



Jubilee Campaign submits this brief as a contribution to the Hearing “Current Human Rights Situation in Nigeria” convened **28 April 2023** by the Subcommittee on International Human Rights of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development of the Parliament of Canada

OUR ORGANIZATION

Jubilee Campaign is a non-profit organization which promotes the human rights and religious liberty of ethnic and faith minorities. We assist individuals and families seeking asylum in the West from religious based persecution as well as promote the care and well-being of such refugees. We also raise the status of vulnerable women and children to protect them from bodily harm and sexual exploitation. Jubilee Campaign has held consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council since 2003.



jubileecampaign.org



@JubileeC



@jubileecampaign268

REFERENCE

[REFERENCE 1]

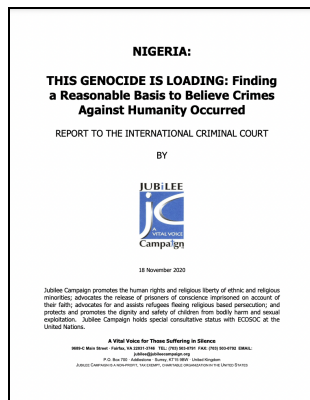
Nigeria - This Genocide is Loading: Finding a Reasonable Basis to Believe Crimes Against Humanity Occurred

Report to the International Criminal Court

November 2020

Jubilee Campaign

<https://jubileecampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Jubilee-Campaign-Genocide-is-Loading-in-Nigeria-2020-11-1.pdf>



MAIN POINTS

Crimes against humanity are comprised of *any one* of the following acts “when committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population, with knowledge of the attack”: (a) Murder; (b) Extermination; (c) deportation or forcible transfer of population; (d) torture; (e) rape; (f) persecution against a group on political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural, religious, gender or other grounds”; (g) enforced disappearance of persons; and (h) other acts “intentionally causing great suffering, or serious injury to body or to mental or physical health”. Acts of genocide similarly include the killing of members of a group, the infliction of harm, and additionally imposing conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part. The commission of *any one* of these acts constitutes crimes against humanity and genocide. Throughout the militant crisis in Nigeria, *every one* of these have been committed.

The Middle Belt violence is often cast as a struggle over resources, and in part, it is. But that is just one motive. Trends in the violence show that religion is a central motivating factor of the conflict that cannot be dismissed. Bishop Mountstephen of Truro, in his report on the growing violence in the Middle Belt prepared for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom government, observed that “The precise motives behind a growing wave of attacks by nomadic Fulani herdsmen in Nigeria’s Middle Belt has been widely debated, but targeted violence against Christian communities in the context of worship suggests that religion plays a key part, alongside other factors such as a clash of lifestyles exacerbated by climate change.”

The repeated attacks on churches, church leaders, and worshippers strongly suggest that the Fulani militants are motivated by religious hatred as well as an interest in land and resources. While there may be mixed motives behind the attacks, the ethno-religious animus is clearer every day. Not only do Fulani militants attack Christian targets, suggesting a religious motive, but the attackers’ conduct during attacks indicate that they are motivated by religion. Disturbingly, there are frequent reports of victims hearing Fulani militants yell jihadist phrases during attacks.

[END REFERENCE 1]

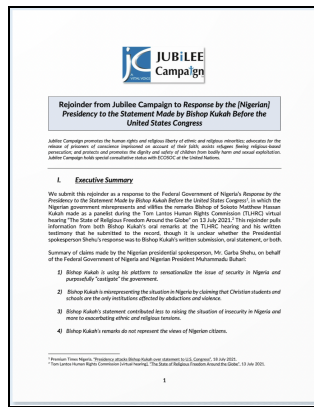
[REFERENCE 2]

Rejoinder from Jubilee Campaign to Response by the Nigerian Presidency to the Statement Made by Bishop Kukah Before the United States Congress

August 2021

Jubilee Campaign

<https://jubileecampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Nigeria-Rejoinder-2021-final-1.pdf>



Nigerian Presidency Claim (1): “It is unfortunate, and disappointing, for citizens of Nigeria to bear witness to one of their Churchmen castigating their country in front of representatives of a foreign parliament.”

Jubilee Campaign Response: Unfortunate and disappointing as it may be for Nigerian citizens to listen to stories and statistics that paint their home country in a negative light, what is most disheartening is that the atrocities taking place in Nigeria have become so harrowing and persistent that they have amassed global humanitarian concern. In mid-July 2021, the International Society for Civil Liberties and Rule of Law published a report highlighting that in just the first 200 days of 2021 (1 January to 18 July), there were 3,462 Nigerian Christian casualties resulting from Islamic jihadists. The number of Nigerian Christian deaths within these first seven months of 2021 has nearly approached the total 3,530 deaths in the entire year of between October 2019 and September 2020 reported by Open Doors. The Institute for Economics & Peace ranks Nigeria 3rd out of 135 nations in its 2020 Global Terrorism Index, [Nigeria falls in the ‘very high’ range for the impact of terrorism at 8.68 points out of 10] and ranks Nigeria 146th out of 163 nations in its 2021 Global Peace Index, [Nigeria falls in the ‘very low’ range for the state of peace at 2.7 points out of 10].

Nigerian Presidency Claim (4): “Soon enough we inescapably hear an identical list of racist tropes against northerners, how one religion dominates governance above all others, how the government is doing nothing to address herder-farmer disturbances, and how the government spends money on infrastructure to benefit everyone but the group and religion of the speaker.”

