



HUMAN
RIGHTS
WATCH

“Leave Everything to God”

Accountability for Inter-Communal Violence
in Plateau and Kaduna States, Nigeria

Summary and Recommendations

“Leave Everything to God”

Accountability for Inter-Communal Violence in Plateau and Kaduna States, Nigeria



A photograph of a baby found in the rubble
of a house in Kuru Karama, Plateau State.
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A Christian woman, from the Hausa ethnic group, holds up photographs of her husband and son who were killed during an April 18, 2011 attack on Ungwar Tuji village, in Soba local government area, Kaduna State.
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Alhaji Inuwa Liman, the chief imam of the central mosque in Zonkwa, Kaduna State. He was killed during the April 18-19, 2011 violence in Zonkwa, Kaduna State.
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Obida Hildi, a pastor, killed in Bukuru, Plateau State, on January 19, 2010.
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Afolalu Felix Olugbenga, a Christian from the Yoruba ethnic group, was a lecturer at the Nuhu Bamalli Polytechnic in Zaria, Kaduna State. He was killed by a mob that attacked the campus on April 18, 2011.
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A Muslim woman, from the Hausa-Fulani ethnic group, holds up a photograph of her son killed during the April 18-19, 2011 attack on Zonkwa, Kaduna State.
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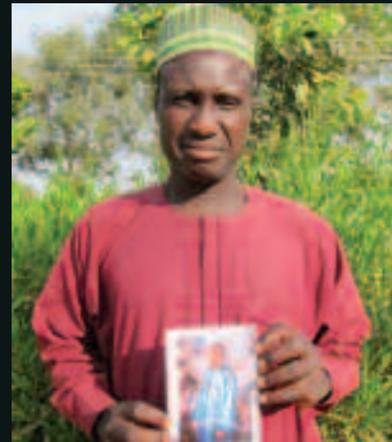
A Christian man, from the Berom ethnic group, holds up a photograph of his 17-year-old son who was shot and killed during an attack on Gwanfil village, Plateau State, on September 9, 2011.
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Hajiya Tine Abdullahi Wase, a Muslim woman from the Hausa-Fulani ethnic group, was killed in Kuru Karama, Plateau State, on January 19, 2010. Her body was recovered from inside a well.
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A Christian woman, from the Berom ethnic group, holds up a photograph of her mother who was killed in the March 7, 2010 attack on Dogo Nahawa, Plateau State.
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A Muslim man, from the Hausa-Fulani ethnic group, holds up a photograph of his son killed in the April 18-19, 2011 violence in Zonkwa, Kaduna State.
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A Christian woman, from the Berom ethnic group, holds up a photograph of her son who was killed in a February 22, 2011 attack on Bere Riti village, Plateau State.
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A Muslim woman, from the Hausa-Fulani ethnic group, holds up a photograph of her husband who was killed on April 19, 2011 in Zonkwa, Kaduna State.
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Karos Nash, a 70-year-old Christian woman, from the Berom ethnic group, was killed in the March 7, 2010 attack on Dogo Nahawa, Plateau State.
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Cecilia Pam, a 32-year-old Christian woman from the Berom ethnic group, was hacked to death along with her husband and two daughters in the March 7, 2010 attack on Dogo Nahawa, Plateau State.
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Ahmed Bako, a Muslim from the Anghan ethnic group, was the district head in Gidan Maga, Kaduna State. He was killed by a mob that attacked Gidan Maga on April 19, 2011.
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A Christian woman, from the Berom ethnic group, holds up a worn photograph of her six-year-old daughter who was killed in a February 22, 2011 attack on Bere Reti village, Plateau State.
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A Christian man, from the Berom ethnic group, holds up a photograph of his 68-year-old mother who was shot and killed during an attack on Gwanfil village, Plateau State, on September 9, 2011. His wife and four children were also killed in the attack.
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A Christian woman, from the Berom ethnic group, holds up photographs of her mother and two children who were killed in a February 22, 2011 attack on Bere Reti village, Plateau State.
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A Muslim man, from the Hausa-Fulani ethnic group, holds up photographs of family members killed during the April 18-19, 2011 violence in Zonkwa, Kaduna State.
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Houses burned by mobs during the January 17-19, 2010 sectarian violence in Jos, the capital of Plateau State.
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On a sunny day in January 2010, in the small town of Kuru Karama, Plateau State, a Muslim mother watched helplessly as Christian men bludgeoned and hacked to death her two young children. About the same time, in a nearby village in Fan district, a Fulani pastoralist witnessed farmers from the Berom ethnic group—his neighbors—burn his house and kill his uncle. A year later, Berom residents in Fan district witnessed former Fulani neighbors kill Berom women and children in a murderous night raid.

