



# Annual Report



# The State of Press Freedom in Nigeria 2020



A report by International Press Centre (IPC)  
with funding support from Media foundation  
for West Africa (MFWA)

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## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

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In this report the International Press Centre (IPC) with the support of Media Foundation for West Africa, seeks to review the landscape of press freedom in Nigeria and draw connections between the several issues that concern the media in a way that reflects the state of its existence.

It sheds light on present challenges to media freedom, drawing attention to the need to review laws, end violations of journalists' rights, and enhance media professionalism that will sustain a truly free press, among other issues.

Nigeria is one of the countries in West Africa that has the highest number of infractions on press freedom which has continued to shrink the Civic space.

In its 2020 annual World Press Freedom Index, Reporters Sans frontières (RSF) ranked Nigeria 115 out of 180 countries, and rights groups have continued to express alarm about conditions for the media in Nigeria over the past year.

Journalists are arbitrarily arrested, killed, forcibly kidnapped and unlawfully detained. Worsening these threats is the introduction of two prohibitive legislative proposals – the Hate Speech and the Social Media Bills, which until recently were under consideration in the National Assembly.

The campaign for the elections in which President Muhammadu Buhari obtained another term in February 2019 was marked by an unprecedented level of disinformation, especially on social media.

Similarly, Buhari Administration has flagrantly flouted its own multiple treaty obligations. Articles 19 of the Universal Declarations on Human Rights, Article 9 of the

African Charter on Human and People's Rights, as well as Sections 65 and 66 of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Protocol not to mention other United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) protocols are just a handful of international instruments that the country has committed to but constantly flouts with regards to its obligation to promote a free press.

The International Press Centre through the Safety Alert Desk revealed that forty-eight (48) journalists and eight (8) media outlets were attacked in 2020 with the perpetrators including security agents, paramilitary forces, political agents, and unknown gun men.

18 journalists were assaulted for covering the nationwide #ENDSARS protests against police brutality in October 2020. In ten cases, a member of the national police force was the perpetrator as reported by Committee to Protect journalists (CPJ).

The Nigerian socio-political environment influences press freedom with adverse implications for education, information, entertainment, and surveillance. A theoretical recognition of the press as the "fourth estate" connotes the capacity of the press to monitor the tiers of government (the legislature, the executive and the judiciary). However, the state monitors the press in Nigeria in a manner that negates the principle of the fourth estate.

## Chapter 2

### 2.1 THE LAWS REGULATING MEDIA PRACTICE IN NIGERIA

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Below is a summation of laws governing the dissemination and reception of information of the Nigerian media to the public, their rights and duties to the individuals and state in general.

#### SUMMARY OF MEDIA LAWS 1903 TO DATE

##### **A: As at Independence in 1960**

1. The Newspaper Act, 1917.
2. Presses Regulation Act, 1933 .
3. The Criminal Code Act and schedules thereto insofar as it deals with:
  - Sedition: sections 50 and 51 (ss 416 & 417 of Penal Code)
  - Injurious Falsehood: section 59 (sec 418 PC)
  - Criminal Defamation: ss 373-379 (ss 391-392 PC)
  - Power to prohibit importation of publications: sec 58
  - Seditious publication against foreign head of state: sec 60
  - Contempt of Court: sec 6 Criminal Code Act & sec 133

##### **B: Between 1960 and the Coup d'etat of 1966**

1. Children and Young Person (Harmful Publication) Act, 1961
2. Defamation Act 1961
3. Emergency Powers Act 1961

4. Seditious Meeting Act 1961
5. Obscene Publications Act 1961
6. Official Secrets Act 1962
7. Newspaper (Amendment) Act 1964

**C: Between 1966 and 1979**

1. Circulation of Newspaper Decree No 2, 1966
2. The Defamatory and Offensive Publications Decree No 44, 1966
3. Newspaper Prohibition of Circulation Decree No 17, 1967
4. Public Officers (Protection Against False Accusation) Decree No 11, 1976
5. Newspaper (Prohibition of Circulation) (Validation) Decree No 12, 1978
6. Nigerian Press Council Decree No 31, 1978
7. Daily Times of Nigeria (Transfer of Certain Shares) Decree No 101, 1979.
8. Constitution of the federal Republic of Nigeria (Certain Consequential Repeals etc) Decree No. 115, 1979

