

**Press release**

**NIGERIA: THE HUMANITARIAN COORDINATOR CONDEMNS THE REPORTED KILLING OF FOUR AID WORKERS**

ABUJA, 13 December – The UN Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria, Mr Edward Kallon, condemns the announced execution of four aid workers by armed groups in Nigeria's northeastern Borno State on 13 December.

“I am deeply saddened and outraged by the news of the tragic killing of four aid workers who were held captive by armed groups for almost five months,” stated Mr Kallon. “My thoughts go to their families, friends and colleagues who are enduring unspeakable pain and hardship.”

The four men were amongst the six aid workers who were abducted on 26 July when their convoy came under attack near Damasak, in the Mobbar LGA. They were working on a health project implemented by the INGO Action Against Hunger. One of the drivers was killed during the attack and another was reportedly executed on 24 September 2019.

“I plead for the immediate release of Grace Taku, the only woman who was in the ACF team, and whose whereabouts remain unknown,” said the Humanitarian Coordinator. “I also call for the immediate release of Alice Loksha, a nurse and a mother, who was abducted during an attack in Rann in March 2018.”

“This is another sad day for the people of Nigeria and the humanitarian community supporting them,” regreted Mr Kallon. “These colleagues were devoting their lives to helping the most vulnerable communities in Borno State. Despite the risks, they were driven by the values of solidarity and humanity.”

The United Nations and NGO partners in Nigeria are working to bring vital assistance to over seven million people in the crisis-affected states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe. They are increasingly the target of violent attacks. Seven aid workers have been killed since the beginning of the year, amongst 26 UN and NGO workers having lost their lives in the conflict since 2011.

“Violence against humanitarian actors jeopardizes access to much needed assistance for people affected by the armed conflict,” stressed the Humanitarian Coordinator. “I renew the call for all armed actors to respect the principles of humanity, neutrality, independence and impartiality which guide humanitarian assistance, and to ensure the protection of aid workers.”

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