

IN THIS ISSUE

NHRC HARPS ON STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGEMENT TO PREVENT TORTURE, SEEKS SUPPORT FOR NATIONAL PREVENTIVE MECHANISM [Page 1-3](#)

NHRC DEEPLY COMMITTED TO COMBATING HATE SPEECH [Page 1-2](#)

RECOMMIT TO THE PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY, OJUKWU URGES NIGERIANS [Page 2](#)

NHRC EBONYI STATE OFFICE INTERVENES INTO RIGHTS VIOLATION TRIGGERED BY CLERGYMAN'S 'SPIRITUAL REVELATION' [Page 3](#)

MOJ/NHRC PARTNER TO SUPPORT VICTIMS OF TORTURE [Page 3](#)

NHRC ENGAGES WITH ZAMFARA STATE FIRST LADY IN PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS [Page 4](#)

IMO STATE OFFICE RESCUES A MINOR FROM CHILD ABUSE [Page 4](#)

NHRC HARPS ON STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGEMENT TO PREVENT TORTURE, SEEKS SUPPORT FOR NATIONAL PREVENTIVE MECHANISM

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has harped on the need for engaging with stakeholders from diverse sectors to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive approach to preventing human rights violations including torture and other inhuman and degrading treatments.

The Executive Secretary of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), Dr. Tony Ojukwu OFR, SAN made this disclosure in his welcome statement at the "Strategic Meeting on Prevention of Torture in Nigeria" which held in Abuja.

The Chief Executive Officer of the Commission observed that "by harnessing the expertise, insights, and perspectives of all stakeholders present, we aim to develop robust framework and initiatives that effectively safeguard the rights and dignity of all individuals in Nigeria."

According to the Executive Secretary, the meeting represents a critical step

NHRC DEEPLY

The Executive Secretary of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), Dr. Tony Ojukwu, OFR, SAN, has affirmed the Commission's strong commitment to addressing hate speech, particularly within Nigeria's diverse political, ethnic and religious landscape.

This statement was made during the 2024 International Day for Countering Hate Speech, held at the Commission's headquarters in Abuja. The event,



Sitting from L - R 5th - Executive Secretary NHRC Dr. Tony Ojukwu OFR, SAN and Co-Chair National Committee Against Torture, (NCAT), members of the Committee and other stakeholders during a "strategic meeting on prevention of Torture in Nigeria" held at the Commission Headquarters, Abuja

fulfilling Nigeria's commitments under the OPCAT and enhancing the protection of human rights in places of deprivation of liberty, and effective National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) that upholds the dignity and rights of all individuals that have been deprived of their liberty."



From L-R Thambekile Dube-Ncube from Office of the United Nations High Commission on Human Rights Executive Secretary NHRC Dr. Tony Ojukwu, OFR, SAN, ficmc, Philip Delange representative of the UN Resident & Humanitarian Coordinator

It could be recalled that in response to the challenges posed by hate speech, the NHRC launched the Mobilizing Voters for Election (MOVE) project to enhance access, participation, and accountability in the 2023 general elections. The Commission also established a National Hate Speech Register to document incidents and reports of hate speech across Nigeria and trained its staff in monitoring and reporting such cases.

NHRC EBONYI STATE OFFICE INTERVENES INTO RIGHTS VIOLATION TRIGGERED BY CLERGYMAN'S 'SPIRITUAL REVELATION'

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) is currently investigating an alleged arson and human rights violation perpetrated against Mr. John Ekpono in Iboko Community in Izzi Local Government Area of Ebonyi State.

The alleged human rights violation was reportedly perpetrated by the youths in the community, following a spiritual revelation by a Clergyman, "Ubadimma", who stated that the victim was responsible for the community's backwardness and other calamities in the area.

The State Coordinator of the NHRC, Mr. Christopher Okorie, while reacting to the incident in an interview with News Agency of Nigeria (NAN), condemned the alleged action of the youths, assuring the public that justice will prevail at the end of the

investigation.

Okorie expressed concern that people could throw caution to the wind and indulge in such a barbaric act to witch hunt innocent citizens in this age and time despite increased nationwide human rights sensitization.

Besides, Section 443 of Criminal Code Act in Nigeria provides that "Any person who wilfully sets fire to any of the following (a) any building or structure what ever, whether completed or not; (b) any vessel, whether completed or not; (c) any stack of cultivated vegetable produce, or of mineral or vegetable fuel; (d) a mine, or the workings, fittings, or appliances of a mine, is guilty of a felony and is liable to imprisonment for life". The Human Rights Advocate further decried the alleged arson by the youths, saying that

rampaging and burning down Okpono's house is tantamount to taking the laws into their hands, which is highly unacceptable.