Jubilee Campaign Response: The Nigerian constitution in sections 275 and 279 devolves power to the states to create their own Shari’a courts – which operate alongside secular courts – and draft Sharia penal provisions, and since 1999, a total of 12 northern Nigerian states have implemented such criminal codes and court systems to which the states’ Muslims are subject to. Sharia courts in states such as Zamfara, Kano, Sokoto, Katsina, Bauchi, Borno, Jigawa, Kebbi, Yobe, Kaduna, Niger, Gombe have been established and, although they are encouraged to only oversee cases of family law, have taken up and imposed punishments for criminal cases. These severe Sharia punishments often include death sentences, limb amputation, lashes, banishment, stoning, and more for hudud crimes – ‘crimes against God’ – including theft, illicit sexual relations, consuming alcohol, and apostasy.

[END REFERENCE 2]

[REFERENCE 3]

Kidnapping & Slavery in Nigeria

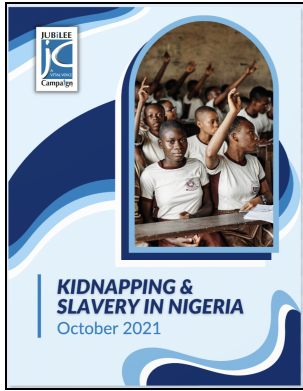
October 2021

Jubilee Campaign

<https://jubileecampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Kidnapping-Slavery-in-Nigeria.pdf>

In April 2014, Boko Haram conducted a mass abduction of 276 schoolgirls from Government Secondary School for Girls in Chibok. Though many of the original students have since been released, there still remain approximately 100 of the Chibok girls in Boko Haram captivity, and stories of the freed girls have shed light on the militant group’s use of abductees for slavery and domestic servitude. This incident, termed the Chibok Kidnapping, served as a “blueprint of sorts”, as Boko Haram launched similar mass abductions in the years following. In February 2018, Boko Haram faction group ISWAP launched a similar mass abduction of 110 schoolgirls from Government Girls Science and Technology College in Dapchi, Yobe State. One Christian girl, Leah Sharibu - 14 years old at the time of the incident - has remained in captivity to this day; she has since been coerced to renounce her faith and convert to Islam, forced to marry a top Boko Haram commander, and has reportedly given birth to two children at a young age.

In May 2015, Nigerian soldiers found a 23- year-old mother of four, Asabe Aliyu, vomiting blood at the time of her rescue; she explained that during her time with Boko Haram, militants took turns raping her relentlessly, that she was impregnated, and that



her captors were attempting to coerce her into an unwanted marriage at the time of her escape. Only days later, another rescued captive girl revealed that she was raped 15 times a day by 15 Boko Haram terrorists “throughout the time she was with the Islamic insurgents before she could escape from their den”.

In 2016, 21 released Chibok girls informed reporters that Boko Haram militants gave them two ‘choices’ upon being captured: either join the group and become the militants’ wives and sex objects, or become domestic slaves tasked with preparing meals, repairing roads, treating injuries, cleaning the camps, maintaining the weapons, fetching water, and more. All the while, as they were forced to endure these hours of domestic and manual labor, many were deprived of sleep and fed very small amounts of food.

One Christian woman was abducted by Boko Haram in 2013 or 2014 and spent four years in captivity. She remembered that militants forced her and her fellow women and girls to learn Quranic verses, and that the punishment for failing to recite what they studied included physical assaults and lashings. She explained, “as a Christian, it meant they lashed me every day, because I could not learn. They’d lash me... and call me an infidel.” Fortunately, she was able to escape alongside another female captive.

[END REFERENCE 3]

[REFERENCE 4]

A Multitude of Human Rights Violations and Security Concerns in the Federal Republic of Nigeria

February 2023

Jubilee Campaign

https://jubileecampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/HRC52_Nigeria.pdf

Perhaps one of the most infamous forms of religious persecution taking place in Nigeria is the application of blasphemy laws to arrest (typically by state actors) and attack (typically by non-state actors and private citizens) Christian individuals accused of blasphemy. One of the most recent and horrific of such incidents occurred in May 2022 in Sokoto State, where Christian university student Deborah Samuel Yakubu was stoned to death and set on fire on her college campus by her Muslim classmates who were angered over her allegedly blasphemous remarks. The perpetrators alleged that she had committed blasphemy when days before, in the class WhatsApp group chat, she questioned why they were discussing religious matters and stated that she was able to pass her exams by believing in Jesus. Nine months later, Deborah’s killers have reportedly still not been located, arrested, and prosecuted for their crime; this is despite that the video of the incident – which circulated on the internet and gained international condemnation – clearly shows the perpetrators’ faces and their verbal confirmation of committing the murder.



In the months following Deborah’s death, one middle-aged Nigerian mother of five, Rhoda Jatau, was arrested and charged with blasphemy for forwarding a video on WhatsApp of a Muslim condemning Deborah’s killing; immediately after news of Jatau’s actions reached the general public, a Nigerian Muslim mob initiated riots which led to the severe injury of 15 Christians. Jatau faces other charges as well as “inciting public disturbance, exciting contempt of religious creed and cyber-stalking”.

The Observatory of Religious Freedom in Africa reported that between 1 October 2019 and 30 September 2021, jihadist assailants – including Fulani militant groups, Islamic State West Africa Province, and Boko Haram – killed 8,560 Nigerian Christians and were responsible for a substantial proportion of the 2,417 Muslim deaths during this period as well. With regards to recent incidents of violence against Christians, in December 2022 suspected Fulani militants ambushed the farm of and killed Christian couple Clement and Christiana Ukertor and their 17-year-old daughter. Also in December, a mob of Fulani militants descended upon Christian communities in two villages in Kaduna State, where they burned and looted no fewer than 96 homes and subsequently killed 40 Christian civilians using machine guns, swords, and axes.

