

Zurich, January 25, 2024

Press release

## **Nigerian Christians massacred as Blinken visits Abuja**

### **Christian Solidarity International calls for end to killings in Middle Belt**

Dozens of Christians in Mangu local government area of Plateau State in Nigeria have been killed in Fulani militia attacks since January 23, CSI's sources in the area report.

The massacres came as U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken made an official visit to Nigeria on January 23 and 24, and just three weeks after Blinken refused, for the third year in a row, to designate Nigeria as a "country of particular concern" for religious persecution.

On Tuesday afternoon, CSI's sources in Plateau State reported that Fulani militia fighters were moving on motorbike to attack Christian villages in Mangu. By Wednesday, the attacks had killed [at least 25 Christians](#), including a [family of six](#) who were burned alive in their home in Sabon Kasuwa village. A [church](#) in the same village was burned down.

The attacks are part of a long-running campaign by jihadist militias from the Fulani ethnic group to drive indigenous Christian people groups out of their homeland in Nigeria's Middle Belt. In recent years, attacks by these militias have killed more Nigerians than attacks by Boko Haram or the Islamic State.

In an impassioned [video statement](#) shared on social media, the local chairman of the Christian Association of Nigeria in Mangu local government area stated that the Nigerian military was complicit in the attacks.

"The military are the ones sending our people away to allow the militia to burn their houses," he charged. "They have set a curfew," but it is enforced "only on people within Mangu, within the Christian domains. Within the Muslim domains, they are free to move and do whatever they want to do."

Military forces had themselves killed three young men in the area, including one of his parishioners, the pastor said. "There is an evil plan to destroy Mangu."

On [Christmas Eve](#), hundreds of Christians in Plateau State were massacred by Fulani militias going from village to village in Bokkos, Barkin Ladi, and Mangu local government areas.

At a [joint press conference](#) with Nigeria's Foreign Minister, Yusuf Maitama Tuggar, Blinken extended "the condolences of the American people to all Nigerians who were affected by the horrific attacks over the Christmas weekend."

According to reporting by [Morning Star News's](#) Nigeria correspondents, more than 136 Christians have been killed in Nigeria since January 1.

Nigeria is the deadliest country in the world for Christians. In 2020, CSI issued a [Genocide Warning](#) for Christians in Nigeria.

"The U.S. appears to believe that it can protect its interests in Nigeria by partnering with the Nigerian security establishment," commented CSI's International President, Dr. John Eibner. "This same security establishment is complicit in the ethnic cleansing of Christians from their homeland in Nigeria's Middle Belt by jihadists and Muslim supremacist militias."

"We urge the U.S. and its allies to address these killings in their dealings with the Nigerian government, rather than continuing to turn a blind eye to the slow genocide unfolding in Africa's most populous nation."