



NIGERIAN BAR ASSOCIATION OWERRI BRANCH

OFFICE OF THE VICE CHAIRMAN/CHAIRMAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE NBA OWERRI BRANCH PRESENTED BY THE VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE NBA OWERRI BRANCH/CHAIRMAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE, DATED THIS 26TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2026

Activities from July – September 2026

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Human Rights Committee of the Nigerian Bar Association, Owerri Branch, under the leadership of the Vice Chairman/Chairman, Human Rights Committee, commenced the present administration with a commitment to strengthening access to justice, responding to rights violations and deepening the role of the Bar in public-interest advocacy.

Before the formal resumption of the Human Rights Clinic, the Committee's work was reflected in public advocacy. On 16 July 2026, at the behest of the Chairman of NBA Owerri Branch, the Vice Chairman /Chairman of the human rights committee, delivered a Goodwill Address/Presentation at the University Policy Dialogue commemorating the 23rd anniversary of the Maputo Protocol held at the Faculty of Law Lecture Theatre, IMSU.

On Saturday, the 4th day of July 2026, the Chairman also participated in an awareness walk organised by **Stand for Humanity Foundation** against all forms of child abuse, during which the Committee briefed newsmen on its willingness to receive complaints from members of the public and collaborate with relevant agencies.

The Monday Human Rights Clinic formally resumed on 27th July 2026. The chairman of committee constituted two panels within the committee, with each panel sitting on alternate weeks on a rotational basis. The Chairman, Alternate Chairman & Secretary of committee may sit on all panels as their convenience permits. **Panel 1**, led by **Phil Amaefule Esq**, comprises of other members like **Blessing Emeghara, Ephraim Okafor, Chris Nnaji, Humphrey Asichukwu, Uchenna Nnadozie, Rufus Abanobi, and Chidiebere Enyia**, while **Panel 2**, headed by **Ngozi Ejike Esq**,

comprises of other members like **O.C.J. Kamalu, Kissinger Ikeokwu, Victoria Joshua, Godspower Ukaegbu, Franklin Agughalam, Ugonna Uzowuru, and Richard Agumanu**. Since then, the Committee while being aided by volunteers like Dr. Chioma Emukah, Iyke Umah, Queen Nwakaibeya, Ola Anosike, Ifeanyi Nwaturuocha, Kelechi Ogugbuaja etc has considered 30 formal petitions, alongside a number of urgent interventions arising outside the regular Clinic process. For easy reference, The committee introduced a filing/numbering system for petitions or complaints received and below are the petitions handled.

2.0 HUMAN RIGHTS CLINIC – PETITIONS HANDLED

File No.	Brief Subject / Action	Status
HRC/OW/01/2026	Perfume business dispute; police intervention; complainant released unconditionally.	RESOLVED
HRC/OW/02/2026	Indigent accused in armed robbery charge; counsel F.C. Obinna Esq., recommended and defence commenced.	REFERRED
HRC/OW/03/2026	Detention at Anti-Kidnapping Unit in alleged terrorism matter; request for charge/administrative bail.	PENDING
HRC/OW/04/2026	Domestic/family dispute already before court; referred to FIDA for assistance.	REFERRED
HRC/OW/05/2026	Domestic abuse/neglect; children returned; Committee monitoring welfare arrangements.	PENDING
HRC/OW/06/2026	Domestic violence/neglect; parties reconciled with focus on welfare of two children.	RESOLVED
HRC/OW/07/2026	Domestic violence/discrimination allegations; complainant advised to obtain private legal representation.	DISMISSED
HRC/OW/08/2026	Rape of minor; police investigation and prosecution commenced; additional suspects being pursued.	PENDING
HRC/OW/09/2026	Rape of vulnerable woman; suspect charged and remanded; watching brief and monitoring.	PENDING
HRC/OW/10/2026	Workplace appointment dispute; complainant able to	DISMISSED

