On 5 June 2022, gunmen attacked the St Francis Catholic Church in Owo, Ondo State. The EU Delegation in Abuja has since reported that 40 people were killed. Whilst the methods of the perpetrators and motivation behind the attack seem clear, so far no group has claimed responsibility. On 6 June 2022, the High Representative/Vice-President released a statement condemning such attacks and calling for accountability, bringing those responsible to justice. The EU is continuously addressing these issues as a political actor, by providing legal assistance in human rights cases, through development cooperation, and through an ongoing political and human rights dialogue. The EU also contributes to the building of an institutional framework to deal with issues such as impunity, particularly focused on the justice sector and building networks of human rights organisation, as well as promoting inter-cultural and religious dialogue.

One of the focal areas of the EU’s Human Rights and Democracy Country Strategy 2021-2024 for Nigeria is the promotion of Freedom of Religion and Belief (FoRB). FoRB is also a high priority of the Global Europe: Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument Thematic Programme on Human Rights and Democracy and the Multiannual Indicative Programme for Nigeria, in line with the EU Guidelines on the promotion and protection of FoRB. An allocation of EUR 3.5 million for 2021-2024 is foreseen for Nigeria. A first thematic allocation of between EUR 500,000 to EUR 1 million will be used to fund actions related to support FoRB in Nigeria through a call for proposals launched on 27 May 2022.