exacerbating also, of course, medical services that is provided. Protection issues and concerns have become more of concern, gender based (inaudible) had become more rise in concern, not only related to sexual exploration or abuse, or sexual abuse, but more in terms of -- of course, what is prevalent in the north. The legal child marriage, that is related to that, and also to be able to provide dignity keys, by humanitarian's actors to displace communities in the difficult location has become more and more difficult because of the breakup of the faction of the Boko Haram which are now -- fact section into the east (inaudible) and also the jays with more criminal banded, that have a band that have come up also.

Making it more difficult to travel along the roads, because of the conditions of the road, as well as the securing clearance by military, to be able to send in assistance, in terms of Kobo clearance, and sometimes also because of the security situation, where IDP's are in need of assistance, because they are liking the basic necessities of food, shelter, water, you know, so they have to also, relocated sometimes, without waiting for assistance to get them, to other locations where there is supposed to be assistance provided, where is more accessible, where you see a new trend in displacement, where people are moving voluntary or involuntary because of security situations, and condition.

Despite the efforts by the humanitarian's actors and the state government, to try to provide assistance. So, access has become more and more, an issue, but through the IDP, and to the

humanitarian communities, to be able to provide assistance to basic necessities. Also, another issue is the congestion of cars in the camps, that has become more and more concern, especially with the onset of the COVID-19, so -- already existed in the dilapidated infrastructure in camps and in the host communities.

Of course, these are more and more of the key concerns of people living on the grounds, and the inability to travel far away from the city to be able to make some sort of living, by farming. It has become more and more difficult, they expect, of course, the support by military to try to provide assistance. And, of course, there had been efforts by the state government, in collaboration with the some of the humanitarian's actors, or the humanitarian's community, to return, because the concern that IDP's is they, want to return, but they also want to return to a secured environment.

Not just to return to where they will be attacked eventually, within a short period of time, so the state government, itself, is also, like caught in between the devil and the (inaudible), if I will say. In trying to make sure that the -- they are able to provide the basic necessities. They say they provide, which is sometimes the (inaudible) looking at the returns and relocation of IDP's to the -- to places like (inaudible) that is around the (inaudible) axis, and it's only the barest services that is provided, in terms of medical assistance, which the government does not really have much of the capacity to do that, and the humanitarian actors, that are supposed to be supporting to do that, are really facing a lot of challenges, in terms of access.

So, that has become more and more difficult for the IDP's, both within (inaudible), and also in terms of traveling along the roads, that by both the humanitarian actors itself, without military escort. It is almost impossible to travel, because of the road lined with IED's, a lot of rise in the obduction and kidnapping, which ransom demand, that is caught in a cross (inaudible), along the Sambisa South Forest, at this, where you cannot travel even between full car and go there without a military escort, because the faction have dismantled and formed small gangs that has become more banditry along the roads. So, it's become more and more difficult for ADT's and for humanitarian actors on the ground in the northeast.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Excellent, thank you, so much Sophia, for this enormously useful portrait from the ground, to give us a real feel of what life is like. You know, some of us have been

fortunate to go to places like Maiduguri, but for many of the communities, Maiduguri is as far away and as cutoff perhaps Maiduguri might be for us from the United States, so enormously important insights from you and the work you're doing.

Dr. O'Neil, let me turn to you. I spoke about the challenges of policy, so has Ambassador Campbell, about the real deficiencies in the military strategy. Are there alternatives, how to reduce or mitigate the conflict, such as by encouraging exits of individuals, the factors programs, like Operation Safe Corridor, that exist in the northeast and meant to channel low-risk the factors out of the insurgencies. Your insight, please.

MS. O'NEIL: Thank you, Vanda, and thank you to Brookings for inviting me to be part of such a great group and what a wonderful panel. Yes, so, there are alternatives, and I'll tell you a little bit, just 30 seconds or so, about our project and then some of the early findings related to exactly the question you've just posed.

So, one of the things we don't really understand, despite having supported these types of interventions for a long time, is exactly sort of what it means, the lived experience of exiting an armed group or an armed force, and what types of interventions really support those kind of full and permanent transitions out of armed groups. So, when military solutions aren't necessarily the right option or the only option, when we're talking about widespread involvement in many of these conflicts, how do you help people exit a conflict and return to civilian life in a productive way?

