



DEBATE PACK

CDP 0148 (2020) | 19 November 2020

E-petition 554150, relating to Nigeria and the sanctions regime

Westminster Hall

Monday 23 November 2020

6:00-7:30pm

Debate to be led by Theresa Villiers

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The House of Commons Library prepares a briefing in hard copy and/or online for most non-legislative debates in the Chamber and Westminster Hall other than half-hour debates. Debate Packs are produced quickly after the announcement of parliamentary business. They are intended to provide a summary or overview of the issue being debated and identify relevant briefings and useful documents, including press and parliamentary material. More detailed briefing can be prepared for Members on request to the Library.

1. Background

The [petition](#) suggests the UK Government should consider using the sanctions regime to impose sanctions on members of the Nigerian Government and police force involved in any human rights abuse.

The petition has been prompted by the actions of one police unit in particular, the Special Anti-Robbery Squad, known as SARS. Originally created in 1992 to fight violent crime, the unit became [synonymous with police brutality](#). In 2016 [Amnesty International](#) reported:

[SARS]is responsible for widespread torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (other ill-treatment) of detainees in their custody.

[...]

SARS officers involved in the torture and other ill treatment of detainees are rarely held to account and in some cases are transferred to another location to avoid punishment.¹

The #EndSARS tag began trending on social media in 2017 alongside reports of police abuse and assault. In early October 2020 a video of a man allegedly being killed by SARS officers prompted [large-scale protests against the unit](#). The forceful response by police to those protests further exacerbated tensions. On October 11 President Muhammadu Buhari announced plans to [disband the unit](#) and reform the police.

However, such promises have been [made before](#). And Mayeni Jones, the BBC Nigeria correspondent, suggests disbanding SARS may not resolve the [underlying issue of police brutality](#), and activists are calling for a total overhauling of policing in Nigeria. The military and police are rarely held accountable for malfeasance or for perpetrating human rights violations, Matthew Page, associate fellow in the Africa Programme at Chatham House, wrote in 2019 in an article on Nigeria's struggles with security sector reform. Page said much of the responsibility for the security forces failings "[can be laid at the feet of Nigeria's political leaders](#)".

[Amnesty International](#) is also calling for the Nigerian authorities to explain the [army's role in the deaths of protestors](#) at Lekki Toll Gate on 20 October.

The UK Government has outlined its position in the [response to the petition](#). The Government said it welcomed the disbandment of SARS and the establishment of judicial panels of inquiry to investigate allegations of brutality. The FCDO urged the Nigerian Government to hold those responsible to account.

The [statement continues](#):

The UK Government will continue to work with the Nigerian Government and international and civil society partners to support justice, accountability and a more responsive policing model in Nigeria. We will continue to push for the Nigerian security services to uphold human rights and the rule of law, investigate all incidents of brutality, illegal detentions and use of excessive force, and hold those responsible to account.

The Lords International Relations and Defence Committee discussed Nigeria's links with the UK and the security challenges facing the country in its report the [UK and Sub-Saharan Africa](#) (HL Paper 88) published in July 2020.

Data on violence in Nigeria can be found in the [Nigeria Security Tracker](#), provided by the Council on Foreign Relations, a US-based think-tank. This tracks violence by both state and non-state actors. Crisis Group's [Crisis Watch database](#) also tracks violent incidents in Nigeria.

Magnitsky sanctions

Pressure for a legal regime that specifically provided for corrupt officials guilty of human rights violations to be sanctioned has grown since the death of Russian lawyer, Sergei Magnitsky. With the UK needing a new legal framework for sanctions after Brexit, the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Bill 2017-18 was an ideal opportunity to create a "Magnitsky" sanctions regime. After Opposition and Government amendments, the Sanctions and anti-Money Laundering Act 2018 includes gross human rights violation as a reason for imposing sanctions on a person or an entity.

After the passage of the 2018 Sanctions Act, the Government said it would bring forward more detail on Magnitsky sanctions in the form of secondary legislation using the powers in that Act.

The Government announced the first new sanctions using the Sanctions Act in July 2020. They were also the first UK Magnitsky sanctions. The measures imposed asset freezes and travel bans on Saudi citizens alleged to have been involved in the murder of Jamal Khashoggi, the Saudi journalist murdered in the Saudi Embassy in Istanbul. Also targeted were Russian officials allegedly involved in the mistreatment of Sergei Magnitsky in a Moscow jail.

