

Peace News Notes



Some Good News About Nigeria

The Nigerian government announced that 21 of the Chibok schoolgirls abducted by Boko Haram in April 2014 have been freed in negotiations with the insurgents, according to reports from media outlets on October 13 including the Associated Press and ABC News and PBS. The negotiations were carried out with help from the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Swiss government.

The Brethren Newslines reports:

Church of the Brethren staff have received confirmation of this news from Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN, the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria). EYN president Joel S. Billi sent confirmation after he talked with Chibok parents and the Bring Back Our Girls organization in Nigeria. The majority of the girls abducted from the school in Chibok are from Nigerian Brethren families.

"We receive this news with great joy," said Jay Wittmeyer, executive director of Global Mission and Service. "As a church we have been in active prayer for these individuals since their abduction. Congregations continue to pray specifically for each girl. Jesus said that we should pray always and not lose heart and we have steadfastly been doing so and we will continue to do so.

"We also express gratitude to all parties involved in this negotiated release. We know that both the IRC and the Swiss government have been actively involved in working toward peace and relief in Nigeria in many ways, and we are not surprised that they have been involved in this settlement.

"We do continue to call for the release of all individuals held against their will," Wittmeyer said, "not just those from Chibok."

Some 197 of the Chibok students remain in Boko Haram hands, and "it is not known how many of them may have died," said the AP report, as published on AllAfrica.com. According to AP, the freed girls are in the custody of Nigeria's Department of State Services, which is the country's intelligence agency. Presidential spokesman Garba Shehu told the AP that talks will continue for the release of the rest of the Chibok girls.

The names of the girls who have been released is on the Brethren website at brethren.org.

Find the AP and ABC News report at <http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/nigeria-21-abducted-chibok-schoolgirls-freed-42771802>. Find information on the Nigeria Crisis Response of the Church of the Brethren and EYN at www.brethren.org/nigeriacrisis.

A report from the New York Times online on October 17 gives details of the girl's reunion with their families and gives some details of their ordeal.

Please be in prayer for the girls who are still missing and for those who have been freed. The freed girls remain in the custody of the secret police, and they are receiving medical and psychological care, government officials said. They were able to see their families, but they are not yet home.

One Way You Can Help Nigeria Recover

Books for Nigeria (through November 20, 2016)

This new initiative is focused on helping schools recover, and improve, as EYN rebuilds its education programs. One of the best ways to combat terrorism is to provide good education. Boko Haram, meaning “western education is forbidden”, is trying to stop education, especially of girls. This book drive is part of a larger plan supporting education for the children of NE Nigeria. There are two focuses of this book drive, child education and pastoral education. The books will be shipped in December 2016, so all books must be to the Brethren Service Center by November 20, 2016.

Books for Children

EYN-related schools are in need of books for their school libraries and classrooms. Please collect new or used books in good condition for children ages 6 to 16 years old. Specifically requested are paperback chapter books for children, such as those recognized by the Newberry Award (easily found online). Non-fiction books and children’s encyclopedias are also requested. All books should be in good condition and published in the last 20 years.

Books for Kulp Bible College

EYN’s Kulp Bible College is requesting help supplying their library. They are in need of materials for training pastors including Bible commentaries, reference books, and resource books for pastors as well as books on Christian education, theology, preaching resources, Hebrew and Greek languages, pastoral counseling and ethics. All books should be in good condition and published in the last 20 years. The college staff have provided a wish list of specific titles that can be found online on the Brethren website.

Send books to:

Books for Nigeria

Brethren Service Center Annex

601 Main Street

New Windsor, MD 21776

Please make sure all books arrive at the Service Center by November 20, 2016.