This project is -- it really tries to bring together both robust research and practitioners. So, we work with IOM, UNICEF, UNDP, DPO, and the World Bank, as our partners, and we've got great support from Norway, the U.K., Switzerland, and Ireland. So, we're bringing together a really diverse community to try to do this together. The goal is to try to collect really quality and comparable data, over a long period of time. Part of the problem is any of the assessments we have in this space are these snapshots, and we really think that, when you exit a conflict, and you exit an armed group or an armed force, it's a process of disengaging both probably mentally, with your identity, but also from a network, and to stop certain conflict-related behaviors and support functions, and that takes a while.

When we're talking about terrorist context, there's not a lot of acceptance that this is not a cold turkey or a sudden event, that it takes a while, but we, indeed, believe that the evidence suggests

that that's the case. We've spent a year putting together a converging vision for what this sort of looks like, how you would study it, and what kind of tools you would use, and we've developed a bunch of these tools, and we're now pilot testing them in multi-year studies in two countries, including Nigeria, in the northeast . So, in Nigeria, we're looking at people coming out of Boko Haram, ISWAP, Ansaru, and the CJTF. We're doing this sort of over layed on top of a series of U.N.-supported programs meant to support those transitions to better understand what works and under which conditions, but we're also looking at the community. We recognize that exits are not a one-way street. It requires an acceptance by the community on the other side, and these are communities that have been heavily victimized. So, we're doing a series of community-oriented studies, with community leaders and community members, so we can contextualize those transitions.

So, we're running three surveys right now, and they'll -- in these, like, last couple weeks, and I have some initial results to sort of inklings of what's coming out of one of our community leaders' surveys. So, I have about 100 respondents, so far, so not a very big sample, but at least gives you some interesting little tidbits, and I think that one of the things that's so important, and it comes back to Vanda's question about are there alternatives.

One of the things we're seeing, and this is not sort of groundbreaking for most people who study this conflict, is how widespread association in the conflict is. I mean, how many people in the community have been involved with Boko Haram, in some way, shape, or form. So, of the community leaders that we've surveyed, the majority of them have large numbers in their communities who've been associated in some way, shape, or form. Whether abducted or willing, there's also a pretty sizeable number of people who have been involved willingly. This echoes, even though this is an emerging finding, this echoes work in this space before.

So, some great work in 2019 by Rebecca Littman, Graeme Blair, and Rebecca Wolfe, with Mercy Corps, where they for -- they found 8% of a random sample, in and around Maiduguri, said that they had been involved with Boko Haram, and these are talking to people that they never met before admitting this, so, that's a pretty high number, and I think quite important, but it's important for us not to focus only on Boko Haram. I think one of the things here that's really important, in looking at Borno, is the large-scale mobilization into these self-defense forces that Vanda was mentioning just a moment ago.

So, these, these various forces, the CJTF, other types of Yan Gora hunters and charmers, who are performing these functions, they are predominantly the main security provider in many communities, so, like, 80%, 86% of the leaders we talked to identified the CJTF as one of the main security providers, so not the military, not the police, and many of these organizations started on their own. They are sort of ad hoc. So, they're not necessarily under a lot of guidance, or adhering to as many rules, or have as much oversight, per se. So, that creates sort of a difficult situation for moving forward.

If you look at the involvement levels, nearly 60% of all communities that we're looking at have really high CJTF involvement from the community, and that's not even some of the other types of even more loosely organized groups, as well. I think this is really important because, in addition to relying on these groups very heavily for their security, there's also an emerging concern about them. So, 20% of the community leaders that we interviewed identified the CJTF and some of these groups as the primary threat against the community. So, that raises some questions. I think another one is, you know, a majority of the people that we've interviewed thus far said they are really concerned about what happens when you demobilize some of these CJT -- if you right side some of these CJTF groups, what those people, who've been let go, go about and do. So, this is something I think we have to worry about, not only on the Boko Haram side and how do you help people exit an organization like that, but also how do you deal with this very ad hoc community-driven response, which has been, I think, very important for communities, but also potentially raises some challenges and concern, I think, long-term about security and obviously adherence to human rights and certain standards of policing, things like that. So, that's one sort of thing, just to highlight the -- how large spread this is.

