



National Human Rights Commission

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

Date: 7th July, 2025

Good morning distinguished partners, colleagues, and gentlemen of the press,

Every month, when we gather to present this human rights dashboard, we are confronted with a sobering reality of the lived realities of those affected by violence, injustice, discrimination, and systemic neglect. These numbers compel us to reflect deeply on our collective responsibility and ask ourselves the difficult question: *Are we doing enough?* The events of June 2025 demand not just reflection, but an honest and urgent response.

Last month, Nigeria witnessed a harrowing surge in violent attacks, with devastating consequences for affected communities and our national conscience. Among the most tragic incidents were the brutal assaults on the Yelewata and Dauda communities in Guma Local Government Area of Benue State, where over 200 innocent lives were lost. These were not mere figures on a report; they were fathers, mothers, children, and breadwinners; families torn apart, livelihoods destroyed, and futures extinguished in moments of senseless brutality.

Equally alarming is the rising trend of attacks against law enforcement and local security forces. In Kaduna and Niger States, more than 17 soldiers were killed in coordinated attacks, further destabilizing already fragile regions. Equally distressing was the massacre of over 40 members of the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) in Ruggar Chida, brave individuals who stood on the frontlines to protect their communities, only to pay the ultimate price. Their deaths leave a void in local security structures, rendering civilians even more exposed to further violence.

The wave of insecurity plaguing our highways has also intensified. In June alone, more than 50 travellers were abducted along major transit routes in Kogi and Benue States. These are not isolated criminal acts; they represent a direct assault on the fundamental rights to freedom of movement, economic participation, and personal dignity. These abductions inflict lasting trauma on victims and their families while further eroding

public trust in the safety of our roads. This pattern of violence marked by impunity, fear, and systemic failure highlights a grave deficit in protection and accountability.

In the month of June, we received 327,154 complaints reflecting another sharp increase in human rights violations, each one a desperate plea for justice and a stark reminder of how much work remains to be done.

To the government, we reiterate the need for decisive and coordinated security interventions. To civil society and the media, we urge sustained advocacy and amplification of these issues. To our development partners, we call for strengthened collaboration in addressing the root causes of these issues. This dashboard must not merely serve as a record of tragedies; it must be a catalyst for meaningful and sustainable change.

It is within this broader context that we are proud to share that the National Human Rights Commission of Nigeria has been elected as President of the Network of National Human Rights Institutions in West Africa (NNHRI-WA), following the 7th Regional Consultation held here in Abuja. Under the theme, "*Justice for Africans and People of African Descent through Reparations: The Role of NHRIs*," the consultation reaffirmed the critical role our institutions must play in advancing justice and redress. This new leadership position is both an honour and a solemn responsibility, one we embrace with the full awareness of the challenges before us, and the urgency of this moment.

Let us never forget; every complaint documented, every statistic recorded in these dashboards represents a Nigerian citizen, a fellow human being seeking justice, safety, and the fulfilment of their basic rights.

The National Human Rights Commission remains unwavering in its mandate to promote, protect, and enforce human rights across Nigeria. We will forge ahead with purposeful and sustained action.

Thank you.

Dr. Tony Ojukwu OFR SAN FICMC
Executive Secretary
National Human Rights Commission