



National Human Rights Commission

SPEECH BY DR. TONY OJUKWU, OFR, SAN, FICMC – EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION, AT THE PRESENTATION OF THE OCTOBER 2025 HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION DASHBOARD

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Good morning distinguished guests, colleagues, members of the media, development partners, civil society representatives, Government Agencies and all stakeholders present here today.

It is my honour to welcome you to the presentation of the October 2025 National Human Rights Dashboard. This dashboard, as you know, is a key instrument of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) in tracking, analyzing, and reporting the state of human rights in Nigeria. Now in its 22nd month, the Dashboard has become an indispensable tool for evidence-based advocacy, policy direction, and public accountability. It presents an analytical overview of human rights complaints received at the Commission, trends in human rights violations across the country, and our broader monitoring through the NHRC Observatory.

At the Commission, we are guided by the Paris Principles, which enshrine independence, impartiality, and transparency as the foundations of a National Human Rights Institution. These principles also require us to ensure that our work is objective, evidence-based, and focused on protecting and promoting human rights for all, without fear or favour.

As you are aware, Nigeria continues to face significant challenges related to conflict, insecurity, and criminality. These challenges manifest in multiple ways: insurgency in the North East, banditry and communal clashes in the North West and central regions, violent conflicts over land and resources, and human rights violations associated with law enforcement responses.

Our mandate at the NHRC is to document these issues faithfully, amplify the voices of victims, and provide a reliable source of evidence that informs policy and national response. The October 2025 Dashboard reflects these realities, including complaints and incidents that have occurred across the country.

In October 2025, the NHRC received a total of **four hundred and six thousand, eighty-eight (406,088)** complaints and over **One Hundred and Fifty (160)** monitored incidents of human rights violations. Complaints received by the NHRC continue to reflect concerns around freedom from arbitrary detention, police misconduct, access to justice, sexual and gender-based violence and violation of fundamental civil liberties. Our Observatory has recorded incidents of communal violence, insurgent attacks, and human rights abuses related to insecurity, which continue to affect communities disproportionately.

In the month under review, we recorded a general drop in both killings and abductions compared to the previous month of September, a possible indication of the success of our Armed Forces and Security institutions. However, we still recorded alarming violence, killings and abductions reached alarming peaks, with hundreds of lives lost in coordinated attacks across Niger, Borno, Plateau, Kaduna, Kogi and Kwara states. Farmers, herders, women, children, and entire communities have suffered attacks and displacements. I must remind us that these are not statistics; they are Nigerian mothers, fathers, and children whose dignity has been violated. There is an urgent need for targeted interventions by both state and non-state actors to address these violations and protect vulnerable populations.

These findings underscore the importance of timely reporting, accountability, and institutional response. They also highlight that the protection of human rights is inseparable from national stability and development.

In today's presentation, we will share with you our concerns in recent human rights violations and development, including a rise in suicide cases,

extra-judicial killings, torture, inhumane and degrading treatment in schools as well as violations of the freedom of assembly, movement and religion.

Ladies and gentlemen, permit me a moment to comment on recent diplomatic events relating to the United States threats to intervene in Nigeria's internal affairs due to the killing of Christians in Nigeria. There is no doubt that conflicts and insurgency in Nigeria has led to the killings by religious extremists on Christian civilians in parts of Nigeria, it is important to highlight that citizen from other faiths have also been victims. As a Commission, we hold the view that no life should be lost to conflict or criminalities. The responsibility of Government to protect lives and properties in line with section 14(2) of the Constitution should be paramount. The threat from the United States should be seen as an opportunity to reform our approaches to terrorism and conflict in Nigeria, emphasising civilian protection and accountability for perpetrators. We should as a nation get the narrative correctly so that we can have the right diagnosis. Boko Haram and ISWAP have the ideology of Islamising Nigeria. I don't think there is any argument about that. Boko Haram and ISWAP believe some Nigerian Muslims are not true Muslims and therefore should be killed like other Christians, hence the attack on mosques and churches. This has led to the killing of Christians and Muslims who do not agree with Boko Haram. So the common enemy here is Boko Haram who is surely killing Christians and Muslims in Nigeria for religious reasons.

The NHRC holds the view that rather than threats, the international community, including the United States should support the efforts of the Government of Nigeria and our Armed Forces to put an end to terrorism and religious extremism. Only through partnership and mutual respect can we fight terror and secure the lives and liberties of all Nigerians. We also note that the injunction from the United States is for the Government of Nigeria to take urgent steps to stop the killings. I believe the government is capable of taking such urgent steps that are required to stop the killings.

The NHRC remains committed to its mandate under the Constitution to protect and promote human rights for all Nigerians. We undertake this work with integrity, impartiality, and transparency, guided by both the Paris Principles and the rule of law. We call on all Nigerians — citizens, leaders, media, and development partners — to join us in advancing a culture of human rights, accountability, and national cohesion. We urge all stakeholders — the media, civil society, and international partners — to interpret the data responsibly, with an understanding of the complex security landscape in Nigeria.

Only through collective responsibility can we ensure that our country navigates these challenging times while upholding the dignity and rights of every person. Let me conclude by reiterating that the Dashboard is a tool for awareness, advocacy, and action, and it is not an instrument of division or blame. Our shared commitment to human rights and justice remains the foundation upon which Nigeria can thrive.

We appreciate our partners – the United Nations Development Program, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Government of Norway for their support to the Tripartite Partnership Programme (TPP). We also recognise the hard work of our State and FCT offices in compiling the data that we present today. Our gratitude also to the Media for amplifying our voices and to our esteemed partner

Thank you.

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