The other one, and I'll just quickly get to it, is the role of climate change in facilitating this crisis. So, my colleagues, Adam Day and Jessica Caus, have done some great work on climate security and did a case study in Nigeria, that highlighted the role of climate change in sort of facilitating conflict, and that's what we're hearing, again, about, the conversation around the northwest. Of the community leaders that we've interviewed, overwhelmingly, they know people whose livelihoods have been damaged because of climate-related change, and of those 37% say they know someone who joined Boko Haram specifically because of a climate-related livelihood challenge, 61% say they know someone who joined the CJTF, Yan Gora, or other self-defense group because of a climate-related livelihood issue. So, this

(inaudible) all the emphasis on the northwest and the Middle Belt is extremely important for us to think about prevention for recruitment into these types of armed groups. So, I'll stop there. I know I probably hit my time.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Thank you, Siobhan. This is a perfect transition to both some of the questions that are coming in the -- that are coming in, they're written questions. Please, continue submitting them. And it's also a great transition for us now to do a lightning round, three minutes, please, if we can, on what are the policy recommendations, and let me highlight some of the questions that have come in that are highly pertinent for the policy recommendations and for the issues that we are dealing.

Siobhan, you spoke about DBR bringing not just Boko Haram actors, but also militias out. What is the track record of such programs in Nigeria, broadly, in the northeast? What is the role of alternative livelihoods? How can they be created? We're getting those questions, both about the northeast and northwest, related to farmers per this conflict.

Ambassador Campbell, some of the questions have to do with security sector reform in Nigeria. Should governors have power over state police? Should there be state police? Should there be the evolution of state policing? And anyone, perhaps Dr. Suifon, a reflection on so-called community policing efforts in Nigeria. What do they mean in practice? Another related set of questions on -- that is coming in and that is related to policy recommendations, the role of community dialogue and community reconciliations, as well as, finally, more issues of how to deal with gender-specific policy, women who are associated or seen as associated with either Boko Haram or other groups.

And maybe, Sophia, if I can put you on the spot, there is a big debate with respect to whether there should be efforts to encourage women in the northwest as well as northeast, widows or women who were ready to marry and remarry -- or marry, and whether this should be facilitated by perhaps financial incentives because it is often men who are key providers of security. That policy is often advocated by Nigerian NGOs and deeply disliked in the international humanitarian response that wants to provide livelihoods but doesn't want to encourage marriage.

So, any reflections on this dilemma, and or how to deal with gender issues, and any other related policy recommendations that fog the level of Abuja, as well as very local policy responses. Ambassador Campbell, if I can start with you, please?

AMB. CAMPBELL: Thank you very much. Security sector reform, with a particular focus on the police, it's a naughty problem. The National Police were established by the British. The -- in part, bearing in mind that the country is divided into literally hundreds of ethnic groups, and the concern was that if policing were local, then the dominant ethnic group would dominate the police, and would essentially make nearly impossible justice for various minorities.

I would suggest that this concern continues, and, in fact, the morselization of Nigeria from essentially three regions, at the time of independence, into 36 states, plus Abuja, with regular calls for even more states, means that more and more states are dominated by a particular ethnic group. What concerns me is if you have a state police under the control of a governor, are you then moving towards warlord-ism, particularly as the national government continues to decline in effectiveness?

I'm not saying that this question is easy. I would start with security sector reform of the police with practical and concrete steps, such as raising police salaries, paying salaries on time, so that policemen are not manning checkpoints, essentially to shakedown people passing through them, simply to keep their own bodies and souls together.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Excellent. Thank you very much and thank you for being so timely. Dr. Suifon, please, to you, what are the key policy recommendations in this very big set of policy dimensions that I put on the table and then have come in in the questions?

MR. SUIFON: Thank you very much, Vanda. I think I will dwell most on this issue of community policing, and just to situate it in the context, in 2014, there was a national conference in Nigeria, during the government of President Jonathan, that debated on so many issues, and the discussion that lasted for close to four months touched on almost every topic or issue you can think about, including policing, including most of the issues that are cropping up today.