Radical Fulani militants are believed to be responsible for the 5 July 2021 abduction of 140 Christian schoolchildren from Bethel Baptist boarding school in Kaduna State;

while 28 of the kidnapped students have been freed, the rest remain in captivity. In April 2021, Fulani militants abducted three students from a Plateau State Christian mission school; while two students were able to escape during the incident and only one was transferred to the Fulani militant camp, it is likely that had it not been for the swift intervention by local security forces, the situation could have become a mass kidnapping of tens or even hundreds of students.

[END REFERENCE 4]

[REFERENCE 5]

General Persecution of and Genocidal Violence against Christians by Militant Actors in Nigeria Continue Unabated and Escalate in Intensity

Submission to the United Nations Human Rights Council 51st Session

August 2022

Jubilee Campaign

<https://jubileecampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Nigeria-HRC-51.pdf>



In November 2020, eight UN human rights experts released a joint statement urging the Nigerian government to “set up a credible, independent inquiry” into police brutality which has caused civilian casualties. We echo the call to action we made in one of our previous Human Rights Council Session 49 written submissions in February 2022, in which we stated that the United Nations “must either encourage and assist the Nigerian government in establishing a mechanism to investigate, analyze, and preserve evidence of violent atrocities taking place in Nigeria, or otherwise take up the task of setting one up within the realm of the United Nations”, similar to the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar and/or the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine, both of which were established by the Human Rights Council.

In recent months there have been numerous horrendous violent attacks by Islamic jihadist groups, many of which victimized Nigerian Christian civilians. On Pentecostal Sunday, 5 June 2022, unidentified terrorists stormed St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church in Owo, Ondo, during prayer and worship services and shot indiscriminately at congregants, killing approximately 70. Though no militant group has claimed responsibility for the massacre, Ondo lawyer Adeyemi Olayemi explains that it is highly speculated that the assailants were radical Fulani militants. Such would fit the standard of terrorist activity of Fulani militants who in late October 2021 killed two Christian worshippers and abducted an few dozen additional congregants while attacking a Baptist church in Kaduna State, and more recently in April 2022 set fire to Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) in Plateau State’s Miango District in a widespread attack in which they additionally torched 25 civilian homes and 40 agricultural stores.

[END REFERENCE 5]

[REFERENCE 6]

Statement of the Prosecutor, Fatou Bensouda, on the conclusion of the preliminary examination of the situation in Nigeria

December 2020

International Criminal Court
Cour Pénale Internationale

<https://www.icc-cpi.int/news/statements-prosecutor-fatou-bensouda-conclusion-preliminary-examination-situation-nigeria>

“Specifically, my Office has concluded that there is a reasonable basis to believe that members of Boko Haram and its splinter groups have committed the following acts constituting crimes against humanity and war crimes: murder; rape, sexual slavery, including forced pregnancy and forced marriage; enslavement; torture; cruel treatment; outrages upon personal dignity; taking of hostages; intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population or against individual civilians not taking direct part in hostilities; intentionally directing attacks against personnel, installations, material, units or vehicles involved in a humanitarian assistance; intentionally directing attacks against buildings dedicated to education and to places of worship and similar institutions; conscripting and enlisting children under the age of fifteen years into armed groups and using them to participate actively in hostilities; persecution on gender and religious grounds; and other inhumane acts.

“While my Office recognises that the vast majority of criminality within the situation is attributable to non-state actors, we have also found a reasonable basis to believe that members of the Nigerian Security Forces (“NSF”) have committed the following acts constituting crimes against humanity and war crimes: murder, rape, torture, and cruel treatment; enforced disappearance; forcible transfer of population; outrages upon personal dignity; intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population as such

and against individual civilians not taking direct part in hostilities; unlawful imprisonment; conscripting and enlisting children under the age of fifteen years into armed forces and using them to participate actively in hostilities; persecution on gender and political grounds; and other inhumane acts.

“Moving forward, the next step will be to request authorisation from the Judges of the Pre-Trial Chamber of the Court to open investigations.”

[END REFERENCE 6]

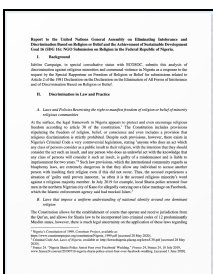
[REFERENCE 7]

Report to the United Nations General Assembly on Eliminating Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief and the Achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16): NGO Submission on Religion in the Federal Republic of Nigeria

June 2020

Jubilee Campaign

<https://jubileecampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Nigeria-SR.pdf>



Multiple members of the Nigerian Christian and minority religious group members reported that local governments in northern states repeatedly rejected applications for building permits for new religious buildings, reconstruction of destroyed houses of worship, and renovation and expansion projects. In Kano State, one Christian leader explained that his request to build new churches had been rejected for “decades.” In Zamfara State, when a Christian community tried to register its recent legal purchase of land, the government refused to allow the purchase to be completed for fear that the land would be used for construction of a new church. In Rivers State, Muslim students of Rivers State University of Science and Technology reported that since 2012, the university board has refused their request to build a campus mosque, despite the students winning a suit against the university.

Moreover, it is important to note that accusations of blasphemy have caused situations of mob violence directed towards accused individuals. In 2016, the murder of a Nigerian Christian man was likely in response to the allegations raised against him that he posted blasphemous messages on social media, and in the same year a Christian woman was killed after preventing a stranger from engaging in a ritual outside of her storefront and another Christian was killed for ignoring the rules of fasting for Ramadan, despite not subscribing to Islam. And in the same year, a Muslim student’s home was burnt down after he was accused of being in cahoots with a Christian student who had supposedly made a blasphemous remark.

