



Public statement: Calling for independent, impartial and effective investigations into the confrontations between the Nigerian military and the Shiites.

AI Index: AFR 44/3363/2016
29 January 2016

Amnesty International calls for a prompt, effective and independent investigation into the confrontations between the Nigerian Military and the Islamic Movement of Nigeria (IMN) – a Shiite sect - that occurred on 12, 13 and 14 December 2015. All those found to hold criminal responsibility for human rights violations and abuses must be held to account through fair trials, not subject to the death penalty.

While Amnesty International welcomes the formation of several panels of inquiry into the events, the organisation calls on these panels to ensure impartial, independent, transparent and effective investigations, in order to bring about accountability and the provision of remedies to the victims.

Amnesty International has interviewed victims, their lawyers, doctors, and eye witnesses. Though we are yet to complete our investigations, we have strong reasons to believe that several human rights violations occurred as a result of this confrontation. We have received allegations of extrajudicial executions, indiscriminate arrests, incommunicado detention, and enforced disappearances of members of the IMN, by the Nigerian military.

We note that since the confrontations, panels of inquiry have been formed by seven bodies namely - the National Human Rights Commission; the Nigerian Bar Association; the Senate; the House of Representatives; the Council of Ulama; the Nigerian military; and the Kaduna State Government. As the Kaduna State Panel of Inquiry is sworn in today, Amnesty International urges it and all other panels to conduct thorough, impartial and effective inquiries into the events which took place on 12, 13 and 14 December 2015, and which led to the loss of many lives, and other violations of human rights.

Further, Amnesty International is concerned about the impartiality of some members of the Kaduna State Panel of Inquiry. For example, the appointment of some ex members of the Nigerian Military and Police to this panel could lead to the perception of bias. We therefore urge the Kaduna State Government to ensure that its panel of inquiry is impartially constituted, in order to perform a credible inquiry.

Amnesty International urges all seven panels of inquiry to make public their terms of reference, and conduct their affairs in a transparent and accountable manner. We hope that these panels will not only uncover the truth, but also ensure accountability, fair and just remedies to all victims. We call on all panels to also make the report of their findings public.

Finally, Amnesty International calls on the Federal Government of Nigeria to ensure that all those found to hold criminal responsibility for human rights violations and abuses which occurred on 12,

13 and 14 December 2015, are held to account through fair trials, not subject to the death penalty.

Amnesty International will continue to monitor this situation closely.

Please see this link for a press statement issued by Amnesty International on 15 December 2015 on this issue - <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2015/12/nigeria-killings-of-shiites-in-zaria-must-be-urgently-investigated/>