The -- unfortunately, the findings of this conference we are shoved aside by the incoming government, and that's one of the issues that we are looking forward to see how we can break from this, you know, to where governments come, flood issues, and then the next government comes and puts an aside and continues with it on. That's not withstanding. There has been a continuous clamor for restructuring in the country, and this work, too, is also as vague as you may think because everybody means something else when they talk of a restructuring. That means I have my own views when I'm

talking about restructuring. That means when you're in the southwest, if you're in the southeast, it means something different from those in the northeast and so on and so forth, and Ambassador has highlighted the issue, the sensitive nature of ethnicity and religions in Nigeria.

So, any attempt to change the status quo is -- there's a feeling that we are capacitating a particular group or so on -- and so on and so forth. So, I think their trust -- the trust deficit is so huge that, even genuine attempts to do whatever reforms are on board, people are suspicious of it. There's an ongoing constitutional reform, and, more and more, there has been an echo, which is almost getting momentum of that there's need for the volume of powers or community policing, but we have not -- there is no agreement yet on what specifically it should be, and you will know that the insecurity had pushed people to start beyond the vigilante, which is -- which will look like ad hoc. People are going into formal structures and that is what sort of images of the emoticon security art feed from the southwest, and they took it from a regional perspective, which, again, sends some signals. People were like, well, we thought it was a step, stead-level region, talking about its regional outfit. What is on the meaning? What is in the outfit?

So, there were doubts, there were suspicions, and so on and so forth, but I think that this community policing should go with something else, so, begin to look at some of the rules, the drivers of this crisis, because it is not just a security issue, alone, and we are all saying that security measures, alone, will not address the magnitude of crisis in Nigeria. What are the other issues that we need to think about? What are the -- and the governor of the -- of Borno has just said, the other day, that more than 25 years, there has been no repair of any federal routine in Borno, and there have been no constitutional (inaudible) in Borno. That is very revealing, and he was very categorical, saying that if there were rules, structures, and infrastructure, Boko Haram Insurgency will have been reduced by 60%, and I think that, without being emotional, people should begin to look at -- to that direction, to say what are the other non-kinetic measures that we need to be addressing, going to address the issues that are devaluating not only the northeast, but that are also -- that is now also going to other parts of the country, so, the trust deficit, and it's the issues of peace, the issues of justice, and the issues of inclusivity, as articulated in SDG 16, become, for some of us, the central issue that we should discuss.

You can't talk about these police. When people hear that people will use police against

other groups, just as has been articulated. What, then, shall be done? SDG 16, about justice, peace, and inclusion, is trying to frame it, but in a Nigerian context, what does that mean? I think these are still some of the issues that we are trying -- struggling to deal with, and we've been advocating for peace structures, at community, at state, and, if possible, regional level, and when people begin to talk, when people begin to dialogue, we believe that the trust deficit will begin to narrow, and we have to begin somewhere, and there are moves already, like the recommendations that we have part of, parts of the recovery and the police assessment, in the northeast , to begin to assess structures, but it looks like because we are dealing with actual -- a crisis that is still, still, almost coming to the limelight, and that is put into government at a very difficult situation because the narrative has been Boko Haram has been technically defeated, Boko Haram has been finished, they can no longer regroup, they can no longer hold ground, but I don't think that we should define defeating Boko Haram by not holding ground. I think we are saying that this is an asymmetrical war and that using military strategies, alone, will not resolve it. Thank you.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Well, thank you for those very important comments. Let me quickly check that, perhaps at a very broad level, but also a fundamental level, a key issue is one of our greater accountability, whether it's security sector reform or development policies. The reality is, of course, that very many actors, not just militant groups or so-called bandits perpetrate grave severe human rights abuses, (inaudible) killings, and that many an investigation is sometimes conducted, yet always shoved under the rug, into the drawer.

