



OBSERVATORY FOR
RELIGIOUS FREEDOM
IN AFRICA

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SUBMISSION OF THE OBSERVATORY FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN AFRICA TO THE 45th SESSION OF THE UPR WORKING GROUP (4th CYCLE)

NIGERIA

The Observatory for Religious Freedom in Africa (ORFA) is a programme of the Foundation Platform for Social Transformation, a charity established in 2010 and registered in Voorburg, The Netherlands under Chamber of Commerce number 50264249. The aim of the foundation, as set out in its statutes, is to promote social transformation in the broadest sense, and it focuses on programmes that promote the political, socio-economic and cultural development of societies. It implements programs that contribute to issues such as democracy, human rights (in particular religious freedom), integrity (fighting corruption), conflict resolution, the protection of the rule of law, combating injustice, economic diplomacy, etc.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. This submission is prepared for the fourth Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Nigeria on 1 January 2024. Our submission relates to commitments given by Nigeria at its last UPR in the areas of:
 - B8 Human rights & counter-terrorism*
 - B52 Impunity*
 - D1 Civil & political rights - general measures of implementation*
 - D22 Extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions*
 - D31 Liberty and security – general*
 - G1 Members of minorities*
2. We focus on violence in Nigeria during the reporting period, basing our submission on data that we collected through three years of gathering by our Nigerian partners within the country. This data spans the periods 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020, 1 October 2020 to 30 September 2021, and 1 October 2021 to 30 September 2022. Our published report of the project is available at <https://orfa.africa/wp/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Nigeria-Killings-and-Abduction-10-2019%E2%80%932021%E2%80%93final.pdf>.
3. The project registered killings and abductions of civilians, including their religious backgrounds (Christian, Muslim or African Traditional Religionist), age and gender, in the context of an ongoing 'culture of violence' created by 'Terror Groups' such as Boko Haram, Islamic State in the West Africa Province (ISWAP), armed Fulani herders, 'bandits' and other, smaller groups. Where possible, the project recorded the alleged perpetrators from the 'Terror Groups'. We chose to distinguish between the religious background of the civilian victims because a variety of contradictory analyses exists concerning the causes of violence in Nigeria, raising issues surrounding the right to the truth.
4. The data sheds light on the reality of violence in Nigeria and on the implementation of commitments made by Nigeria in its previous UPR in 2018. It brings to attention fresh information about the nature and scale of religiously motivated violence in Nigeria, and the response (or lack of it) of the Nigerian government.

II. FOLLOW UP TO THE PREVIOUS REVIEW

5. In the 3rd cycle of 2018, Nigeria received 290 recommendations and it supported 240 of them. Among the commitments that Nigeria made were the following that are relevant to this submission:
 - a) to continue to strengthen steps in the protection and promotion of human rights (Senegal's recommendation);
 - b) to ensure the respect, protection and fulfilment of human rights for all persons, without distinction of any kind (Sweden's recommendation);
 - c) to continue the implementation of measures and strategies to combat terrorism in order to ensure adequate protection of the population (Belarus's recommendation);
 - d) to take further measures in implementing its programme to counter violence (Turkmenistan's recommendation);
 - e) to continue efforts to counteract violence and improve the security and protection of people in remote areas (Cabo Verde's recommendation);
 - f) to protect and guarantee religious freedom and the rights of people of faith in Nigeria (Chile's recommendation);

- g) to strengthen the fight against impunity, notably guaranteeing respect for rights in the fight against terrorism and law enforcement (France's recommendation);
- h) to adopt measures to fight against impunity with an increased focus on Boko Haram's crimes (Portugal's recommendation);
- i) to ensure that the perpetrators of violence and crimes against children as well as adults are brought to justice (Holy See's recommendation);
- j) to investigate and punish those responsible for violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, for example attacks against schools, hospitals and protected persons, humanitarian actors and their organizations, and those who committed abductions of children, civilians and humanitarian actors (Argentina's recommendations);
- k) to conduct prompt, thorough and independent investigations into allegations of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed by some government forces during counter-insurgency operations, and bring perpetrators to justice (Slovakia's recommendation).¹

III. THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION ON THE GROUND

- 6. Over the three years of our monitoring of killings and abductions in Nigeria, we uncovered a situation of extreme violence across the country.
- 7. Over the reporting periods (1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020, 1 October 2020 to 30 September 2021, and 1 October 2021 to 30 September 2022) the overall total of people killed in the context of the culture of violence created by 'Terror Groups' was 27,183 (5,629 in the 2020 period; 7,569 in the 2021 period; and 13,985 in the 2022 period). The overall total of people abducted in this context was 13,843 (1,224 in the 2020 period; 4,955 in the 2021 period; and 7,664 in the 2022 period). We should stress that our data gathering is conservative in its counting.
- 8. We also found that in each of the three years, Christians were disproportionately affected by violence perpetrated by 'Terror Groups' such as Boko Haram, ISWAP, armed Fulani herders and 'bandits'.

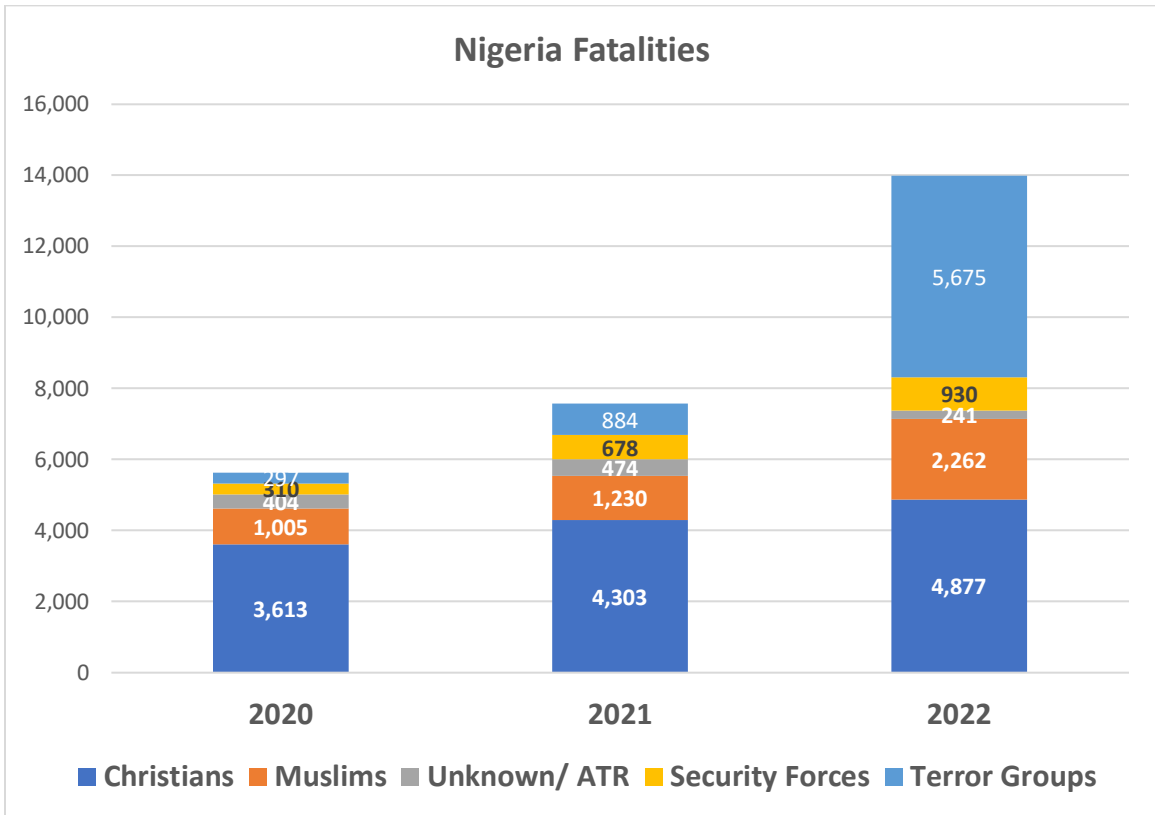
Killings in Nigeria (the right to life)

- 9. Below is a summary table showing the numerical breakdown of killings that we recorded by year and the identity of the victims. Out of the total of 27,183 recorded killings, the overall total of Christians killed was 12,793 (3,613 in the 2020 period; 4,303 in the 2021 period; and 4,877 in the 2022 period). In comparison, the overall total number of Muslims killed was 4,497 (1,005 in the 2020 period; 1,230 in the 2021 period; and 2,262 in the 2022 period). The rest of the victims were Unknown or practitioners of African Traditional Religions 1,119; Security Forces 1,918; and 'Terror Groups' 6,856.

