

Christian Pastor Executed in Nigeria

Save the Persecuted Christians (STPC) has received news that Rev. Lawan Andimi, the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) Chairman for Michika LGA in Adamawa state, Nigeria, has been executed.

According to STPC Executive Director Dede Laugesen, a trusted source said the family was notified yesterday by the CAN office of Adamawa. Andimi was abducted during a Jan. 3 raid on Michika. Video posted to social media following the raid purports to show Andimi being forced into a vehicle by his captors.

A few days later, a proof of life video was released, in which the minister made pleas to the Church of the Brethren to intercede for him with the governor of Adamawa state. He then went on to say he was placing his trust in God and asked others to do the same.

Now, news of his execution is beginning to come to light.

STPC is a bipartisan, multi-faith coalition of nearly 200 civil society, faith and community leaders who advocate for more than 300 million persecuted Christians globally.

The Save the Persecuted Christians source, who is not being revealed out of concern for his safety, said, "They have slaughtered him in Sambisa forest. They murdered him because he refused to renounce his faith. And, because they couldn't raise the money for his ransom."

The source went on to say that the terrorists were asking 2 million euros for ransom. Unfortunately, his church had only been able to raise 50 million nira, an amount far short of the demand, but an extravagant amount for this destitute

community.

“While ISIS may be in retreat in the Middle East, it has found a new and powerful ally in Boko Haram, which is entrenched in northern Nigeria,” said Stephen Enada, director of the International Committee on Nigeria (ICON) and a Save the Persecuted Christians coalition partner. “Like Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria before it, an unstable Nigeria is becoming the new breeding ground for Islamist terrorists.

“The true extent of the ripple effect of the mass killings taking place at the hands of the terrorist organizations responsible, including humanitarian issues, human trafficking and economic strife in the region, among others, may never be captured in simple statistics,” Enada added. “There’s simply too much; it goes too far and too deep to capture everything. That’s why action is so critical. That, and inaction against these terrorist groups only embolden them to take more extreme actions. Therefore, the appointment of a special envoy to Nigeria and the Lake Chad region by the president of the United States will send a signal to terrorists and their enablers that their time is up, just like it was in the Middle East region.”

Andimi is the second pastor this community has lost thus far in 2020. Reports yesterday also detailed the assassination of a prominent Adamawa clergyman, the Rev. Denis Bagauri. Known as “Pastor Nyako,” the Christian leader was killed at his house by unknown gunmen.

As evidenced by these murders already this year, the bloodshed has been significant in Nigeria, where Christians are in danger daily because of their faith.

STPC has urged a U.S. special envoy to Nigeria and the Lake Chad region because of extreme violence against Christians there—and efforts are now being heightened. At least 1,000 Christians were killed in 2019, with more than 5,000 killed

since 2015, according to a recent U.K. report.

Coalition members are collecting signatures for an open letter to President Donald Trump and his administration to continue to urge this much-needed Special Envoy.

“Our hope is that in the coming days, even more will sign on to this crucial letter to the president that calls on American leaders to use our country’s strength, sovereignty and global influence to help save Christians being murdered in Nigeria,” Laugesen said. “Save the Persecuted Christians President and CEO Frank J. Gaffney is attending today’s International Religious Freedom (IRF) Roundtable, made up of powerful and passionate individuals and NGOs who work toward freedom of religion or belief. We implore members of those working groups to also sign on to this important communication to the president.”

The letter begins: “As you have rightly made the protection of religious freedom a priority for your administration, we write to urge you to act immediately to prevent the further escalation of one of the most ominous threats to this fundamental liberty—the genocidal assault on Christians in Nigeria and the Lake Chad region. You and your predecessors have appointed special envoys to address critical problems in the past. We call upon you to do so in this case in the hope of staving off a currently unfolding disaster for that region, for Africa and for the world.”

Signers to the letter go on to remind that murderous attacks on Christians and other minorities in Nigeria and neighboring countries have been well-documented—and are growing. Furthermore, the government of Nigeria has done little to stop the violence and bloodletting.

