



**World Council  
of Churches**



**THE  
LUTHERAN  
WORLD  
FEDERATION**

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H.E. Muhammadu Buhari  
President of The Federal Republic of Nigeria  
Nigerian Presidential Complex  
Rock Presidential Villa  
Abuja, Nigeria

Geneva, 27 January 2020

Mr President,

The World Council of Churches (WCC) and the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) are appalled by the continuing violence and targeted sectarian attacks against people, including religious leaders, in northern Nigeria. The recent execution of Rev. Lawan Andimi by Boko Haram, one of the latest atrocities in a long and painful history of extremist violence in the region and despite the proclaimed defeat of the insurgents, impels us to convey this appeal to you.

We join the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and all the churches of the country in our grief at the news of the brutal murder on 20 January of Rev. Andimi, CAN Chairman Michika Local Government Area and the District Church Council Secretary of the Ecclesiya Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN) Church in Michika, Adamawa State. This news followed immediately upon reports of the killing of Rev. Denis Bagauri of the Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria by unknown gunmen in his residence at Mayo Belwa, Adamawa State, on 19 January. In addition to attacks in the north, extremists have killed Christian clergy in Benue, Enugu and elsewhere across the country.

If the clergy are targeted, ordinary community members are even more at risk. Recent attacks on communities in Adamawa and Borno States have caused many people to flee to IDP camps for safety. The videotaped execution of Ropvil Daciya Dalep, a 22-year-old student of the University of Maiduguri, two weeks after he was abducted on his way to school on 9 January, is the latest emblematic example of the unrelenting brutality of the extremists.

We condemn all such senseless killings and attacks on people – Christians and Muslims alike – on the basis of their religious identity and beliefs as intolerable and unacceptable.

Your government says that it has defeated the insurgency of Boko Haram. And yet attacks, kidnappings, extortion, sectarian killings, rapes and the abduction of young girls by these and other extremist groups continues unabated. Indeed, the intensity of such attacks has increased markedly in recent weeks. Faith in the commitment and effectiveness of your government for the protection of Nigerian citizens belonging to these targeted communities has reached a very low ebb.

We appeal to you, your government and all State authorities in Nigeria to fulfil your duty to Nigerian citizens for their protection and security, regardless of religious affiliation or belief. Among other

things, we urge you to reform the security apparatus, and ensure that senior security officials are representative of the diversity of communities in Nigeria and that their actions are effective in protecting all the communities concerned.

We also appeal urgently to you to ensure the release of Leah Sharibu, and the hundreds of other victims who are in Boko Haram and ISWAP captivity before it is too late and they suffer the same fate as Rev. Andimi.

We believe that the current situation in Nigeria requires resolute leadership on your part to end these atrocities, and to satisfy all Nigerians that your government genuinely has their interests at heart, through effective action and not only words. The risks for the future of Nigeria in the absence of such leadership and action are grave.

We pray that God grant you wisdom, resolve and strength to confront these challenges.

Yours respectfully,



Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit  
General Secretary, World Council of Churches



Rev. Dr Martin Junge  
General Secretary, Lutheran World Federation