

**COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS CLINIC ORGANISED AND
HOSTED BY THE COMMITTEE FOR THE DEFENCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS ON TUESDAY
23RD AND WEDNESDAY 24TH JUNE, 2009 AT THE RIGHTS HOUSE, 43 ADENIYI JONES
AVENUE, IKEJA LAGOS.**

As part of the activities marking the 20th anniversary of the **COMMITTEE FOR DEFENCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS (CDHR)**, Nigeria, a Human Rights Clinic was organized for the general public with the collaboration of the **OFFICE OF PUBLIC DEFENDER OF LAGOS STATE; NIGERIAN BAR ASSOCIATION IKEJA BRANCH; HUMAN RIGHTS RESOURCE CENTER OF THE LAGOS STATE POLICE COMMAND AND THE CRIME VICTIMS FOUNDATION OF NIGERIA.**

At the clinic, about twenty lawyers and police officers attended to various complaints by members of the public who came to the venue to benefit from the opportunity afforded them to lodge complaints of human rights violation which were immediately treated and appropriate remedies or redress obtained. This novel idea was designed in such a way that complaints against Lagos State Governmental Agencies were dealt with immediately by the Office of Public Defender; complaints against the police were dealt with immediately by the Human Rights Resource Center of the Lagos State Police Command and Crime Victims Foundation of Nigeria while the Nigerian Bar Association and the CDHR counseled those in need of counseling.

At the end of clinic sessions, consultants exchanged ideas on issues affecting the protection and defence of human rights of Nigerians and resolved as follows:

- That the clinic congratulates the CDHR for her 20 years of active defence of human rights in Nigeria and commends the CDHR for the innovative collaboration that brought about the Human Rights Clinic for the benefit of the general public.
- That the clinic welcomes the Human Rights Resource Center of the Lagos State Police Command into the human rights community wholeheartedly and calls on the general public to lodge their complaints with the police human rights centers and the Human Rights Desk Officers now in every Division of the police in Lagos State. Clinic calls on police authorities to make adequate provision for the needs of the center to make it more productive.
- That in order to expand enjoyment of human rights by the people and reduce violations traceable to the police, Human Rights should be added as compulsory course at Police Colleges all over Nigeria and that existing men and women in the police force be trained on human rights standards for law enforcement agencies within the next three years.
- That onerous conditions being attached to grant of bail by Judges and Magistrates is responsible for congestion of prisons due to inability of suspects to satisfy the conditions which amounts to indirect denial of bail hence the clinic calls for relaxation of the terms.
- That members of the public are urged to enjoy their rights to bail at police stations as police bail remains free hence it will amount to a crime to demand for or give payment for bail
- Those judicial attitudes to human right matters need to be improved upon.
- That there is urgent need for the Chief Justice of Nigeria to review the technicalities of the fundamental Rights Enforcement Procedure to enable ordinary and indigent victims of rights violation approach the courts for redress more easily as is being done under the epistolary jurisdiction of the India High Courts where any indigent member of the public can address complaints directly to judges who are empowered to make orders as may be necessitated by the facts of each case.

- That all organs concerned with the administration of justice should ensure speedy treatment of case files to avoid delay in the dispensation of justice.
- That provision should be made for compensation for victims of crimes in Nigeria to be paid by those responsible for the crimes or by their estate in case they die.
- That all damages awarded by various courts in favour of victims of human rights violations should be paid without further delay as non-payment encourages impunity and frustrates the rule of law.
- That this collective Human Rights Clinic should begin to hold monthly and regularly as another platform for creating awareness about human rights and redressing violations.
- That Nigerians are enjoined to embrace human rights education to enable them enjoy and defend their rights



BARR. DAVE AJETOMOBI

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