The State Coordinator therefore assured the public that the Commission would leave no stone unturned in collaborating with the relevant institutions of government including the Nigeria Police Force to ensure that justice is served to all the parties involved.

He used the opportunity to appeal to the members of the public to always respect the rights of their fellow citizens and report any form of human rights violations to the appropriate institutions of the government such as the Nigeria Police Force, the National Human Rights Commission, the Public Complaints Commission, the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons, among others for redress. ●

MOJ/NHRC PARTNER TO SUPPORT VICTIMS OF TORTURE

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and the Federal Ministry of Justice (MoJ) have reiterated their commitment to support victims of torture, urging stakeholders to enhance medical, psycho-social, and legal assistance.

At an event marking the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, NHRC Executive Secretary Dr. Tony Ojukwu SAN, OFR called for the establishment of rehabilitation centers across the country to support victims and survivors of torture.

The Solicitor General of the Federation and Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Justice, Mrs. Beatrice Jedy-Agba, emphasized government's commitment to advocating for human rights and sensitizing law enforcement agencies, hospitals, and other stakeholders.

The event featured a presentation by Ms Roseline Tasha, Director, Citizens' Rights



Prince Lateef Fagbemi, SAN
Hon. Attorney General of the Federation
and Minister of Justice



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

Department, highlighting achievements in commemorating the day.

anti-torture efforts, including engagement with international mechanisms, reporting, and education.

Civil society organizations, including Access to Justice (A2J), gave goodwill messages

The International Day in Support of Victims of Torture is observed annually on June 26 to raise awareness and promote support for victims of torture and cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment. ●

▶ Continued from Page 2 NHRC HARPS ON STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGEMENT TO PREVENT TORTURE, SEEKS SUPPORT FOR NATIONAL PREVENTIVE MECHANISM

In addition, he recalled that on 27 July 2009, Nigeria became a party to the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (OPCAT), committing to establishing a National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) to prevent torture and ill-treatment in places of deprivation of liberty.

"Specifically, under Article 17 thereof, each State Party is under obligation to maintain, designate or establish independent national preventive mechanisms for the prevention of torture at the domestic level. Accordingly, in April 2023, the National Human Rights Commission has been designated as Nigeria's NPM", Ojukwu stated.

In his zoom presentation at the occasion, Mr. Abdallah Ounnir, Head, African Regional Team & Country Rapporteur for Nigeria, United Nations Sub-Committee on Prevention of Torture stated that the first

step towards addressing issues of torture is to create a national mechanism that would assist member nations to comply with all the necessary international legal instruments prohibiting torture.

Aside from establishing a national mechanism, he pointed out that there is need to provide financial assistance to enable the mechanism to realize its objective of preventing torture and other degrading treatments.

Also, in her presentation, via zoom, Ms. Lisa Henry who leads the International Rehabilitation Council of Torture Victims/Survivors (IRCT) Global Secretariat said that her Office is working to ensure that torture is prevented from happening.

She stated that in order to prevent torture from happening, there is need to have in place relevant personnel who are well-trained and well-resourced to be able to

detect when torture occurs and take the appropriate steps to tackle it head on.

In his goodwill message, the Inspector General of Police (IGP), Kayode Egbetokun said that the Nigeria Police Force is aware of national and international laws as well as the Administration of Criminal Justice Act (ACJA) that prohibits torture, pointing out that the era of torture is gone in the Force's operations especially as it relates to handling crime suspects.

The IGP who was represented at the occasion by Barrister Kehinde Oluwole noted that there are professional ways of extracting information from crime suspects other than subjecting them to torture.

Other stakeholders who gave similar goodwill messages were Deji Ajare- Project Director, Access to Justice & Executive Director, Sterling Law Centre and Member, CAT – Nigeria, and Angela Uzoma-Iwuchukwu, Head of Office, Avocat Sans Frontiers (France) Abuja Office & member, CAT-Nigeria, among others. ●

NHRC ENGAGES WITH ZAMFARA STATE FIRST LADY IN PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS

The Zamfara State office of the National Human Rights Commission recently paid an official visit to the wife of the Governor, Her Excellency, Hajiya Hurriya Daudu Lawal to discuss issues that will further enhance the promotion and protection of human rights in the State.

