



Blitz in Nigeria: Special Forces eliminate Isis number two Abu-Bilal al-Minuki

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A joint operation between US special forces and the Nigerian army has eliminated the global leader of the Islamic State in the Lake Chad basin. Trump: "The global network of Isis is significantly downsized".

The raid in Lake Chad

In a high-impact joint operation, the military forces of the United States and Nigeria eliminated **Abu-Bilal al-Minuki**, described by American President Donald Trump as the "**second in command of Isis globally**".

The raid, described as "meticulously planned", targeted a compound located in the Lake Chad basin, in northeastern Nigeria. According to US Air Force General Dagvin Anderson (commander of AFRICOM), the attack resulted in the death of Minuki and several of his lieutenants, with no

injuries reported among US military personnel.

"With his removal, the global operations of Isis are significantly downsized."

— **Donald Trump**, President of the United States

Who was Abu-Bilal al-Minuki

A Nigerian citizen, al-Minuki had already been placed on the global terrorist list by the US State Department in 2023. Over the years, his influence had grown exponentially within jihadist networks:

- **Head of the al-Furqan office:** Managed one of the most active networks of the Islamic State in the Sahel.
- **Global coordinator:** According to Nigerian intelligence, he oversaw the manufacture of weapons and explosives, the use of drones, and media propaganda channels.
- **Linking ring:** Connected the Isis branch in the Sahel with the Islamic State's West Africa Province (ISWAP), facilitating the movement of foreign fighters to Libya.

Turning point in relations between Washington and Abuja

The outcome of this mission marks a clear change in diplomatic relations between the two countries. In recent months, Trump had harshly criticized the Nigerian government for failing to protect the Christian minority (the Nigerian population, of over 230 million people, is almost evenly divided between Christians and Muslims), threatening to block humanitarian aid.

Nigerian President, **Bola Ahmed Tinubu**, expressed strong satisfaction on X, praising the "courageous joint operation" and thanking the United States for the strategic partnership.

Daniel Bwala, Tinubu's spokesperson, wanted to clarify the nature of the threat posed by the terrorist leader:

"From our perspective, Minuki was killing both Muslims and Christians. This operation demonstrates the dramatic improvement in our relations with the United States."



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Experts' analysis: lasting or temporary blow?

While the White House claims a historic success – reminiscent of the elimination of Isis leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi in 2019 – analysts urge caution.

James Barnett, a specialist in Nigerian geopolitics at the Hudson Institute, described the raid as *"the most significant US counterterrorism operation in West Africa in recent years"*. However, Barnett emphasized that due to the fluid and decentralized structure of ISWAP in the Lake Chad basin, it is still difficult to determine if this blow will manage to degrade the organization definitively in the long term.

News link: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2026/05/16/senior-isis-commander-killed-by-us-nigerian-forces-trump-says/>