



TEXTS ADOPTED

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Mass kidnapping of children in Nigeria, including from St Mary's Catholic school in Papiri

European Parliament resolution of 18 December 2025 on the mass kidnapping of children in Nigeria, including from St Mary's Catholic School in Papiri (2025/3029(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Nigeria,
- having regard to Rules 150(5) and 136(4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas on 21 November 2025 gunmen attacked St Mary's Catholic School in Papiri, Niger State, abducting 303 students, 12 teachers and staff in one of the largest school kidnappings in Nigeria's history;
- B. whereas approximately 50 children managed to escape shortly after the attack and Nigerian authorities have secured the release of around 100 abducted children, while others remain missing and at risk, causing severe anguish among families and communities;
- C. whereas over 400 people, largely schoolchildren, have been abducted in North-Central Nigeria since mid-November 2025; whereas the majority of them have not been released; whereas similar kidnappings have occurred across northern and central Nigeria, including in Kebbi and Borno states;
- D. whereas these repeated attacks have forced widespread school closures, denying millions of children safe access to education;
- E. whereas Nigeria's security situation continues to deteriorate owing to armed gangs and jihadist groups such as Boko Haram and Islamic State, leading the government to declare a national security emergency on 26 November 2025;
- F. whereas escalating religious, ethnic and intercommunal violence has resulted in the destruction of churches and other places of worship, forced displacement, and mass killings of Christians and Muslims;

- G. whereas globally Nigeria is the country most affected by violence against Christians, with nearly 17 000 killings between 2019 and 2023, and over 7 000 victims since the start of 2025;
1. Strongly condemns the mass kidnapping at St Mary's Catholic School and all attacks against children, teachers and educational or religious institutions; expresses solidarity with the victims, their families and the affected communities;
 2. Demands the immediate and unconditional release of all remaining abductees and calls on the Nigerian Government to ensure their safe return and to conduct thorough and transparent investigations;
 3. Calls on the federal and regional governments in Nigeria to take concrete steps to strengthen school protection and to fully implement the Safe Schools Declaration in cooperation with international partners; urges authorities to accelerate early warning systems;
 4. Expresses concern over school closures caused by insecurity, and urges authorities to limit disruptions and safeguard children's access to education;
 5. Urges the provision of alternative learning arrangements to ensure continuity of education for affected students;
 6. Calls on Nigerian authorities to intensify efforts to secure the release of all civilians held by armed groups and to better protect schools and vulnerable communities; urges authorities to ensure independent and effective investigations into abductions and related attacks and to prosecute and ensure judicial follow-up of those responsible in line with international human rights obligations and the rule of law;
 7. Recognises that conflict over access to scarce resources, endemic poverty, and insufficient opportunities to achieve a stable livelihood are driving insecurity and fuelling violence in northern Nigeria;
 8. Urges Nigerian authorities and the international community to take action against insecurity and religious, ethnic and intercommunal violence in the region, in particular against Christian communities, which are specifically being targeted, and end the widespread impunity that has emboldened criminal and terrorist groups;
 9. Instruct its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council, the VP/HR, and the Government and Parliament of Nigeria.