The UK government also pledges to develop using powers in the Sanctions Act a legal formula for creating sanctions specifically on officials who profit from corruption.

Other countries have introduced Magnitsky-style sanctions legislation or are working on it. The European Commission started organising EU Magnitsky legislation in December 2019.

2. E-petition 554150 and the UK Government response

[Implement sanctions against the Nigerian Government and officials](#)

Petition

The Government should explore using the new sanctions regime that allows individuals and entities that violate human rights around the world to be targeted, to impose sanctions on members of the Nigerian government and police force involved in any human rights abuses by the Nigerian police.

There have been deeply concerning reports of a Nigerian police force unit (SARS) engaging in illegal activities and human rights abuses, and there have also been reports of police firing at protestors calling for SARS to be disbanded.

Deploying sanctions would provide accountability for and be a deterrent to anyone involved in violations of human rights.

Government response

We were concerned by violence during recent protests and await the outcome of Nigerian investigations into reports of police brutality. We do not publicly speculate on future sanctions designations.

The UK Government is deeply concerned by violence during recent protests in Nigeria, which tragically claimed lives. Our thoughts are with the families of all those affected.

The Foreign Secretary issued a statement on 21 October calling for an end to the violence and for the Nigerian Government to urgently investigate reports of brutality by its security forces and hold those responsible to account. The Minister for Africa tweeted on 16 October, noting the Nigerian people's democratic and peaceful calls for reforms, and again on 21 October, encouraging the Nigerian authorities to restore peace and address concerns over brutality towards civilians. He reiterated these messages when he spoke to Foreign Minister Onyeama on 23 October. The British High Commissioner in Abuja has also raised the protests with representatives of the Nigerian Government and will continue to do so.

We welcome President Buhari's decision to disband the Federal Special Anti-Robbery Squad (FSARS) and the establishment of judicial panels of inquiry to investigate alleged incidents of brutality by the security services. They must investigate all incidents, including in Lagos, fully. The Minister for Africa tweeted on 29 October stressing the importance of the police and military's cooperation with the panels. He raised this, and the need for the panels to urgently start investigations, when he spoke to the Governor of Lagos on 11 November.

The UK Government will continue to work with the Nigerian Government and international and civil society partners to support justice, accountability and a more responsive policing model in Nigeria. We will continue to push for the Nigerian security services to uphold human rights and the rule of law, investigate all incidents of brutality, illegal detentions and use of excessive force, and hold those responsible to account.

On 6 July, the Government established the Global Human Rights sanctions regime by laying regulations in Parliament under the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018. In a statement to Parliament, the Foreign Secretary set out in full the scope of the UK's new Global Human Rights sanctions regime. He announced the first tranche of designations, as well as the Government's approach to future designations.

This sanctions regime will give the UK a powerful new tool to hold to account those involved in serious human rights violations or abuses. The sanctions regime is not intended to target individual countries. It will allow for sanctions to be imposed on individuals and entities involved in serious human rights violations or abuses around the world.

We will continue to consider potential designations under the Global Human Rights sanctions regime. It is longstanding practice not to speculate on future sanctions designations as to do so could reduce the impact of the designations.

The UK Government will keep all evidence and potential listings under close review.

Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

3. Press articles

The following is a selection of press and media articles relevant to this debate.

Please note: the Library is not responsible for either the views or accuracy of external content.

[Nigeria Sars protest: Army chief denies firing live bullets at protesters in Lagos](#)

BBC News Online
15 November 2020

[Nigeria cracks down on 'end Sars' protesters, alleging terrorism](#)

The Guardian
Emmanuel Akinwotu
13 November 2020

[Letter from Africa: Why Nigerians fear social media sanctions](#)

BBC News Online
7 November 2020

[Nigeria: attempt to cover up killing of #EndSars protesters exposed](#)

Amnesty International
28 October 2020

[Shutting Down SARS Won't End Nigeria's Security Crisis](#)

Foreign Policy
Max Siollun
28 October 2020

[Nigeria Protests: What's Happening and Why Are People Demonstrating Against SARS?](#)

Wall Street Journal
Joe Parkinson
26 October 2020

[Nigeria protests: Police chief deploys 'all resources' amid street violence](#)

BBC News Online
25 October 2020

[End SARS: Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari says world should 'know all facts' after alleged protest deaths](#)