[END REFERENCE 7]

[REFERENCE 8]

Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons - Nigeria Must Ensure Equitable Assistance to IDPs in Southern Kaduna

May 2021

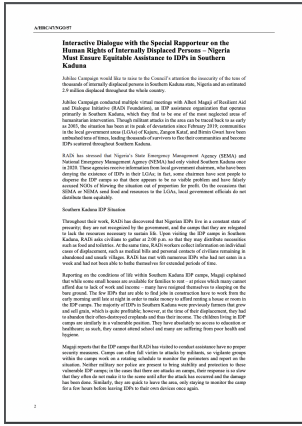
Jubilee Campaign

https://jubileecampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/5467_A_HRC_47_NGO_Sub_En.pdf

Jubilee Campaign conducted multiple virtual meetings with Alheri Magaji of Resilient Aid and Dialogue Initiative (RADi Foundation), an IDP assistance organization that operates primarily in Southern Kaduna, which they find to be one of the most neglected areas of humanitarian intervention. RADi has stressed that Nigeria’s State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) and National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) had only visited Southern Kaduna once in 2020. On the occasions that SEMA or NEMA send food and resources to the LGAs, local government officials do not distribute them equitably.

Throughout their work, RADi has discovered that Nigerian IDPs live in a constant state of precarity; they are not recognized by the government, and the camps that they are relegated to lack the resources necessary to sustain life. Upon visiting the IDP camps in Southern Kaduna, RADi asks civilians to gather at 2:00 p.m. so that they may distribute necessities such as food and toiletries. At the same time, RADi workers collect information on individual cases of displacement, such as medical bills and personal contacts of civilians remaining in abandoned and unsafe villages. RADi has met with numerous IDPs who had not eaten in a week and had not been able to bathe themselves for extended periods of time.

Reporting on the conditions of life within Southern Kaduna IDP camps, Magaji



explained that while some small houses are available for families to rent – at prices which many cannot afford due to lack of work and income – many have resigned themselves to sleeping on the bare ground. The few IDPs that are able to find jobs in construction have to work from the early morning until late at night in order to make money to afford renting a house or room in the IDP camps. The majority of IDPs in Southern Kaduna were previously farmers that grew and sell grain, which is quite profitable; however, at the time of their displacement, they had to abandon their often-destroyed croplands and thus their income. The children living in IDP camps are similarly in a vulnerable position. They have absolutely no access to education or healthcare; as such, they cannot attend school and many are suffering from poor health and hygiene.

Magaji reports that the IDP camps that RADi has visited to conduct assistance have no proper security measures. Camps can often fall victim to attacks by militants, so vigilante groups within the camps work on a rotating schedule to monitor the perimeters and report on the situation. Neither military nor police are present to bring stability and protection to these vulnerable IDP camps; in the cases that there are attacks on camps, their response is so slow that they often do not make it to the scene until after the attack has occurred and the damage has been done. Similarly, they are quick to leave the area, only staying to monitor the camp for a few hours before leaving IDPs to their own devices once again.

[END REFERENCE 8]

[REFERENCE 9]

Letter to the United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect - Growing Crisis for Nigerian Christians

July 2020

Jubilee Campaign

<https://jubileecampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/UN-Office-on-Genocide-Prevention-and-R2P-letter.pdf>



We, the undersigned, are a collection of organizations and activists of multiple religious, intellectual, and political backgrounds who work in collaboration to promote and protect inalienable human rights as well as the internationally accepted standard of religious freedom; together we strive to raise awareness of situations in which such fundamental rights and freedoms are unjustly challenged and rescinded. We would first like to express our gratitude for the imperative work of the U.N. Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect on raising international awareness within the United Nations on situations where genocide and atrocity crimes are increasingly likely to place certain populations in extreme danger. The Office’s early warning mechanism is essential in fostering international coordination to pre-emptively respond to genocidal crises around the world.

In light of the increasing genocidal trends in Nigeria, we collectively and respectfully request that you raise the probability of genocide in Nigeria with the United Nations Secretary-General. For the United Nations to spearhead the intervention and prevention of impending genocide is essential to generate international collaboration and a strategic plan of action involving governments, human rights organizations, religious leaders, and individual activists; Nigeria’s multidimensional crisis demands an integrative response, and the United Nations’ leadership on this issue is fundamental to resolving the situation before it becomes irreversible and irreparable beyond measure.

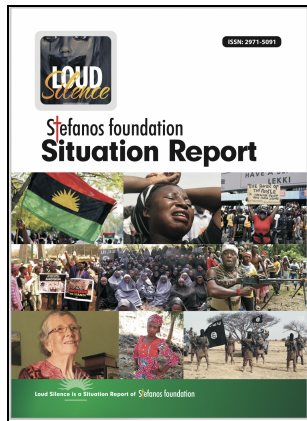
[END REFERENCE 9]

[REFERENCE 10]

Loud Silence: Situation Report

2021

“With the activities of these terror groups, Nigeria is said to be the most dangerous place for a Christian to live in, it is even ranked the 9th most Christian persecuted nation in the world according to 2021 report by Open Doors. It further stated that 2,200 Christians were killed in 2021. The persecution has grown in intensity the past few years. Another report has stated that the attacks have claimed at least over 27,000



civilian lives, have killed over 2,300 teachers and destroyed over 1,400 schools throughout Nigeria's three North-eastern States (Borno, Adamawa and Yobe) in 2021.

