

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 19, 2025

The Honorable Marco Rubio
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20451

Dear Secretary Rubio,

We are writing to express our strong support for designating Nigeria as a Country of Particular Concern (CPC) due to deteriorating religious freedom conditions. It is inexcusable that Nigeria's government continues to tolerate horrific violence that severely affects religious communities.

The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) and others have documented that religious freedom conditions in Nigeria are deteriorating. Blasphemy laws in Nigeria restrict freedom of expression and punish people of faith and nonbelievers alike for their religious beliefs. The imposition of religious Shari'a codes in several Northern Nigerian states also imposes severe religious freedom restrictions. Bandit gangs continue to kidnap Catholic priests, holding them for ransom. In March, vigilantes in Edo State executed 16 predominantly Muslim civilians from the north.

Of particular concern is the widespread and escalating violence affecting religious communities, primarily in the Middle Belt. Last month, violent Muslim Fulani herders massacred more than 200 Christian farmers in one attack in Benue State. In April, Muslim Fulani gunmen attacked a Christian farming community in Plateau State, killing around 50. Survivors and eyewitnesses of this violence have testified to the religious hatred fueling these terror attacks, which kill thousands of Christians annually and have created a massive displacement crisis.

Despite claims of good faith efforts, the Nigerian government has not adequately addressed religious freedom violations. Nigeria's judicial system has failed to adequately prosecute and hold accountable those who engage in violence in the name of religion. The federal government has also failed to properly resource police to prevent and respond to this violence.

The United States has long been a global leader in promoting religious freedom, and it is crucial that we continue this role. We support the clear step from the United States to press the Nigerian government to act by recently designating Nigeria as a CPC. We hope that the CPC designation—and the Presidential actions associated with such a designation, including entering into a binding agreement—will influence the government of Nigeria to better address religious freedom violations.

Nigeria must safeguard the freedoms of all its citizens—Christian and Muslim alike—and hold violators accountable. Every human being possesses the right to practice their faith freely and safely. For many in Nigeria, this right is under constant threat, and the government has failed to protect it. The United States must ensure that religious liberty protections are central to current and future U.S.-Nigeria relations.

We thank you and President Trump for designating Nigeria as a CPC. Protecting religious freedom has never been more important. Thank you for your attention to this matter. We stand ready to work with you as you continue to address this issue.

Sincerely,



French Hill
Member of Congress



Thomas R. Suozzi
Member of Congress



Keith Self
Member of Congress



Don Bacon
Member of Congress



Marlin A. Stutzman
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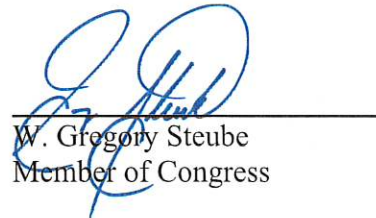
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