UPR 17, October 22, 2013

Recommendations by Canada

**Nigeria**

**Question**

In 2009, Canada recommended that Nigeria take urgent steps to prevent religious violence. We would like to ask the Nigerian delegation what specific actions the Federal Government of Nigeria will take to protect its people from being targeted for their religious beliefs?

**Recommendations**

Canada recommends that Nigeria:

* Protect and promote the right of Nigerians to practice their religious faith or beliefs, including by enhancing the dialogue between different faith communities to address inter-religious tensions - particularly those in the Middle Belt states - and to combat all forms of extremism.
* Take all necessary measures to prevent extrajudicial executions and torture by security forces by providing targeted training and capacity building to law enforcement officials and military members.
* Urgently address child, early and forced marriage by putting in place legislation that clarifies the legal age for marriage, honouring commitments made in the country’s last UPR to prevent and eliminate the practice.
* **Ensure that no legislation discriminates between men and women, and**

**enact legislation to prevent violence against people based on sexual orientation.**

**Observations (if time allows):**

Canada recognizes the difficulties faced by Nigeria in combatting terrorism, particularly that which targets religious institutions.

We welcome the steps taken by Nigeria to strengthen its national human rights institutions by amending the National Human Rights Commission Act, the Legal Aid Act, and the Law Reform Commission Act, and strengthening the independence of the National Human Rights Commission in the conduct of its affairs and its funding. We understand that there is yet a lot of work to be done for the reforms to be successful, especially in institutional capacity building, and would be glad to work with Nigeria on this important endeavour.

We recognize that Nigeria passed its Freedom of Information Act in May 2011 to guarantee access to information held by publicly funded institutions and their officials. Canada congratulates Nigeria on taking this step.