CRISNO 377

CAMEROON-NIGERIA II

Background:

Nigeria experienced a minor border crisis with Cameroon from 2 May to 26 September 1987.

Summary:

The border between Cameroon and Nigeria is porous and imprecise at several points. On 2 May 1987 a small number of Cameroonian troops intruded into Nigeria's Borno Province, triggering a crisis for Nigeria. (However, on 1 July Nigeria's President Babangida described it as a minor incident.) Nigeria’s major response was to increase border security.

On 24 September Nigeria's Chief of Army Staff, Major-General Abacha, visited Cameroon--to affirm the "commitment of Nigeria toward peace and progress and toward the stability and peaceful coexistence between Cameroon and Nigeria." Abacha said that his visit had given the two countries an opportunity to correct some wrong impressions. Two days later, on 26 September, a joint military border patrol was formed to monitor the border. That act terminated a low-intensity crisis in West Africa.

The UN, the U.S., the USSR, and the OAU were not involved in this crisis.

(On 29 September, Cameroon's Army Chief of Staff arrived in Nigeria: Brigadier-General James held talks at the airport with General Abacha on the incursions into Nigeria by Cameroonian soldiers. Relations between Nigeria and Cameroon entered a new positive phase following the visit of Babangida to Cameroon on 8-11 December. This did not, however, prevent other border incidents, including one full-scale crisis [see Case #410--Cameroon/Nigeria III, in 1993-94].)

References:

AR 1987; ARB 1987; ARec 1987; Keesing's 1987.

Last Updated: 1/5/2004