¹ All recommendations recorded in A/HRC/40/7/Add.1.

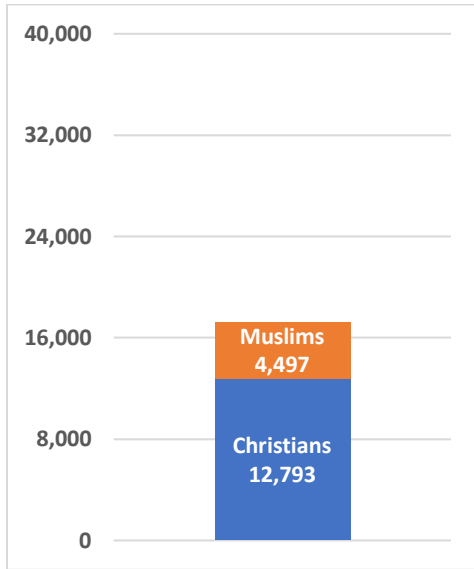
	Christians	Muslims	Unknown/ ATR	Security Forces	Terror Groups	Total
2020	3,613	1,005	404	310	297	5,629
2021	4,303	1,230	474	678	884	7,569
2022	4,877	2,262	241	930	5,675	13,985
Total	12,793	4,497	1,119	1,918	6,856	27,183

10. Below is a bar chart showing the breakdown of killings that we recorded by year and the identity of the victims.



In the chart above please read the figures with a comma instead of a decimal point.

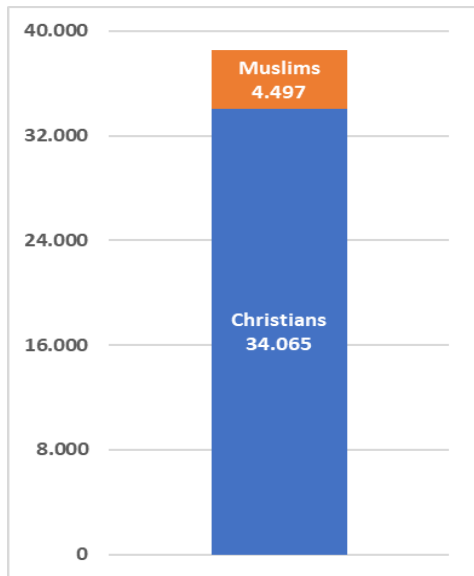
11. Below is a bar chart comparing our records of the number of Christians and the number of Muslims that have been killed over the three year period: 12,793 Christians to 4,497 Muslims. If we do not take into account the size of the Christian and Muslim populations in the geopolitical zones and states where the killings took place, over the three reporting periods the overall ratio of Christians/Muslims killed was 2.8/1.



Muslim Christian Killings 2020 - 2022

In the chart above please read the figures with a comma instead of a decimal point.

12. If we take into account the size of the Christian and Muslim populations in the geopolitical zones and states where the killings took place, the number of Christians killed was proportionally (much) higher than the overall number: over the three reporting periods (covering Oct 2019 – Sept 2022) the adjusted overall ratio of Christians/Muslims killed was 7.6/1.



Proportional Muslim Christian Killings 2020 - 2022

In the chart above please read the figures with a comma instead of a decimal point.

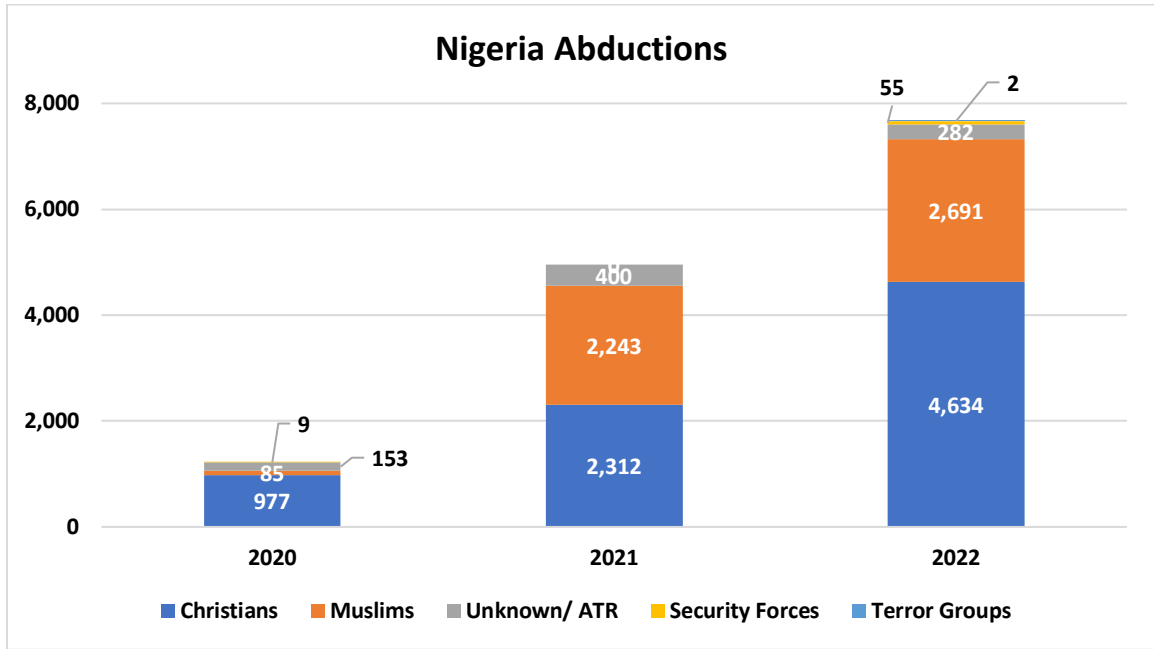
13. For Christians as well as Muslims, there was an increase in killings of around 20% from the 2020 period to the 2021 period. From the 2021 period to the 2022 period the increase in Christians killed was 13%, while the increase in Muslims killed was 84% (even so, there were still more Christians killed).
14. The great majority of civilians killed related to attacks on communities (eg. villages, neighbourhoods of cities etc). The number of attacks involving civilians killed in communities has consistently increased over the 2020, 2021 and 2022 periods. The number of attacks that were more on an individual basis (eg. on the farm, on the road etc) remained stable in the 2020 and 2021 periods, but strongly increased in the 2022 period.
15. The total of Christians and Muslims killed during these attacks was 17,290. The total number of Christian and Muslim victims killed during attacks on communities was 14,099 (82%). The total number of Christians and Muslims killed during attacks that were more on an individual basis was 3,191 (18%).

Abductions in Nigeria (the rights to liberty and personal integrity)

16. The overall total of people abducted in the context of the culture of violence created by 'Terror Groups' was 13,843 (1,224 in the 2020 period; 4,955 in the 2021 period; and 7,664 in the 2022 period). The table below illustrates what we recorded in this regard.

