

Human Rights Council 40th session

UPR adoption: Nigeria

Speaker:– Jude Chimdi Ohanele- *Check against delivery*

Thank you Mr. President.

ISHR and the West African Human Rights Defenders Network welcome the important recommendations made this cycle to Nigeria, including on the security forces and impunity, on the freedoms of expression and association, and on violence against women. We urge the government to take credible action to implement these.

The government noted in its report that security services officers have been held accountable for extra judicial killings. However, in reality, the security agencies, other state actors and militia groups, have continued to carry out extra judicial killings with impunity. Between the 27th and 30th of October 2018, the Nigerian Army reportedly killed 45 Shiite Muslim protesters in Abuja. No army personnel have been held accountable for those or other killings including those Rivers State during the recent general elections.

The government has continued to crack down on freedom of expression in Nigeria, with numerous journalists having been attacked and detained in 2017 and 2018.

Gender based violence, especially rape and sexual violence, are a serious concern. According to UNICEF, 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 10 boys experience sexual violence before the age of 18. The government has claimed that the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act 2015 is being implemented throughout Nigeria, however it is only applicable in the Federal Capital Territory.

The government has not shown sufficient political will to invest in protecting women and girls from sexual violence or to hold perpetrators accountable. We urge the nationwide application of the Gender and Equal Opportunities Bill, the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act and the Child Rights Act.

Thank you