

**National Human Rights Commission**

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

**Date: 10th June, 2025**

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

Every month, the dashboard presentation forces us to pause and confront reality, not just about data, but about the lived experiences behind this data.

The month of May was especially sobering. From brutal attacks in the North East, to rising cases of sexual violence and mass displacement caused by natural disasters, the Commission recorded 275,256 complaints. When over a quarter of a million people turn to the National Human Rights Commission in just one month, the message is loud and clear: too many Nigerians feel unprotected, unheard, and unseen. What is most worrying is the normalization of this distress where many no longer expect redress or accountability. This is a dangerous place for any society to find itself.

The recent floods in Mokwa, Niger State, serve as a tragic reminder of the vulnerability of our displaced populations. Over 200 lives were lost, and many remain missing. This devastation highlights the urgent need for coordinated disaster preparedness and response strategies. The humanitarian crisis in Nigeria is further exacerbated by the plight of Internally Displaced Persons. Our collaboration with UNHCR has highlighted the dire conditions faced by IDPs in many parts of the country. These individuals endure inadequate shelter, limited access to healthcare, and a lack of basic amenities. Their rights to safety, dignity, and livelihood are systematically violated.

The scourge of internal and forced displacements in Nigeria has led the NHRC to, for the first time in the history of Nigeria, launch a quarterly Dashboard on Human Rights and Internal Displacement in Nigeria. This dashboard which is the highlight of our partnership with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees is aimed at providing monitoring and collation of information/data on mandate population- IDPs, Asylum-seekers, Refugees, and Returnees and to call attention to human rights issues affecting these populations with a view to promote, protect and enforce their rights. In the months of February, March and April, the commission recorded over 40,000 displacements and 1,460 complaints from IDPs, Refugees, Returnees and Asylum Seekers. The Commission wishes to express its appreciation to UNHCHR, the UN System in Nigeria and our local partners and Human Rights Monitors in the 34 LGAs across 11 states.

Today also marks a significant step towards inclusivity with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the NHRC and The Ability Life Initiative (TALI), an NGO dedicated to the advancement of the rights of persons with disabilities. Despite the enactment of the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act in 2018 and the signing of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Africa (the African Disability Protocol), we are still confronted with the challenges of ensuring that persons with disabilities live a life of dignity and protection. Over 35 million Nigerians live with disabilities, yet many face discrimination, lack of access to education, and limited employment opportunities. This partnership with TALI aims to bridge these gaps, ensuring that persons with disabilities are not merely included but are active participants in societal and economic spheres.

Ladies and gentlemen, our efforts as exemplified with our Monthly Human Rights Situation Dashboard and the Dashboards on Human Rights and Internal Displacement require support by government and development partners. We also look forward to strengthening our partnership with the media in the usage and deployment of this banks of data and more importantly, with civil society to use this data to hold governments to account on their obligations to promote, protect and fulfil all human rights of every Nigerian.

As we present these dashboards today, let us remember that behind each complaint is a Nigerian citizen yearning for justice. Let this data not be a mere reflection of our failures but a call to action.

The NHRC remains steadfast in its commitment to safeguarding the human rights of all Nigerians. Together, we can transform this commitment into a reality where every Nigerian lives free from fear, discrimination, and injustice.

Thank you.

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