“Sadly, more school abductions have taken place, from December 2020 to October 2021, more than 1700 school children and students have been abducted with many of them still in captivity. Their parents are made to pay ransom yet some are killed. Their innocence stolen and they feel abandoned by their government. According to UNICEF Representative in Nigeria (Peter Hawkins) stated that education of 1.3 million children, whose schooling was disrupted and learning severely impacted in the 2020/2021 academic calendar, were directly affected by the closure of 11,000 schools. This school kidnappings are further causing havoc in the Northern region where education is very backward especially girl child education. The abductions discourage parents that have agreed to send their daughters to school because those girls taken by the terrorists are forced to become child brides.

“Recently, militant herdsmen’s activities in the middle belt region have also been extended to the western and eastern part of the country where Fulani herdsmen are reportedly seen bearing and brandishing AK47s. [...] ‘Figure spinning’ and ‘mangling’ have also in recent time become part of the Federal governments’ seeming conspiracy and complicity. The government denies outright the casualty figures associated with militant herdsmen killings, or it mangles and minimizes the statistics. In the year 2020 alone, there have been several instances of attacks on whole communities as well as attacks on individuals on their farms, etc. [...] Credible statistics show that from June 2015 to February 2022, between 11,500 and 12,000 Christians were murdered by Boko Haram, Militant Fulani Herdsmen and Bandits as well as highway kidnappers. Since June 2015, militant Fulani herdsmen accounted for over 7,400 deaths of Christians, Boko Haram killed 4,000 Christians, bandits and kidnappers killed 150-200 Christians.”

[END REFERENCE 10]

[REFERENCE 11]

Nigeria: Unfolding Genocide?

*An Inquiry by the UK All-Party
Parliamentary Group for
International Freedom of
Religion or Belief*

June 2020

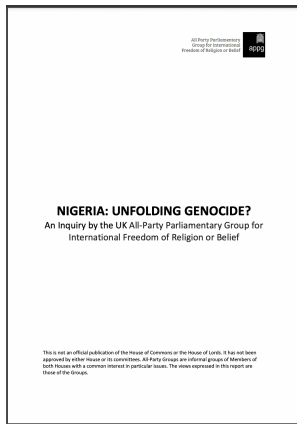
United Kingdom All Party
Parliamentary Group for
International Freedom of
Religion or Belief

<https://appgfreedomofreligionorbelief.org/media/200615-Nigeria-Unfolding-Genocide-Report-of-the-APPG-for-FoRB.pdf>

“The escalation of violence must also be seen in the context of the growing power and influence of Islamist extremism across the Sahel. Multiple groups, such as the Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP), a splinter of Boko Haram and an affiliate of the weakened Daesh caliphate in Iraq and Syria, continue to extend their networks in Nigeria, Mali, Niger, Cameroon, Chad and Burkina Faso. While not necessarily sharing an identical vision, some Fulani herders have adopted a comparable strategy to Boko Haram and ISWAP and demonstrated a clear intent to target Christians and symbols of Christian identity such as churches.

“The APPG received numerous reports that Christian pastors and community heads are specifically targeted. During many of the attacks, herders are reported by survivors to have shouted ‘Allah u Akbar’, ‘destroy the infidels’ and ‘wipe out the infidels.’ Hundreds of churches have been destroyed, including over 500 churches in Benue State. As the Bishop of Truro concluded in his report for the UK’s Foreign and Commonwealth Office, ‘the religious dimension is a significantly exacerbating factor’ in clashes between farmers and herders and ‘targeted violence against Christian communities in the context of worship suggests that religion plays a key part.’

“Another of the main drivers of the escalating violence is the Nigerian Government’s inability to provide security or justice to farmer or herder communities. Failure to prosecute past perpetrators of violence, or heed early warnings of impending attacks has facilitated the rise of armed militia which often form along ethno-religious lines to protect community interests. [...] The inability of the Nigerian Federal and State Governments to protect Christian farmers, and the lack of political will to respond adequately to warnings or to bring perpetrators of violence to justice, has fostered feelings of victimisation and persecution. The APPG agrees with Amnesty



International’s conclusion that failure to protect communities, as well as cases of direct military harassment or violence, combined with an unwillingness to instigate legitimate investigations into allegations of wrongdoing, ‘demonstrate, at least, wilful negligence; at worst, complicity’ on the behalf of some in the Nigerian security forces.

“Evidence analysed by the APPG suggests that the ready availability and low price of firearms has also played a role in escalating violence. The Archbishop of Canterbury gave evidence to the APPG that ongoing instability in Libya has led to a huge increase in the number of firearms flowing into Nigeria. According to Adam Higazi and Oliver Owen, ‘guns are sourced via ordinary criminal networks, in which arms obtained in post-conflict zones such as Libya are imported and traded in known underground markets in the Niger Delta and South-East.’ Combined with the huge supply of weapons left over from civil wars in Liberia, Ivory Coast and Sierra Leone, as well as the domestic Nigerian arms manufacturing industry, this means that firearms are readily available in Nigeria and have halved in price in recent years. While obviously not causing conflict in itself, this preponderance of readily available weapons has played a role in exacerbating violence in Nigeria.

“In a situation as variable and widespread, featuring so many disaggregated actors, and about which there is still a concerning lack of data, the APPG cannot make definitive judgements about the motivations of every group or individual. The drivers of the farmer-herder clashes are complex and need to be addressed if the violence is to be curbed. Religious ideology nevertheless has an important impact. Failure to acknowledge this or to overlook the underlying tensions between religious groups will only serve to limit attempts to reduce violence.”