In April 2011, a Christian man in the northern part of neighboring Kaduna State saw Muslims from nearby villages surround his village and kill two of his Christian neighbors and set fire to their church and homes. That same month, some 200 kilometers to the south, in the town of Zonkwa, a Muslim secondary school student, from the Hausa ethnic group, witnessed her history teacher, a Christian, murder her father.

In each of these cases, the witnesses knew the perpetrators of these crimes, but none of the perpetrators has been brought to justice.

Nigeria's volatile Middle Belt, an area in central Nigeria that divides the largely Muslim north from the predominantly Christian south, has witnessed horrific internecine violence over the past two decades. Two neighboring states in this region—Plateau and Kaduna—have been worst affected. Since 1992, more than 10,000 people in those two states have died in inter-communal bloodletting; several thousand of those deaths have occurred since 2010 alone. Many of the victims were targeted and killed, often in horrific circumstances, based simply on their ethnic or religious identity. Victims, including children, have been hacked to death, burned alive, or dragged off buses and murdered in tit-for-tat killings. The Nigerian authorities have failed, with rare exception, to break the cycle of violence by bringing to justice the perpetrators of these serious crimes, and horrific attacks in both Plateau and Kaduna have continued.



A church in Jos, Plateau State, that was destroyed during sectarian violence on January 17-19, 2010. Christian leaders said 23 churches were destroyed in the violence.

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This report details the major incidents of violence in Plateau and Kaduna states, in particular brutal massacres in 2010 and 2011, and documents how the Nigerian authorities responded to these mass killings. The incidents documented in this report are not simply bygone historical events but remain very present in the lives of the victims and survivors. In the absence of effective remedies through the criminal justice system, similar violence continues to threaten these states, as aggrieved individuals seek retribution for the loss of their loved ones, homes, and livelihoods.

While the root causes driving communal violence in the Middle Belt are varied and often entail longstanding grievances and disputes, they are exacerbated both by divisive state and local government policies that discriminate on ethnic or religious lines and by the failure of authorities to hold to account those responsible for the violence. The report examines the reasons that Nigerian officials have not prosecuted perpetrators and recommends steps the government can and should take to end the pervasive culture and practice of impunity that have helped fuel this violence.

The communal strife in Plateau and Kaduna states has primarily pitted Hausa-Fulani Muslims—the largest and most politically powerful group in northern Nigeria—against smaller predominantly Christian ethnic groups that, together, constitute the majority in the Middle Belt. Members of these Christian groups say they feel threatened by the expanding Hausa-Fulani communities in the region. Some Christian



Children stand outside a mosque that was burned during the January 17-19, 2010 sectarian violence in Jos, Plateau State.

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A church burned during sectarian violence on April 18-19, 2011 in Kafanchan, Kaduna State. Christian leaders said 129 churches were burned in Kaduna State during the violence.
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A mosque burned by mobs on April 18, 2011 in Maraban Rido, Kaduna State. Muslim leaders said 40 Muslims were killed in the town.
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leaders accuse the Hausa-Fulani of trying to impose Islam on the region and point to a history of oppression and violence suffered by non-Muslims in the northern region of the country to back up these concerns. They also accuse Hausa-Fulani in the Middle Belt communities of resorting to violence to achieve these ends.

In Plateau State, state and local government officials have responded to this perceived threat by implementing policies that favor members of predominantly Christian “indigene” groups—those who can trace their ancestry to what are said to be the original inhabitants of an area—and exclude opportunities, such as state and local government employment, to Hausa-Fulani and members of other ethnic groups they deem to be “settlers.”

The situation is more complex in Kaduna State, where the ethnic and religious divisions are more evenly split. In the northern part of the state, Hausa-Fulani hold the majority, and Christians claim they face discrimination, while in the southern part of the state—where numerous predominantly Christian ethnic groups, together, make up the majority—Hausa-Fulani complain that they are treated as perpetual “settlers” and second-class citizens, despite the fact that, in some cases, their families have lived in those communities for multiple generations. The struggle for “ownership”—cultural, religious, and political control—of these areas has been at the heart of much of the inter-communal conflict.



A young Muslim woman, from the Hausa-Fulani ethnic group, was badly burned by a mob during the January 19, 2010 attack on Kuru Karama, Plateau State, which left more than 170 Muslims dead.