Investigations are rarely transparent, rarely advertised, what was actually found, and more importantly, there is very sporadic accountability of perpetrators, whether they are members of the military and members of police, not just SARS, but broader police forces, all for the matter politicians, governors, government members, who are guilty of corruption, and this poses this, this fundamental lack of accountability, the ability to get away with crime, corruption, and literally murder, under the cover and rubric of state action, of course, means that policy, such as the rolling militia groups into state forces into federal policy -- or military forces are troubled, to the extent that they want to come into those forces at all, which they very frequently don't. Many members of CJTF do not want to join either the federal police or the Nigerian military because they don't want to be deployed away from the north, but to the extent that

they come in at all, if they come in with the same dirty, abusive practices they engaged with prior, or if the setting is of abuse, then that problem is merely perpetuated, and alternative livelihoods are great, all the power to them. The reality is that what's being delivered is alternative jobs training, rather than alternative livelihoods, in the context where, perhaps, 75% of people live in poverty, and a very high number, well over 50%, do not have access to jobs. Unemployment is very hard. So, people are trained in making shoes and sewing clothes, perhaps in being electrician, but without really having an economy to which they can join, outside of the military sector. So, the security sector reform is naughty, so are other policy dimensions. Ms. Michael, what about healing, community dialogues, reconciliation among different ethnic groups, among different religious groups? What is the state of these efforts, and how effective can they be?

MS. COMFORT MICHAEL: Thank you very much, Vanda. I think that at the core of interventions, especially in the northeast, lies dialogue, especially between community IDPs, as well as community leaders, and, you know, because there is a feeling of, in some displaced communities or most displaced communities, of the fact that one of the concerns that some of them express, or some of the anger that they express, is I know you were part of people who impacted on my family, or that resulted in the displacement.

So, there is a blame approach or perspective that is also very key, that we have to go in the way of dialogue reconciliation for us to arrive at healing because healing cannot be attained just in isolation without dialogue, and one of -- some of the interventions that have been done by, of course, you know, some of the humanitarian actors, of course, involves a large, large, extra-large degree, I will say a conflict dispute resolutions perspective, also empowering the community leaders, the religious leaders, in terms of having knowledge and skills of dialogue, of resolving conflicts within the communities, within the IDPs, within the host communities, and within the camps, as well, and there is also intensified efforts to ensure that there is no isolation of particular ethnic groups, or particular persons from a particular community living in -- within a camp or within a host community, segregated from another fraction of the community, or a camp or a host community that is strictly based on a particular ethnic group.

So, those kind of efforts and the empowerment of the community leaders, the religious leaders to be able to take more fully, and document, and record, and be able to have dispute resolve,

also in terms of returns and to see how far it can go, is a sure way of taking it forward to healing, but there is a lot more that needs to be done in the aspect of how far can the healing go because there is more need for psychosocial support, there is more need for psychological awareness, sensitization, and to give people the time to be able to heal because it's not going to happen in one day, it's not going to happen in two days, it's going to take years for healing to return, and one of the ways to get that, also, to start running also, is to also intensify and see towards the effort of having people return back to their state of -- their home of origin because that will help when people get more sustainably involved in finding livelihoods and being able to interact and integrate and kind of, from day to day, kind of interact more and more with the communities.

I think the healing will happen going that way, and maybe a formal that is put up to see how people will be able to air grievances, not necessarily only because it is tied to a conflict, but also because, oh, this is how I feel towards you, this is how my perspective towards this community is, or towards the community leaders, as well, what role are they playing, in terms of segregation or bias. I think that will go a long way in the healing, and also in more and more of the psychological support interventions that needs to be seen in the humanitarian interventions.

This is difficult to actually access because it's cost-intensive, of course, when you have to compare what are the basic needs of the displaced communities or host communities right now, as against the emotional state of people. The first priority will always come to be that you need to provide the basic infrastructure, you need to provide the basic amenities, you need to provide food and shelter, and so, it is a struggle to have that included, even though it is mainstream in some of the humanitarian interventions, but I think a lot more needs to be done in that aspect, in that regard, which also needs to involve a lot more of women in that participation because women needs to be more trained, women needs to be more empowered to be able to do that because they have that ability to be able to facilitate reconciliation, to be able to facilitate that engagement, to cross the -- to be the cross bridge between that emotional healing process and the forgiveness process because it plays a very pivotal role in the journey towards healing.

So, I think a lot more needs to be done, a lot more funding needs to be also a focus, in terms of that aspect of the healing process that is related to psychological support interventions for

people, in terms of providing support for returns to places of origin, in terms of resuscitation of livelihood, as well.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Thank you. Siobhan, to you -- recommendations from your perspective, perhaps on issues that we haven't touched yet on, that I understand you would like to take on.

