



4.20.2010

## NIGERIA Increasing loss of confidence in army as Attacks continue in Plateau State

---

A man and woman were killed and three people are missing after Fulani tribesmen attacked a group of miners near Rim village, Plateau State, Nigeria, yesterday at midday. Eyewitnesses report that 67-year-old Mr. Danyan died of gunshot wounds to the head and chest, while the body of 27 year-old Garous Davou appeared to have suffered chemical burns.

The attack in Rim occurred despite a significant military presence in the “crisis prone” area, and has led to renewed speculation about the role of military elements in the on-going violence. During an earlier incident on the same day, two people were hospitalized with gunshot wounds following an attack by around 20 Fulani men on the nearby village of Tahoss. While the assault was underway villagers in Tahoss reported witnessing a man in military uniform hand his own weapon to one of the attackers when the latter appeared to run out of bullets.

Following the latest violence, Simon Mwadkwon, Chairman of Riyom Local Government Area, which includes Rim, told Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW): “We have a large security presence, yet no-one came to help until we called the Mobile Police Force. These are the people who [the soldiers] are supposed to protect, and who pay them through their taxes. But instead of giving them security, they are killing them. People are now clamoring for them to be withdrawn. The military in Nigeria has been polarised along ethnic and religious lines, and it is now difficult to say who is a genuine soldier in the Nigerian army today”.

Mr Mwadkwon also informed CSW that extremists appeared to have established a training camp in the Riyom area. Although he has alerted the Governor of Plateau State, the Police Commissioner and the Assistant Inspector General of Police (AIG) about this “potential threat to Nigeria as a whole”, he has yet to receive a response.

Yunusa Nmadu, CEO of CSW Nigeria said: “This spate of attacks and secret killings, especially on the outskirts of Jos, is a serious cause of concern, and is indicative of the continuing security lapses in Plateau State. CSW-Nigeria calls on the Government of Nigeria to be more proactive in tackling this issue and in ending the continuing loss of innocent lives on the Plateau”.

CSW National Director Stuart Windsor says: “It is unfortunate that allegations of military inaction or collusion are continuing to emerge. An army that was widely respected for its peace keeping efforts worldwide, and was viewed locally as a truly national institution, is fast losing the vestiges of this reputation, and is increasingly viewed with fear and suspicion by many in Plateau State. For the sake of the nation, and of this vital national body, the Federal Government must intervene robustly to prevent any fragmentation along religious or ethnic lines, and to ensure that the army’s reputation is no longer tarnished by the partisan behavior of a lawless remnant. It is also in the national interest for federal and state authorities to thoroughly investigate reports of the existence of extremist training camps, and take

urgent measures to address this should this information prove to be accurate”.