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Both sides have accused the other of using extreme violence to achieve their goals, including mass killing and ethnic or sectarian cleansing of communities and neighborhoods. Christian leaders in these states often accuse the Hausa-Fulani of starting the violence, allegations that the Hausa-Fulani leaders usually deny, while Hausa-Fulani point out that far more Muslims have died in mass killings at the hands of the Christians, massacres that Christian leaders invariably dispute.

For this report, Human Rights Watch interviewed more than 180 witnesses and victims of violence in Plateau and Kaduna states, as well as police officers, judges, prosecutors, lawyers, and Christian and Muslim leaders. A Human Rights Watch

researcher conducted site visits to the major scenes of violence, sometimes just days after a massacre, collected and analyzed court documents, and attended some of the trials in Federal High Court in Jos.

Human Rights Watch has been reporting on violence in the Middle Belt for more than 12 years, and its human rights investigations during that time also inform this report. Plateau State, as Human Rights Watch has previously reported, suffered recurring bloody episodes of inter-communal violence and mass killing in 2001, 2004, and 2008, which left hundreds of people, in each incident, dead. Following this violence, federal and state authorities took no meaningful steps to address underlying grievances and brought no one to justice for the bloodletting.

With tensions still simmering after the 2008 violence, the veneer of calm was shattered in January 2010 in renewed sectarian clashes in Jos, the capital of Plateau State. The violence led to massacres of Muslims in rural communities, south of Jos, including ethnic pogroms against rural Fulani



(above) A Nigerian Red Cross official tends to a wounded man in Jos, Plateau State, on January 21, 2010.

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(right) A Fulani man, who is Muslim, was attacked by a mob on April 19, 2011 in Jaba local government area of Kaduna State. Fulani leaders said at least 350 rural Fulani in the southern part of the state were killed in the violence.

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(above) A man stands in the rubble of the main market in Kafanchan, Kaduna State, on April 25, 2011. Hundreds of shops, houses, and vehicles were burned during the April 18-19, 2011 violence in Kafanchan.

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(opposite) People slowly return to the Bukuru Market, in Bukuru, Plateau State, after mobs destroyed the market on January 19, 2010.

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farmers and pastoralists, which left hundreds dead. The federal government stepped in for the first time and prosecuted some of the suspects, but in most cases, including the largest massacres, no one was brought to justice. In the three and a half years since then, Plateau State has been racked by numerous episodes of violence, including dozens of horrific massacres in predominantly Christian villages to the south of Jos, which have left hundreds more dead.

In neighboring Kaduna State, bloody ethnic and sectarian violence in 1992, 2000, and 2002 left hundreds or more dead in each incident. As in Plateau State, no one was brought to justice, with the exception of prosecutions under a special

tribunal during military rule following the 1992 violence. Then, in 2011, following the election of President Goodluck Jonathan—a Christian from southern Nigeria—Hausa-Fulani opposition party supporters rioted across northern Nigeria, attacking properties of ruling party officials and Christians and burning hundreds of churches. The violence then spread to the southern part of Kaduna State, where Christians killed hundreds of Muslims, including rural Fulani farmers and pastoralists.

Community leaders and witnesses in many cases filed complaints with the police in Kaduna State, but no one was prosecuted for these serious crimes. Since then, in a pattern similar to Plateau State, there have been several dozen attacks on largely Christian rural communities in southern Kaduna State, allegedly by armed Fulani attackers, as the cycle of violence continues.

Alarmingly, Boko Haram, a militant Islamist group in northern Nigeria, has invoked the lack of justice in these Middle Belt killings as one of its justifications for its horrific attacks on Christians, including suicide bomb attacks on church services in Plateau and Kaduna that left dozens dead and sparked renewed sectarian clashes.

Many commentators described the failure of the Nigerian authorities to bring the perpetrators of violence to justice as



A soldier stands guard atop of an armored vehicle outside the central mosque in Jos, Plateau State, during Friday prayers on January 22, 2010, after a week of violence that left hundreds dead.
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(above) Detainees arrested during or immediately after the April 2011 violence in Kaduna State were brought before the chief magistrate's court in the city of Kaduna on April 21, 2011. Detainees with fresh scars on their backs told journalists that they had been beaten by the police and soldiers in custody. The authorities later dropped charges against nearly all the detainees arrested in connection to the violence.
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one of the major drivers of the cycle of violence. "The law that is there is just on the books," a Christian youth leader in Jos lamented. "If you are a victim of a crisis, you will become a perpetrator of the next crisis because there is no justice."

