
Nigeria Extremists Release 21 Abducted Girls After Two Years

13/10/2016



The release follows negotiations between the Nigerian government and the extremist group Boko Haram.

Nigerian authorities confirmed Thursday that 21 girls abducted two years ago by the extremist organization Boko Haram have been freed.

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A spokesperson for Nigerian President Mallam Garba Shehu, said the girls are a part of the group of 276 girls abducted by the militants in April 2014, when the militants kidnapped them from their beds in the middle of the night.

"It is confirmed that 21 of the missing Chibok Girls have been released and are in the custody of the Department of State Services," Shehu wrote on his Twitter account.

Shehu added that the release, the largest so far, was the result of negotiations between the Nigerian government and the extremists.

The abduction triggered the "Bring Back Our Girls" campaign, which has received international attention. According to campaign figures, the latest release brings to 57 the number of girls who have either escaped or been released, bringing the total number of missing to 219.

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Most of the girls have been rescued in a remote area located in the Sambisa Forest in Borno state, where Boko Haram has long been suspected of operating.

According to nongovernmental organizations and officials, at least 2,000 women and girls have been kidnapped

since early 2015 by the extremists, who seek to revive a medieval caliphate in the former British colony of Nigeria, which is sub-Saharan Africa's most populous country and its largest energy producer.