MS. O'NEIL: Well, I'll respond a little bit to some of the questions because I think they have recommendations kind of built in, and one is the question about, you know, do we know anything about sort of the impact of the kind of DDR process that's -- or like processes that are in Nigeria? And the truth is we don't really know a lot, yet, about their impact, and I think that's the reason for this project, but this isn't a Nigeria-specific issue. I mean, across the board, DDR and other types of reintegration interventions are humanitarian interventions.

Given the timeline, the timeframe, and the rush to get support for people, you know, this kind of evaluation is really a robust assessment, it hasn't existed, and we really just haven't taken the time because of funding cycles and other challenges to really follow people, truly understand what works and what doesn't, so. So, we don't, we don't really know now, and that's what we're hoping to contribute to and to assist U.N. partners with, but we don't really know in a lot of places. So, I think this is really important. It speaks to a recommendation, which is we need a lot more robust assessment here, so we know what works, we know what doesn't. We have a number of very large-scale conflicts with a lot of different groups that would overwhelm the criminal justice systems, if they all went through that process, and so, you're going to need some sort of alternate approach, whether it's some sort of transitional justice approach, some sort of DDR Program, and we really need to know if these things work and under which conditions. You know, what's the -- where should we prioritize any of our limited resources for programming?

And that gets me to livelihoods, the question you asked, Vanda, yeah, a very good point about there's a lot of jobs training, but not necessarily a lot of jobs waiting for people that come out of them, and livelihoods are important, people need to have an income stream, but I think we've focused on them really narrowly, and not necessarily on sort of what they might represent. First of all, we don't know if they're the reason people leave, or the reason they stay out, or just an indication that they've stayed

out, right? We don't know if it's about just having income, so, supplementing income or replacing income that an armed group was providing, or if it's more about the status and other things that a job or employment can provide. So, there's a lot there that we're trying to unpack with really sort of nuanced economic studies. So, I think that's really important, but I think the main the main thing to remember, in policy considerations around all of this, is how individualized these paths into armed groups are and individualized they are out, and so, I think it's important to remember the re -- undoing the reason someone went in does not mean they come out, right? The reason they went in is in the whole reason they stay in. That's not the reason that they go back. So, I think really understanding the totality of experience for individuals is important.

I'll just make one last comment on women, and I think this, again, has a lot of programmatic implications. So, this is a very difficult population to identify. These are -- many women kind of go back to their communities and try to self-reintegrate, to lay low because of stigma and other issues, and so, it's really hard to get access to them, to identify them and get access to them to find out sort of their programming preferences and how they could be reached without doing harm, and we know that programming tends not to be as gender-sensitive as it should be, and particularly around girls and women who may have been married to a Boko Haram fighter or have children from a Boko Haram fighter. You need to make sure that this programming is really flexible because they will have very different preferences coming out, and those preferences will likely change over time. So, we need to have an adaptive structure, that can change and respond to those needs, and we're seeing that in other countries, as well. So, I'll just stop there.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Thanks very much, Siobhan. Let me -- we have about 10 minutes. Let me bundle a whole set of questions that have come on fathers -- farmers-herders conflict. They have to also ask what is a better way to deal with them? Is the man to deal the man fist deal, a model for how to deal with farmers-herders? What about the Zamfara deal, several years ago? What should it tell us about how viable the deals that were struck this year and last year are? What is the role of the international community, in dealing with the certification in the Lake Chad area? And what role can the international community have in addressing farmers-herders conflict and its reverberations across the country? Please, perhaps just unmute yourself if you would like to come in on that issue. Sophia, I know

that you wanted to come in. Send me a note in the chat or unmute, anyone else, if you would like to come in. Sophia, please?

MS. COMFORT MICHAEL: Thank you, Vanda. I think that one of the crux that we need to look at, when we come to the -- at this sort of farmer-herders issue, is understanding that this is swelled by continued insecurity across African countries, which has continuously made (inaudible), well, as a result of (inaudible), who usually follow the seasons, you know, to the movement and all that, in search of pastural crops for their families, but I really think that the result of the conflict between the herders and the farmers has, under seeking for compensation, has a lot, also, to do with the corruption within the judicial system, also in the delivery of the judgements, as well as failure of the government to be able to address the issue of grazing, which has continued to remain a major challenge that also has led to escalation of conflicts and has also led to the loss of lives and destruction of properties, especially in the situations around the Southern Kaduna areas and applied to (inaudible), well, to mention but a few.