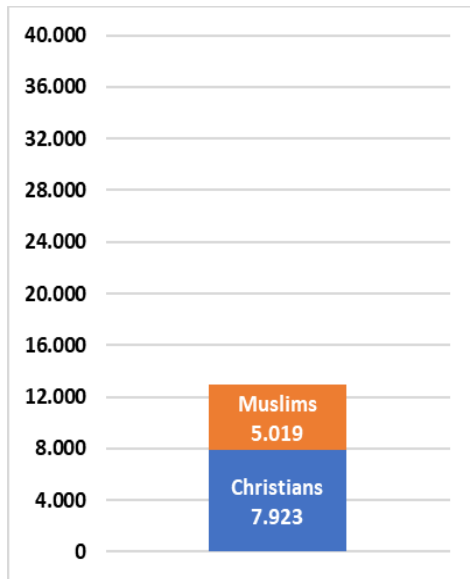
	Christians	Muslims	Unknown/ ATR	Security Forces	Terror Groups	Total
2020	977	85	153	9	0	1,224
2021	2,312	2,243	400	0	0	4,955
2022	4,634	2,691	282	55	2	7,664
Total	7,923	5,019	835	64	2	13,843

17. Below is a bar chart showing the breakdown of abductions that we recorded by year and the identity of the victims.



In the chart above please read the figures with a comma instead of a decimal point.

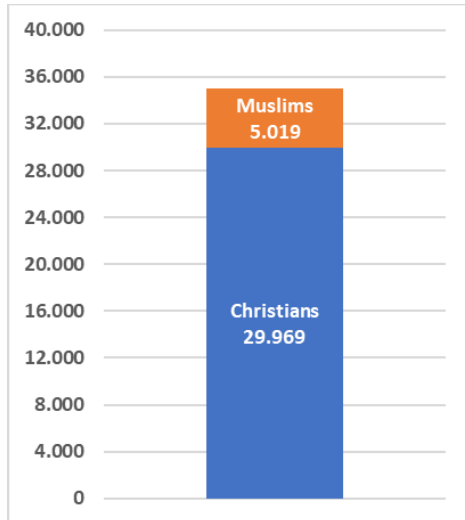
18. Out of the 13,843 abductions that we recorded, the overall total of Christians was 7,923 (977 in the 2020 period; 2,312 in the 2021 period; and 4,634 in the 2022 period). In comparison, the overall total number of Muslims was 5,019 (85 in the 2020 period; 2,243 in the 2021 period; and 2,691 in the 2022 period). If we do not take into account the size of the Christian and Muslim populations in the geopolitical zones and states where the abductions took place, the overall ratio of Christians/Muslims abducted was 1.6/1.



**Muslim Christian
Abductions 2020 - 2022**

In the chart above please read the figures with a comma instead of a decimal point.

19. If we take into account the size of the Christian and Muslim populations in the geopolitical zones and states where the abductions took place, the number of Christians abducted was proportionally (much) higher than the overall number. Over the three reporting periods (covering Oct 2019 – Sept 2022) the adjusted overall ratio of Christians/Muslims abducted was 6.0/1.



**Proportional
Muslim Christian
Abductions 2020 - 2022**

In the chart above please read the figures with a comma instead of a decimal point.

20. For both Christians as well as Muslims, there was an increase in abductions from the 2020 period to the 2021 period. For Christians the number more than doubled, for Muslims the number multiplied by 25. From the 2021 period to the 2022 period the increase in Christians abducted doubled again, while the increase of Muslims abducted was 20%.
21. The great majority of civilians abducted is related to attacks on communities. The number of attacks on communities involving civilians abducted increased significantly in the 2021 period, followed by a slight decrease in the 2022 period. The number of attacks that were more on an individual basis consistently increased from the 2020 to the 2022 periods, with the greatest increase occurring in the 2022 period (153%).
22. The total of Christians and Muslims abducted during these attacks was 12,942. The total number of Christians and Muslims abducted during attacks on communities was 9,942 (77%). The total number of Christians and Muslims abducted during attacks that were more on an individual basis was 3,000 (23%).

IV. OBSERVATIONS

23. Our data collection is an ongoing statistical project. Three years of monitoring have revealed a situation of extreme violence against civilians that appears to be organised, systematic and widespread. What we see suggests that international crimes have been committed, and that they continue to take place in Nigeria. Our data shows that the

violence is escalating, spreading, and the actors are diversifying. The statistics are also showing that the members of one religious group, Christians, are disproportionately affected to the extent that we can suggest there may be deliberate targeting. We also know from our monitoring that the situation of religious extremism and violence in Nigeria has affected other countries in the Sub-Saharan region, such as Burkina Faso and Mali, and is becoming a threat to international peace and security.

24. While our project has not focused on the actions or inactions of Nigeria in terms of its legal obligations, we have encountered a number of issues relevant to the issue of the State conduct raising issues of responsibility. They include the following:

- allegations of governmental indifference to its obligations to prevent and protect;
- allegations of failure to prevent attacks on vulnerable populations (e.g. no presence, attacks take place despite a security presence);
- allegations of failure to intervene or unreasonably delayed responses when attacks or crimes are taking place;
- allegations of inadequate response to solving crimes and the lack of/absence of accountability; and
- allegations of discrimination or collusion by the Nigerian security forces.

Illustrative substantiations for these claims are provided in Annex 2 filed alongside our written submission. We draw these weighty allegations to the attention of the Council for consideration alongside our own scientifically collated data.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

25. The situation in Nigeria is very grave, and also increasingly complex. To recap, by our conservative assessment, in the last three years 27,183 civilians were killed and 13,777 were abducted in the context of the culture of violence created by 'Terror Groups', with the majority of them being Christians. This alone allows us to challenge any claim that the earlier-highlighted commitments that Nigeria made to the previous Human Rights Council have been fulfilled.

26. We call for a robust engagement by the Human Rights Council in its interaction with Nigeria. The enormity of the situation, the risks of further escalation and the likely spillover beyond national borders are such that we recommend the establishment of a United Nations international commission of inquiry into the situation in Nigeria. The commission should, we suggest, include seasoned human rights investigators and specialists in international criminal law. It should have a wide temporal mandate and should consider appropriate measures under the doctrine of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P). For its part, we suggest that Nigeria should urgently seek international Rule of Law assistance to strengthen its capacities. It must cooperate with any international mechanisms that are set up to investigate the matter of the widespread, systematic and gross violations of human rights and humanitarian law that have been and are taking place on its territory.

ANNEX

1. Observatory for Religious Freedom in Africa, 'Killings and Abductions in Nigeria (10/2019 – 9/2022)', 24 February 2023 (revised version).

2. Observatory for Religious Freedom in Africa, Table documenting human rights allegations against the government of Nigeria, July 2023.
3. UK All-Party Parliamentary Group for International Freedom of Religion or Belief, 'Nigeria: Unfolding Genocide? Three Years On', 4 July 2023.
4. UK All-Party Parliamentary Group for International Freedom of Religion or Belief, 'Nigeria: Unfolding Genocide? An Inquiry by the UK All-Party Parliamentary Group for International Freedom of Religion or Belief', 15 June 2020.
5. Open Doors International / World Watch Research, 'Nigeria: Full Country Dossier', April 2023.
6. Aid to the Church in Need, 'Persecuted and Forgotten? A Report on Christians oppressed for their Faith 2020-22', 16 November 2022.
7. HART, Joint Visit Report, 'Breaking Point in Central Nigeria? Terror and Mass Displacement in the Middle Belt', March 2022.
8. UN Doc A/HRC/47/33/Add.2, 'Visit to Nigeria - Report of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Agnès Callamard', 11 June 2021.
9. International Committee On Nigeria (ICON) & International Organization on Peace-building & Social Justice (PSJ), 'Nigeria Silent Slaughter: Genocide in Nigeria and the Implications for the International Community', July 2020. [only available as an e-book, at <https://clientwebproof.com/Nigeria-Silent-Slaughter/>]
10. The Right Reverend Philip Mounstephen, Bishop of Truro, 'Bishop of Truro's Independent Review for the Foreign Secretary of FCO Support for Persecuted Christians: Final Report and Recommendations', July 2019.

