

MRC ALERT NO 52

## WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES WANTS EU SANCTIONS ON ISRAEL IF ANNEXATION GOES AHEAD....

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World Council of Churches Headquarters-05.jpg

By MHM55 - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=73802255>

Umbrella Christian group urges bloc to end trade agreement with Jewish state if it extends sovereignty over parts of West Bank, says move *'cannot lead to justice or to peace'*.....

The **World Council of Churches** is asking European diplomats to **punish Israel** with sanctions if it annexes West Bank lands.

The request has triggered a heated debate in Christian circles.

The call to punish Israel came last month in a letter to EU foreign ministers from the Geneva headquarters of the council, an umbrella body established in **1948** that now has 350 member churches with about 500,000 followers among them.

The Roman Catholic Church is not a member. Often an observer.

If Israel annexes land, the letter said, *"the EU must surely suspend the EU-Israel Association Agreement,"* a reference to a 1995 contract that promotes trade between the bloc and the Jewish state.

## VATICAN THREATENS ISRAEL OVER WEST BANK ANNEXATION PLAN



Minister Khaldi greeting Pope Francis-Vatican 201811.jpg

By Mkhaldi60 - Own work, CC0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=76835351>

THE VATICAN JUNE 7, 2020 — The Holy [?] See is concerned about an Israeli plan to unilaterally annex a large portion of land in the West Bank, said a Vatican statement. "The Holy See is following the situation closely and expresses concern about any future actions that **could further compromise dialogue**," said the statement.

The Vatican statement said, "The Holy See reiterates that respect for international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions is an indispensable element for the two peoples to live side by side in two states, within the borders internationally recognised before 1967."

The Vatican also expressed "its hope that Israelis and Palestinians will be soon able to find *once again* the possibility for directly negotiating an agreement, with the help of the international community, so that peace may finally reign in the Holy Land, so beloved by Jews and Christians and Muslims."

### TURKEY'S GROWING WAR ON CHRISTIANS. "YOU ARE FINISHED!"



House of Virgin Mary RB1.jpg

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by **Raymond Ibrahim** •

When pretexts cannot be found, assailants sometimes resort to other tactics. In an apparent attempt to conceal the online presence of at least one church, for instance, authorities labeled its website "pornographic," and blocked it.

"[T]his hateful environment did not emerge out of nowhere. The seeds of this hatred are spread, beginning at primary schools, through books printed by the Ministry of National Education portraying Christians as enemies and traitors. The indoctrination continues through newspapers and television channels in line with state policies. And of course, the sermons at mosques and talk at coffee houses further stir up this hatred." — Uzey Bulut, Ahvalnews.com., March 16, 2020.

Just what, then, do so-called "radical" Muslims... regard as the "proper" treatment of Christians?

On May 8, 2020, a man tried to torch the Surp Asdvadzadzin **Armenian Church in Istanbul**, which had been repeatedly attacked with hate-filled graffiti, among other desecrations.

Islamic terror attacks that target Christians in Turkey have been noticeably on the rise. During Christmas in 2011, for instance, a large-scale al-Qaeda plot to bomb "all the churches in Ankara" was exposed. Before Christmas 2015, ISIS issued death threats to at least 20 Protestant churches, and warned that "Koranic commandments... urge us to slay the apostate like you."

In 2017, as widely reported, a gunman dressed as Santa Claus entered a nightclub in Istanbul during New Year celebrations, and murdered 39 people. A "heroic soldier of the caliphate," the Islamic State ("ISIS") later claimed, "attacked the most famous nightclub where Christians were celebrating their pagan feast." The statement further characterized the government of Turkey as being the "servant of the cross."

Attempts to stay current with the reporting of attacks and destruction in Nigeria can seem devastatingly futile. The description expressed by VOMC's CEO Floyd Brobbel, as it being "an epic battle," is apropos. One witness defines the situation as an "atmosphere of anarchy and despair." A report from the International Society for Civil Liberties and Rule of Law states that at least 620 Christians have been killed in the first five months of 2020 alone.

**Pray that God will keep the surviving Christians in Nigeria encouraged in their faith, despite the constant barrage of violence and devastating loss.**

May they not despair nor give up, but rather find great comfort and strength in the Lord. As they recover from the trauma of repeated attacks, may He minister to their every need – whether it be spiritual, physical, or emotional. Ask Him to also touch the hearts of the governmental leaders, so they will take a strong stand against this inhumane savagery and implement effective strategies to prevent it.

The coordinated attacks have been described as a genocide against Christians. For members of the Boko Haram terrorist group, their specified goal is to create an Islamic caliphate in Nigeria, thus considering the large Christian population an obstacle to their plans. Similar Islamic ideologies held by the Fulani herdsmen led to daily attacks on villages that are predominantly Christian. Men, women and children have been slaughtered without hesitation.

## **NIGERIA: HUNDREDS SLAIN IN CAMPAIGN OF VIOLENCE**



Nigeria Bayelsa State map.png <https://commons.wikimedia.org>

Sources: Christian Solidarity Worldwide, Jubilee Campaign, VOMC Sources

May the Lord's comforting presence and grace rest on each of the Nigerian believers now grieving the devastating loss of loved ones who were slain in these communities. Pray that the survivors will receive healing and consolation from God, and that they be further encouraged through their relationships with one another. Continue upholding the Nigerian authorities who must act proactively and swiftly in order to counter these attacks, rather than arriving at the scene well after the perpetrators have departed and the damage has been done.

Two recent attacks in Kaduna State show the extent of violence facing Nigerian Christians due to the terrorism of Fulani militia groups....

On the evening of May 11th, Fulani gunmen laid siege to the village of Gonan Rogo in the Kajuru area. Entire households were wiped out as the militants went from house to house, killing those they found. In one home, Jonathan Yakubu was slaughtered, along with his wife and three young children. In another home, a mother and child were killed, but a three-month-old baby girl miraculously survived a bullet wound to her head. The baby is now in the care of her aunt. In all, 17 people were killed that night and six injured. Ages of the victims ranged from young children to the elderly.

Fulani herdsmen are also suspected as the perpetrators of further attacks on several farming villages from May 18th to the 22nd, resulting in the deaths of at least 20 people, with several others injured or missing. These villages were all inhabited by the Adara people, who are known to be predominantly Christian. According to one resident, as many as **4,000** people are now internally displaced due to the attacks, and often

On August 12th, 2015, a 13-year-old girl named Ese Rita Oruru was kidnapped from her home in Bayelsa State of southern Nigeria. After being taken to the northern state of Kano, she was raped, forcibly converted to Islam, and married to her kidnapper.

From the beginning, it was known that the kidnapper was Yunusa Dahiru, nicknamed "Yellow." The parents repeatedly appealed for her release, but were unsuccessful, in part because the Emir of Kanu was connected to the forced conversion and marriage, which took place in his palace.

Ese was finally rescued by Kano State Police on February 29th, 2016. Upon her rescue, they discovered that the young teen was five months pregnant. Her abductor, Yunusa Dahiru, was arraigned at the time on five counts, including abduction, child trafficking and sexual exploitation. After much delay, a court decision finally took place more than four years later. On May 21st, the federal court found her kidnapper guilty of four of the five charges and sentenced him to a total of 26 years in prison.

At least 63 attacks have taken place in the Kajuru region since this January.