



3.31.2010

NIGERIA Religious liberty organizations call attention to crisis in Northern and Central Nigeria

Key organizations that work on religious liberty issues around the world have issued a strong statement on the recent killings and violence in Nigeria, and have launched a global campaign calling for prayer for that nation.

In what is being called “The Cyprus Statement,” the Religious Liberty Partnership (RLP), with member organizations based in 18 countries, is calling the worldwide Christian community to pray for the crisis in northern and central Nigeria.

While acknowledging some positive developments within Nigeria, The Cyprus Statement, expresses deep concern at the inadequate enforcement of a curfew by the security services prior to attacks that left hundreds dead in Plateau State, and calls for accurate, unbiased reporting on Nigeria by the international media. In addition, the Statement calls on the church worldwide to pray for and work towards the religious rights of all Nigerians, to provide practical humanitarian support to victims of violence, and to support reconciliation efforts.

“Following the recent appalling massacres of men, women and children in villages around Jos, Nigeria, it was timely that this year’s RLP Conference in Cyprus had a focus on Nigeria,” said Mervyn Thomas, CEO of Christian Solidarity Worldwide, UK and Chairman of the Religious Liberty Partnership. “The Cyprus Statement calls amongst other things for the perpetrators of violence to be brought to justice. If these people continue to kill with impunity, the violence will escalate even further, and will eventually endanger the entire nation.”

“Together as the RLP, we stand in support of Christians in Nigeria, calling upon the Church worldwide to pray for a restoration of lasting peace in Nigeria,” said Andy Dipper, CEO of Release International. “Christians in central and northern Nigeria today face unprecedented persecution, with women and children suffering barbaric acts of violence. In this context the Nigerian Church leadership are actively choosing to isolate those perpetrators of these recent killings by not retaliating, and relying on God to sustain them in their grief.”

[To view and download the text of the Cyprus Statement, click here](#)

Note to Editors:

The Religious Liberty Partnership (RLP) is a collaborative effort of Christian organizations around the world focused on religious liberty. The RLP seeks increasingly to coordinate efforts in addressing advocacy and in raising the awareness of religious liberty issues globally. Besides Mervyn Thomas and Andy Dipper, the RLP Leadership Team is made of: Johan Companjen, Open Doors International; Linus Pfister, HMK Switzerland; Daniel Hoffman of Middle East Concern; and Godfrey Yogarajah of the World Evangelical Alliance. A listing of RLP members is on the Cyprus Statement.

For more information about the Religious Liberty Partnership or the Cyprus Statement, please contact
Brian O'Connell:
E-mail: Brian@REACTServices.com
Phone: +1-425-218-4718