[END REFERENCE 11]

[REFERENCE 12]

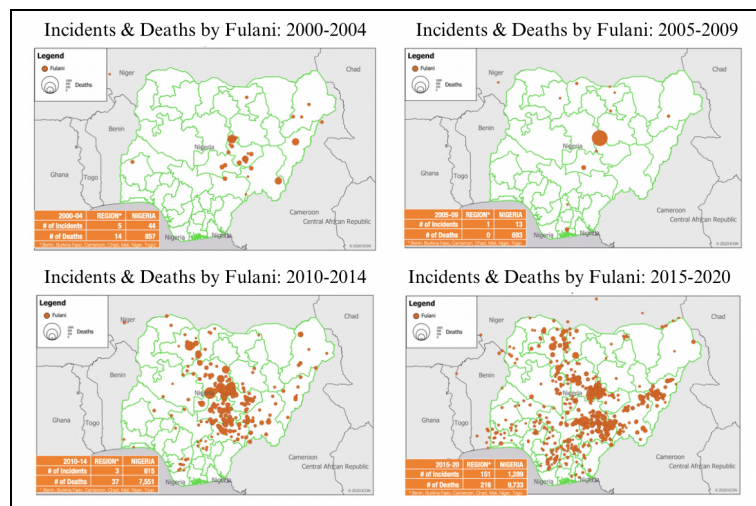
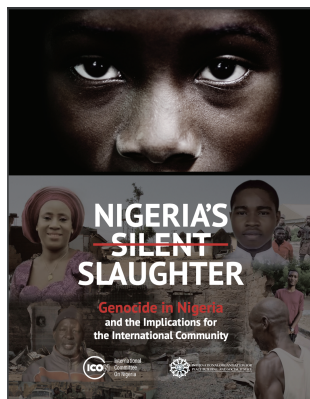
Nigeria’s Silent Slaughter

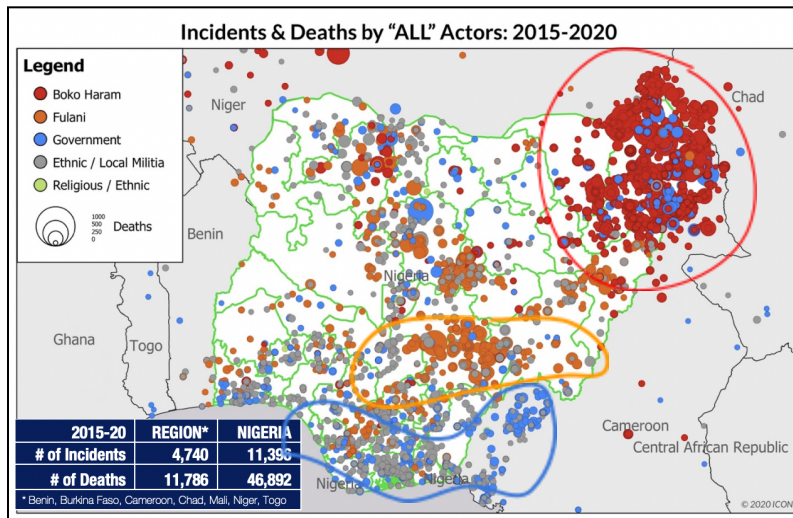
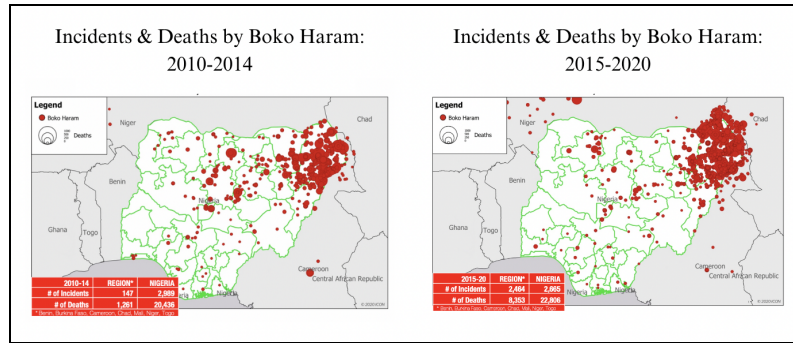
2020

International Committee on Nigeria (ICON) & International Organisation for Peace Building and Social Justice (PSJ)

<https://clientwebproof.com/Nigeria-Silent-Slaughter/offline/download.pdf>

“Certainly, if the Nigerian Government does not act adequately under the applicable laws such as performing the obligations under the Constitution, and the prosecution of offenders under the Criminal Code, Penal Code, Anti-Torture Act, Terrorism (Prevention) Act, as amended, etc., a fortiori it is impossible to deal with these menaces under the UN Charter, the Genocide Convention and the Rome Statue, none of which has the force of law except to the extent of which any of them has been enacted into law by the National Assembly by virtue of section 12 of the Nigerian Constituion, as altered. Hence this formal and urgent request for international intervention in dealing with the pogrom and attacks against the Christians and minority groups in Nigeria. While the country is trying to manage the concerns endangered by the clamour for self-determination, two violent extremist groups have emerged to exacerbate an already deteriorating situation.”





