



19 October 2018

VIA OVERNIGHT DELIVERY SERVICE

H.E. Sylvanus Adiewere Nsofor
Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Nigeria
to the United States
3519 International Court, NW
Washington, D.C. 20008

RE: Request that the Nigerian Government Secure the Immediate Release of Leah Sharibu and Put an End to the Violence Being Carried Out Against Christian Children.

Your Excellency,

By way of introduction, the American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ) is an organization dedicated to the defense of constitutional liberties secured by law. ACLJ attorneys have argued before the Supreme Court of the United States and other federal and state courts in a number of significant cases involving the freedoms of speech and religion. The ACLJ and its international affiliates – including the European Centre for Law and Justice (ECLJ), which is credentialed as an NGO before the United Nations – defend human rights and religious liberty around the world.

Within Nigeria exists one of the deadliest and cruelest Islamic terrorist organizations, Boko Haram. It is estimated that since May of 2011 Boko Haram has killed more than 37,500 people, displaced 2.4 million, and created 228,000 refugees¹. This massive humanitarian crisis needs to be addressed and those responsible need to be brought to justice.

Additionally, reports indicate that since 2013 Boko Haram has abducted approximately 1,000 children in northeast Nigeria². These attacks and kidnappings have been carried out when children are at school and should feel safe. However, it is estimated that Boko Haram has killed over 2,000

¹*Boko Haram in Nigeria*, Council on Foreign Relations, <https://www.cfr.org/interactives/global-conflict-tracker?marker=19#!/conflict/boko-haram-in-nigeria>, (last visited 9 Oct. 2018).

²Morgan Winsor, *Boko Haram has Abducted over 1,000 Children, Killed More Than 2,000 Teachers*, ABC NEWS (14 Apr. 2018, 9:10 AM), <https://abcnews.go.com/International/boko-haram-abducted-1000-children-killed-2000-teachers/story?id=54442518>.



teachers and destroyed more than 1,400 schools³. Boko Haram routinely attacks girls' boarding schools in order to kidnap the students.

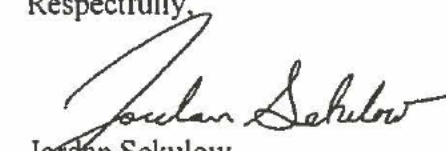
In February of 2018, Boko Haram insurgents abducted 110 students from a girls' boarding school. Of those, five were killed while being held captive. Ultimately, 104 of the schoolgirls were released, but Boko Haram still holds 15-year-old Leah Sharibu prisoner because she refuses to bend to Boko Haram's demands that she renounce her Christian faith and convert to Islam⁴.

Now, there are reports that Boko Haram has issued an ultimatum by threatening that if their demands are not met they will kill Leah—this month. Leah's father, Nathan Sharibu, stated, 'The terrorist[s] threatened to kill Leah in October if they don't get any response to their demands. Time is running out, that is why I am calling on the government to keep talking to them'.⁵ Time is running out. It is imperative for the government of Nigeria to work quickly to bring Leah home safely. Action must be taken now before it is too late.

We are grateful for the Nigerian government's recent efforts to secure Leah's safe release. However, we are now within the time-frame in which Leah's captors have threatened to take her life. Time is of the essence. The Nigerian government must continue its efforts to ensure Leah's life is saved.

Therefore, we respectfully and solemnly urge you to respond with utmost urgency and take whatever actions necessary to assist in the safe release of Leah Sharibu. Her life depends on it. The time is now for Leah Sharibu to be returned safely home to her loving family, and for Nigeria to ensure that all school children, Christian or otherwise, live safely and freely. Children should be able to attend school, learn, and grow without the constant fear of death. Please act now to put an end to the growing atrocities being carried out against Leah and Nigeria's children.

Respectfully,



Jordan Sekulow
Executive Director

³*Id.*

⁴*Nigeria Dapchi Abductions: Schoolgirls Finally Home*, BBC NEWS (25 Mar. 2018), <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-43535872>.

⁵Bukola Adebayo, 'Our Daughter is Facing a Death Sentence,' *Parents of Leah Sharibu Cry Out*, CNN (4 Oct. 2018, 12:53 PM), <https://www.cnn.com/2018/10/04/africa/nigerian-girl-boko-haram-ultimatum/index.html>.