“The implications of this crisis extend far beyond Nigeria,” the letter continues. “Its potential implosion may result in a gargantuan bloodbath and send millions of refugees to nations

near-and-far unprepared to support them. ... We consider the stakes in this matter, both for our own country and for our vital interests around the world, to be sufficiently great that you should appoint a prominent and highly respected champion of religious freedom as your special envoy to bring a redoubled effort to monitoring the situation on the ground in Nigeria and the Lake Chad region and, even more important, to forge and execute an appropriate U.S. strategy for ameliorating it.”

Besides Laugesen, Gaffney and Enada, those who have signed on to the letter include: Retired Congressman Frank Wolf; Dr. Sayo Ajiboye, president, Redeemer Bible College; Dr. Gloria Puldu, director, Leah Foundation; Archbishop and Primate Foley Beach, Anglican Church in North America; Timothy Hall, senior fellow, Religious Freedom Institute; Joseph Ndirang, evangelist, Kingdom Life Christian Mission International; Dr. Barr Innocent Ekwu, president, Association of Gospel Ministers of Nigeria, Inc.; Engr. Daniel Kadzai, national youth president, Congress of Northern Nigeria Christians; Linda Harvey, president, Mission America and many others. Signatures to the letter will be accepted through close of business Jan. 24.

Letter organizers also include many instances of violence and persecution in Nigeria in the first few days of 2020 alone that help to inform both potential signers and the president and his administration:

–Jan. 1: Gunmen kidnap five people as well as a Taraba chief in Gassol, Taraba.

–Jan. 1: A retired teacher in the Barkin Ladi Council Area of Plateau, Mr Iliya Dafet, is shot dead by gunmen, who attacked his house in the Gana-Daji community.

–Jan. 1: Nigerian Air Force kills “scores” (estimated at 40) of Boko Haram militants in Gwoza, Borno.

–Jan. 2: Nigerian troops kill four Boko Haram militants in Michika, Adamawa.

–Jan. 2: Kidnappers engage a team of policemen in a gun battle in a bid to escape with six abducted farmers, all women, in Mata-Mulki village of Batsari Local Government Area of Katsina State.

–Jan. 3: Herdsmen kill 23 in Kotonkarfe, Kogi. The gunmen are suspected to be the killer herdsmen who invaded Tawari community in Kotonkarfe local government area of Kogi state, killing at least 23 people, and burning the community's traditional ruler's palace and places of worship.

–Jan. 3: Boko Haram kill three in Chibok, Borno. Two siblings are killed in Payasatan Bilaburdar village under Chibok Local Government Area of Borno State during a Boko Haram attack.

–Jan. 6: Fulani militants attack 10 villages in Kadunaz; 10 villages in Kaduna State are also attacked by Fulani militants, with 35 killed and 58 taken captive.

The letter also details the number of deaths since 2011 relating to terrorism and other criminal elements in north and northeastern Nigerian states:

–Borno: 29,951.

–Yobe: 2,760.

–Buchi: 480.

–Gombe: 471.

–Adamawa: 3,888.

–Kano: 1,052.

–Kaduna: 2,776.

–Plateau: 2,703.

Perpetrators of the violence over the past year (January 2019-January 2020) include: Boko Haram (responsible for 1,295 deaths), sectarian actors (988 deaths), state actors (327 deaths) and other armed actors (1,649 deaths).

Save the Persecuted Christians has a mission to save lives and save souls by disseminating actionable information about the magnitude of the persecution taking place globally and by mobilizing concerned Americans for the purpose of disincentivizing further attacks on those who follow Jesus.

With so much of the world's Christian population being attacked, imprisoned and/or exiled for their beliefs, such as Christians in Nigeria, the need has never been greater for the sort of grassroots campaign STPC's SaveUs Movement is working to foster. Its efforts are modeled after a miraculously successful one that helped free another population suffering from heavy persecution—Soviet Jews—by penalizing those in the Kremlin responsible for such repression. Through this movement, Save the Persecuted Christians endeavors to provide American policymakers with the popular support they need to effect real change worldwide and alleviate systemically the suffering being experienced by so many of those following Christ.