

October 27, 2020

Office of the President

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**A Statement from President Rhonda L. Lenton on the Violence in Nigeria**

The York University community is deeply saddened by the violence that has been occurring across Nigeria in recent weeks in connection with the EndSARS movement. We are particularly devastated by the tragic events of October 20, when police and military forces fired into a crowd of unarmed young people who had gathered to protest police brutality. We join other universities, organizations, and leaders around the world in denouncing these actions and condemning the use of excessive force.

On behalf of the University, I offer my heartfelt condolences to those who were injured in the confrontation, to the friends and families of those who were killed, and to the many students and young people in Nigeria, here in the York community, and elsewhere whose wellbeing has been affected in connection with these events.

At York, we recognize and applaud the meaningful work being done by the young people in Nigeria and others to protect the safety of all individuals, and in particular, those of underrepresented groups.

The right to free speech and the ability to gather and express diverse ideas free from persecution, intimidation, or harassment are principles that we cherish deeply at York — they are fundamental to our very existence as an institution of higher learning. That is why we are committed to fostering a diverse, inclusive, and equitable environment where every member of our community feels safe and protected.

If you need support, please know that York has a variety of resources available to you. For more information on how we can help, please visit the Mental Health and Wellness at York site at <http://mhw.info.yorku.ca/resources/resources-at-york/>.

Our thoughts lie with the York community members and those around the world affected by the violence in Nigeria. Know that we grieve beside you and resolve to support and protect you as events continue to unfold.

Sincerely,

Rhonda L. Lenton  
President & Vice-Chancellor