Sky News
22 October 2020

[Calls for sanctions on Nigeria following SARS protests are intensifying but is this the best way forward?](#)

The Independent
Funmi Olutoye
22 October 2020

[Nigerian soldiers open fire on peaceful protesters in Lagos](#)

The Times
Jane Flanagan
22 October 2020

[End SARS: Nigerian forces 'open fire on protesters' in Lagos after 12 days of anti-police brutality demonstrations](#)

Sky News
John Sparks
21 October 2020

[Nigeria: What is SARS and why are people protesting against police?](#)

The Independent
Samuel Osborne
21 October 2020

[End Sars: How Nigeria's anti-police brutality protests went global](#)

BBC News Online
16 October 2020

4. Press releases

[Foreign Secretary statement on protests in Nigeria](#)

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

21 October 2020

Following the protests in Nigeria against police brutality and the allegations of the deaths of protesters, Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said:

I am deeply concerned by the recent violence and continued clashes in Nigeria, and am alarmed by widespread reports of civilian deaths.

We call for an end to violence. The Nigerian government must urgently investigate reports of brutality at the hands of the security forces and hold those responsible to account.

[Nigeria: Statement by the High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell](#)

European Union External Action Service

21 October 2020

It is alarming to learn that several people have been killed and injured during the ongoing protests against the Special Anti-Robbery Squad in Nigeria.

It is crucial that those responsible of abuses be brought to justice and held accountable.

Following the Government's will to deliver on reforms, we expect to see decisive implementation.

5. PQs

[Nigeria: Police](#)

18 Nov 2020 | HL10037

Asked by: Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government (1) what assessment they have made of the effectiveness of the Nigeria Countering Organised Crime and Corruption programme, (2) how much the programme cost, and (3) what indicators have been used to assess its success or failure.

Answering member: Baroness Sugg | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The UK is committed to tackling organised crime and corruption around the world. As part of this work, the UK Government, through the National Crime Agency, delivers a Countering Organised Crime and Corruption programme in Nigeria. The programme provides mentoring and capacity building for units of the Nigerian Police Force to improve border security and anti-kidnap capacity, and to respond to organised crime groups in Nigeria. The programme budget was £3.1 million for 2019/20.

The Nigeria Countering Organised Crime and Corruption programme is evaluated each year. External consultants have been used to evaluate the programme in some years. It was given a grade A rating for meeting expectations in 2019/20. It was also assessed that the programme represents good value for money and that the project successfully integrates gender and equality issues into delivery. All UK programmes are provided in adherence with the UK Government's Overseas Security and Justice Assistance guidance. We will continue to support police reform in Nigeria, working with the Nigerian Government and international and civil society partners to improve its transparency and accountability, in line with its human rights obligations.

[Nigeria: Violence](#)

12 Nov 2020 | 111472

Asked by: Lyn Brown

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what representations he has made to his counterpart in Nigeria on the reported killing of protesters in Lagos, Nigeria by police and military personnel on the 20 October 2020.

Answering member: James Duddridge | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The UK Government is deeply concerned by violence during protests in Lagos and other major cities in Nigeria, which tragically claimed lives. Our thoughts are with the families of all those affected. Reports of the numbers killed in Lagos on 20 October vary and we have not been able to verify their accuracy.

The Foreign Secretary issued a statement on 21 October calling for an end to the violence and for the Nigerian Government to urgently investigate reports of brutality by its security forces and hold those responsible to account. I tweeted on 21 October, encouraging the Nigerian authorities to restore peace and address concerns over brutality towards civilians. I reiterated these messages when I spoke to Foreign Minister Onyeama on 23 October. The British High Commissioner in Abuja has also raised the protests, including incidents in Lagos, with representatives of the Nigerian Government and will continue to do so. We welcome the establishment of judicial panels of inquiry to investigate alleged incidents of brutality by the security services. It is vital these panels receive full police and military cooperation. They must investigate all incidents, including those in Lagos, fully. I shared these messages in a tweet on 29 October.

Nigeria: Religious Freedom
11 Nov 2020 | 110831

Asked by: Jim Shannon

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his UN counterparts about freedom of religion or belief in Nigeria.