This impunity is largely the result of an already broken criminal justice system, including systemic corruption in the Nigeria Police Force, that has been further rendered ineffectual by political pressure to protect the perpetrators of these crimes. In the absence of accountability and effective redress, communities that have suffered violence frequently take the law into their own hands and carry out revenge killings.

Human Rights Watch found that the response of Nigerian authorities following mass killings has been surprisingly similar through the years. During or immediately following most spates of violence, hundreds of suspects were arrested. But those arrested were often randomly rounded up, in an attempt to calm the situation, or the police or soldiers dumped suspects en masse at police stations, with weapons and any other evidence collected at the scene all lumped together, making it nearly impossible to link individual suspects to any specific crime. "[N]o attorney general worth



A broken suitcase on a road near burned vehicles on April 19, 2011 after post-election violence in the city of Kaduna. Travelers were dragged out of their vehicles and killed by sectarian mobs on the main roads leading north and south of the city.

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Photograph allegedly taken of a mob surrounding a group of Hausa-Fulani young men in Zonkwa, Kaduna State, on April 19, 2011. A second photograph at the same location showed what appears to be the dead bodies of the Hausa-Fulani young men. Civil society leaders said they gave the photographs to the police in Kaduna and Abuja, but the police took no action.

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his salt wants to file a case in court when there is no evidence whatsoever,” a lawyer in Kaduna said. So, instead, after “tempers might have calmed down,” a judge in Kaduna explained, “people might not be paying attention to the cases, and you go and quietly discharge them.”

In many communities racked by violence, people witnessed the crimes, and, especially in rural areas, knew the perpetrators. Human Rights Watch interviewed dozens of eyewitnesses to alleged murder and arson. In most cases the witnesses had not reported the crime to the police. Some cited fear of retaliation by the perpetrators, but by far the most common reason cited for not reporting to the police was captured by a rural Fulani man in Kaduna State: “The police won’t do anything.”

But many witnesses interviewed by Human Rights Watch had indeed gone to the police, including witnesses from some of the largest mass killings in the area. In some cases, police investigators, including from Force Headquarters in Abuja, also came to the communities to interview witnesses. Witnesses said, however, that the police failed to take any action in response to their complaints, and many of them still see the men who murdered their family members and neighbors walking freely in their neighborhoods.



Dozens of bodies were found inside Kuru Karama's wells following the April 19, 2010 attack, which left more than 170 Muslims dead.
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The failure to conduct, or follow through with, criminal investigations reflects systemic problems in the police force, where police officers frequently demand that complainants pay them to investigate crimes or at times take bribes from criminal suspects to drop investigations. This system leaves victims of communal violence, who frequently have lost everything they own, not to mention their loved ones, at the mercy of an often unresponsive and ineffective police force.

These problems are further exacerbated when the violence is communal or sectarian in nature. Police and government officials fear that if they arrest suspects, it might spark renewed violence. Community and religious leaders often rally behind members of their own groups suspected or implicated in crimes during outbreaks of violence and pressure the authorities to drop the cases.

There are, however, important exceptions. Following the 2010 violence in Plateau State, for example, the federal attorney general took the rare step of intervening by prosecuting some of the perpetrators in Federal High Court, instead of leaving them in the state courts. These prosecutions, including convictions of individuals for the March 2010 Dogo Nahawa massacre (described in this report), were an important step forward. To gain jurisdiction, however, federal prosecutors often had to try the suspects using rather tenuously connected terrorism provisions under federal anti-corruption legislation. Since then, state prosecutors in Plateau State have also secured several convictions.



Mourners on March 8, 2010, observe the mass burial of 70 Christians, including 38 children, killed in the March 7, 2010 attack on Dogo Nahawa, Plateau State.
© 2010 Reuters/Akintunde Akinleye



A mass grave for the victims of the April 18–19, 2011 attack on Zonkwa, Kaduna State. Muslim leaders said that 311 Muslims were buried in mass graves during three burials from April 21 to 23, 2011.
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Aside from these infrequent prosecutions, the authorities have generally treated the violence as a political problem rather than a criminal matter. They invariably set up commissions of inquiry, which are good in theory, but in practice have become an avenue for reinforcing impunity. In the words of one civil society leader, “Going to these panels buys the government time, and when the problem drops from the headlines, they go back to business as usual.” More often than not, the reports are shelved, their recommendations are rarely implemented, and the perpetrators are not brought to book.