[END REFERENCE 12]

[REFERENCE 13]

The risk of death penalty and execution of singer Yahaya Sharif Aminu for blasphemy in Nigeria

Texts Adopted

P9_TA(2023)0116

2023

European Parliament

https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2023-0116_EN.html

“The European Parliament,

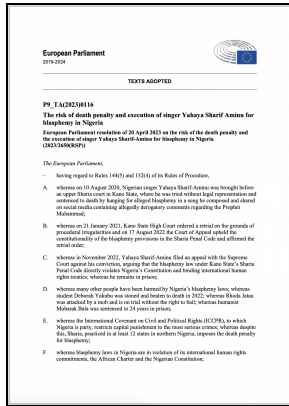
“[A] whereas on 10 August 2020, Nigerian singer Yahaya Sharif-Aminu was brought before an upper Sharia court in Kano State, where he was tried without legal representation and sentenced to death by hanging for alleged blasphemy in a song he composed and shared on social media containing allegedly derogatory comments regarding the Prophet Muhammad;

“[B] whereas on 21 January 2021, Kano State High Court ordered a retrial on the grounds of procedural irregularities and on 17 August 2022 the Court of Appeal upheld the constitutionality of the blasphemy provisions in the Sharia Penal Code and affirmed the retrial order;

“[C] whereas in November 2022, Yahaya Sharif-Aminu filed an appeal with the Supreme Court against his conviction, arguing that the blasphemy law under Kano State’s Sharia Penal Code directly violates Nigeria’s Constitution and binding international human rights treaties; whereas he remains in prison;

“[D] whereas many other people have been harmed by Nigeria’s blasphemy laws; whereas student Deborah Yakubu was stoned and beaten to death in 2022; whereas Rhoda Jatau was attacked by a mob and is on trial without the right to bail; whereas humanist Mubarak Bala was sentenced to 24 years in prison;

“[E] whereas the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Nigeria is party, restricts capital punishment to the most serious crimes; whereas



despite this, Sharia, practiced in at least 12 states in northern Nigeria, imposes the death penalty for blasphemy;

“[1] Urges the Nigerian authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Yahaya Sharif-Aminu, drop all charges against him and guarantee his due process rights; calls for the release of Rhoda Jatau, Mubarak Bala and others who face blasphemy allegations;

“[2] Recalls that blasphemy laws are in clear breach of international human rights obligations, in particular the ICCPR, and contrary to the Nigerian Constitution, which guarantees religious freedom and freedom of expression;

“[6] Recalls the international efforts to abolish the death penalty and urges Nigeria to immediately withdraw the use of capital punishment for blasphemy and take steps towards full abolition.”

[END REFERENCE 13]

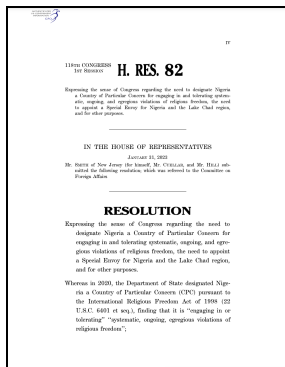
[REFERENCE 14]

H.Res.82 - Expressing the sense of Congress regarding the need to designate Nigeria a Country of Particular Concern for engaging in and tolerating systematic, ongoing, and egregious violations of religious freedom, the need to appoint a Special Envoy for Nigeria and the Lake Chad region, and for other purposes.

Introduced January 2023

United States 118th Congress,

<https://www.congress.gov/118/bills/hres/82/BILLS-118hres82ih.pdf>



“Whereas in 2020, the Department of State designated Nigeria a Country of Particular Concern (CPC) pursuant to the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6401 et seq.), finding that it is ‘engaging in or tolerating’ ‘systematic, ongoing, egregious violations of religious freedom’;

“Whereas, in 2022, the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) recommended that the Department of State redesignate Nigeria as a CPC and found the Department of State’s decision to delist Nigeria ‘inexplicable’, and a result of ‘turning a blind eye’ to that country’s ‘particularly severe religious freedom violations’;

“Whereas USCIRF finds that ‘in Nigeria’s Middle Belt, nonstate armed groups also conducted attacks on houses of worship, religious ceremonies, and religious leaders, with Christian communities and their churches hit particularly hard’ and that ‘the Nigerian Government has often failed to respond sufficiently to violence against religious leaders and congregations’;

“Whereas, in January 2023, Open Doors reported in Nigeria there were ‘5,014 Christians killed in 2022, nearly 90 percent of the total number of Christians killed worldwide ... [and] almost 90 percent of kidnappings carried out against Christians in 2022’;

“Whereas USCIRF cites Nigeria’s Islamic blasphemy laws among the reasons it lists Nigeria as worthy of CPC designation, given that Nigeria is one of only 7 countries with criminal blasphemy laws that carry the death penalty, with such laws existing in the 12 majority-Muslim northern Nigerian States;

“[1] the Secretary of State should immediately designate Nigeria a ‘country of particular concern’ for engaging in and tolerating systematic, ongoing, and egregious violations of religious freedom, as mandated by the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6401 et seq.); and

[2] in order to ensure that the Secretary of State receives more complete and accurate reporting and analysis, the President should promptly appoint a person of recognized distinction in the fields of religious freedom and human rights as ‘Special Envoy for Nigeria and the Lake Chad Region’ with the rank of Ambassador, who reports directly to the Secretary of State and coordinates United States Government efforts to monitor and combat atrocities there.”

