

# Wife of Slain Senator Speaks Out Amid Grief

It has been nearly three months since Hannatu Dantong's husband died. She has been surrounded by his colleagues and family during this time, but still is in a deep state of mourning.

"I find the greatest comfort in Psalm 23," Dantong said. "I am reminded that the Lord will always care for me, even during this trying time."

On July 8, Nigerian Sen. Gyang Dantong was attending a funeral for more than 100 Christians who had been killed by members of **Boko Haram** the day before, in Plateau state. While the attendees were burying those who had died, gunmen infiltrated the service and began shooting those in attendance.

"One of the most difficult things to deal with is the fact that we still do not know exactly what happened that day," Hannatu Dantong said during a visit with Open Doors News. "All we really know is that gunmen invaded the funeral and that my husband and others are dead."

Gyang Dantong was a member of the Nigerian National Assembly, representing Jos, the capital of the Plateau state. He served four years in the House of Representatives, and then was elected to the Senate, where he had served for the past five years. He was an advocate for peace in the region and crossed many cultural, religious and tribal divides.

A physician by training, Dantong was as a surgeon at Vom Christian Hospital in rural Plateau. His election to the National Assembly took him away to the capital, Abuja, about 150 kilometers away. Despite the distance, he returned from the national assembly to assist with surgeries on a weekly

basis.

"My husband did many things for Nigeria," his widow said. "I know that his life blessed many and God will continue to use his legacy. My husband loved Nigeria and loved the people he served."

Hannatu Dantong has three children; Dan and Grace attend university, but have remained at home to be with their mother during this time. They comforted their mother as she shared about the events of that day.

"I will never forget that day," she said. "My husband attended the funeral early in the morning and planned on returning soon after to accompany me to church. When he did not arrive home when he said he would, I was worried and called his cell phone multiple times, but he did not answer. I became so worried that I got in my car and started to drive myself to where the funeral was being held. As I began to drive, I received a call with the horrible news that my husband had been killed.

"My husband loved the people he served," she said, "and it is very difficult to move forward without him."