

# UN condemns attack on civilians in north-east Nigeria

Denouncing an attack on civilians in Nigeria's restive north-east region, a senior United Nations humanitarian official has called on all parties to the conflict to immediately cease hostilities and ensure the protection of civilians.

According to reports, at least 34 people were killed and over 90 injured in the attack that took place on 1 April near Belle Village, in the outskirts of Maiduguri, the capital of Borno state.

"Innocent civilians continue to suffer daily from direct and indiscriminate attacks in north-east Nigeria [and] endless numbers of explosions, brutal killings, abductions and lootings continue to uproot the lives of women, children and men daily," said Yassine Gaba, the acting UN Humanitarian Coordinator, in a news release on Monday.

"I call on all parties to the conflict to end this violence and to respect human life and dignity."

The situation in north-east Nigeria has witnessed a steady deterioration over the past few weeks, particularly in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states.

Since the beginning of the year, at least 120 women, children and men are reported to have been killed and over 210 seriously injured, in over 22 attacks allegedly carried out by non-state armed groups directly targeting civilians.

Of particular concern is the safety of women and girls, who remain at a constant threat of grave human rights abuses and gender-based violence as well as of abduction.

On 19 February, 110 school girls were abducted in an attack in Dapchi, Yobe state. In 2014, the region witnessed one of the worst such incidents in which over 270 girls were abducted from a government school in Chibok.

Violence and insecurity in the region has left close to 7.7 million people in dire need of humanitarian assistance – especially food, shelter, water, healthcare and protection.

Since the start of the conflict in 2009, more than 20,000 people have been killed; thousands of girls, women, boys and men have been abducted; and children continue to be used routinely as so-called "suicide" bombers.