



National Human Rights Commission

STATEMENT BY DR. TONY OJUKWU SAN OFR, THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION AT THE PRESENTATION OF THE DECEMBER 2024 HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION DASHBOARD AND 2024 YEAR OVERVIEW

Date: 28th January 2024

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the presentation of the December 2024 Human Rights Dashboard and the 2024 Year Overview. Today, we stand united in our shared commitment to upholding the fundamental principles of human rights, and in our collective determination to ensure accountability for violations across our beloved country.

Over the past year, the National Human Rights Commission has worked tirelessly to fulfil its mandate of monitoring, investigating, and addressing human rights concerns across the country. The monthly Dashboard on Human Rights Assessment in Nigeria is a major flagship through which we are fulfilling this sacred mandate. The data we share today is not merely a set of statistics; it represents the day-to-day experiences of Nigerians who continue to entrust us with their complaints and hopes for justice.

In December 2024 alone, the NHRC received a staggering 355,726 complaints of human rights violations. This marks an overwhelming increase from the 1,147 complaints reported in January of the same year. This dramatic surge is a testament to the growing awareness among Nigerians of their rights, and the trust they have placed in the Commission as a crucial avenue for seeking justice and redress. It is a clear indication that Nigerians are increasingly aware of their human rights and are turning to the Commission as a beacon of hope in the face of adversity.

The violations documented in 2024 paint a sobering picture of the challenges we face. Among the most prevalent issues were the violation of the rights to freedom of expression, assembly and association; abandonment of children, attacks on law enforcement, discrimination, sexual and gender-based violence, the suppression of civic space, as well as the escalating violence of banditry and mass killings. These issues, though varied, underscore the complexity of the human rights landscape in Nigeria.

While this dashboard highlights the extent of the violations, it also serves as an urgent call to action. These findings should not just be a point of reflection—they must be a facilitator for change. The protection of human rights cannot, and must not, rest solely on the shoulders of the National Human Rights Commission alone. We call on all stakeholders—our government, civil society organizations, international partners, and all Nigerians—to come together to reinforce our collective efforts to combat systemic injustices.

We must strengthen mechanisms of accountability and justice. We must advance policies and interventions that safeguard the freedom of expression and combat discrimination in all its forms. It is essential that we invest in the welfare and training of law enforcement officers to ensure that they act in accordance with human rights standards. And we must commit to

protecting the most vulnerable in our society, particularly the children who are often neglected and abused.

Dear partners, colleagues and gentlemen of the media, the year 2025 is a milestone for the NHRC as it marks its 30th anniversary of its establishment. From military dictatorships to democratic governments, the NHRC has come a history of resilience, innovation and commitment to the Nigerian people. We will be making this year one for not just the NHRC but for all Nigerians and recommit ourselves and the entire nation to realizing Nigeria's obligations in international human rights.

We are deeply grateful to our partners, particularly the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) for their continued and unwavering support.

To the Nigerian people, we thank you for your courage in bringing forward your complaints. Your voices fuel our commitment to safeguard your rights, and we assure you that the Commission remains resolute in its mission to safeguard your rights and uphold your dignity.

Today's presentation is not the end, but the beginning of renewed efforts. The data we present demands innovative solutions, strengthened partnerships, and a collective resolve to address the human rights challenges in our country. Working together and prioritising human rights in government policies and programmes, we can make 2025 a major turning point in our quest to becoming a leading nation where no man or woman is oppressed or left behind. Together, let us continue to champion the values of dignity, justice, and equality for all Nigerians.

Thank you.

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National Human Rights Commission