**ANNEXE 2 TO THE SUBMISSION OF ORFA IN RELATION TO NIGERIA'S UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW
SAMPLING OF ALLEGATIONS ABOUT NIGERIA'S VIOLATION OF ITS HUMAN RIGHTS OBLIGATIONS**

ALLEGATION AGAINST THE STATE	NARRATIVE	SOURCE FOR VERIFICATION [where we can use public sources, we have done so, to protect our own sources]
Allegation of governmental indifference to its obligations to prevent and protect	<p>In April 2022, the Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN, the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria) held its 75th General Church Council 2022, or Majalisa, at the denomination's headquarters in Kwarhi. EYN president Joel S. Billi, in his speech stressed <i>"Our security situation is completely dilapidated, nothing seems to improve. We have all become vulnerable in the hands of kidnappers, Boko Haram, and ritual killers. Nigeria has never been barbaric and in a state of anarchy like this . . . We are all witnesses of what our church has been undergoing since 2008 to date. We have been crying every now and then but it seems our cries do not matter or make sense. Kautikari, a town under Chibok Local Government of Borno State, was attacked on 14th January and also 25th February, 2022. They killed people and burnt our church, which was rebuilt recently. EYN Pemi was re-attacked on 20th January, 2022, and they went away with 17 children including a 4-year-old boy. On 28th December, 2021, three siblings (all boys) were killed in Vemgo, Madagali Local Government, Adamawa State . . . If truly the federal government is fighting insurgency and uncovers the sponsors, why is the war endless and why not tell Nigerians who are the sponsors. Nigerians want to know who are the sponsors and should face the wrath of the law no matter who they are."</i></p>	<p>https://www.brethren.org/news/2022/ey-n-75th-general-church-council/</p>
	<p>The Christian Association of Nigeria issued a statement of sympathy in response to the 20 January 2020 killing of Lawan Andimi, an ordained minister in Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN, the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria) who served as EYN district secretary for the Michika area, and was chair of the local branch of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN). The statement called for effective action by the Nigerian government: <i>"The Church views the unabated kidnappings, extortions and killings of Christians and innocent Nigerians as shameful to the government that each time boasts that it has conquered insurgency. It is reprehensible and saddening that each time the government comes out to claim the defeat of the insurgency, more killings of our people are committed.... We are almost losing hope in government's ability to protect Nigerians especially Christians who have become endangered species under its watch. We once again call on the International community and developed world like the US, the UK, Germany, Israel and others to please come to the aid of Nigeria, especially, the Nigerian Church so that we might not be eliminated one by one."</i></p>	<p>https://www.brethren.org/news/2020/nigerian-brethren-district-leader-and-ecumenical-leader-lawan-andimi-has-been-executed-by-boko-haram/</p>
	<p>On 14 June 2022, Governor Samuel Ortom of heavily affected Benue State issued a Press Statement denouncing the massacre of farmers in Edumoga, Okpokwu Local Government Area by gunmen believed to be Fulani terrorists. He said that he had long complained about the spiralling killings of Christian farmers by armed Fulani herdsmen, with little to no response by government forces. <i>"When i started shouting about the menace of killer herdsmen in my state, many people thought i was playing to the gallery. Gradually, this has spread to all other parts of the country because the federal government has refused to act appropriately and decisively against them. This is the reason why they have continued with impunity. It has clearly shown that the killing of these innocent farmers in Edumoga, Okpokwu local government is yet another barbaric act by Fulani herdsmen. They must not go unpunished"</i></p>	<p>Benue State Government, Press Statement, 'Ortom describes Edumoga Massacre as Barbaric', at https://www.facebook.com/benuestategovernment/photos/a.1558626717709355/3114584628780215/?type=3.</p>
	<p>In his 17 June 2022 Homily at the Funeral Mass for the victims of the massacre at St Francis Xavier Church in Owo, Bishop Emmanuel Adetoyese Badejo of the Catholic diocese of Oyo said the following: <i>"In these coffins a part of Nigeria lies dead too...Because lying down here with these deceased ones are the joys and hopes and aspirations of their families and loved</i></p>	<p>https://www.nigeriacatholicnetwork.com/the-scandal-of-owo-nigeria-salvation-in-jesus-crucified/</p>

	<p>ones, of the Church of God, of the various communities from where they come and indeed of this country. Even the ones who are maimed and wounded themselves wherever they are, represent Nigeria with all her self-inflicted wounds, bruised brutalized and violated. So I ask, For how much longer shall this continue? From President Muhammad's BUHARI, from the federal government the lawmakers, security agencies and all leaders with responsibility for the State at all levels, I ask....How many more must die? . . . This murder at OWO shows that far more must be done. Ritual killings, abductions, murders, lynching, kidnappings, armed robbery still increase the bloody tally of innocent deaths and suffering in Nigeria day by day. All this is going on while many of our leaders and people in power do business as usual, feign deaf and dumb or worse still continue with their macabre rallies and dances done merely to grapple for positions and privileges or perhaps even mourn the dead the dying and suffering....I say God is not served nor amused by this and judgment will one day come. I call on President Buhari, and our leaders in the Federal Government and State governments to wake up, sit up and act up to secure life and property all over Nigeria. I ask again: "How many more must die"? "Does life really have any value any more with you"? Are we to believe that insurgents, bandits, Boko Haram, ISWAP and murderous herdsmen are more powerful than the Federal government of Nigeria? Is the glaring weakness and helplessness of all our security agencies real or deliberate? These questions need answers . . . So many have cried out in frustration for a review of the security apparatus of our country. I urge leaders at every level to listen to the cry for help of the people they claim to serve, shun discrimination and hypocrisy and do their duty. Why, even God Almighty listens to us in our distress. Death occurs in any organism when the lower order dominates the higher one. One wonders whether the lower order of lawlessness and crime has not already dominated the higher order of the rule of law and governance and begun to strangulate this beloved country of ours. The present situation must not continue so that people may not resort to self-help and kill this country entirely."</p>	
	<p>The Catholic Archbishop of Abuja, Most Revd Ignatius Kaigama has lamented that despite promises by the government to ensure the safety of its citizens, heinous acts of criminality continue to fester. These remarks came in the wake of an attack on the St. Mulumba's Parish, where some members of the church were kidnapped and a violent attempt was made on the priest in the parish. "It is sad that despite the promises of the government to ensure the safety of her citizens, these heinous acts of criminality continue to fester in different communities across the nation". The Archbishop called on the government to take urgent action in addressing the security situation in the country. He urged the government to do more to protect its citizens and ensure that those responsible for these heinous acts are brought to justice. "Proactive measures must be taken once and for all to bring such ugly situations under control".</p>	<p>https://www.nigeriacatholicnetwork.com/fgs-promises-on-security-unfulfilled-says-catholic-archbishop/</p>
	<p>At its 68th General Church Council (GCC) meeting held at its headquarters in Jos Plateau State, the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) condemned attacks on Christian communities in the Middle Belt, North and other parts of the country and the needless destruction of lives and property by Fulani jihadist militia and Boko Haram terrorists. A statement issued on 25 April 2021 and signed by ECWA President, Rev. Stephen Baba Panya, and General Secretary, Rev. Yunusa Sabo Nmadu, denounced the "systematic genocide being executed against Christian and other autochthonous communities throughout Nigeria, especially in the Middle Belt. This is typically orchestrated through continuous raid on Christian farming communities with lethal weapons, often in the dead of the night. Thousands of our people have been murdered in cold blood and their lands expropriated by the marauding aggressors. The council notes with utmost disgust the shameful neglect of the plight and deplorable conditions of the internally displaced persons (IDP) camps, especially in Middle Belt and other parts of the country." The two ECWA leaders called on the Federal Government to "rise from its lethargic slumber and wake up to its responsibilities to its citizens and ensure return of the IDPs to their ancestral patrimonies." They also joined calls for the resignation of the Minister of Communication and Digital Economy, Isa Pantami from office over his alleged link to terrorists.</p>	<p>https://guardian.ng/news/ecwa-condemns-attack-on-christians-alleges-neglect-of-idps/</p>
	<p>In an interview with the Nigerian publication Punch, the Catholic Bishop of Ondo Diocese, Bishop Jude Arogundade, has said that "Just within these few years, one tribe is trying to dominate others, one religion is trying to dominate one others and the passion with which a group within the entire nation is working to overrun other parts of the country is quite troubling</p>	<p>https://www.nigeriacatholicnetwork.com/owo-worshippers-killing-horrible-even-in-war-people-are-spared-once-they-</p>