“I don’t think it is good enough,” a judge in Kaduna argued. “That is why we are having this recurrent crisis. [For] any small thing people will just take to the streets because nobody has been really pinned down.”



Bodies at the mortuary of Saint Gerard’s Hospital in the city of Kaduna on April 20, 2011, after post-election violence in Kaduna State left hundreds dead.
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Three Christian men, from the Berom ethnic group, stand next to a mass grave in Gwanfil village, Plateau State, where they buried 15 neighbors and family members—4 men, 3 women and 8 children—who were shot and killed in an attack on September 9, 2011.

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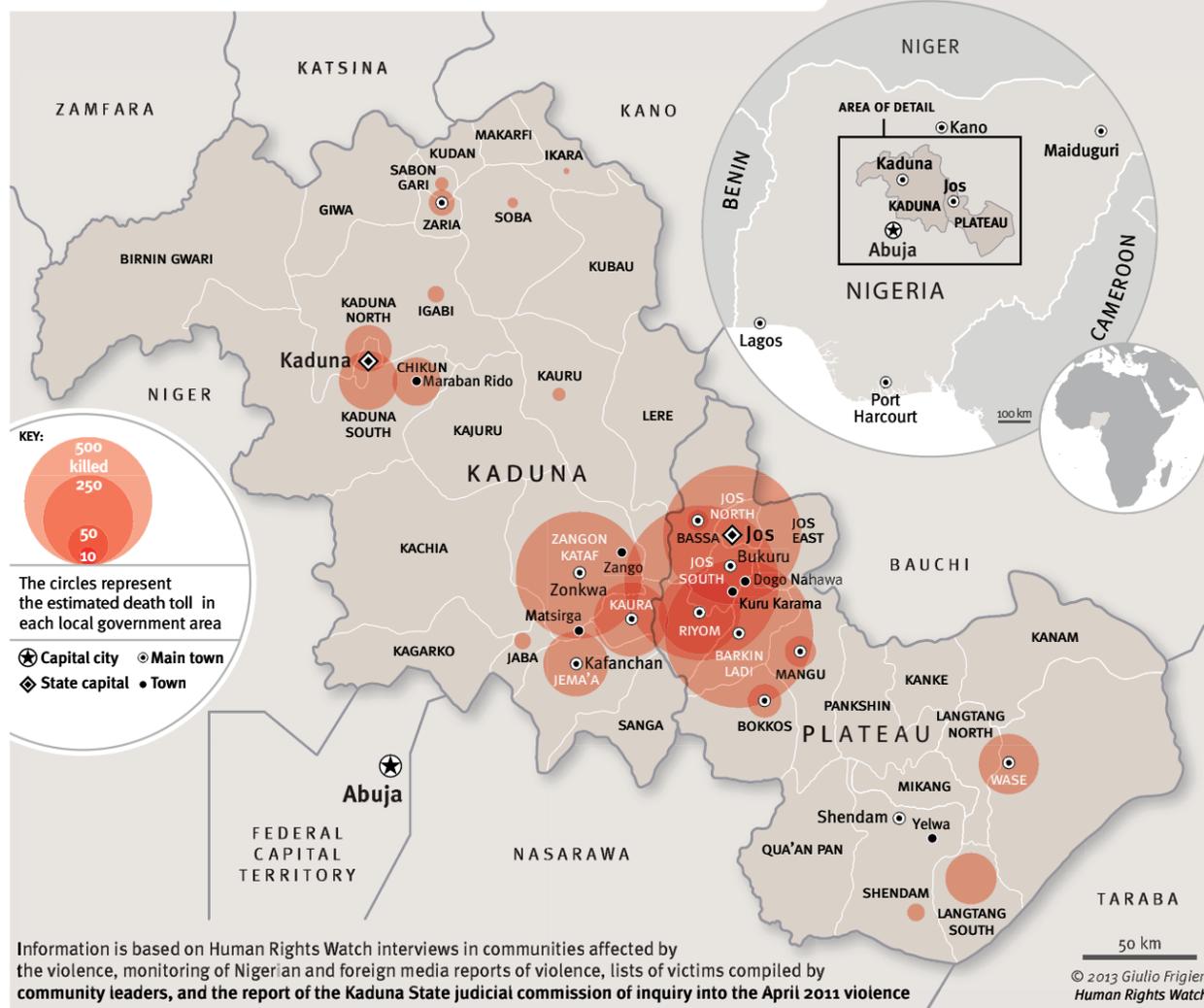
This report calls on the federal authorities to promptly and thoroughly review the status and outcome of police investigations into inter-communal violence, including alleged mass murder documented in this report, and promptly file criminal charges against those implicated, or publicly explain why charges have not been filed. The police should also create a special mass crimes unit, trained in investigating mass violence, and quickly deploy it to investigate incidents of communal violence in an impartial and thorough manner. Those implicated in crimes should be promptly prosecuted according to international fair trial standards.

