

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. _____

To require the Secretary of State to designate the Federal Republic of Nigeria as a Country of Particular Concern, to impose certain sanctions, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. CRUZ introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To require the Secretary of State to designate the Federal Republic of Nigeria as a Country of Particular Concern, to impose certain sanctions, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Nigeria Religious Free-
5 dom Accountability Act of 2025”.

6 **SEC. 2. IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—The President shall impose the
8 sanctions described in Executive Order 13818 (50 U.S.C.
9 1701 note; relating to blocking the property of persons

1 involved in serious human rights abuse or corruption) on
2 the persons identified in the report required under sub-
3 section (b).

4 (b) REPORT REQUIRED.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after
6 the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually
7 thereafter, the Secretary of State shall submit to the
8 appropriate congressional committees a report listing
9 Nigerian persons who are—

10 (A) federal officials or state governors who
11 have, during the period specified in paragraph
12 (2)—

13 (i) promoted, enacted, or maintained
14 Nigerian blasphemy laws, including
15 through public advocacy, legislative action,
16 or executive enforcement directives; or

17 (ii) tolerated violence by non-state ac-
18 tors invoking religious justifications to
19 commit acts of violence, including persons
20 designated as—

21 (I) foreign terrorist organizations
22 pursuant to section 219(a) of the Im-
23 migration and Nationality Act (8
24 U.S.C. 1189(a)); or

1 (II) specially designated global
2 terrorists pursuant to Executive Order
3 13224 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating
4 to blocking property and prohibiting
5 transactions with persons who com-
6 mit, threaten to commit, or support
7 terrorism); or

8 (B) judges, magistrates, prison officials, or
9 other judicial or law enforcement authorities
10 who have, during the period specified in para-
11 graph (2), enforced blasphemy laws, including
12 through prosecution, conviction, imprisonment,
13 or other deprivation of liberty of individuals
14 pursuant to such laws.

15 (2) PERIOD SPECIFIED.—The period specified
16 in this paragraph is—

17 (A) with respect to the first report re-
18 quired by paragraph (1), the period beginning
19 10 years before the date of the enactment of
20 this Act and ending on the date on which the
21 report is submitted; and

22 (B) with respect to each subsequent such
23 report, the period beginning on the date on
24 which the previous such report was submitted

1 and ending the date on which the new report is
2 submitted.

3 (3) FORM.—The report required by paragraph
4 (1) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may
5 include a classified annex, if appropriate.

6 **SEC. 3. DESIGNATIONS AND AMENDMENTS RELATED TO**
7 **THE INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM**
8 **ACT.**

9 (a) IN GENERAL.—In reports required under section
10 402(b)(1)(A) of the International Religious Freedom Act
11 of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6442(b)(1)(A)) and concurrent re-
12 views required under section 301(a) of the Frank R. Wolf
13 International Religious Freedom Act of 2016 (22 U.S.C.
14 6442a(a)), the Secretary of State shall designate, for en-
15 gaging in or tolerating systematic, ongoing, and egregious
16 violations of religious freedom—

17 (1) the Federal Republic of Nigeria as a Coun-
18 try of Particular Concern (CPC); and

19 (2) Boko Haram and ISIS-West Africa as Enti-
20 ties of Particular Concern (EPC).

21 (b) WAIVER AUTHORITY.—

22 (1) CPC.—The Secretary of State may waive
23 the requirement to impose a designation required
24 under subsection (a)(1) if the Secretary transmits to

1 the appropriate congressional committees a deter-
2 mination that—

3 (A) neither entity listed in subsection
4 (a)(2) is currently operating in Nigeria; and

5 (B) the federal government of Nigeria and
6 all state governments in Nigeria are not cur-
7 rently enforcing blasphemy laws.

8 (2) EPC.—The Secretary of State may waive
9 the requirement to impose a designation required
10 under subsection (a)(2) if the Secretary transmits to
11 the appropriate committees a determination that the
12 entity not being designated is not currently oper-
13 ating.

14 (c) TECHNICAL CORRECTION.—Section 605(a)(1) of
15 the of International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22
16 U.S.C. 6473a) is amended by striking “freedom religion”
17 and inserting “religious freedom”.

18 **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

19 In this Act:

20 (1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
21 TEES.—The term “appropriate congressional com-
22 mittees” means—

23 (A) the Committee on Foreign Relations of
24 the Senate; and

1 (B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of
2 the House of Representatives.

3 (2) BOKO HARAM.—The term “Boko Haram”
4 means Jama’tu Ahlis Sunna Lidda’awati wal-Jihad.

5 (3) ISIS-WEST AFRICA.—The term “ISIS-West
6 Africa” means the Islamic State West Africa Prov-
7 ince.

8 (4) NIGERIAN BLASPHEMY LAWS.—The term
9 “Nigerian blasphemy laws” refers to provisions in
10 Nigeria’s criminal, penal, or Shari’a codes that crim-
11 inalize expression, behavior, or belief perceived as in-
12 sulting religion.

13 (5) PERSON.—The term “person” means an in-
14 dividual or entity.