[END REFERENCE 14]

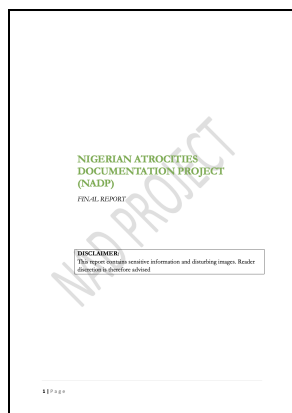
[REFERENCE 15]

*Nigerian Atrocities
Documentation Project
(NADP): Final Report*

April 2023

The Kukah Centre

https://religiousfreedominstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/FINAL-REPORT-Nigerian-Atrocities-Documentation-Project_April-2023.pdf

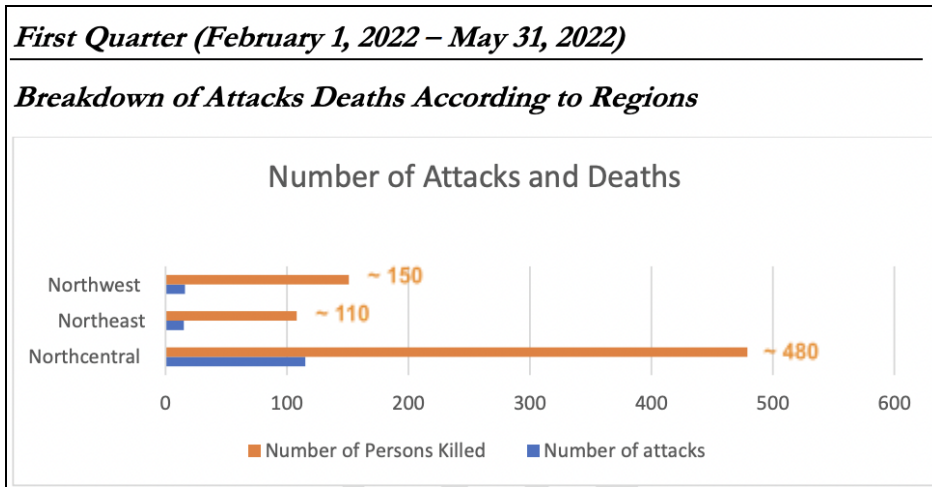


“Contrary to popular opinion and the news circulating in the media, the attacks on Christian communities are attributed to different factors, religion continues to play a significant role in the sustenance of conflict in Northern Nigeria. Christians have been disproportionately targeted both in terms of marginalization, exclusion, and physical violence. For instance, a member of the vigilante group in Zango Kataf and survivor of a terrorist attack, whose name will be withheld for security reasons, disclosed that the terrorists who attacked his community were seen in Hilux vans shouting ‘Allahu Akbar’ while shooting. That day, about 42 persons were killed and over 300 houses were razed. The attacks did not in any way suggest that it was a conflict between Fulani herdsmen and indigenous farmers.

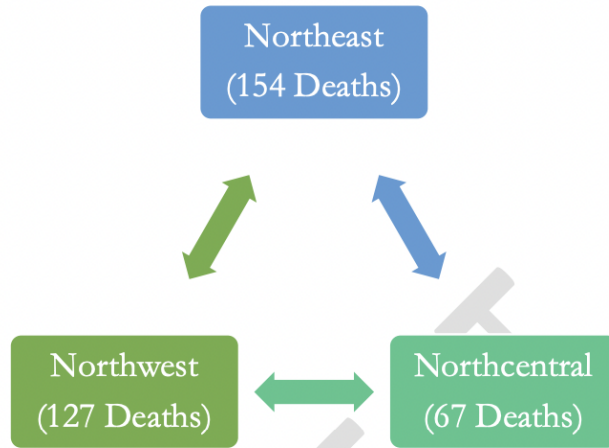
“Findings from the documentation also reveal that forceful conversion of persons to Islam is ongoing in some communities in the Northwest. In Rano Local Government Area of Kano, a twelve-year-old girl was taken away from her guardians by the Hisbah (an Islamic Security Association) and converted into Islam because her guardians punished her for stealing. Two other similar cases have been taken up by the Christian Association of Nigeria, CAN, and were in court at the time of compiling this report.

“Another unyielding short-term response to these attacks is site visits after attacks. In January 2022 for example, a delegation from the Kaduna state government with the joint team of Heads of Security headed by the Commissioner for Internal Security of the state, Samuel Arwan visited Kaura and Giwa LGAs to commensurate with victims and survivors of attacks. There, he assured the victims and survivors of the state government’s efforts in addressing security issues. Despite this, Christian communities in the state [have] been attacked continuously. Most worrisome is the fact that the government has deliberately refused to recognize that these attacks targeted at Christians are religiously motivated. There is more attention to providing analysis of these attacks from the viewpoint of climate change, cultural clash, and economic contestation.

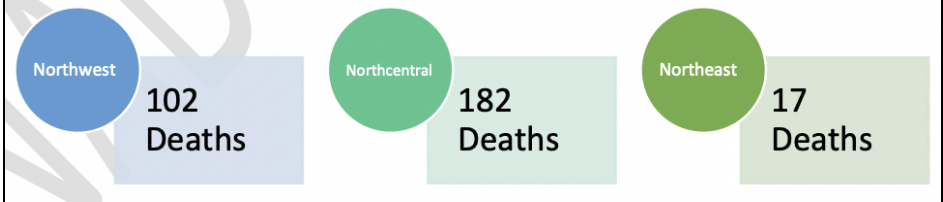
“Christian religious leaders have continued to fall victim to attacks by these non-state actors. For instance, in the last month of this quarter, Rev. Fr. Isaac Achi, the Parish Priest of Saint Peter and Paul Catholic Church Kafin Koro in Niger state was burnt to death in the parish house while his assistant, Fr. Collins Ameh managed to escape with bullet wounds.¹⁴ The killing of Fr. Isaac Achi made it 30 Catholic priests killed by non-state actors in Nigeria in 2022. Also, two pastors and a catechist were kidnapped in Katsina state. A total ransom of 45 million naira was paid to secure their release.”



Documented Number of Persons Killed Between July 1 – September 30, 2022



Documented Figures of Persons Killed from November 1, 2022- January 31, 2023



Affected States in Nigeria



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