**D: From 1979 to return of the Military in Dec. 1983 and beyond**

1. Constitution (Suspension and Modification) Decree No I, 1984
2. State Security (Detention of Persons) Decree No 2, 1984
3. Public Officers (Protection Against False Accusation) Decree No 4, 1984
4. The Federal Military Government (Supremacy and Enforcement of Powers) Decree No 13, 1984
5. Nigerian Media Council Decree 59 of 1989
6. Nigerian Press Council Decree 85 of 1992
7. National Broadcasting Commission Decree 38 of 1992
8. Treason & Treasonable Offences Decree 29 of 1993
9. Offensive Publications (Proscription) Decree 35 of 1993
10. Newspapers etc (Suspension and Prohibition from Circulation) Decree 48 of 1993

11. Newspaper Decree 45 of 1993
12. The Constitution (Suspension & Modification) Decree 107 of 1993
13. State Security (Detention of Persons) (Amendment) (No.2) Decree 14, 1994. 14. Nigeria Press Council (Amendment) Decree 60 of 1999.

### **Constitutional Base of the Press:**

Sec 24, 1960 Constitution

Sec 25, 1963 Constitution

Secs 21 & 36 1979 Constitution

Secs 22 & 38, 1989 Constitution

Secs 23 & 40, 1995 Draft Constitution

Secs 22 & 39, 1999 Constitution

### **Ethical Base of the Nigerian Press:**

NUJ Code

Code of the Nig. Guild of Editors. 1962

Code of NPO, 1978 (9) adopted officially in Dec, 1992 Ilorin Code 1998 - operative to date.

### **Some of the Laws Abrogated on May 1999 to help sustain the Walk on the Democracy Highway:**

Listed below are the decrees, as they affect media practice, which ceased to have effect on the departure of the military:

- Constitution (Suspension and Modification) Decree No.1 of 1984
- State Security (Detention of Persons) Decree No. 2 of 1984
- Public Officers (Specific Provisions) Decree No. 17 of 1984
- Military Courts (Specific Powers) Decree No. 23 of 1984
- Treason and other Offences Decree No 29 of 1993

-Constitution (Suspension and Modification) Decree No 107 of 1993

-The Newspaper Decree of 1993 was also abrogated and its rights, interests and staff transferred the Nigerian Press Council established under the NPC Decree of 1 992.

**Table 1 Showing laws regulating the media in Nigeria**

Laws	Pitfalls to Note	Action Points
<p><b>The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended)</b></p> <p>The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended) is the supreme law of Nigeria. It guarantees the freedom of the press, as a backbone of the right to freedom of expression.</p> <p>Section 39 subsection (1) and (2). Subsection (1) provides that "every person shall be entitled to freedom of expression, including freedom to hold and to receive and impart ideas and information without interference.</p> <p>" Subsection (2) states that "without prejudice to the generality of subsection (1) of this section, every person shall be entitled to own, establish and operate any medium for the dissemination of information, ideas and opinion." Subsection (2), however, states that private</p>	<p>Section 45 of the 1999 Constitution (as amended) places limitations on the freedom of expression in the interest of defense, public safety, public order, public morality or public health. The restriction of press freedom on these grounds is applicable to print, electronic, and online media.</p> <p>Section 22 is located in chapter 2 of the constitution whose provisions are non-justiciable. The implication is that the media cannot legally enforce its constitutional right to monitor governance especially when under attack in the course of carrying out the legitimate responsibility.</p>	<p>The media should continue to insist on a constitutional guarantee of freedom of the press and sustain the campaign and advocacy for section 22 of the constitution to be moved to chapter 4 (Fundamental Rights) so that the media and journalists can enforce the right to hold the government accountable whenever they are faced with obstacles.</p>