The National Assembly should pass legislation establishing clear jurisdiction for the federal attorney general to prosecute, in federal court, cases of mass violence, in order to better insulate cases of ethnic and sectarian violence from political interference at the state level. Human Rights Watch calls on Nigeria's international and foreign partners, including the United Nations, United States, and United Kingdom, to publicly and privately call on Nigerian authorities to ensure that all perpetrators of mass killings are brought to justice. They should also use their expertise to offer targeted training and technical assistance to the mass crimes unit.

The cycle of violence is not inevitable. Nigerian authorities can and should take urgent steps to ensure that the perpetrators of inter-communal violence are brought to justice and the victims are compensated for their enormous personal and material losses. "I want to believe that if they had done justice, maybe a repeat of this wouldn't have come," a man in Kafanchan, Kaduna State, said after the April 2011 violence there. "This time justice should be done."

RECOMMENDATIONS

Estimated Number of People Killed in Inter-Communal Violence in Plateau and Kaduna States, Nigeria, January 2010 - November 2013



TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

- Order the inspector-general of police and the federal minister of justice to provide a full account to the president, within 30 days, of investigations and prosecutions of inter-communal violence in Plateau and Kaduna states. This report should:
 - Cover the incidents of communal violence, including alleged mass murder, documented in this and other reports, including incidents and individual suspects identified in the reports of the various commissions of inquiry and administrative panels, community petitions submitted to federal authorities, and alleged sponsors of violence identified by witnesses and suspects in police statements.
 - Determine the status and outcome of the investigations and prosecutions of those cases, and identify the reasons that investigations and prosecutions were not conducted or completed.
- Ensure that those responsible for perpetrating or sponsoring serious crimes in Plateau and Kaduna states, including alleged mass murder, are promptly and thoroughly investigated, prosecuted, and punished, according to international fair trial standards.
- Take meaningful steps to begin to address root causes of inter-communal violence in Plateau and Kaduna states:
 - Sponsor legislation to end divisive government policies that fuel ethnic and sectarian tensions by expressly barring any federal, state, or local government institution from discriminating against “non-indigenes” with respect to any matter not directly related to traditional leadership institutions or other purely cultural matters. Launch a broad public education campaign throughout Nigeria focused on the rights that go with Nigerian citizenship and the need for an end to discrimination against non-indigenes.
 - Take meaningful steps to begin to allay fears of religious or ethnic minorities, including Christians living in predominately Muslim communities in northern Nigeria, by ensuring that their rights are protected, and that those responsible for sectarian or ethnic violence, including the April 2011 post-election attacks on Christians and their property in northern Nigeria, are promptly investigated, prosecuted, and punished, according to international fair trial standards.
 - Establish and publicize clear boundaries for international and regional cattle routes and grazing reserves, and establish alternative dispute resolution mechanisms for disputes between local farmers and pastoralists.

TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

- Hold public hearings, including in the respective Senate and House of Representatives committees on police affairs, justice, and human rights, calling on the police to give account of the status and outcome of investigations into communal violence, including alleged mass murder, in Plateau and Kaduna states.
- Enact legislation to domesticate the International Criminal Court’s Rome Statute, ratified by Nigeria in 2001, including criminalizing, under federal law, genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity, consistent with Rome Statute definitions.
- Enact legislation establishing that specific crimes, such as murder, committed during mass inter-communal violence are federal crimes, which can be prosecuted by the federal attorney general in Federal High Court.
- Enact legislation to end divisive government policies that fuel ethnic and sectarian tensions by expressly barring any federal, state, or local government institution from discriminating against “non-indigenes” with respect to any matter not directly related to traditional leadership institutions or other purely cultural matters.

