

**Papal Invitation To Tinubu For The Inauguration Of Pope Leo XIV Is Undeserved And Rejected**  
**-Intersociety**

**In two years of his presidential watch and inaction (May 2023-May 2025):**

- *Estimated 15,640 Christians killed by Jihadists on average of 7,820 deaths per year, 650 per month, 22 per day and one per hour*
- *Estimated 14, 600 Christians abducted on average of 7,300 per year, 608 per month, 20 per day and almost one per hour*
- *Out of the estimated 14, 600 abducted Christians, 1,460 (ten percent) died in their captors' dens*

**(For Immediate Release)**  
**Onitsha, Eastern Nigeria**  
**Saturday, May 17, 2025**

**The Leadership of the International Society for Civil Liberties and Rule of Law(Intersociety),** Nigeria's leading research and investigative advocacy group, working to promote adherence and observance to freedom of religion, worship and belief; democracy and accountable governance, civil liberties and rule of law and citizens' security and safety since 2010; has strongly declared as undeserved and totally rejected the papal invitation extended to President Ahmed Bola Tinubu of Nigeria to attend the inauguration of the 267<sup>th</sup> Pope of the global Catholic Church, Cardinal Francis Robert Prevost (as he then was) or Pope Francis Robert Prevost or 'Pope Leo XIV as he is presently addressed. The global Catholics, numbering more than 1.4billion has recorded serious denominational and religious retardation, under-growth and under-development in Nigeria since the Boko Haram Jihadist Uprising in July 2009 and the Jihadist Fulani State Power Conquest since June 2015 to date.

President Bola Ahmed Tinubu and his predecessor (Retired Major General Muhammad Buhari (as he then was) had sat under the situations of inaction, inability, unwillingness and complicity since then as the country's leaders and watched the country entered the World's Hall of Infamy as the worst country on earth to practice Christianity and where one Christian is hacked to death on hourly basis. Nigeria under them has also unbeatably recorded the highest number of destroyed or burned down churches and Christian schools in the world. It is recalled that the Vatican's Secretary of State (Foreign Affairs), Cardinal Pietro Parolin recently extended the invitation to Nigeria's President Ahmed Bola Tinubu to attend the inauguration of Pope Leo XIV, which begins with a solemn mass at St Peter's Square at Vatican on Sunday, May 18, 2025. The Nigeria's Presidency swiftly accepted the invitation and further announced that "President Bola Ahmed Tinubu will travel to Rome on Saturday (May 17) following an invitation from Pope Leo XIV to attend his papal inauguration on Sunday, May 18 and will be accompanied by Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Bianca Odumegwu-Ojukwu and top Catholic clerics including Archbishops Lucius Ugorji, Ignatius Kaigama, Alfred Martins, and Bishop Mathew Hassan Kukah".

**The Intersociety** wishes to state unequivocally that the enlistment of the named Catholic bishops in the itinerary of Nigeria's Presidency to the Vatican is strongly condemnable. It further exposes the conspiracy of the country's Christian leaders in grisly and egregious attacks by Jihadists and their patrons against Christians and their properties. This, such clerics most likely do by way of being too attached to the country's top serving political office holders particularly top Federal and State executives and legislators. It must also be pointed out that much political attachment by top Christian clerics in Nigeria to the country's top political office holders have brutally robbed Christian leaders of vocal and assertive voicing and powers particularly in matters of defense of Christian Faith and securement of security and safety of the country's lay Christians. It is therefore our insistence that the country's Catholic Bishops have no business whatsoever having their names in the list of the country's presidential itinerary to the Vatican for the inauguration of Pope Leo XIV.

One of the dire and damning moral implications of such is that it is likely that the named Catholic top clerics will have their flight tickets and other add-ins catered for by the Presidency, which if true, raises further concerns and suspicions over the likelihood of the named clerics becoming the country's presidential image launderers particularly by demarketing the defense of Christian and Catholic Faith and covering up or whittling down reports or campaigns against violent attacks on Nigerian Christians and their properties including dwelling houses, sacred places of worship and learning, livelihoods, etc. Emerging statistics have shown that apart from Nigeria's Catholics losing about 16 dioceses and thousands of parishes and outstations to the country's Islamic Jihadists or Radical Islamists and their patrons in the past sixteen years or since July 2009; the country is now home to dozens of Islamic Jihadists and jihadist elements/jihad enablers within the country's security forces. The country's Jihadists and their patrons have launched unchecked, untamed and untracked attacks on defenseless Christians and sacked or seized not less than 1000 indigenous Christian communities and occupied estimated over 70% of Christian forests out of the country's total of 1,129 forests. The Jihadists and their patrons have also seized and occupied over 20,000 square miles and hundreds of thousands of hectares of Christian farmlands and farm settlements covering Benue, Plateau, Southern Kaduna, etc.

#### **Fifteen Years Of Our Statistical And Investigative Prowess:**

It is reminded that **the International Society for Civil Liberties and Rule of Law, InterSociety**, is locally and internationally reputed and credited since 2010 with research and statistical reports on attacks against Christians and other religious minorities including Shiite Muslims in Nigeria or any part thereof. Such reports of ours are built on several credible and verifiable sources including reports generated from our research and investigations using natural and scientific methods of data mining and analysis. We also generate and verify reports from research groups, credible government sources, religious groups including church leaders, credible rights groups, anti-persecution and *religiocide* watchdogs, diplomatic quarters and intergovernmental bodies.

