

PRESS RELEASE



NIGERIA POLICE FORCE REFUTES AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REPORT

The attention of the Nigeria Police has been drawn to an on-line publication entitled '**Welcome to Hell-Fire**': **torture and other ill-treatment in Nigeria**.

While we do not question the freedom of Amnesty International to earn its relevance and bread, the Nigeria Police takes serious exceptions to some blatant falsehoods and innuendoes contained in that report.

For one, it smacks of indecency and intemperate language to liken our dear nation Nigeria, to hell fire. That cannot be true. We believe that Nigeria is a growing nation, green and largely peaceful.

While the Nigeria Police and other operators in the criminal justice sector are undergoing systematic reforms, and aligning themselves with the demands of democracy, there is no gain saying the fact that the Nigeria Police Force has since improved its operational efficiency and effectiveness. Since the dawn of democracy in 1999, the Nigeria Police Force has significantly improved on its human rights records, owing largely to training and re-training, community policing, attitudinal change and structural transformation.

In its report under reference, Amnesty International did admit in its methodology that it visited some Police Formations and interviewed some family members of suspects. At no time in its report, did Amnesty speak or interface with the Police authorities. This obviously shows their disdain and apparent lack of character where the democratic tenets of fair hearing are concerned.

The report covered a seven year period of 2007-2014. I dare say that some of the issues raised have since been dispensed with and settled.

Of a truth, torture or ill-treatment is not, repeat, NOT an official policy of the Nigeria Police.

The Code of Conduct of Officers, as well as our Regulations prohibit torture and incivility to members of the public. We are versed with international best practices, and the dictates of the Nigerian Constitution as regards human rights. So the Police do not routinely torture suspects. It is not systemic or endemic. Whenever instances of human rights abuses are brought to the notice of superintending officers, the offending personnel are promptly sanctioned in line with the laws and regulations. For the avoidance of doubt, Nigeria Police Force has a zero tolerance for corruption and abuse of power. **There is no Immunity for impunity in Nigeria Police Force.**

Besides, the Nigeria Police is women-friendly. We do not target sex workers, nor routinely adopt rape as a weapon. Instead, the Police has established a family and human trafficking unit to protect the rights of women, children and the vulnerable members of our society.

However, the Nigeria Police Force shall meticulously scan through the document, and investigate any current human rights abuses linked to any officer or formation. Any identified and established case of malfeasance or misconduct shall be treated in line with the laws and regulations.

We crave the indulgence of Amnesty International to, for the first time, furnish the Police with specific details of its allegations to enable us reach the ends of justice for the alleged victims, and to improve our service delivery.

The Nigeria Police Force remains responsive to the yearnings of Nigerians for improved safety and security.

The Police is your helper and friend.

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