



AFRICA/NIGERIA - Another massacre in Nigeria; Archbishop of Jos tells Fides "this is just another retaliation over loss of livestock, not a religious conflict," talk of interreligious violence ends up spreading it

Jos (Agenzia Fides) – "This is a retaliation against the Fulani herders against the villagers, for an alleged theft of livestock. This is not a clash between Christians and Muslims," Fides was told by Archbishop Ignatius Ayau Kaigama of Jos, the capital of the Nigerian Plateau State, where this past night, March 16-17, 12 people were killed in an attack in the village of Byie.

"The Fulani herdsmen, considering the villagers responsible for the loss of part of their livestock, have carried out a retaliation attack. The fact that the Fulani are Muslim, and the villagers are mostly Christians, is an incidental fact. The real motivation for the massacre is the alleged theft of the livestock," Bishop Kaigama strongly affirmed.

"I am concerned about the fact that the large international press continues to present the clashes that take place in Plateau State as a religious conflict between Christians and Muslims. This is not so. "This violence is of a social, economic, and political origin. Stating that there is a religious clash means endangering the lives of people, because, talking about it really presents a threat to igniting sectarian hatred. Why doesn't the international press talk of the initiatives undertaken by everyone, including Christians and Muslims, to reduce tension in the area? It seems to me that they are just trying to throw fuel on the fire" concludes the Archbishop of Jos. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 17/3/2010)