Answering member: James Duddridge | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

In North East Nigeria, terrorist groups including Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa (ISWA) seek to undermine the right to Freedom of Religion or Belief by indiscriminately attacking those of all faiths who do not subscribe to their extremist views. The UK has led international condemnation of these groups at the UN, including drafting a UN Security Council press statement that was released on 16 June following terrorist attacks in Felo, Monguno and Nganzai, Borno State. We are also concerned by intercommunal violence across multiple states in Nigeria, which is having a devastating impact on communities of all faiths, although we do not assess religion to be a principal driver of the violence. We have engaged closely with the UN, federal government, state governments, the National Economic Council and other international partners to help address the drivers of violence in Nigeria and push for solutions.

The UK is committed to defending Freedom of Religion or Belief for all, and promoting respect between different religious and non-religious communities. We remain deeply concerned about violations and abuses of Freedom of Religion or Belief in many parts of the world. Where we have concerns, we raise them directly with governments, including at Ministerial level. We also regularly discuss Freedom of Religion or Belief with our international partners and through multilateral fora, including the UN, where we call out human rights violations. Defending Freedom of Religion or Belief was a core pledge in our successful campaign to be re-elected to the UN Human Rights Council, and we will continue to use our position to stand up for individuals who are persecuted for their faith, belief, or because they have no religious belief.

Nigeria: Violence**09 Nov 2020 | HL9740****Asked by: Lord Pendry**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the scale of attacks carried out by Nigerian security forces on protestors in Nigeria; and what assistance they are providing to programmes in that country that aim to strengthen the freedom of expression and the rule of law.

Answering member: Baroness Sugg | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The UK Government is deeply concerned by violence during protests in Lagos and other major cities in Nigeria, which has tragically claimed lives. Our thoughts are with the families of all those affected. The Foreign Secretary issued a statement on 21 October calling for the Nigerian Government to urgently investigate reports of brutality by its security forces and hold those responsible to account. The Minister for Africa repeated this message to the Nigerian Foreign Minister on 23 October. We welcome President Buhari's decision to disband the Federal Special Anti-Robbery Squad (FSARS) and the establishment of judicial panels of inquiry to investigate allegations of brutality by the security services. It is vital these panels receive full police and military cooperation. They must investigate all incidents, including in Lagos, properly.

The UK Government has supported police reform in Nigeria. We will continue to work with the Nigerian Government and international and civil society partners to improve the accountability and responsiveness of the Nigerian Police Force in line with its human rights obligations. The Nigerian authorities must uphold human rights and the rule of law, investigate any incidents of police brutality and hold those responsible to account. Through our CSSF-funded Nigeria Policing Programme, which ended in March 2020, FSARS officers participated in training on amended Nigerian police guidance designed to improve human rights, training on public finance, and community policing workshops. The Nigeria Policing Programme was part of our Security and Justice Reform Programme, which is working to help deliver a criminal justice system that better protects the human rights of all Nigerians.

Nigeria: Human Rights**06 Nov 2020 | 109147****Asked by: John McDonnell**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps he is taking against people involved in the suppression of human rights in Nigeria.

Answering member: James Duddridge | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The UK Government's position on human rights is firm: they are universal and must apply equally to all people. We condemn all human rights violations or abuses in Nigeria and encourage all parties to work together to enable the people of Nigeria to exercise their rights safely,

peacefully and in line with the rule of law. The UK Government works closely with the Nigerian Government and international and civil society partners on improving the human rights compliance and accountability of the Nigerian authorities. We are also committed to helping Nigeria tackle the terrorist threat from groups, including Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa, who commit human rights abuses in North East Nigeria. We will continue to make clear to the Nigerian authorities at the highest levels the importance of protecting human rights for all.

Nigeria: Human Rights

05 Nov 2020 | 110085

Asked by: Theresa Villiers

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will publish any assessment he has made of the effectiveness of human rights training programmes which his Department has supported in Nigeria in the last two years.

Answering member: James Duddridge | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The UK Government is firmly committed to promoting and protecting human rights around the world. We have supported efforts to bring about the long-term changes needed to improve human rights compliance in Nigeria, including through providing human rights training to the Nigerian Police Force and Nigerian Armed Forces. For example, under the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund, the Nigeria Policing Programme provided human rights training to the Nigerian Police Force. Evaluations show this led to improved relationships and trust with communities and the police continue to work on community safety and security. We will continue to make clear to the Nigerian authorities at the highest levels the importance of protecting human rights for all Nigerians.

Nigeria: Christianity

02 Nov 2020 | HL9272

Asked by: Baroness Cox

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the statement by the Nigerian House of Representatives on 4 July 2018 declaring killings in predominantly Christian villages in Plateau State to be a genocide and calling on the federal government of Nigeria to establish orphanages in areas affected by violence.

