

**TEXT OF PRESS CONFERENCE ORGANIZED BY  
CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA (CAN)  
AT THE NATIONAL CHRISTIAN CENTER, ABUJA, ON  
FRIDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> APRIL, 2018 AT 12.00 NOON**

**ISLAMIST INSURGENTS: PUSHING NIGERIA  
OFF THE EDGE OF THE PRECIPICE**

Gentlemen of the Press,

I welcome you all to this press conference in the precious and wonderful name of Our Redeemer and Savior, Jesus Christ. The last press conference I addressed was in January over the state of insecurity in the country where we brought to the fore, the failure of the security agencies to rise to the challenges of ending sustained killings by the Fulani herdsmen, the Boko Haram terrorists, the armed banditry, the kidnapers and the armed robbers. These criminals have been operating with impunity, leaving a strong impression that the security architecture in Nigeria has collapsed. There is also the suspicion that the entire security system of Nigeria is compromised.

Unarguably, lawlessness and impunity are reigning supreme in Nigeria, while the country is fast heading to chaos and anomie. It has never been this bad in the country that had lived relatively peacefully since independence.

The sad angle to it is that the Nigerian President, Muhammadu Buhari is not giving majority of Nigerians an impression of being deeply touched by the turn of events. He has been acting complacent and indeed unmoved by the reign of terror that his administration has permitted since the past three years of being the President. Most painfully, the President seems to depend on his media aides to make responses, which often times had no bite on widespread bloodletting across the federation, most especially in the Middle Belt part of the country.

Over the past few days, Fulani herdsmen, bandits, gunmen and others had mowed down more than 300 people in cold blood only in Benue state. On 24 April 2018, 19 people including two Catholic Priests were brutally killed in Gwer Local Government area, 25 April 2018, 23 people killed in Guma Local Government, 26 April, 2018, 27 people were killed in Logo, while on 26 April, 2018 five people were killed in Guma Local government area and the figures continues to rise by the day. This is not to talk about numerous innocent citizens that were killed in states like Adamawa, Taraba, Kogi, Plateau and others in the southern region of Nigeria.

War seems to be looming in Nigeria while the aggressors are none other than misguided individuals who had been armed to provoke different communities into needless battles. Yet, President Buhari, who was popularly elected in 2015 has not seen the need and urgency to issue a presidential order on need to halt the killings and with stern instruction to heads of security operatives to bring perpetrators to book. The Dark Age that has come with the Administration of President Buhari in Nigeria is giving the Christians in this country a huge concern. The development is making us the leaders to shudder and ask, where lies the interest of the President, really. All the same, Mr President has his own interests, key of which is to seek re-election to remain in power beyond 2019 and continue with the reign of terror in Nigeria. It does not matter how many Nigerians will end up as sacrificial lamb on that single ambition!

Therefore, with heavy heart and unquantifiable sorrow, the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) welcomes you to this Press Conference. To say that we are sad and grieved would be an understatement at the blatant treachery, treason and unpatriotic actions of some of our fellow citizens. Our pains are multiple fold and we are baffled that in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, we could still have human beings whose worldview is locked in backward and retrogressive beliefs and culture.

On the one hand, we are in sorrow because we are daily bereaved of our members, Christians, who are serially murdered by Islamic insurgents. On the other hand, we are in shock and disbelief that citizens of this country, most of who went to school and are supposed to be civilized and rational human beings could blatantly **legalize murder** based on retrogressive worldview. Daily, Islamic religious extremists in Nigeria, backed by powerful and influential people in Government, with impunity, commit acts of treason that jeopardize the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Nigeria.

Since 2008, the terrorist group Boko Haram has been unleashing terror and death in Nigeria. Rather than abate, it was joined by Fulani herdsmen and recently, the Nigerian Armed Forces and other security units have collaborated with the insurgents all in a bid to promote one religion and one culture over all the other religions and cultures in Nigeria. We have discovered that the main roots of the insurgency in Nigeria are two factors:

1. **The Doctrine of Hate taught in the various Mosques and Islamic Madrasas in northern Nigeria.**
2. **The supremacist ideology of the Fulani ethnic group.**

These two factors are responsible for the river of blood that is flowing all over Nigeria. The Christian Association of Nigeria is compelled therefore, to call on all citizens of Nigeria as well as the international community to observe that Nigeria is on a free fall to disintegration.

## **A CATALOGUE OF MURDER AND DESTRUCTION**

Time and space would not permit me to list chronologically the horrendous report of death and murder sponsored by the Islamists of northern Nigeria since the 1970s. However, it would be necessary to refresh our memory with some of the gory occurrences in recent times.