	<p>because we all came together and voted the APC (All Progressives Congress) government into power. So, I feel disappointed that those we elected into power in Nigeria are not carrying out their primary responsibility. Their number one responsibility is to protect the lives and property of Nigerian citizens.” The Bishop was asked about promises made by those in authority that the perpetrators will be arrested and be made to face justice, and how confident he was that justice would be served. The Bishop responded that “Again, how can we trust this kind of government? They promised they would rescue the kidnapped Chibok girls (in Borno State)... empty promises; that’s what they make every time. This is the seventh year that promise was made but nothing has been done. They promised to arrest these terrorists and some of those arrested, they claimed they have rehabilitated them and we know the result of their rehabilitation but nothing has been done to resettle those whose villages and lands have been taken over. And if what we are hearing in the press is true, that these villages have been renamed by this group of people trooping into the country, how can we just sit down and feel that everything is alright? Everything is not alright in Nigeria.” The Bishop was asked if the Catholic Church in Nigeria had met about the situation. He responded as follows. “The Catholic Bishops’ Conference has been issuing communiqués upon communiqués about the situation of Nigeria. We have even threatened, we have issued all kinds of strong statements and what we get is just cold silence. Even the entire country has screamed that it has never happened before for all the military and paramilitary outfits in Nigeria to be headed by people from one tribe. The President just ignored everybody. What kind of thing is this? Do we still belong in this country? What is this agenda about? I have called on the international community, I have called on anyone that cares to listen and I have called on Heads of States all over the world to please ask the leadership of Nigeria what is going on. Ask our President, sit him down and ask him. This is not the Nigeria we used to know.” When asked about an earlier claim he had made that the attackers had the backing of some powerful people, the Bishop responded that “Everybody knows that, even the government knows that. In the newspapers sometime ago, we read that UAE had submitted the names of the persons behind these attacks to Nigeria. Some Nigerian Generals have come out that they have identified those behind this evil and gave their names to government. But what do we get? Cold shoulder was turned to them. And that is why I’m asking: What is going on?”.</p>	<p>run-inside-church-ondo-catholic-diocese-bishop-arogundade/</p>
	<p>Mourning the murder of Rev. Fr. John Cheitnum the Chairman of the Christian Association of Nigeria in Jema’a local government area and the Coordinating Chairman of the body for Southern Kaduna and recalling the murder of Lawan Andimi, the chairman of CAN in Michika, Adamawa State, the Christian Association of Nigeria issued a Press Release on 21 July 2022. It asserted that the violence is “unprecedented anywhere in the world. We don’t know when an end will come to these wicked acts and to worsen the situation, the same government that cannot protect us has failed to establish state police to compliment the obviously overstretched Federal Police.” It added that “we have a government that has failed to protect the lives and property of citizens and yet it will not ensure that these terrorists pay a heavy price for their evil actions. Ours is a government that lacks political will to put these criminals where they rightly believe. Instead, they are being recycled in the pretext of de-radicalising programme.” In another Press Release on 1 December 2021, the Christian Association of Nigeria stated that “The way and manner by which our security agencies have been handling those criminals is totally unacceptable, reprehensible and unprecedented”.</p>	<p>https://christianassociationofnigeria.org/2022/07/21/press-release-the-gruesome-murder-of-cans-chairman-is-deliberately-provocative-can/ and https://christianassociationofnigeria.org/2021/12/01/no-christian-should-be-killed-in-zamfara-can-warns/</p>
<p>Allegation of failure to prevent attacks on civilians (e.g. no presence, attacks take place despite a security presence)</p>	<p>An armed group attacked the Yelwa Zangam community (located close to the University of Jos) burning houses and shooting anyone in sight. The attackers had disabled the bridge leading to the Anaguta community preventing any access to help before launching their attacks. The incident was described as an unprovoked attack that the security forces failed to prevent or respond. The village was just 2 kilometers away from the city center. Yet the Police and the Military only showed up after the killings and burning of houses had taken place. At least 35 Christians were killed. The interviewees were, apparently, very aware that the government was failing to protect their lives and property. It was difficult for them to simply stand back and watch their relatives being killed so brutally.</p>	<p>https://www.samsonomale.com/post/breaking-bandits-attack-jos-community-kill-over-35</p> <p>https://www.samsonomale.com/post/breaking-16-victims-from-jos-attacks-buried-amidst-tears-pain-and-anguish</p>

	<p>Armed Fulani herdsmen attacked Ancha Community in Miangao District, Bassa Local Government Area, Plateau State on 31 July 2021 in an attack that lasted from around 10 pm to 1 am. Nuhu Nkali from the Miango Youth Development Association, lamented how the community had sought the help of the authorities but they had not responded. <i>“Our community has been under siege of the gunmen in recent times but we believe that the latest attack on our people could have been prevented because when we noticed strange and suspicious movements in the evening of Tuesday, the community made efforts to alert the security agents but nothing was done about it”</i>. The attackers duly arrived, and began shooting and burning houses for several hours. <i>“At the end of their operation, three of the victims were discovered dead. From the look of things, it is clear that they have marked out the community for attacks because it is the same village where two soldiers were killed a few days ago by the same assailants. Two other women who had gone to sympathise with a bereaved family were also killed in a similar attack while two young men are still missing in another attack, all within a space of three weeks. So, we don’t know what we have done to warrant this wickedness against our people without the authorities moving in quickly to protect our people and stop the gunmen from causing more havoc in our community.”</i></p>	<p>https://punchng.com/gunmen-kill-three-persons-in-plateau-night-raid/</p>
	<p>At least 22 people (all Christians) were killed and an unknown number injured and displaced in a series of attacks between 10 and 12 July by armed assailants of Fulani ethnicity on remote communities in southern Kaduna state. The attacks occurred despite a substantial security presence in the area and a 24-hour curfew that has been in place since the murder of a church leader’s son on 10 June. On 10 July, nine people were killed and many more were injured during an attack on the Chibwob community in Gora Ward, Zangon Kataf Local Government Area in the Atypa Chiefdom, which occurred at around 1.30 am. Most of the victims were women and children. The assailants also burnt down over 20 homes, several motorcycles, and a car; destroyed farms; stole 24 cows and other livestock; and looted property and food stocks. On 11 July armed Fulani assailants attacked several settlements close to Chibwob, including the Kigudu community on the boundary between Zangon Kataf and Kauru Local Government Areas, where ten women, one infant and an elderly man were burned to death inside a house in which they had taken refuge. Then on 12 July the militia launched a morning attack on Ungwan Audu village in the Gora Ward of Zangon Kataf Local Government Area, killing one person and looting the entire village before burning it down entirely.</p>	<p>ORFA informants [confidential for security reasons]</p>
<p>Allegation of failure to intervene or unreasonably delayed responses when attacks or crimes are taking place</p>	<p>In August 2022, following a wave of violent attacks by armed Fulani herdsmen on the Christian Irigwe ethnic group in Bassa Local Government Area, the paramount ruler of Plateau State, His Royal Highness, The Bra Ngwe Irigwe, Rt Rev Ronku Aka, alleged that some security operatives who were deployed in the communities during the attacks told the residents they had no instruction to repel the invaders. The Monarch was quoted as saying the following: <i>“I don’t blame the local government chairman in Bassa or the governor of the state over the calamity that has befallen my people. At peace meetings, the governor will give order but the security men will go and do a different thing. During the recent attacks in my communities, the soldiers and other security operatives were around. As the invaders were carrying out the attacks in Jebu Miango and advancing to other communities we expected them to confront the invaders and stop the destruction going on but that did not happen. When I enquired what was happening, some soldiers cried to me that they did not receive the order to repel the attackers on the communities. Some of them who expressed frustration over the situation wondered the essence of holding guns which they could not use and left the scene while the attackers continued with their destruction in the communities.”</i></p> <p>Over three days in December 2022, attacks were launched on Malagum 1 community of Kagoro Chiefdom, Kaura Local Government Area, Southern Kaduna. At least 46 villagers were killed in two separate attacks across four villages. According to the Southern Kaduna People’s Union, local security officials failed to respond when villagers reported the prospect of danger. <i>“The villagers had noticed the gathering of strange herdsmen coming from different directions on motor bikes to set camp in nearby bush some days back...the security forces deployed there did nothing under this glaring potential threat to security”</i>. The Vicar General of Kafanchan Diocese, Fr. Emmanuel Kazah Faweh, complained how <i>“the</i></p>	<p>https://dailypost.ng/2021/08/08/paramount-ruler-decries-destruction-in-irigwe-communities-by-armed-militia-in-plateau/</p> <p>https://www.nigeriacatholicnetwork.com/nigeria-terror-attacks-kill-46-despite-hopes-for-peaceful-christmas/</p>

