

European Baptist Missionaries evacuated in Cameroon after bombings

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FALLS CHURCH, Va.—German-based Baptist mission agency [EBM International](#)—formerly European Baptist Mission—evacuated all its missionaries and volunteers from the Far North province in Cameroon following a series of bombings by Boko Haram.

“Since January 2013, Boko Haram has started to kidnap foreigners in order to release them for money,” said Christoph Haus, EBMI general secretary, who was visiting the western Central African nation. “They have kidnapped almost 20 foreigners. Some of them were missionaries.”



Areas in Cameroon where EBM International has work. (EBM International Image)Activities by the militant Islamist group have intensified recently.

“Over the past six weeks, they have started a series of six suicide bombings that have left more than 50 dead and hundreds injured,” Haus reported to the [Baptist World Alliance](#). “Three of those attacks occurred 400 and 600

meters from our mission station in Maroua, the capital of the Far North province. We have evacuated all our EBMI missionaries and volunteers from the province.”

The predominantly Muslim region in northern Cameroon has about 350 Baptist churches, Haus said.

“Some of our Baptist churches at the Nigerian border have been destroyed by Boko Haram terrorists,” he said.

In Nigeria, Boko Haram is considered responsible for killing 15,000 and displacing 1.5 million people.

Magloire Kadjo, EBMI regional representative in Cameroon, said Boko Haram has changed its tactics and strategy.



Remains of a Baptist church in northern Cameroon destroyed by a Boko Haram bombing attack. (BWA Photo)“After the burning of houses, the destruction of properties, the killing with guns, cutlasses and many other means, Boko Haram has changed its methods,” he said. “They are now using adolescents as kamikazes.

“They take time to brainwash them and to convince them that if they die as kamikazes, God will be very pleased with them. They will have special privileges in paradise. They will be together with their loved ones who are already dead.”

Although he acknowledged lack of conclusive proof, Kadjo said, “Some suspect that the adolescents they are using are from the children who were kidnapped in Nigeria.”

Baptists are extending assistance to displaced persons, he added.

“Baptist Christians from other churches and villages gathered food, clothes and fertilizer to help the brethren who were victims,” he said.

The support EBMI and Baptists in Cameroon and elsewhere provided “helped a lot of victims and refugees in many villages,” he added.