In the past few months, there have been Islamist insurgent attacks on Benue, Taraba, Plateau, Yobe, Borno, Nasarawa, Enugu, Imo, Abia, Rivers, Ogun and Oyo States. The Islamists and their agents have extended their trail of blood and destruction to Bwari in Abuja and Ilorin in Kwara State. On Christmas Day, 2017, Christian community in Bwari, Abuja was attacked; several lives were lost while business locations of Christians were burnt down. All these were done with full security “protection” as it were, for the attackers, according to eye-witnesses report. On New Year’s Day in 2018, Christians observing “watch-night” service in Ilorin were attacked and three Churches were burnt. Again, the Security Agents did not intervene until the attackers had finished their horrendous assignment.

This pattern suggests collusion of the Security Units with the Islamists militia operating under such names as Fulani herdsman, Boko Haram, “unknown gunmen”, and “group of vandals”. On 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2017, the Nigerian Air Force “accidentally”, in broad daylight, bombed a Christian IDP Camp and killed over 200 Christian refugees in Rann, Kala-Balge Local Government in Borno State. In December 2017, an Air Force spokes person confirmed that the Nigerian Air Force sent an Alpha Jet and an EC 135 attack Helicopter to fire “warning” shots at Islamist militia attacking Christians in Numan, Adamawa, but not to kill them! The villagers were later to report that the Jet actually bombed the Christian villages resulting in the death of over 50 people, while, the Nigerian Air Force said it merely fired warning shots at the Islamist militia attacking the villagers.

Twice in 2018, the Benue State Government has conducted mass burials publicly. The Government of Taraba state has had to publicly denounce the Nigerian military of colluding with insurgents to attack Christians in Taraba State. The situation became so tense that Elder Statesman, General T. Y. Danjuma publicly called on Nigerians to defend themselves as it is clear the Security Unity are incapable of doing so.

As these attacks are going on, school girls in Chibok and Dapchi, both in northern Nigeria were abducted. To date, four years after the abduction of mostly Christian female students in Chibok, 113 of the girls are yet to be released. A recent news report insists that 98 out of the remaining 113 girls are dead. In Dapchi, all the girls who professed Islam as religion were brought back safely by the Islamist insurgents while 15 years old Leah Sharibu, who held on to her Christian faith, remained in captivity.

On Tuesday, 24<sup>th</sup> April, 2018, Rev. Fathers Joseph Gor and Felix Tyolaha, with 17 members of the Catholic Church were murdered during worship service in St. Ignatius Quasi Parish Ukpok-Mbalom, Makurdi, Benue State. Again, the security forces are unable to effect any arrest.

All these are going on under the full glare of a democratically elected President who took an oath to defend and uphold the Constitution of Nigeria. Section 14 (2) b of the Constitution declares: **“the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government:”** It is clear that the security and welfare of the people is NOT the primary purpose of this government in power.

## WHAT IS GOING ON IN NIGERIA?

We affirm that JIHAD has been launched in Nigeria by Islamists of northern Nigeria. There is an intentional and deliberate agenda to impose Islam as the only religion in Nigeria and supplant the Constitution with Sharia as the source of legislation. The promoters of Islamization want to eradicate Liberal Democracy as the National Ideology and replace it with Sharia ideology. Even though the current Administration has been strenuously denying this, its actions and inactions, confirm that this is the truth. Every denial by this Administration is nothing but display of “Taqiyya”, which is approved deception in Islam.

Abukabar Shekau, the leader of Boko Haram, provides undeniable insight into the Islamization Agenda when he stated as follows in 2012:

“... This war is not political. It is religious. It is between Muslims and unbelievers (arna). It will stop when Islamic religion is the determinant in governance in Nigeria or, in the alternative, when all fighters are annihilated and no one is left to continue the fight. I warn all Muslims at this juncture that any Muslim who assists an unbeliever in this war should consider himself an unbeliever and should consider himself dead.”

We equally affirm that the ongoing Jihad is the continuation of the Othman Dan Fodio Jihad which was halted in 1804 by the British Colonialists. It is clear that there is a **Fulani Supremacist Ideology** behind the current Islamization Agenda in Nigeria. This is confirmed by the unconstitutional appointments of mostly Fulanis by the President to head nearly all units in Security as well as in Education.

Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) is holding two entities responsible for the large scale murder going on in Nigeria. They are as follows:

### PRESIDENT MUHAMMADU BUHARI

President Buhari was elected on a wave of unprecedented public approval in 2015. Unfortunately, within a few weeks of his election, he started creating the impression that he was in power to serve the interests of his Fulani ethnic group only. Discerning people were quick to note that contrary to his electoral promises, he actually meant to pursue core Islamist agenda. Almost every vital appointment in Security and Education went to Muslims from the North. He did not hide his disdain for the indigenous ethnic nationalities and, at every opportunity, showed preferential treatment to the Muslim North.