	<p><i>security architecture of the country seems overstretched,</i>” and that local security officials did not prevent the attacks: <i>“Security agents do not act on time; they appear after evil has been carried out”</i>.</p> <p>A former Information and Orientation Commissioner in Ondo State, Donald Ojogo, accused the local Police of a poor response to the gruesome attack on worshippers at the St. Patrick Catholic Church, Owo, Ondo State. The former Commissioner accused the security operatives of refusing to show up to rescue the victims despite being just 2 kilometres away from the scene of the incident. <i>“These gunmen shot for more than 20 minutes and the police didn’t show up”</i>.</p> <p>Attackers believed to be Boko Haram insurgents attacked Shuwari, Kirchinga, and Shuwa in Madagali Local Government area in Adamawa State on 4 February 2019. Amos Udzai, District Secretary for the Gulak District of Ekklesiyar Yan’uwa a Nigeria (EYN, the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria), who visited two of the affected communities, reported that the villagers said military personnel arrived the scene after the attackers had fled with a police van. He added that there was tension as residents were living in fear because according to them the military had not enough weapons to confront the attackers.</p>	<p>https://dailypost.ng/2022/06/06/owo-massacre-police-operatives-refused-to-show-up-despite-being-2kms-away-ex-commissioner-ojodo/</p> <p>https://www.brethren.org/news/2019/boko-haram-attack-three-villages-in-adamawa-state-nigeria/</p>
<p>Allegation of inadequate response to solving crimes and the lack of/absence of accountability</p>	<p>The UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Agnès Callamard, conducted an official country visit to Nigeria from 19 August to 3 September 2019. Among the findings she made were the following, on the state of justice in the country:</p> <p><i>“102. The state of the administration of justice in Nigeria gives rise to extreme concern. The federal authorities and their international partners preside over a veritable pressure cooker of injustice, in which several of the specific contexts examined are truly simmering. Functional accountability is absent on such a scale, and resentments spread so widely, that pretending that the situation is otherwise is a major mistake, as is ignoring the crisis. A tragedy for the people of Nigeria, the central economic, political and cultural leadership of the country means that the effects of that situation also ripple unchecked far beyond the country’s borders, throughout the subregion and the continent as a whole.</i></p> <p><i>103. The broken criminal justice system, the widespread loss of public trust and confidence, and the corruption and rampant impunity are all root causes of the widespread unlawful killings perpetrated by security forces, armed groups and gangs alike. At virtually every level of government, the system is failing. The authorities further undermine the justice system, including the independence of the judiciary, by failing to implement court orders pertaining to security agencies. Moreover, there is a total lack of access to remedy and a total absence of victim/survivor-centred approaches to addressing widespread and repeated human rights violations.</i></p> <p><i>104. With only a few notable exceptions, the number of killings has increased over the past 10 years, as have the levels of criminality and insecurity. There is a widespread failure by the federal authorities to investigate and hold perpetrators accountable, even for mass killings. Victims and their relatives are absent from the government response; they are left without any hope of securing the justice for which they long.</i></p> <p><i>105. Nigeria may be a middle-income country according to economic indicators, but the situation there is spiralling into a human rights and humanitarian crisis that requires urgent action by both the Nigerian authorities and the international community. Rising poverty, deepening inequality and expanding environmental disaster contribute to the multiplication and durability of hotbeds of violence, pointing to a pressing need for the country and its partners to adopt integrated, multidimensional approaches to tackling killings and impunity for them.”</i></p>	<p>UN Doc A/HRC/47/33/Add.2: Visit to Nigeria - Report of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Agnès Callamard, 11 June 2021, available at https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/country-reports/ahrc4733add2-visit-nigeria-report-special-rapporteur-extrajudicial</p>
	<p>No one has been held accountable for the 2022 massacre at Ondo Church. On the anniversary of the massacre, the human rights organisation HURIWA complained that <i>“Although about a year ago, the Nigerian military said it has arrested about six assailants that carried out the attack on St Francis Xavier Church, Owo, Ondo State, on June 5, 2022, none of the suspects have been prosecuted in the attack, which left over 40 worshippers dead, while scores of others sustained different injuries.”</i> The Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), Lucky Irabor, named the arrested suspects.</p>	<p>https://guardian.ng/news/huriwa-tasks-buhari-on-speedy-trial-of-six-owo-church-attackers/</p> <p>https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/47306</p>

