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NIGERIA Anniversary of Dogo Nahauwa massacre but no change

Women and children continue to be the target of violent attacks one year on from the massacre of more than 400 Christians in Dogo Nahauwa, Zot and Ratsat villages in Jos South, Nigeria, by armed Fulani men on March 7, 2010.

Despite a heavy security presence in the area, entire families were murdered, using tactics that have since become the hallmark of attacks on non-Muslim villages. Villagers were woken in the early hours of the morning by gun fire and shouting, before homes were set on fire and victims were hacked with machetes. Women and children were particularly targeted, a trend which has only become more widespread in the past year.

On that occasion, the army was slow to respond with assistance, leading some victims to question their commitment to tackling the violence. Unfortunately, confidence in the security services has continued to plummet as attacks regularly occur in villages within close proximity to military outposts. Concerns of possible collusion in the violence by some parts of the army have grown following increasing reports of attackers dressed in military uniform or driving military vehicles, and the discovery of military ID, bullet shells and attire at some of the crime scenes.

This year alone, violent night-time attacks on villages and university and college campuses in Plateau State, have left over 50 people dead.

CSW's National Director Stuart Windsor said, "It is a sad indictment of the political will to tackle the violence in Plateau State that attacks are still occurring with alarming regularity, and in some cases on villages in close proximity to army barracks. In addition, the continuing targeting of women and children is an extremely sinister development that must not be allowed to continue. On this sad anniversary CSW takes the opportunity to call once again on the Nigerian authorities to take robust and effective action to bring a definitive end to this violence, to track down the perpetrators and masterminds of these actions, and to bring them swiftly to justice."