Under President Buhari, the murderous Fulani herdsmen enjoyed unprecedented protection and favoritism to the extent that the herdsmen treat Nigeria as a conquered territory. Rather than arrest and prosecute the Fulani herdsmen, security forces usually manned by Muslims from the North offer them protection as they unleash terror with impunity on the Nigerian people.

The bottom line is that President Buhari failed woefully to protect Nigerians. He willfully permitted the Fulani herdsmen to operate killing people, destroying communities wholesale, destroying farmlands and turning the entire Middle Belt into

“killing fields”, all the while enjoying government protection from counter attack, arrest or prosecution.

By failing to curb the attacks of the Fulani herdsmen President Buhari has failed to uphold Section 14, (2)b in the Constitution that “the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government:”

Through his partial, sectional and discriminatory appointments, particularly in Security and Education, President Buhari violated Section 14, Para. 3 “The composition of the Government of the Federation or any of its agencies and the conduct of its affairs shall be carried out in such a manner as to reflect the federal character of Nigeria and the need to promote national unity, and also to command national loyalty, thereby ensuring that there shall be no predominance of persons from a few State or from a few ethnic or other sectional groups in that Government or in any of its agencies.”

### **MIYETTI ALLAH CATTLE BREEDERS ASSOCIATION**

The Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association is supposed to be a business group much like many other businesses and professional groups in the country. However, the MACBAN differs from any other business group in that it combines bloodshed with enterprise.

The Fulani herdsmen are clearly associated with MACBAN and the officials of MACBAN are noted to make very inciting statements before and after the Fulani herdsmen attack vulnerable communities. In the recent attacks on Benue State, the President of Benue Branch of Miyetti Allah, Garus Gololo said they attacked the communities because 1,000 of their cows were stolen. Even if it was true that cows were stolen, who constituted Miyetti Allah into law enforcement agency, judge and jury to commit wholesale murder?

In another account, Miyetti Allah called a Press Conference in which it stated it would not abide with the anti-open grazing law of Benue State Government. The Chief Press Secretary to the Benue State Government, Terve Akase believes that the attacks on Benue State on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> January, 2018 were in reaction to the grazing law enacted by the Benue State Government.

Miyetti Allah has openly rejected anti-open grazing bills in Taraba, Plateau and Benue States. In May 2017, the National President of Miyetti Allah, Alhaji Bello Abdullahi Bodejo and the National Secretary Engineer Saleh Alhassan openly declared at a Press Conference that the introduction of anti-open grazing bill in some states is a recipe for anarchy. Are we now to conclude that a business group has supremacy over State Governments?

In view of the foregoing, Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), on behalf of all Christians in Nigeria who collectively constitute well above 50% of the population of this country, resolves as follows:

1. In very strong terms, CAN condemn the inability of the President Muhammadu Buhari Administration to curb and stop the murderous activities of Islamic

insurgents in the country. Christian Association of Nigeria calls on the President of Nigeria to immediately take steps to permanently dismantle both Boko Haram and Fulani herdsmen.

2. CAN also condemns in equally strong terms the violation of the Federal Character Principle in appointments in Security and Education by the Buhari Administration and calls on the National Assembly to fulfill its mandate by reversing the appointments made by President Buhari. **The supremacy of the Constitution must be upheld by the National Assembly.**
3. All Christian assemblies in and outside Nigerian shall observe two Sundays of Christian Mourning and Protest on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> April, 2018 and Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> May, 2018. All Christian Assemblies are required to protest round their neighborhood about the killings of Christians and also demand the immediate release of Leah Sharibu and the remaining girls from Chibok still in captivity.
4. Nigerian Christian assemblies, particularly all those in Diaspora are requested to obtain a copy of this Press Release and read it publicly on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> April, 2018 and on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> May, 2018 at all locations worldwide. All Churches are encouraged to ensure adequate media coverage.
5. The Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association should be banned for promoting terror and bloodshed in the country. In addition, the officials of Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association should be arrested and prosecuted for murder. By their public statements, they have confirmed that they are directly responsible for the murderous activities of the Fulani herdsmen.
6. Every Nigerian of voting age should ensure he/she is registered and obtain the Permanent Voters Card in readiness for the 2019 Election. Nigerians must vote into power a Political Party that will promote Democracy which translates to Justice, Equity, and Fairness for all.
7. CAN support the call of the National Christian Elders Forum (NCEF) for the setting up of **Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Restructuring** the nation as platforms to provide healing for the country and rebuilding trust and confidence.

God bless Nigeria.

Rev. Musa Asake, PhD.  
General Secretary  
Christian Association of Nigeria

**Friday 27<sup>th</sup> April, 2018**