	<p>Oba Gbadegesin Ogunoye, the traditional ruler of the town of Owo, expressed disappointment with the government's failure to bring the perpetrators of the massacre at Saint Francis Xavier Catholic Church to justice one year on. Despite reports that some suspects had been apprehended by the Nigerian Army, the Oba complained that no progress had been made in prosecuting those responsible. Revd. Father Michael Abuga, the parish priest, revealed that attendance at the church had decreased since the attack, but he remained optimistic that worshippers would soon return. <i>"The victims' confidence would be fully restored once the perpetrators were apprehended and brought to justice."</i></p>	<p>https://www.odogwublog.com/priest-lament-halted-trial-of-owo-catholic-church-attackers-one-year-after/</p>
	<p>The Catholic Bishop of Ondo Diocese, Bishop Jude Arogundade, was asked about the allegation that while the attack on the Ondo Catholic church of St Francis Xavier was ongoing, calls were made to security agencies but none showed up, allowing for 30 minutes of unchallenged attack. He responded that <i>"It is the same story all over Nigeria. When it happened, we called the military, the police went there. I have never seen such unprofessional set of security agents. I'm a priest of the Catholic Church, but I think that I'm even better than they are; I'm sorry! I was the one even pointing to the straps of bullet that were on the floor, and they picked them up and left. That night there was no security men at that compound. After all this happened, everybody was behaving as if they did not understand the basic principle of security and professionalism that goes with it. In my little experience, when you have a crime scene, you have to secure the place rather than allow the crowd to mess it up. So, our police cannot secure a crime scene and do proper investigation? Do you know that it was God that saved us that day?...But I don't want to say more because it will embarrass the whole nation."</i> The Bishop explained how he went to the Church with the Governor and the Police, <i>"the highest level of security outfits in Nigeria were there. We went through the entire compound and left. But later the anti-bomb squad came in and just where we had earlier stood, they discovered that there were two explosives there and the police could not recognise that we were in danger! God forbid, if the explosives had exploded, what would have happened? This is what I'm saying; there is a crisis in our country, and that crisis is begging to be tackled urgently, for experts to come in and take hold of the situation. There is no other country where people behave like this."</i> He bemoaned the fact that <i>"The same Nigeria that other countries turned to for help, all of a sudden, a group of thugs, criminals, who infiltrated our country, are overriding the Nigerian military! This is unacceptable!"</i>.</p>	<p>https://www.nigeriacatholicnetwork.com/owo-worshippers-killing-horrible-even-in-war-people-are-spared-once-they-run-inside-church-ondo-catholic-diocese-bishop-arogundade/</p>
	<p>To date, no one has been tried let alone punished for the gruesome murder of the Christian student, Deborah Samuel, on 12 May 2022. The student of Home Economics at Shehu Shagari College of Education in Sokoto was attacked, beaten and burned alive by a mob of her classmates outraged that she had credited her examination success to Jesus Christ which they claimed blasphemed the Prophet Mohammed. She had posted a voice message in a group WhatsApp saying: <i>"Jesus Christ is the greatest. He helped me pass my exams."</i> Deborah was accused of blasphemy and forcibly taken from the campus security room. While they were trying to take her from the room to a local police station, she was attacked by a mob, stoned to death and burned beyond recognition. The savagery was captured live on many telephones. In one video, men with sticks can be seen beating the lifeless, bloody body of a woman reported to be Deborah Samuel. The video also showed young men celebrating, with one man holding up a matchbox and saying he used it to set her on fire and kill her: <i>"I am the one who killed her; I am the one that killed her."</i> There was cheering and shouting; <i>"Allah Akbar, Allahu Akbar!"</i> On 16 May 2022, Sokoto Police charged two of her Moslem classmates, Bilyaminu Aliyu and Aminu Hukunchi, for Criminal Conspiracy and Inciting Public Disturbance. The pair were represented by a large team (at least 34 by some accounts) of Muslim lawyers acting pro bono. In August 2022, the Sokoto State Police Command explained that the two were involved in organising the riot, but were not the prime suspects. The trial commenced on 30 January 2023 at the Magistrates Court of Sokoto but the Prosecution did not appear. In a five-page decision delivered on 30 January 2023, Chief Magistrate Shuaibu Ahmad, Esq struck out the case and released the suspects from detention on the grounds of lack of evidence. The prosecution had actually failed to appear at other hearings. <i>"From the conduct of the prosecution in this case, it seems to be very clear to this court that the prosecutions have no any evidence against the defendants. And any/or are no longer interested in seriously prosecuting this case. . . In the light of the above, it would be unjust to further adjourn this case at the instance of the prosecution when they have been given several adjournments to call their witnesses but could not call</i></p>	<p>https://psjuk.org/the-two-suspects-held-over-the-killing-of-deborah-samuel-set-free/</p>

	<p><i>any. In the interest of justice and in accordance with the law, I hereby grant the application of the Learned Counsel to defendants to strike out this case for lack of evidence and lack of diligent prosecution.”</i> The two had been charged in relation to circulating pictures of the alleged killing. Ironically, these pictures, along with at least one ‘live’ video and other photographs, show the faces of the direct perpetrators. The key suspects are said to have fled to Niger. No public notices or warrants of arrest have been issued, and nothing appears on the Interpol Red Notice. A detailed account, copies of the court documents and incisive analysis of this matter can be viewed at https://psjuk.org/the-two-suspects-held-over-the-killing-of-deborah-samuel-set-free/ (“<i>the case of her suspects has been swept under the carpet. Sokoto State Government, the Federal Government and the Nigeria Police Force, who promised to ensure justice was done, have not held anyone accountable for the murder</i>”).</p>	
	<p>The Christian Association of Nigeria, in a Press Release dated 1 December 2021, complained that “<i>Up till today, the perpetrators of the genocide in the Southern Kaduna are still walking freely despite the killings of hundreds of our members.</i>” On 20 November 2021, it complained that “<i>ISWAP and other Islamic terrorists that surrendered or were captured were not allowed to face the wrath of the law but rather, unlike other criminals are being slated for a programme of de-radicalization or rehabilitation! These are people who had sent many people to early graves! Is this action of government fair to the people they killed and the rest of us whom these people traumatized and put in sadness over our property or relatives they killed?</i>”.</p>	<p>https://christianassociationofnigeria.org/2021/11/20/cpc-list-we-are-at-a-loss-on-the-data-the-us-government-used-for-the-delisting-of-nigeria-can/</p>
	<p>Civil rights advocacy group, Human Rights Writers Association of Nigeria (HURIWA) has complained about how the government was not holding anyone accountable for the ongoing violence. “<i>Buhari should prove his critics wrong that he pampers Fulani terrorists and is reluctant to prosecute the few arrested ones in the custody of security agents. The President should prove his detractors wrong by doing the needful, which is swift trial of arrested terrorists and their conviction. We demand clarity on what has happened to the 400 suspected sponsors and funders of terrorism in the North-East who were numerically listed but their names not disclosed by the Attorney General of the Federation, Abubakar Malami. It is over two years since they have been announced but why the secrecy in disclosing their names and why is their prosecution shrouded in secrecy or not commenced at all when other nations are committed to using the legal mechanisms to stamp out terrorists funders? . . . “Also, the United Arab Emirates convicted Nigerians who were terror financiers about two years ago, but the Nigerian government is failing to do the basic duty of government, which is to enforce the counter terrorism law to deal with those, who have provided resources used by these genocidal killers to bomb civilians targets, and churches</i>”.</p>	<p>https://guardian.ng/news/huriwa-tasks-buhari-on-speedy-trial-of-six-owo-church-attackers/</p>
<p>Allegation of discrimination in response or collusion by the Nigerian security forces</p>	<p>In relation to the end of July and beginning of August attacks on some 20 communities in Bassa Local Government Area, Plateau State, 70 civilians (all Christians) were killed as well as 1 soldier, about 275 houses burnt, about 30,000 people displaced, 24 people sustained varying degrees of gunshot injuries, 20 communities were affected, and a variety of farm crops were mowed down by the attackers. They were attacked by armed Fulani herdsmen for a week, in their numbers at different time intervals in dusk. All through the attacks which lasted for quite some time, there was no security intervention. Some soldiers stated with frustration that they had not received orders to repel the attackers (Punch, 8 August 2021), which would seem to indicate there was some sort of collusion going on in the background.</p>	<p>https://www.vanguardngr.com/2021/08/plateau-attacks-shocking-details-of-how-70-persons-were-killed-55-injured-30000-displaced/</p> <p>https://punchng.com/soldiers-said-they-werent-ordered-to-stop-invaders-from-attacking-plateau-communities-monarch/?amp</p>
	<p>65 persons were killed, 9,000 displaced, and 15 churches, two primary schools and a health centre destroyed during armed Fulani attacks on 18 predominantly Christian Jukun Kona villages in Jalingo Local Government Area, Taraba state over a period of weeks centred around May and June of 2019. Archbishop Ignatius Kaigama of Abuja deplored the way that “<i>Biased and prejudiced official security reports heighten tension when they blame the victims instead of the aggressors because of the Nigerian ‘factor’ of tribal or religious affiliation. This sadly keeps the fire of the crisis raging.</i>” There had in that situation been a backlash by the Jukun Kona minority group, and the Archbishop complained that “<i>Generally, it is when</i></p>	<p>https://acnuk.org/news/nigeria-state-forces-accused-of-stoking-crisis/</p>