Answering member: Baroness Sugg | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The UK Government condemns all incidents of intercommunal violence in Nigeria. We have made clear to the Nigerian authorities at the highest levels the importance of protecting civilians, including ethnic and religious minorities, and human rights for all. We do not assess religious identity to be the principal driver of most incidents of intercommunal violence. The root causes are more complex and relate frequently to competition for resources and failures of governance.

We are aware of the advisory resolution passed by the Nigerian House of Representatives in July 2018. It is UK Government policy not to unilaterally determine whether genocide has occurred, in line with the Genocide Convention. This is a matter for competent courts and tribunals, including the International Criminal Court, after consideration of all the evidence, rather than governments or non-judicial bodies. We encourage additional measures by the Nigerian Government to protect children affected by conflict across the country.

Nigeria: Overseas Aid
02 Nov 2020 | HL9270

Asked by: Baroness Cox

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the situation in Plateau State, Nigeria; and what (1) financial, and (2) technical, assistance they intend to provide (a) to strengthen the rule of law, and (b) to protect freedom of religion or belief, in that region.

Answering member: Baroness Sugg | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The Government condemns all incidents of violence in Nigeria, including recent attacks in Plateau State. Intercommunal violence continues to have a devastating effect on local communities across multiple states. We are working with Nigeria to respond to the drivers of conflict, which include disputes over natural resources, competition over land, and population growth. We have provided technical support to the Nigerian Government for the development of the National Livestock Transformation Plan. The Plan aims to promote cattle-rearing in one place, rather than the traditional nomadic practice, to limit competition over land and resources leading to violence. The Plan is currently being implemented in eight Middle Belt states in Nigeria, including Plateau state. The UK is firmly committed to promoting and protecting the right to freedom of religion or belief around the world. The British High Commissioner and her team are increasing their engagement with state governments in areas affected by the violence, including Plateau state. The High Commission team have met with Governors; Christian and Muslim faith leaders; Fulani communities; NGOs active in reconciliation, and affected communities including displaced persons. We are also developing a new conflict, security and justice programme, which aims to reduce levels of intercommunal violence through the development of more effective conflict-management systems.

We will continue to encourage the Government of Nigeria to take urgent action to protect those at risk of intercommunal violence, to bring perpetrators to justice and to implement long-term solutions that address the root causes of violence and meet the needs of all communities. To strengthen the rule of law across Nigeria, we have supported a new police bill, engaging the National Assembly and providing technical support to National Assembly members considering the draft legislation. On 17th September President Buhari signed the Police Establishment Act into law. The bill seeks to create a more efficient and effective police force that is based on the principles of accountability and transparency; and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The UK Government is deeply concerned by

violence during protests in Lagos and other major cities in Nigeria, which has tragically claimed a number of lives. We will continue to work with the Nigerian Government and international and civil society partners in support of police reform and improvements in the human rights records and accountability of the Nigerian security services.

[Nigeria: Human Rights](#)

02 Nov 2020 | 107007

Asked by: Gavin Robinson

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of imposing sanctions against Nigeria in the event of the continuation of human rights abuses against people in that country.

Answering member: James Duddridge | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The UK Government has made clear to the Nigerian authorities at the highest levels the importance of protecting human rights for all. We encourage all parties to work together to enable the people of Nigeria to exercise their rights safely, peacefully and in line with the rule of law. On 6 July, the Government established the Global Human Rights sanctions regime by laying regulations in Parliament under the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018. This sanctions regime gives the UK a powerful new tool to target individuals involved in serious human rights violations or abuses. It is longstanding practice not to speculate on future sanctions designations as to do so could reduce the impact of the designations. We will keep all evidence and potential listings under close review.

[Nigeria: Police](#)

29 Oct 2020 | 107130

Asked by: Stephen Farry

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether UK development funding for the Nigeria Countering Organised Crime and Corruption programme has (a) directly and (b) indirectly been used to support Nigeria's Special Anti-Robbery Squad.

Answering member: James Duddridge | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The UK Government's Conflict, Stability and Security Fund's (CSSF) Countering Organised Crime and Corruption programme, which supports capacity building of Anti-Kidnap Coordination Units in Nigeria, has not provided any support or training to Federal Special Anti-Robbery Squad (FSARS) units or officers.

