



# NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY



**STATEMENT PRESENTED BY THE NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (NHRC)  
NIGERIA TO THE AFRICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS DURING ITS  
71<sup>ST</sup> ORDINARY SESSION**

**Affiliate Status Number: 76**

**Name and Designation of Representative making the Statement:**

**Chief Tony Ojukwu, SAN**

**Salutations/Protocol: Your Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen**

**Law Establishing the NHRI:**

**The National Human Rights Commission (Amendment) Act 2010**

**I. Summary of Positive Human Rights Developments November 2021-April 2022**

The following are the summary of Positive Human Rights Developments in Nigeria:

- a. The Federal Government of Nigeria in line with the requirements of the African Commission and the Paris Principles, reconstituted the 5th Governing Council of Nigeria National Human Rights Commission.
- b. The Nigerian Senate has passed the National Human Rights Commission (Repeal and Enactment) Bill 2022 which further strengthens the NHRC of Nigeria to carry out its functions. Similar version of the bill had earlier been passed by the House of Representatives and it is hoped that the President will assent to the bill once it is transmitted to him for assent.

Amongst other innovations, the bill enhances the Commission's powers to investigate human rights violations and establishes the sourcing of the human rights fund to improve funding of the Commission. The bill also harmonises all legislations on the Commission and outlines the process for registration and enforcement of the decisions of the Commission as the decisions of a High Court.

- c. The Federal Government of Nigeria lifted the ban on social media Platform-Twitter thereby restoring access of Nigerians to freely express themselves.
- d. The NHRC Panel on Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) has concluded its first round of sittings. About 162 cases of SGBV were concluded across the country. Findings show that empowerment of women and girls is a major



factor that exposes them to SGBV. There is therefore need to educate and empower women through live-skills and livelihoods to stem the tide of SGBV in the country.

- e. The Federal Government of Nigeria procured 38 new aircrafts which have been added to the inventory of the Nigerian Air force. This is to strengthen the fight against insurgency to protect life and property in the country.
- f. The ongoing National Human Rights Commission Independent Investigation Panel on Human Rights Violations by the defunct Special Anti-Robbery Squad and other units of the Nigerian Police Force, arising from the End SARS protests, awarded monetary compensations to 27 victims of human rights Violations. The compensation which amounted to N146 million serve as civil remedies to the violations suffered by the victims and their families in the hands law enforcement agents. The other layers of justice, which are institutional and prosecutorial in nature will be handled by the Nigeria Police Force/the Police Service Commission and the Office of the Attorney General of the Federation respectively.
- g. A Federal High Court in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja delivered judgement and awarded damages in favour of women who were subjected to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) by agents of the Federal Capital Territory Administration and the Abuja Environmental Protection Board.
- h. The President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Muhammadu Buhari GCFR in November 2021 signed into law, the Climate Change Act 2021. The signing into law of this Act demonstrates the Federal Government of Nigeria's commitment towards addressing the issues of climate change in Nigeria.

The Act establishes the National Council on Climate Change and draws membership from both the public and private sectors, including members of the civil society, women, youth, and persons with disabilities with significant powers to, among others, coordinate national climate actions in Nigeria. This all-inclusive Act has further expanded the frontiers for the protection of the right to a clean and healthy environment as guaranteed by the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 as amended as well as the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights.

## II. Summary of Negative Human Rights Developments November 2021 to April 2022

- a. There are heightened attacks by insurgents, terrorists and separatist groups despite efforts of the Federal Governments of Nigeria to curb insecurity in the country. This is exacerbated by recurrence of kidnapping, armed banditry and other mass atrocities perpetrated by these enemies of the people.  
An example is the recent attack on a train travelling from Abuja to Kaduna State where the terrorists used explosives to stop the train before shooting



passengers and kidnapping others. At least eight people were allegedly killed in the attack while over 100 people are alleged to have been abducted.

- b. The effect of insecurity and attacks by insurgents have resulted into wide spread violation of international humanitarian and human rights law. The impact of these attacks include death, loss of means of livelihood, the sacking of communities and displacement of civilians from their places of original habitation.

Other impacts include deepening of poverty, non- access to education, sexual and gender-based violence, water, sanitation, healthcare challenges, access to justice and malnutrition.

- c. Also, there is the unwholesome practices of law enforcement and security officials including arbitrary arrests, excessive use of force, torture, cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment as well as the condition of Custodial Centers in the country.

### III. Recommendations

- a. There is need for the Federal Government of Nigeria to take further steps to guarantee the security and welfare of the citizenry as provided by section 14 (2) (b) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 as amended.
- b. There is need for a permanent Panel of the National Human Rights Commission to look into cases of Sexual and Gender Based Violence.
- c. There is also the need to make permanent the sitting of the Independent Investigation Panel for Police brutality as recommended by the white paper on Police Reforms by the National Human Rights Commission. This will enthrone accountability against impunity by officers and men of Nigeria Police Force.
- d. Strong collaboration between the National Human Rights Commission, the African Commission, the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights to promote and protect human rights in Nigeria and Africa.
- e. The African Commission should continue to strengthen its partnership with African National Human Rights Institutions to promote and protect the rights of all persons in Africa including the realization of the 2030 Agenda.