Well, I think that one of the key issues that we need to look at is how is the judicial system del -- approaching the farmers-herders conflict, and is it objective or it is subjective, is it transparent, how do we go about it, how does government need to look into how the judicial system is also addressing this particular aspect of it? Because without this first being addressed at the judicial system, I don't really see much to be done from it because it's just going to continue to escalate, to escalate without this addressing from the core, when we have to address it from a judicial perspective and without the government backing or without a law and a reform that addresses it from a judicial perspective.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Thank you. That's, indeed, one of the issues, isn't it, that these peace deasl are struck, whether it's with man, or to some father deal of 2014, yet there is -- all the current deals, yet there is essentially no enforcement mechanism. So, groups that stay and participate in the deal, great, but others who violate, whether they are militias, or the very same actors are not held accountable, and this, then, creates perception, of course, that the best way to milk deals, and jobs, and payoffs is by creating insecurity and raising arms. Takwa or John, John, I see that you unmuted, would you like to come in on the farmers-herders issue?

AMB. CAMPBELL: Yes, thank you very much. An important dimension of the conflict, I

think, is its exploitation by various political figures to advance their own agendas. Their ability to do so is a reflection of the weakening of the Nigerian federal government. With farmer-herder, as with so many other conflicts in Nigeria, you have to start with governance and improvement of governance. As for we outsiders, we very often know very little, but we are quick to jump to conclusions. Hence, our media is too often prepared to take a farmer-herder conflict and put it into, particularly, a religious context, Christian versus Muslims, and not only is that false, but it actually makes the situation worse.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Thank you, very important. Siobhan or Takwa, would you like to come in, perhaps on the issue of how the international community can help address the certification in Lake Chad, in Sahel, more broadly, and I would, of course, highlight that there are echoes or very similar manifestations in other parts of Africa, with the (inaudible) invasions in Kenya and the issues of the herders invading national parks, protected areas, as well as farming land, in Kenya and East Africa, several years ago, as a result of overgrazing and globe -- and climate change and the certification and also posture, so, Africa-wide problem that will only get more intense.

MR. SUIFON: Thank you very much, Vanda. If I may just use the words of the President, President Buhari, when the U.N. team visited once, he said, cows will not stop anywhere until when they see water. He said the issue of water points is very critical in containing the movement of cattle to any direction that, as you saw, so, the government of Nigeria came in with lots of purposes, their project, farming settlements or herder settlements, but some sort of -- somehow, they will (inaudible) had not been very popular, and so, some governments and the states put limiting limitations banning roaming cattle and they have become very political, just as you have rightly said.

So, the National Livestock Transformation Plan with the U.N.-supported, who are in -- doing these programs, too, with the support from the Human Security Trust Fund, and the Peacebuilding Support Office has been trying to see how we can put elements of dialogue, elements of alternative livelihoods for people and communities and so, I mean, also with demonstrated ranching laws carried, so that we can begin to change that culture. That is a very toxic, politically toxic issue, just like Ambassador Campbell has said.

I will -- talking about the densification, I think the government of Nigeria has been pushing for this infamous Green Beret Project, wherein there is call for tree planting in the Northern and the

Sahara states, in the thousands. The project has been going on and because of what we are talking about, this, the climate change, the culture, even -- and though this, you know, it's animals go to destroy, and there's this emphasis to say we put that reimburse, it may contribute to their arrest, to re -- you know, stopping the increasement of (inaudible), but, of course, the president, Buhari, was also very pushed for Vanda, with this issue of reward, think of Lake Chad, a project that has not had a lot of unanimity on what shall be done, but they believe that if the Lake Chad waters are restored, lots and lots of things will be, you know, will follow.

That is very expensive, it's also very critic -- very difficult to do, and more and more, it supports, in one of the papers that I wrote also, the issue that it cannot just come as one. You know, it was very costly for -- to take water, whether from the Congo Basin or from the Libyan Aquifers or wherever they want to do it. It should be accompanied by some economically viable project that people begin to see that their investments will pair off, and I think that is one of the ways to begin to consider looking at all those issues, but as you have said, the farmer-herders issue is very political, political in the sense that it has been looked at it from the point of view where the government in power was some sort of very silent when he was taking a peek and it becomes very difficult, and even now, at the level of the region (inaudible) many countries, Benin Republic has suspended their (inaudible) protocol, and many countries are questioning whether culture will begin to move from one part of the -- even it's a tradition, how that can be stopped. So, this is something on the table, and the U.N. in Nigeria is supporting to bring that platform for discussion. Over.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Excellent. Thank you. Siobhan, would you like to come in on this issue?