Through our CSSF-funded Nigeria Policing Programme, which ended in March 2020, FSARS officers participated in training on amended Nigerian police guidance designed to improve human rights, training on public finance, and community policing workshops. The Nigeria Policing Programme was part of our Security and Justice Reform Programme,

which is working to help deliver a criminal justice system that better protects the human rights of all Nigerians. Through our support to the CSSF-funded North East Public Safety and Security Programme (part of which is delivered jointly with USAID) three radios issued to Borno Police Command police units working to improve local security and to counter violent extremist organisations were distributed to the local FSARS Unit. These were returned after FSARS was disbanded. The North East Public Safety and Security Programme is part of our North East Nigeria Security, Conflict and Stabilisation Programme, working to help stabilise one of Nigeria's poorest and most fragile regions.

The UK Government will continue to support police reform in Nigeria, working with the Nigerian Government and international and civil society partners to improve the accountability and responsiveness of the Nigerian Police Force in line with its human rights obligations. The Nigerian authorities must uphold human rights and the rule of law, investigate any incidents of police brutality and hold those responsible to account. We will continue to monitor the response to the recent protests closely.

Nigeria: Violence

29 Oct 2020 | 107129

Asked by: Stephen Farry

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what reports he has received on allegations of police violence towards protestors in the Lekki suburb of Lagos on 20 October 2020; and what assessment he has made of the potential merits of implementing sanctions against the Nigerian Government and officials if they are found to be involved in human rights abuses.

Answering member: James Duddridge | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The UK Government is deeply concerned by violence during protests in Lagos and other major cities in Nigeria, including reports of casualties. We offer our condolences to the families of those affected. The Foreign Secretary issued a statement on 21 October calling for an end to the violence and for the Nigerian Government to urgently investigate reports of brutality by its security forces and hold those responsible to account. I reiterated these messages when I spoke to Foreign Minister Onyema on 23 October. The British High Commissioner in Abuja continues to raise the protests with representatives of the Nigerian Government.

The UK Government has made clear to the Nigerian authorities at the highest levels the importance of protecting human rights for all. We encourage all parties to work together to enable the people of Nigeria to exercise their rights safely, peacefully and in line with the rule of law. On 6 July, the UK Government established the Global Human Rights sanctions regime by laying regulations in Parliament under the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018. This sanctions regime gives the UK a powerful new tool to target individuals involved in serious human rights violations or abuses. It is longstanding practice not to speculate on future sanctions designations as to do so could reduce the impact of

the designations. We will keep all evidence and potential listings under close review.

Nigeria: Christianity

01 Sep 2020 | 78598

Asked by: John Penrose

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of applying sanctions to those responsible for committing or allowing incidences of persecution and human rights abuses against Christians in Nigeria.

Answering member: James Duddridge | Foreign and Commonwealth Office

In North East Nigeria, terrorist groups including Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa have targeted both Christian and Muslim communities. Despite appalling attacks on Christians, the majority of those killed have been Muslim. Additionally, in many states across Nigeria incidents of intercommunal violence have affected Christian and Muslim communities. While religion is a factor in some incidents of intercommunal violence in Nigeria, the root causes are more complex and frequently relate to competition over resources and criminality.

We continue to call on the Nigerian Government to take urgent action to protect all communities affected by violence in Nigeria and carry out full investigations to bring perpetrators to justice.

On 6 July, the UK Government established the Global Human Rights sanctions regime by laying regulations in Parliament under the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018. This sanctions regime gives the Government a powerful new tool to hold to account those involved in serious human rights violations or abuses, including those who target individuals on the grounds of their religion or belief. It is longstanding practice not to speculate on future sanctions designations as to do so could reduce the impact of the designations.

6. Early Day Motions

Police brutality and End SARS protests in Nigeria

EDM 1050 (session 2019-21)

21 October 2020

Layla Moran

That this House condemns the reported deliberate shooting of unarmed protesters in Lagos and other parts of Nigeria; calls on the Nigerian Government to demonstrate their commitment to human rights and fulfil obligations to hold the police to account for extra-judicial killings, widespread torture and other ill-treatment of detainees in their custody; supports the call from the Nigerian people and Amnesty International to bring those responsible for committing such crimes to justice in fair trials; calls on the Nigerian authorities to comply at all times with international human rights standards on policing, in particular the UN Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials and the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials; and urges the UK Government to take action to reprehend such actions.

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