	engage counsel; not considered HRC matter.	
HRC/OW/11/2026	Alleged hospital negligence resulting in death; request for police investigation.	PENDING
HRC/OW/12/2026	Detention over alleged aiding of kidnapping; intervention led to immediate release.	RESOLVED
HRC/OW/13/2026	Colleague sought institutional support over client detained by anti-robbery unit; client released.	RESOLVED
HRC/OW/14/2026	Colleague sought support over alleged arrest by proxy; administrative bail secured.	RESOLVED
HRC/OW/15/2026	Alleged assault/detention by Ihiagwa Police; petitioner could not return for Clinic hearing.	DISMISSED
HRC/OW/16/2026	Alleged assault/inhumane treatment by husband; hearing adjourned for 28 September.	PENDING
HRC/OW/17/2026	Land matter at Ulakwo Customary Court; counsel contacted and flexible fees encouraged.	REFERRED
HRC/OW/18/2026	Marital/child custody dispute; volunteer to assist with formal custody process.	PENDING
HRC/OW/19/2026	Serious assault allegedly involving fall from storey building; hospital and police facts to be verified.	PENDING
HRC/OW/20/2026	Alleged repeated rape of vulnerable minor; petition to be pursued with relevant branch HRC.	REFERRED
HRC/OW/21/2026	Property dispute outside jurisdiction; complainant advised to engage private practitioner.	DISMISSED
HRC/OW/22/2026	Two indigent security men arrested by Shell Camp Police; intervention secured immediate bail.	RESOLVED
HRC/OW/23/2026	Civil dissolution matter; volunteer offered representation subject to flexible arrangement.	REFERRED
HRC/OW/24/2026	Alleged assault/ejection threat by caretaker;	RESOLVED

	landlord's counsel undertook to take lawful process and not self-help.	
HRC/OW/25/2026	Alleged arrest involving Army contacts; intervention at 34 Artillery Brigade; man released to police.	RESOLVED
HRC/OW/26/2026	Custody/child-protection issue involving two minors in onitsha; referred to NBA Onitsha HRC.	REFERRED
HRC/OW/27/2026	Business property allegedly damaged during government works; advised to engage counsel; possible escalation to Attorney General.	REFERRED
HRC/OW/28/2026	Family/homestead dispute involving alleged threat; parties invited for hearing.	PENDING
HRC/OW/29/2026	Detention over alleged advance-fee fraud exceeding N50m; Committee plans engagement with CP.	PENDING
HRC/OW/30/2026	Late colleague's son detained over unregistered motorcycle; Committee intervention secured bail.	RESOLVED

Summary: 9 Resolved | 7 Referred | 10 Pending | 4 Dismissed. Through our intervention, about 11 people have so far been released from detention or on bail.

3.0 THE HUMAN RIGHTS VOLUNTEER NETWORK

A particularly significant development has been the mobilisation of members of the Branch as Human Rights Volunteers. The Committee has deliberately moved towards the philosophy that human-rights protection should not be the responsibility of the Chairman or a few designated members alone, but a collective responsibility of the Bar under coordinated leadership.

Our volunteers have participated in police interventions, prison matters, child-protection cases, legal representation, monitoring and other urgent assignments. Their interventions have included securing releases, assisting indigent persons, providing representation, visiting vulnerable victims and engaging relevant institutions. The Committee has consequently established a Human Rights Volunteer WhatsApp network for information sharing, mobilisation and deliberation on emerging human-rights issues.

4.0 SUPPORT TO MEMBERS OF THE BAR

An important observation from the Clinic's work is that a number of petitions were brought directly by our colleagues or referred by colleagues who had encountered institutional bottlenecks in the course of discharging their professional obligations to their clients.

In such situations, the lawyers required institutional engagement beyond the ordinary lawyer-client relationship. The Committee therefore served as a support mechanism, engaging relevant police authorities and other institutions where necessary. Matters such as HRC/OW/13/2026 and HRC/OW/14/2026 demonstrate how the Committee can complement, rather than substitute, the professional efforts of individual counsel.