RECOMMENDATIONS

TO THE NIGERIA POLICE FORCE

- Order a high-level review of the investigations conducted by the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) into communal violence in Plateau and Kaduna states. The review should:
 - Examine the incidents of alleged mass murder documented in this and other reports, including the incidents and individual suspects identified in the reports of the various commissions of inquiry and administrative panels, and community petitions submitted to federal authorities, and alleged sponsors of violence identified by suspects and witnesses in their police statements.
 - Determine the status and outcome of these investigations and identify the reasons that investigations were not conducted or completed into these alleged crimes.
- Submit the report of the high-level review to the president and federal attorney general, and provide copies to the Plateau State and Kaduna State attorneys general.
- Order the CID to conduct prompt and thorough investigations into all incidents of communal violence in Plateau and Kaduna states, including alleged incidents of mass murder documented in this report, and without delay send completed case diaries to the respective federal or state attorney general.
- Systematically arrest suspects where there is evidence implicating them in crimes.
- Hold community meetings in areas affected by communal violence to explain the steps taken to investigate the alleged crimes and emphasize that anyone implicated in reprisal violence or intimidation of witnesses will be investigated, prosecuted, and punished.
- Establish a mass crimes unit based at Force CID in Abuja that can be quickly deployed to any future incidents of mass violence to promptly and thoroughly investigate those crimes.
 - Members of the unit should be trained in investigating mass crimes, including collection and preservation of evidence at crime scenes, forensic analysis, and effective and appropriate techniques in interviewing witnesses and interrogating suspects of violent crimes.
 - The unit should also identify states most at risk of mass violence and provide training, in investigating mass crimes, to police investigators posted at state CID in those states.
- Promptly investigate police officers implicated in serious abuses, such as extrajudicial killings, committed while responding, or related to, communal violence.
 - These investigations should include abuses, documented by Human Rights Watch and other groups, during the November 2008 violence in Jos and the April 2011 violence in Kaduna State.
 - Give a public account, including to community leaders and victims, of the status of these investigations and steps taken to hold the police officers accountable.
- Implement reforms of the Nigeria Police Force including ending the widespread use of torture, through prosecuting any police officer where there is evidence of involvement in torture; taking clear measures to end police corruption, such as embezzlement of public funds, extortion of money from complainants or soliciting or accepting bribes from suspects; and improving the capacity of police investigators, including training and funding for forensic analysis.

TO THE FEDERAL MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

- Give a public account of the status and outcome of the federal prosecutions for crimes committed during the January and March 2010 violence in Plateau State.
 - Identify the reasons why individuals were not prosecuted for alleged mass murder in January 2010, including the Kuru Karama massacre and the anti-Fulani pogroms, and why sponsors of the March 2010 Dogo Nahawa massacre, identified in suspects' police statements, were not prosecuted.
- Promptly file criminal charges and prosecute, according to international fair trial standards, all remaining suspects, including those implicated in planning and organizing the January and March 2010 violence.
- Publicly and privately call on the police to conduct and complete investigations of the other incidents of communal violence, including alleged incidents of mass murder, in Plateau and Kaduna states.
- Enact a robust witness protection program for witnesses who provide evidence, such as testifying in court, against individuals implicated in perpetrating, planning, or organizing, communal violence in Plateau and Kaduna states.

TO THE NIGERIAN MILITARY

- Ensure that all military personnel deployed to states historically affected by communal violence, including Plateau and Kaduna, are trained in the collection and preservation of evidence at crime scenes.
- Order all military personnel, including soldiers involved in arresting suspects and collecting evidence at the scene of violence, to promptly respond to subpoenas to testify at trial. Ensure that adequate funding is provided to all soldiers subpoenaed to testify, including travel and lodging expenses.
- Promptly investigate and prosecute soldiers implicated in serious abuses, such as extrajudicial killings, committed while responding, or related to, communal violence.
 - These investigations should include extrajudicial killings, documented by Human Rights Watch and other groups, during the November 2008 violence in Jos, alleged participation by soldiers in various attacks on predominately Berom villages since 2010, and extrajudicial killings during the April 2011 violence in Kaduna State.
 - Give a public account, including to community leaders and victims, of the status of these investigations and steps taken to hold the soldiers accountable.

RECOMMENDATIONS

TO THE PLATEAU STATE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

- Give a public account of the status and outcome of all state prosecutions for crimes committed during communal violence in Plateau State, including incidents of mass murder documented in this and other reports.
- Publicly and privately call on the police to promptly conduct and complete investigations into all incidents of communal violence, regardless of the religious or ethnic identity of the victims, including the January 2010 massacre of Muslims at Kuru Karama and the anti-Fulani pogroms.
- Promptly prosecute all individuals charged with crimes related to communal violence, according to international fair trial standards.
- Enact, in conjunction with the Federal Ministry of Justice, a robust witness protection program for witnesses who provide evidence, such as testifying in court, against individuals implicated in perpetrating, planning, or organizing violence in Plateau State.
- Consider establishing a compensation program for victims of communal violence, and ensure that compensation is provided to victims in a transparent manner, regardless of their religious or ethnic identity or indigene status.
- Proactively recruit state residents who are classified by state and local government officials as “non-indigenes,” including Muslim and Hausa-Fulani candidates, to serve as state counsel, including prosecutors, to ensure greater diversity in the Plateau State Ministry of Justice.