### **15,640 Christians Hacked To Death And 14,600 Abducted In 2 Years Under Tinubu**

*Findings arising from our several reports as well as others generated from other credible sources have clearly shown that in the past two years of Bola Ahmed Tinubu's watch and inaction (May 2023-May 2025) as Nigeria's President, estimated 15,640 Christians have been killed or hacked to death by the country's Islamic Jihadists; on average of 7,820 deaths per year, 650 per month, 22 per day and one per hour. During the same period, too, an estimated 14,600 defenseless Christians were abducted on the ground of their Christian Faith by Jihadists across Nigeria; on average of 7,300 persons per year, 608 per month, 20 per day and almost one per hour; out of which (14,600 abductees), 1,460 (ten percent) died in their abductors' captivities. Importantly clarified is the fact that thousands of moderate Muslims were also separately killed or abducted by the jihadists during the period. Further breakdown shows that out of estimated 8,200 Christians hacked to death from Jan to Dec 2023, no fewer than 5,400 died between June and Dec 2023 under Bola Ahmed Tinubu as Nigeria's new President (as he then was), during which out of 8,400 abducted Christians, not less than 5,300 were abducted between June and Dec 2023. In 2024, under Bola Ahmed Tinubu as Nigeria's President, not less than 6,500 Christians were hacked to death by Jihadists and 7000 abducted. In the outgoing first five months of 2025, not less than 2,170 Christians have been hacked to death and 2,300 others abducted: totaling at least 15,640 Christian deaths and 14,600 abductions in the past two years (May 2023-May 2025) under the watch of Bola Ahmed Tinubu as Nigeria's President. It is also very important to point out 1,460 defenseless Christian deaths were estimated to have been recorded which represented about 10% of those abducted between June and Dec 2023; Jan to Dec 2024 and Jan to May 2025. They also represented those that never made it alive from the point of their abduction.*

### **Three Grounds Of 'Religiocide' In Nigeria:**

*Killings on the ground of religion in Nigeria are drawn from three major grounds: (1) Jihad under "dar al-Islam" or lands under Muslim rule where Shariah must prevail, (2) Jihad under "dar al-harb" or lands not under Muslim rule but where war in defense of radical Islamic faith must be sanctioned or waged and (3) strongly suspected State protected religious killings linked to Jihadist Fulani Herdsmen and Jihadist Fulani Bandits (most widespread across the country's South-East, South-South, South-West, Christian North-Central (newly joined by 'Fulani Mahmuda' Jihadists) and Christian North-West (newly joined by 'Fulani Lakaruwa Jihadists'). Such killings taking place in the North-East are largely perpetrated by ISWAP, Ansaru, Boko Haram and Jihadist Fulanis.*

### **Estimated 40m Northern Christians Uprooted, Threatened And Forced To Flee:**

*The systematic uprooting of estimated 40million defenseless indigenous Christians of Northern Nigeria, threatened or abducted and disappeared or hacked to death or forced to flee their homes and sacred places of worship or learning are divided on State-by-State basis as follows: 5.8m Christians in Benue (largest Christian State in the North) or 95% of the State's population of 6.2m; 4.4m in Plateau or 95% of the State's population of 4.7m (second largest Christian State in Nigeria); 2.3m in Niger or 40% of the State's population of 6.7m; 4m in Kaduna or 40% of the State's population of 9.9m (third State with largest Christians in Northern Nigeria); 2.4m in Adamawa or 40% of the State's population of 4.9m; and 2.8m in Taraba or 75% of the State's population of 3.9m.*

*The rest are: 900,000 in Nasarawa or 30% of the State's population of 3.1m; 1.9m in Kogi or 40% of the State's population of 4.7m; 590,000 in Borno or 10% (Christians are found in their large numbers in areas like Askira/Uba, Gwoza, Biu, Chibok and Damboa, etc.) of the State's population of 5.9m; 1.4m in Bauchi or 15% of the State's population of 9.2m; 180,000 in Yobe or 5% of the State's population of 3.7m; 300,000 in Yobe or 7% of the State's population of 3.7m; 300,000 in Kebbi or 5% of the State's population of 6m; 1m in Kano or 6% of the State's population of 16.3m; 1m in Gombe or 40% of the State's 3.5m; and 1.6m in FCT or 52% of its estimated population of 3.1m; all totaling about 32m. There are additional 8m others representing "urbanized Christians" found in the cities of the named States where they are severally and systematically threatened and abused for being professed Christians. It is also important to inform that the degree of threats and attacks by Jihadist Fulani Herdsmen and Jihadist Fulani Bandits on Christians and non-Muslim others living in the South-East, South-South and South-West since June 2015 has dangerously increased from 0.5% in Jan to May 2015 alarmingly to 30% in the present Old Eastern Region and 35% in the present Old Western Region.*

**End.**

**Signed:**

**For: International Society for Civil Liberties and Rule of Law**

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