



## CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE OF NIGERIA

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### PRESS STATEMENT

#### SHAMEFUL INVERSION OF VALUES: THE PLATEAU MASSACRE

Barely two months ago, from the Eternal City of Rome during our Ad Limina Visit, we, the Catholic Bishops of Nigeria, issued a statement expressing our grave concerns about the spate of violence in our country and the Federal Government's inability to deal with the situation. That statement came on the heels of the gruesome murder of two of our priests along with 17 other parishioners in Benue State on 24 April this year. The latest horrendous massacre of scores of innocent Nigerians, especially children and women, including pregnant women, in Plateau State, by the same rampaging and murderous terrorists who now seem to be operating without any hindrance in the Middle Belt and other parts of Nigeria, shows that our last statement, like all the others before, has been completely ignored by those, whose primary responsibility it is to protect the lives and property of Nigerians. Again, the country is likely to witness another mass burial of innocent Nigerians as a result of the serial murderous activities of a group who clearly seem to be above the law in our country and who, by their actions and words, have insisted that human lives are worth less than the lives of cattle. This shameful inversion of values portrays our country as barbaric and our society as brutish.

We, the Catholic Bishops of Nigeria are devastated by these acts of insensitivity and disrespect for the dignity of human life. We are equally sad that the Federal Government continues to find it difficult to proactively address the issue of these wanton killings. We have said it before and it bears repeating that it can no longer be regarded as mere coincidence that the suspected perpetrators of these heinous crimes are of the same religion as all those who control the security apparatus of our country, including the President himself. Words are no longer enough for the President and his service chiefs to convince the rest of the citizens that these killings are not part of a larger religious project.

While we vehemently condemn any shedding of human blood and ask the Police to speedily arrest and prosecute the perpetrators of these crimes, we must point out the double standards applied by the same Police any time the herdsmen are attacked and killed. In this latter case they react very swiftly and the law promptly takes its course. Would that the same swiftness be applied to all cases!

President: **MOST REV. AUGUSTINE AKUBEZE**  
Vice President: **MOST REV. LUCIUS UGORJI**

Secretary: **MOST REV. CAMILLUS UMOH**  
Assistant Secretary: **MOST REV. CHARLES HAMMAWA**

We feel the pains of all those who have lost dear ones and extend our sincere condolences to them. As Nigerians prepare yet again for another mass burial of innocent citizens, we pray for the repose of the dead and for the consolation of the bereaved.

Once again, we ask President Muhammadu Buhari to please save this country from further pain and avoidable chaos, anarchy and doom. May we here repeat what we said in our last statement: "If the President cannot keep our country safe, then he automatically loses the trust of the citizens. He should no longer continue to preside over the killing fields and mass graveyard that our country has become."

We continue to pray for peace and harmony in our country and invite all men and women of goodwill to do the same.



**Most Rev. Augustine AKUBEZE**  
Archbishop of Benin City  
President, CBCN



**Most Rev. Camillus UMOH**  
Bishop of Ikot Ekpene  
Secretary, CBCN

**29<sup>th</sup> June, 2018**