TO THE KADUNA STATE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

- Give a public account of the status and outcome of all state prosecutions for crimes committed during communal violence in Kaduna State, including incidents of mass murder documented in this and other reports.
- Publicly and privately call on the police to promptly conduct and complete investigations into all incidents of violence, regardless of the religious or ethnic identity of the victims.
- Enact, in conjunction with the Federal Ministry of Justice, a robust witness protection program for witnesses who provide evidence, such as testifying in court, against individuals implicated in perpetrating, planning, or organizing violence in Kaduna State.
- Consider establishing a compensation program for victims of communal violence, and ensure that compensation is provided to victims in a transparent manner, regardless of their religious or ethnic identity or indigene status.
- Proactively recruit state residents who are classified by state and local government officials as “non-indigenes” to serve as state counsel, including prosecutors, in the Kaduna State Ministry of Justice.

TO THE UNITED NATIONS, UNITED STATES, UNITED KINGDOM, AND NIGERIA’S OTHER FOREIGN PARTNERS

- Publicly and privately call on the Nigerian government to ensure that the perpetrators, planners, and organizers of communal violence in Plateau and Kaduna states, including incidents of alleged mass murder documented in this and other reports, are promptly investigated, prosecuted, and punished, according to international fair trial standards.
- Offer assistance to the Nigeria Police Force to help set up a mass crimes unit at Force CID in Abuja that can be quickly deployed to future incidents of communal violence. Targeted assistance could include training the unit’s investigators in best practices in investigating mass crimes, including collection and preservation of evidence at crime scenes, forensic analysis, and effective and appropriate techniques in interviewing witnesses and interrogating suspects of violent crimes.
- Offer assistance to the Federal Ministry of Justice, in conjunction with the ministries of justice in Plateau and Kaduna states, in setting up a robust witness protection program.

TO THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

- Continue to assess, including through site visits, whether crimes committed in Plateau and Kaduna states, including incidents of mass murder documented in this and other reports, constitute crimes under the ICC’s jurisdiction.
- Continue to monitor, including through periodic visits to Nigeria, the steps taken by the Nigerian government to investigate and prosecute those implicated in crimes in Plateau and Kaduna states, in particular those responsible for planning or organizing incidents of alleged mass murder documented in this and other reports.



Plateau and Kaduna—two states in central Nigeria—have witnessed horrific ethnic and sectarian violence. Several thousand people have been killed in inter-communal bloodletting in these two states since 2010 alone. Many of the victims—including women and children—were hacked to death, burned alive, or shot simply based on their ethnic or religious identity. The Nigerian authorities have failed, with rare exception, to bring to justice the perpetrators of these serious crimes.

Based on field research, including interviews with dozens of eyewitnesses to murder, police investigators, prosecutors, and judges, *“Leave Everything to God”* examines the major incidents of violence in Plateau and Kaduna, in particular brutal massacres in 2010 and 2011, and documents the culture of impunity that pervades the criminal justice system.

The report explores why mass arrests during the violence have rarely been followed by criminal prosecutions, documents how the police have turned a blind eye to witnesses who had the courage to come forward to report crimes, and examines how the Nigerian authorities have often abdicated responsibility for criminal investigations and prosecutions by setting up commissions of inquiry.

In the absence of effective remedies through the criminal justice system, aggrieved communities in Plateau and Kaduna have frequently sought retribution by carrying out reprisal killings. These cycles of violence are not inevitable. Nigerian authorities can and should take urgent steps to ensure that the perpetrators of these serious crimes are investigated and prosecuted.

(above) Neighbors hold up a photograph of members of a Christian family from the Berom ethnic group who were killed during an attack on Tatu village, Plateau State, on September 4, 2011. Eight members of the family, including two women and four children pictured in the photograph, were shot and killed in the attack.

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(front cover) A woman walks through a house that was burned during the January 19, 2010 attack on Kuru Karama, Plateau State, which left more than 170 Muslims dead.

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