The State Coordinator, Abdullahi Abubakar who led the delegation to the First Lady appreciated her for the warm reception accorded his team, a gesture which according to him underscored her deep-seated interest in upholding the rights of all citizens, particularly those resident in the State.

The State Coordinator requested for partnership with the State government through the office of the first lady especially in the area of child protection and the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities. According to the Coordinator, the need for collaboration is to reduce the challenges associated with the prosecution

of perpetrators of human rights violations in the State.

Speaking further, the Coordinator noted that as the mother of the state and someone who embodies love and compassion, leveraging the personality of the First Lady and the influence of her office will undoubtedly promote an effective awareness, protect and enforce human rights in the state.

On her part, wife of the governor, Her Excellency, Hajiyya Hurriya Lawal assured the Commission of her readiness to



First Lady of Zamfara State Hajiya Harriya Lawal receiving some publications from the Zamfara State Coordinator during a courtesy visit to the office of the First Lady

collaborate with the Commission in upholding human rights in the State.

It is hoped that this collaboration will go a long way in addressing the numerous human right challenges in Zamfara State. ●

IMO STATE OFFICE RESCUES A MINOR FROM CHILD ABUSE

The Imo State office of the National Human Rights Commission is once again in the news for upholding the rights and welfare of children in Nigeria.

According to the State Coordinator Justina Okeke, a good Samaritan, one Mrs. Peace Ibrahim had on June 1, 2024 reported to the Commission, a case of child battery involving a thirteen year old girl by her aunt, Mrs. Rosemary.

The thirteen year old Blessing was said to have been found in a pool of her own blood by Ms Ibrahim, who immediately drew the attention of the Commission.

Narrating the incidence, the Coordinator stated that the Commission immediately swung into action, first by reporting the matter to the Police and later taking the victim to the hospital where medical treatment was administered on her.

Okeke noted further that the perpetrator (Mrs. Rosemary) was subsequently invited by the Commission and interrogated accordingly.

Deploying proactive measures, the state office invited the victim's elder brother, Mr. Tochukwu Obinna who traveled from Ebonyi State and officially took custody of his

younger sister (Miss Blessing) from the Commission.

This intervention by the Imo State office underscores the Commission's role in protecting the rights and welfare of the child.

It equally highlights the significance of reporting and addressing cases of child abuse for the overall well being of minors who are already vulnerable by their age and cannot speak or take decisions for themselves.

The NHRC is hereby calling on all well meaning Nigerians to do all that it takes in the interest of the child to protect their rights and to make them better adults who in turn will continue with the culture of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in an egalitarian society. ●

