



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

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### Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

## Written statement\* submitted by the Agence pour les droits de l'homme, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[16 March 2017]

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\* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

GE.17-04321(E)



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## **Zaria Massacre: Nigeria Human Rights Violations and Impunity to Rule of Law\***

The research and investigations at the social and humanitarian level we have undertaken confirmed the following. There was a massacre of a Nigerian (religious/political) minority group by Nigerian army in December 2015. More than 1000 unarmed civilians and children were killed within 48 hours. Bodies of the dead and wounded-but-alive were burnt and dumped in a mass grave. The leader of the minority group was captured and detained extra-judicially and is to-date being tortured systematically by depriving him access to necessary and professional medical care or facilities.

For a glimpse to the December 2015 atrocities by Nigerian Army in violation of fundamental human rights of unarmed citizens, consider the following two findings:

1. Thirteen and seventeen years old girls were shot directly on their private organs and also breasts for the latter. Two years old baby girl, her mother and aunt have gone missing. Tens of girls and women, mostly students, were taken away by the Nigerian Army.
2. On the 14th December 2015, cornered at their home (No. 1 Wali Street, Gyallesu, Zaria) by Nigerian Army, three teen agers were directly shot to dead at close range in front of their parents. Their aunt, an elderly woman was locked in a room and burned alive to death.

On January 29, 2016, a Kaduna State judicial commission of inquiry (JCI) was inaugurated to investigate the Zaria massacre. There were calls by Nigerian human rights community and activists that the judicial commission of inquiry be reconstituted by removing the JCI members who have always nursed animosity towards the victims, the minority group attacked. The calls were ignored unfortunately. Nevertheless, on July 15, 2016, the findings of the JCI were reported. The Secretary to the Kaduna State Government confirmed the gruesome massacre of 347 people by the army. The existence of a mass grave where the massacred people were dumped was also confirmed.

The JCI recommended that the General Officer Commanding the Nigerian Army's 1st Division, Adeniyi Oyebade and other yet-to-be-disclosed Nigerian Army officers who participated in the Zaria massacre should be taken for trial to a court of competent jurisdiction. It established that the massacre of the minority was carried out strictly on Mr. Oyebade's order without exercising any rules of engagement.

Despite the recommendations by the JCI and in a clear defiance to rule of law, to date, there was not any prosecution or arrest of the criminal elements who perpetrated the Zaria Massacre crimes in December 12-14 2015.

The leader of the minority group was extra-judicially detained since December 14, 2015. He has survived several bullets and completely lost an eye as a result of the inhumane attack and shootings at close range by the Nigerian Army that invaded his house. He in a deteriorating health conditions. The Nigerian government authority detaining him are essentially torturing him in a silent but systematic manner by denying access to competent medical care. Human rights-based attempts to assist with medical care and facilities were and still are intentionally blocked.

On December 2, 2016, after months of research and case hearings a federal court of justice issued a verdict for the release of the minority leader, Sayyid Ibraheem Zakzaky. The Nigerian government did not respect the court's ruling. Nor were any judicially robust response given to the court and people of Nigeria.

We strongly urge the council to intervene towards saving the live of Zakzaky out of torture. The leader of the about twenty million Nigerian minority group is in dire need of appropriate medical treatment and access to competent medical facilities. Nigeria should be called to order for the violations of fundamental human rights of its citizens. Nigeria should be reminded and assisted as appropriate about the importance of establishing the rule of law in a democracy.

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\* Global Human Rights Advocacy For Sustainable Growth, Empowerment, And Leadership Development (GHRA), NGO without consultative status, also shares the views expressed in this statement.