



STATEMENT ON SARS PROTEST

Friday, October 16, 2020

CONTENT WARNING: POLICE VIOLENCE

On October 7th, 2020, protests broke out in Nigeria and later globally against police brutality, demanding change and justice against a system that continuously fails those it is meant to protect, and for those who have been victims of police violence. These protests are part of an ongoing outcry, specifically targeted toward dismantling the federal Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), a policing unit that has a long-standing history of harassment, extortion, and extrajudicial killings.

On October 11th, Nigerian authorities announced the dismantling of SARS, the redistribution of those officers to other policing units, and later announced a new policing unit called the Special Weapons And Tactics (SWAT) team. Protests have since continued, as citizens have been witnesses to and see through the reoccurring empty promises of the government as they seek justice and accountability from this violent and failed system.

The York Federation of Students would like to reaffirm our stance on the inherently violent and oppressive nature of the institution of policing worldwide. Policing anywhere and in any form is often most insidious to the most marginalized members of our societies. The fact that these conversations are happening on a global scale indicates how necessary it is to reevaluate the role that police play in our daily lives. We know that it is impossible to reform a system and an institution that is functioning in the exact ways it was intended to function.

We support our Nigerian members and anyone being impacted by the protests at this time, as “injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere” - Martin Luther King Jr. If you are in need of resources, please do not hesitate to reach out to us, and we are happy to help connect you.

For more information, contact YFS President Kien Azinwi at President@yfs.ca