STATE OFFICES AT A GLANCE

Abia State Office: No. 9, Item Street, Off Calabar Road, Umuahia, Abia State. Tel: 0803 3473732	Benue State Office: MDGs Office Complex, Kaunum Acka Street, Old GRA, Makurdi. Tel: 081 36730830	Ekiti State Office: Behind New CBN Office Complex, Off New Iyin Road Ado Ekiti, Ekiti State. Tel: 0803 7038224	Kano State Office: Plot 313, Gyadi-Gyadi, New Hospital Road, Opp. Mal. Aminu Kano Teaching Hospital, Kano, Kano State. Tel: 0803 2833051	Nasarawa State Office: Behind Angel Academy, Off Alkali Street, Off Jos Road, Lafia, Nasarawa State. Tel: 0803 3427443	Rivers State Office: 203 Bonny Street, Port-Harcourt, Rivers State. Tel: 08036747115
Abia State Office: Hon. Maduka Enemu, Street, Agu-Awka, Adjacent to Peace Corps Building, Enugu/ Onisha Expressway, Tel: 0803 3766058	Borno State Office: No. 4, Bama Road, Maiduguri, Borno State. Tel: 0806 7833036	Enugu State Office: No. 3, Ezeagu Street, New Haven, Enugu, Enugu State. Tel: 0803 7722569	Katsina State Office: No. 103, Nagogo Rd, Near Old Nitel Office GRA, Katsina, Katsina State. Tel: 0803 1166282	Niger State Office: Abdullahi Kure House, Muazu Mohammed Rd, (Old Airport Road), Minna, Niger State. Tel: 0803 3365395, 0807 4186745	Plateau State Office: Plot 12677, Laminga/Liberty Dam Rd, Opp. Civic Registration Office, Rikkos Village, Jos. Tel: 0803 6849686
Akwa Ibom State Office: No. 160m Nwaniva Rd Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. Tel: 0803 7876516 0817 2681929	Cross River State Office: No. 43, Mekenge Layout, Off Marian Road Calabar, Cross River State. Tel: 0803 6755179 0817 5722286	Gombe State Office: No. 68, 69 & 70, Ground Floor, 362, 363 & 364 3rd Floor, Federal Secretariat Complex Behind Motor Park, Gombe, Gombe State. Tel: 0703 0584926	Kebbi State Office: Abubakar Musa Garkuwa Street, Geshe Phase 1, Birnin-Kebbi. Tel: 0806 5829312	Ogun State Office: 4, Alani Opaleye Drive, Olrunsogo Apo Community, Peps, Abeokuta, Ogun State. Tel: 0802 3649253 0704 9937170	Sokoto State Office: No. 46 Garba Nadam Road, Gowan, Nama Area, Adjacent UDUTH Sokoto, Sokoto State. Tel: 0806 1575389
Adamawa State Office: 1st Floor, Office No. 175- 175b, Federal Secretariat Road, Yola, Adamawa State Tel: 0703 1831522 0802 5498292	Delta State Office: No. 10, Manyam Babangida Way, Opp. State Universal Basic Education Board, (SUBEB), Asaba, Delta State. Tel: 0803 9463100	Imo State Office: Port Harcourt Road Avu Junction, Owerri Imo State. Tel: 0706 1148314	Kogi State Office: Extreme End, Ojo Close, Phase 2, Before WHO Office, Lokoja, Kogi State. Tel: 0803 3645844	Ondo State Office: Road M, House No. 6 2nd Gate, Oba-Ile Housing Estate, Old Airport Road, Akure. Tel: 0803 6307849	Taraba State Office: Magarmi Road, Hiwen Jalingo, Taraba State. Tel: 0803 2862220
Bauchi State Office: No. 20, Old Airport Road, GRA, Bauchi, Bauchi State. Tel: 0802 3400439	Ebonyi State Office: 61, Nnorom Street (Old State Secretariat) Mile 50, Abakaliki, Ebonyi State. Tel: 0813 0011525	Jigawa State Office: Ibrahim Aliyu Bypass, Along Federal University, Opp. Awaji Global Service Filling Station Dutse, Jigawa State. Tel: 0803 0637049	Kwara State Office: No. 3 Old Jebba Road, Opposite Ministry of Agriculture Ilorin, Kwara State. Tel: 0706 8468408	Osun State Office: Block L Plot 33, Oroki Housing Estate, Oshogo, Osun State. Tel: 0803 4949444	Yobe State Office: Federal Secretariat Complex, 1st Floor, Opposite YBC, Gusau Road, Damaturu, Yobe State. Tel: 0803 5332628
Bayelsa State Office: Ground Floor, Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan Federal Secretariat Complex, Ox-Bow Lake, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. Tel: 0803 5424022	Edo State Office: No. 185 Pedrochi House Sapele Road, After Dumez Junction, Benin City, Edo State. Tel: 0901 4329537 0806 9319592	Kaduna State Office: Baron House, Muh'd Buhari Way, Formerly No. 14 Waff Rd, Kaduna, Kaduna State. Tel: 0803 7739448	Lagos State Office: 17, Balogun Street, Off Kudirai Abiola Way, Alausa, Ikeja, Lagos State, Tel: 0803 7213380	Oyo State Office: Room 129/130, First Floor Federal Secretariat Complex, Agodi GRA, Ikoloba Ibadan, Oyo State. Tel: 0703 1555539	Zamfara State Office: No. 109/110 Zamfara Trade Centre GRA, Opp. Filoworld Office, Sokoto Road, Gusau, Zamfara State. Tel: 0706 4315164

Abuja Metropolitan Office: No. 8, Sina Balogun Close, Off Galilee Street, Karu, Abuja. Tel: 0803 5956068

Human Rights Institute Office: Tonimnas Estate, 2201, Cadestral Zone, Liberty Road, Katambe, Abuja. Tel: 0803 6329968

X: @NhrcNigeria Facebook: NHRC Nigeria Instagram: @nhrcnigeria Toll Free: 08006472428 Toll Free Short Code: 6472

Editorial Board

Managing Editor

Obinna Jude Nwakonye

Editor

Fatimah Agwai Moh'd

Correspondents

Ivy Acka

Bernadette Ako

Stephanie Ayuba

Halima Ahmed

Mebrim Kenneth

Jenny T. Torhee

Ruth Yamta

Aisha Ambah

Franklyn Nwoko

Cameraman

Julius Agribe

Farida Anaba

Secretary

Mathew Shemang

Photographer

Gregory Omanakwa Akor

Joy Imeh Sunday