

# URGENT ACTION

## #ENDSARS: INVESTIGATE KILLINGS OF PROTESTORS

Since 8 October, Nigerians have been taking to the streets, peacefully demanding an end to police brutality, extrajudicial executions and extortion by the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), a unit of the Nigerian police tasked with fighting violent crimes. But they have been met with excessive use of force by the army and police forces. On 20 October, at least 12 peaceful protesters were reportedly shot dead when the army opened fire on thousands of protesters calling for an end to police brutality as part of the #EndSARS movement. The authorities must immediately *end the killing and excessive use of force against peaceful protesters across the country and commit to implementing their demands for police reform and accountability for police brutality.*

### TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

**President Muhammadu Buhari**  
President and  
Commander-in-Chief of the Nigerian Armed Forces  
Office of the President of the Federal Republic  
Aso Rock Villa, Abuja, Nigeria  
Email: [ndaura7@gmail.com](mailto:ndaura7@gmail.com)

Dear President Buhari,

I am writing to express grave concern over reported killings of **#EndSARS peaceful protesters** in several parts of Nigeria.

Between 6:45pm and 9:00pm of 20 October, the Nigerian army and police reportedly killed at least 12 peaceful protesters and left several injured in Lekki and Alasusa - two locations in the capital, Lagos- when they without warning opened fire on thousands of people who were peacefully calling for good governance and an end to police brutality as part of the #EndSARS movement.

Since 8 October, protesters have been occupying the streets of major towns and cities across 21 states of the country, demanding an end to police brutality, extrajudicial executions and extortion by the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), a unit of the Nigerian police tasked with fighting violent crimes. The protests, which began as a response to a viral video of SARS operatives shooting a young man on 3 October, has transformed into nationwide protests for police reform. But the protesters have consistently been met with excessive use of force: including the firing of live ammunition, water cannons, the throwing of tear gas into crowds, beating and arresting protesters, all of which have led to deaths and injuries. This excessive force on peaceful protesters is contrary to both the Nigerian Constitution of 1999 [as amended] and international standards that protect the rights to life, dignity, and peaceful assembly.

In light of this, I call on you to:

- **Publicly order an end to the killing and excessive use of force against peaceful protesters across the country by security agents and the military;**
- **Ensure a prompt, thorough, impartial, effective and transparent investigation into all cases of human rights violations by the police, including the unlawful killings of the #EndSARS protesters, is carried out and bring to justice anyone suspected to be responsible for the killings and attacks on protesters;**
- **Ensure access to justice and effective remedies for victims and their families;**
- **Publicly commit to implement the demands of the protesters including: an end to police brutality, accountability for extrajudicial killings, rape, torture and extortion by SARS officers and policing reforms in general.**

*Yours sincerely,*

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Amnesty International has been monitoring developments across Nigeria since the #EndSARS protests began on 8 October 2020. At least 56 people have reportedly died across the country since the protests began, with about 38 allegedly killed on 20 October alone. In many cases the security forces had used excessive force in an attempt to stop the protests.

In response to the nationwide protests, the Inspector General of Police on 11 October 2020, dissolved the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) and called for the immediate redeployment of all SARS officers to other units. Despite the pronouncement and increasingly brutal repression of the demonstrations, thousands of Nigerians continue to protest. They are demanding the release of all arrested protesters, justice for victims of police brutality and adequate compensation for the victims and their families, as well as prosecution of those suspected to be responsible.

Over the past five years, the Federal Government has promised to reform SARS several times. Despite these pledges of reform and accountability for violations, Amnesty International's [report](#) shows that SARS officers continue to commit human rights violations with impunity.

### **PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: ENGLISH**

You can also write in your own language.

### **PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 21 DECEMBER 2020**

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.