5.0 OTHER INTERVENTIONS AND INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENT

Outside the formal Clinic files, the Committee and its volunteers have intervened in a number of urgent matters. A civil matter at Umuagwo Police Station was addressed by our member, leading to the release of the suspect. Another civil matter at the Fire Service Police Station, brought to the attention of the Chairman of committee by the Publicity Secretary of the branch Chimere Okoronkwo Esq., was promptly escalated to the Area Commander and the suspect was released. A further matter at D8 department of the SCID also resulted in bail. Volunteers Chigozie Okenmili, Esq. and Jeff Nnodim, Esq. secured the release of a prison inmate reportedly held for about two years without meaningful prosecution of the case.

The Committee also undertook a familiarisation tour of selected police formations, including Shell Camp Police Station, the Anti-Kidnapping Unit and the office of the Owerri Area Commander. The engagements focused on cooperation in addressing rights abuses and promoting decent policing in line with applicable administration-of-criminal-justice principles. The Committee has also initiated engagement with 34 Artillery Brigade, Obinze, with a view to establishing a constructive institutional interface.

A statutory cell-visitation framework and human rights compliant security agencies monitoring scheme is being developed, with the intention of deploying at least two HRC members/volunteers to each relevant formation to assist indigent suspects and monitor compliance with basic rights and due-process standards.

6.0 PUBLIC ENLIGHTENMENT AND ACCESS TO THE COMMITTEE

To improve accessibility, the Committee has maintained the Monday Human Rights Clinic and established petition boxes at the NBA Bar Centre,

Old High Court Premises, Orlu Road, Owerri; Ozisa FM; and Maria Assumpta Cathedral, Owerri. A dedicated HRC email address, nbaowerrihumanrights@gmail.com, has also been made available for complaints and submissions. An android phone and sim plus accessory were purchased at the rate of N124,400.00 (one hundred and twenty-four thousand four hundred naira only) to house the committee helpline (09030891875), and the said number hereinbefore has been made available to members of the public for complaints and submissions.

The Chairman of Committee has commenced a “**Human Rights Corner**” through three partner newspaper agencies, providing a platform for colleagues to publish public-interest human-rights articles. The article “The Inalienable Right of Liberty” by Stanley Igbudu, Esq., was among the early contributions.

The Chairman of Committee has also commenced the “**Know Your Rights**” radio programme on **Zanders FM 105.7**, Owerri, airing Saturdays at 2:00 p.m. The maiden edition was initiated with Isaac Imoban, Esq., Goodluck Okebata, Esq. and Richard Agumanu, Esq., as guests, while the second episode featured Ndidi Anike Val Okeoma, Esq. and Divine Eronini, Esq.

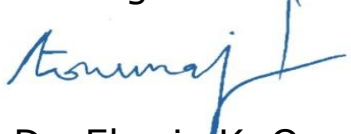
7.0 FINANCIAL REPORT: The committee has not received any amount from the branch for any of its activities or its expenditures.

8.0 CONCLUSION

Within the period under review, the Human Rights Committee has sought to combine responsive intervention with institutional development. From the Maputo Protocol public lecture and child-abuse awareness engagement, through 30 formal Clinic petitions and several urgent detention interventions, the Committee has worked to make the Bar more accessible to persons whose rights require timely institutional support.

Particular emphasis has been placed on supporting colleagues where institutional bottlenecks affect the discharge of their professional obligations, strengthening cooperation with police and other security institutions, and building a volunteer network in which human-rights protection becomes a collective responsibility of the Branch.

The Committee will continue to consolidate these initiatives, expand public enlightenment, strengthen monitoring and visitation mechanisms, support vulnerable persons and deepen collaboration with relevant institutions, while maintaining the professional and institutional standards expected of the Nigerian Bar Association.



Dr. Ekezie K. Onumajulu, Esq.

Vice Chairman NBA Owerri branch/

Chairman human rights committee

07034436094