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## **NIGERIA | Violence Continues Despite Peace Efforts**

Attacks by armed men of Fulani ethnicity have continued to occur in southern Kaduna, Nigeria, despite the conclusion of several peace initiatives.

Two people were burned beyond recognition in their homes in the early hours of Sept. 11 during an attack on Manyi-Mashin village, in the Zamandabo Ward of the Atyap Chiefdom in Zangon Kataf Local Government Area (LGA). The militia razed almost every house to the ground after looting the village of valuables and fled prior to the arrival of a detachment from Operation Safe Haven, a military taskforce aimed at tackling violence in the region. The casualties were named as Cecilia Ishaya, 62, a widow and mother of six children, and Iliya Sunday, 56, a father of eight.

On Sept. 8, herdsmen armed with knives and machetes ambushed three Atyap youths from Atakmawei village in Zamandabo Ward as they went to clear weeds from their sugar cane farm, situated around one mile from their village. Anthony Magaji, 25, a final year Higher National Diploma (HND) student at Nuhu Bamali Polytechnic in Zaria, was struck in the neck and head and died instantly. Isaac Thomas, 24, also a polytechnic student, was hospitalized with life threatening injuries and is in an intensive care unit. The third youth escaped with a less severe injury.

Also on Sept. 8, 13-year-old Emmanuel David Yohanna was killed, and Sunday Zango Stephen, 48 and Zakka John, 23, suffered serious gunshot wounds when Fulani militia attacked Kitsarapang village in Kizachi Chiwo in the Tsam Chiefdom of Kuru LGA. They are currently receiving treatment in Jos, the Plateau state capital.

Additionally, the Southern Kaduna People's Union (SOKAPU) has been informed by farmers in the Gora axis of the Atyap Chiefdom that Fulani men occasionally encroach on their farms surreptitiously to destroy large swathes of growing crops, leaving them at risk of hunger in the near future.

Meanwhile, the decomposing corpses of three of the people who were abducted during an attack on Maraban Rido in Chikun LGA on Aug. 27 were found on the Kaduna-Abuja Highway on Sept. 6. They had been murdered despite the payment of a ransom for their release. Among them was Pius Gargai, 20, the nephew of SOKAPU's first Vice President, Dio Maisamari, who leaves behind a wife and child. Similarly, the decomposing corpse of Danlami Dariya, the driver of a commercial vehicle who was

abducted in an attack on 16 August in which Reverend Adalchi Usman of the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) and two other passengers were killed, was found on or around Sept. 8.

The violence has continued despite the conclusion of a heavily publicized peace deal between the Atyap Chiefdom and representatives of Hausa and Fulani communities in the area on Aug. 23. Other recent peace initiatives include the inauguration on Sept. 2 of "The House of Kaduna Family," by Kaduna State Governor Nasir el Rufai, which he described as "a platform for leaders of faith to dialogue, interact and assume collective responsibility for messages that assist people of faith to live up to the highest ideals" of their respective faiths. Additionally, on Sept. 6, the Kaduna State chapter of the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN) had resolved to "be [their] brothers' keeper henceforth in order to foster growth and development in the region."

Failure to achieve peace has been attributed by local observers to the fact that the meetings are largely high-level convocations in which Hausa and Fulani communities are represented by long-term settlers, while neither the real perpetrators of the violence nor the actual victims are included.

In more encouraging news, eight communities displaced from Zangan District in Kaura LGA are returning to their homes due to the presence of men from Operation Safe Heaven under the Command of Major General Chukwu Emeka Okonkwo. However, 101 communities in four LGAs remain under militia occupation or control.

CSW's Founder President Mervyn Thomas said, "CSW continues to be deeply disturbed by the ongoing and devastating violence in southern Kaduna. We extend our deepest condolences to all those who have lost loved ones in these recent attacks, and wish those injured a swift and full recovery. Despite high-level efforts to promote peace in the region, it is clear these initiatives must go further to engage with the perpetrators of these crimes and to ensure that the voices of victims are heard. Moreover, initiatives for peace and unity must be accompanied efforts to secure justice. More must be done to combat the threat posed by the Fulani militia and all armed non-state actors, to stem the staggering loss of life, and to assist, compensate and rehabilitate victims. As the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) begins its 45<sup>th</sup> session today, Member States must not shy away from raising the ongoing crisis in the Middlebelt with Nigeria at every opportunity, both at the HRC and elsewhere."