MS. O'NEIL: Just very briefly to say that it's been highlighted here, but I think it's -- it bears repeating is, you know, you have all of the conditions, I think, in the northwest and then starting in the Middle Belt of these tensions being not only exacerbated by, but also taken advantage of by various armed actors, and we've seen this in other places to really terrible outcomes.

So, it's clearly a case of where if we're all focused on prevention, but sometimes I think the narrow focus on sort of counterterrorism prevention, it misses these opportunities, potentially, because it's so focused on sort of ideological drivers or things like that that it doesn't see these very

practical other types of conflicts that are creating a space where armed actors, including terrorist groups, that are of high concern to the United States, are moving in to take advantage of, so just to sort of highlight that, which you've highlighted before, and how important that is to kind of preempt in the Northwest potentially.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Thank you. That's very important, and to, indeed, the issue of local community reconciliation, local dialogues, it's often potent, if extremely complex, time consuming, and resource consuming, and we are seeing same issues in Somalia, that, often, the best way to reduce conflict is to invest in that, yet it is so underemphasized, both in international efforts, as well as, frankly, in national governments' efforts.

We are at the end, but I will take the prerogative of running four minutes over and ask the last question to Ambassador Campbell, before thanking all of our panelists and the audience. Ambassador Campbell, East Africa is coping with what people call scramble for Africa again, intense competition between global powers and regional powers, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, China, of course, United States, Europe, over access of priority arrangements, political arrangements. Are we seeing anything similar in West Africa, particularly in Nigeria? Is there a similar power competition playing out? What's the role of China in Nigeria? I know I'm giving you an enormously complex and rich topic with very short amount of time, but your last concluding thoughts, please.

AMB. CAMPBELL: It is not nearly as developed in West Africa as it is in East Africa. Chinese economic penetration of Nigeria is in its relatively early stages. It may amount to something more than it is now. The Buhari administration appears interested in the general proposition of exchange of oil for infrastructure, and the Chinese companies are in the process of restoring the Nigerian railway network.

The extent to which Nigerians dislike and are suspicious of the Chinese is very hard to parse out. There's some polling data that indicates that the Chinese are quite popular in Nigeria, but there is plenty of anecdotal evidence that Nigerians regard them, regard Chinese, as raucous. So, I would suggest that this is something through which we do not see very clearly, at present time. The other thing, of course, is what happens in China? Will China be able to extend its activities in Africa, particularly, should it face economic difficulties of its own?

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Oh, thank you, sir, and, of course, that is a huge role of China, in West Africa, which has to do with deforestation and logging that you already spoke about --

AMB. CAMPBELL: Yes.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: -- as well as with wildlife trafficking, as well as legal wildlife trade, and the levels of hunting and poaching that is being conducted in West Africa, and heads to China, as well as for the matter, as supplies of exotic pets in the United States.

Ambassador Campbell, thank you so much for your enormous insight, very rich, very (inaudible). You gave us a tremendous amount, and thank you, also, for writing the great book on Nigeria, that I highly recommend to everyone, “Nigeria and the Nation-State.” Ms. Michael, we couldn’t have done a panel as well if we didn’t have you. Your on the ground perspectives are just crucial and so is your dedication and courage, along with your other humanitarian colleagues working in the north. Thank you so much for coming and your work, and many thanks also to you, Dr. Suifon, for your tremendous policy insight, your deep understanding of both the U.N.’s role, local situation, and Nigerian policies. It's been a great pleasure having you with us, and, finally, Dr. O’Neil, thank you, also, very much for a very extensive collaboration between us, that goes beyond this panel and your tremendous insight, and I look forward to learning very much from the outcomes and findings of your project as they emerge, and, finally, a tremendous thanks to everyone who has joined the conversations for your questions. The event will stay recorded on our Brookings website, and I look forward to having you with us with future events.

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