

UN News Centre--Nigeria: Ban urges restraint as inter-religious violence takes deadly toll

Clashes between Christians and Muslims resumed in Jos, Nigeria, on January 17 2010, reportedly resulting in over 200 deaths. This is the fourth instance of mass killings in the past decade ([at least 700 casualties resulted from the violence in Jos in November 2008](#)).

AFP

[reported](#)

that the incitement to violence was helped by transmission of hate messages through cell phones. According to Human Rights Watch, the three days of clashes have forced at least 5,000 people from their homes. Nigeria responded by deploying additional military and anti-riot police units to the streets of Jos and imposed a 24-hour curfew in the city.

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There remain questions as to the extent to which these crimes are widespread and systematic, arguably a determining factor for whether the RtoP threshold has been met. As Paragraphs 138-139 of the World Summit Outcome Document outline, States have the responsibility to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

Nigeria, like every other State, carries this responsibility to protect its populations and to prevent these crimes from occurring.

UN SG Ban Ki-moon has expressed serious concern about the violent episode, which is the latest of many religiously fueled conflicts in the region. Human Rights Watch has called for the Nigerian government to launch a full investigation into the attacks.

UN News Centre

20 January 2010

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today appealed for maximum restraint after inter-religious violence in the central Nigerian city of Jos has reportedly left over 200 people dead.

He also appealed to all concerned to “seek peaceful solutions to religious and other differences in the country,” in a

[statement](#)

issued by his spokesperson.

“In particular, he calls on all political and religious leaders in Nigeria to work together to address the underlying causes of the recurring sectarian violence in the country.”

Mr. Ban took note of the Government’s expressed determination to find a permanent solution to the crisis in Jos, and urged that every effort be undertaken to restore stability and avoid further deterioration of the situation, the statement added.

Deadly clashes between Muslims and Christians in Jos in November 2008 killed several hundred people and displaced thousands of others. In addition, at least 100 people were reportedly killed in northern Nigeria last July during clashes which pitted local Muslims against police forces.

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