



CHURCH IN CHAINS

AN IRISH VOICE FOR PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS

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Your Excellency,

I hope you and your family are well. It was a pleasure to meet you again last October at the celebration of Nigeria's National Day; thank you for inviting me to attend.

I write to express the shock and horror of Irish Christians at the brutal murder earlier this week of Rev Lawan Andimi in Adamawa State at the hands of Boko Haram terrorists. This case became well-known following the release of a "proof of life" video by the terrorists on 5 January, in which the pastor called on church leaders to speak out for him and urge the Governor of Adamawa State, Ahmadu Fintiri, to intervene to secure his release.

As I'm sure you are well aware, the Christian community in Nigeria has been outraged at the savage murder of Rev Lawan and several other recent murders of Christians including:

- Ropvil Daciya Dalep executed by ISWAP child terrorist on 20 January
- Teenagers Bridget Philip and Priscilla David killed by Fulani militants on 17 January
- Eleven hostages beheaded by ISWAP (video released on 26 December)

Kwamkur Vondip (Director of Legal and Public Affairs at the Christian Association of Nigeria) spoke for many Christians in the aftermath of Rev Lawan's killing when he said, *"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... in the light of the current developments and the circumstantial facts surrounding the prevailing upsurge of attacks against the church, it will be difficult for us to believe that the federal government under President Muhammadu Buhari is not colluding with the insurgents to exterminate Christians in Nigeria, bearing in mind the very questionable leadership of the security sector that has been skewed towards a religion and region!"*

Recently-released statistics show that from November 2018 to October 2019 Nigeria led the world in Christian martyrdoms (1,350 confirmed), and abductions (224 confirmed).

Therefore, we appeal again to you to convey our urgent request to your government to acknowledge the reality of the persecution of Christians in the north and Middle Belt of Nigeria by terrorists and Fulani militants and to take strong, effective action to end it.

In closing, I pray that you will know God's blessing and guidance as you represent Nigeria in your important role.

Yours respectfully,

David Turner
(Director)