	<p><i>the militant herdsmen vanish after their deadly attacks that the poor villagers try to react to protect or defend themselves.”</i> Kona assaults on members of the Fulani ethnic group also caused damage, including the torching of two mosques. More than 23 Fulani were also killed. The archbishop said: <i>“The violence went on unchecked for a protracted period and the population of Internally Displaced People (IDPs) began to swell because of the increasing attacks of the gunmen.”</i> The archbishop – himself a member of the Kona minority – described contacting senior officials to seek protection for the farming communities under attack, including the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) in charge of operations. He said: <i>“When I called the DCP and asked how the situation was, his immediate remark was, ‘Your people like fighting’. ‘I asked him who my people were since we are all Nigerians? I explained to him how many people were complaining that since the start of the crisis, no security personnel was seen in Kona even when threats to invade Kona were becoming obvious by the day.”</i> Church contacts in Kona told the archbishop that since the crisis began a week earlier, there had been no sign of any security presence but there were also reports of a police presence: they arrested some Kona youths. According to the Archbishop, <i>“[The youths] claimed that they were shot at and arrested for rising in defence of their community against the marauding herdsmen. There should be a deliberate strategy by political and security authorities to protect minority groups in Nigeria.”</i></p>	
	<p>The Leader of the TEKAN/ECWA Bloc at the Christian Association of Nigeria in Kaduna, the Very Rev Moses Ebuga told a Press Conference on 23 August 2021 that the Federal Government and all security agencies urgently need <i>“to be responsible to their duties as the security and protection of lives and properties are the primary responsibility of every government. We are calling on the security agents in the state to be sincere and non-partisan in the pursuit of their responsibilities, as it seems to favor a selective few or particular group, we decry selective justice and imposition of grave injustice on the peace-loving community dwellers in Plateau State and such still remains highly unacceptable”</i>. He called for the removal of the General Officer Commanding 3rd Division of the Nigerian, also the Commander, Operation Safe Haven, for having allegedly taken side with the attackers and losing the confidence of the community. He said <i>“The GOC of the third 3rd Division of the Nigerian Army who doubles as the Commander Operation Safe Haven ... has not lived to expectation. The military barracks being and situate in the self-same Bassa LGA and within a few kilometers radius lie under attacks for long hours and days without any response and protection from the Army this leaves much to be desired any reasonable and security presence by their proximity and neighbourliness.”</i></p>	<p>https://christianassociationofnigeria.org/2021/08/24/plateau-we-lost-85-members-3141-houses-burnt-5901-displaced-leader-tekan-ecwa-can-bloc/</p>
	<p>In a Press Release from 2 December 2021, the Christian Association of Nigeria declared that <i>“The leadership of the national Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) in our recent visit to Sokoto and Kebbi states was alarmed, surprised and shocked by the record of those criminals who are killing and kidnapping with impunity in the area as if there was a pact between them and the security agencies. . . they are now trying to introduce divisive ways by declaring war against Christians and churches in the zone especially in Zamfara State where they are gradually turning into their strongholds”</i>.</p>	<p>https://christianassociationofnigeria.org/2021/12/01/no-christian-should-be-killed-in-zamfara-can-warns/</p>
	<p>The Resident Pastor, Rev. Maxwell Kuri, Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA), Good News Church, Upper Luggere, Jimeta, Yola, Adamawa State, alleged that the objectives of the terrorist groups is to destroy the minority ethnic groups and all areas dominated by Christians, to dispossess them of their ancestral lands and deny them the right to practise Christianity. In light of the fact that the Federal Government rebuilt mosques in Borno State, he asked it to compensate all churches whose structures were destroyed by Boko Haram in the North East. On the other hand, he commended Governor Ahmadu Fintiri of Adamawa for the unbiased administration and security he was providing for his people.</p>	<p>https://guardian.ng/news/ecwa-protests-against-removal-of-nigeria-from-u-s-religious-intolerance-list/.</p>
	<p>The Christian Association of Nigeria has, in a Press Statement on 1 December 2021 alleged that <i>“We know that all kidnappings and other criminalities being perpetrated in the North western part of the country are the handiwork of terrorists who either migrated from the North-East or those who were released under the purported rehabilitation programme of the Federal government . . . The way and manner by which our security agencies have been handling those criminals is totally unacceptable, reprehensible and unprecedented. Criminals are criminals irrespective of their religious, political and ethnic affiliations and they should be treated as just. We also call on the Department of State Security (DSS) and the Inspector</i></p>	<p>https://christianassociationofnigeria.org/2021/12/01/no-christian-should-be-killed-in-zamfara-can-warns/</p>

	<p><i>General of Police to Investigate those who are speaking for the terrorists with a view to unmasking their sponsors and beneficiaries of their criminalities.”</i></p> <p>In January 2023, armed gunmen attacked the home of Father Isaac Achi, a Catholic priest as the priest in charge of St. Peters and Paul Catholic Church in the Diocese of Minna in Niger state. They tried to break in but could not and eventually set his residence ablaze, burning him to death. The attackers also shot his colleague, Father Collins, as he tried to escape. The authorities were not around to prevent or protect the victims from the attack, arriving after the carnage. The gunmen had been shooting sporadically before the attack on the parish house, and the police had apparently received calls for help from Father Isaac and his younger brother. A few days later, some Christian women comprising ECWA, and Catholic groups, converged at the premises of the burnt parish in Kafin Koro to “<i>offer prayers against those who carried out the gruesome murder of Achi, and praying for the repose of his death</i>”. A detachment of police from Kafin-koro police division turned up to offer protection for the praying congregation, which was refused on the grounds that this was unnecessary yet Father Achi died because they never came to his aid. The gathering seems to have gotten agitated, hurling stones and water sachets at the police and then headed off in a peaceful protest march through the major road of the town chanting anti-police slogans to register their anger at how the police had failed to protect Father Achi. The police opened fire, and shot a middle-aged man dead. The killing of the man resulted in the peaceful protest turning into violent one. In the ensuing violent confrontation with the police, the police station was set on fire.</p>	<p>https://thedialog.org/international-news/father-isaac-achi-burned-alive-in-his-residence-enough-of-the-attacks-and-wanton-killings-of-innocent-nigerian-citizens-archbishop-says/</p> <p>https://nigeriadailypost.com.ng/2023/01/15/black-sunday-in-niger-as-gunmen-kill-catholic-priest-set-parish-ablaze-can-wants-killing-investigated/</p> <p>https://sunnewsonline.com/catholic-priests-death-1-killed-as-angry-youths-protest-burn-police-station/</p>
	<p>Benue State governor, Samuel Ortom stated that “<i>The sad thing is that the killings have gone on, raping of our children and wives, women have gone on for a long time. But there has not been any form of condemnation or stoppage of this matter. We have done everything under the sun here in Benue State to stop the carnage that has been going on and we soon discovered that there was grossly inadequate security personnel to man this challenge because the Federal Government had allowed all Fulani terrorists from Senegal, from Mali, from Futa Jalon, from Chad, from all over the place to come in with AK 47 to kill our people and they are not hiding it. . . I wasn’t elected as governor to preside over dead people. Between 2011 to..., or even when I came from 2015 till today, over 5,000 people have been killed. If I take you back to 2009, 2010 and 2011, over 6,000. But as I talk to you, even today, people are being killed by these herdsmen. And that is apart from the local banditry, armed robbery, criminal activities of the local people which we are containing . . . But you see, we cannot all get the kind of security that we need with our people not carrying pump action (guns). Theirs are not even automatic, double barrel, locally made dane guns and then people move around with AK-47. A hundred of those carrying these weapons can be overcome by one person carrying AK-47 because it’s an automatic weapon. And that was why I put a request to the presidency to grant us license to procure AK-47 and AK-49 to face these people. We have the capacity. The community volunteer guards are able, young, trained personnel. The army, the police, civil defence and the DSS trained them. So, they have the capacity, and they’re willing to do the job, but it’s just that the weapons are not there. So, this is the point. ”</i></p>	<p>https://sunnewsonline.com/ortom-opens-up-i-governed-benue-in-pains/</p>