<p>ownership of a television or wireless broadcast station for any purpose whatsoever must be authorised by the president.</p> <p>Section 22 of the Nigerian constitution also provides that: "The press, radio, television and other agencies of the mass media shall at all times be free to uphold the fundamental objectives contained in this Chapter and uphold the responsibility and accountability of the Government to the people".</p>		
<p><b>The Freedom of Information Act (2011) As Amended</b></p> <p>The Freedom of Information Act was enacted on 28 May 2011 as a specific law to facilitate rights to access to information in Nigeria. The law provides access to public records and information, making them freely available, subject to the extent consistent with the public interest and the protection of personal privacy. The 32 sections of the Freedom of Information Act extensively address a wide range of issues relating to access to public records. These include the right of access to public information, records of information to be kept by public institutions, applying for and obtaining information and classes of</p>	<p>Many Ministries, Departments and Agencies of government have failed to heed FOI Act requests while many journalists have not been using the law for investigative reports.</p>	<p>The media should step up the usage of the FOI Act while being part of advocacy for greater compliance by state institutions.</p>

<p>information on which access 'may' or 'must' be denied.</p> <p>Section 16 of the Act protects the right of journalists not to disclose their sources.</p>		
<p><b>The National Broadcasting Act (1992)</b></p> <p>The NBC Act establishes the National Broadcasting Commission as "a body corporate with perpetual succession and a common seal and may sue and be sued in its corporate name".</p> <p>The Powers of the Commission according to the Act include, among others:</p> <p>Advising the Federal Government generally on the implementation of the National Mass Communication Policy with particular reference to broadcasting;</p> <p>receiving, processing and considering applications for the establishment, ownership or operation of radio and television stations including-(i) cable television services, direct satellite broadcast and any other medium of broadcasting;</p> <p>(ii) radio and television stations owned, established or operated by the Federal, State or local government;</p> <p>recommending applications through the Minister to the</p>	<p>The NBC through the enabling legislation and the actions of its management lacks the required independence to fairly and impartially regulate the broadcast sector. It continues to be subjected to the political interest of the government in power.</p> <p>NBC's Nigeria Broadcasting Code contains rules and regulations which if violated could lead to stiff sanctions and 8penalties for the broadcast media.</p> <p>There is a bill before the House of Representatives seeking to give it more powers that would affect the independence and freedom of the Nigerian broadcast media</p>	<p>The campaign and advocacy for an independent NBC should be sustained; so also the call for the review of the obnoxious provision in the broadcast code.</p>

<p>President, for the grant of radio and television licences; regulating and controlling the broadcasting industry;</p>		
<p><b>The Nigeria Press Council Act (1992)</b> The Act repeals the Nigerian Media Council Act of 1988 and establishes the NPC to “promote high professional standards for the Nigerian Press and deal with complaints emanating from members of the public about the conduct of journalists in their professional capacity or complaints emanating from the press about the conduct of persons or organisations towards the press and for other matters connected therewith”</p>	<p>Like the NBC, the NPC lacks administrative independence to perform its functions and a bill to amend the Act establishing it before the National Assembly contains provisions that would further curtail press freedom</p>	<p>The media should sustain efforts at ensuring that provisions in the NPC Act that undermine press freedom should be expunged</p>
<p><b>The Nigerian Television Authority Act (1977)</b> The Act establishes the Nigerian Television Authority and charges it with “the responsibility for the provision of television broadcasting in Nigeria and other matter related thereto”.</p>	<p>The NTA has not been able to perform the functions of a public broadcaster as it lacks independence from the government. The management acts at the whim and caprice of the Minister of Information</p>	<p>There is a compelling case to review the NTA Act</p>
<p><b>The Federal Radio Coprotation Act of 1978</b>  The Act establishes the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria with the responsibility to “provide effective radio broadcasting services on a national scale” and providing external broadcasting services.</p>	<p>The FRCN has not been able to perform the functions of a public broadcaster as it lacks independence from the government. The management acts at the whim and caprice of the Minister of Information</p>	<p>There is a compelling case to review the FRCN Act</p>

<p><b>The Voice of Nigeria Corporation Act (1990)</b></p> <p>The Act establishes VON with the power to “provide radio broadcasting services for global reception and for related matters”</p>	<p>The VON has not been able to perform the functions of a public broadcaster as it lacks independence from the government. The management acts at the whim and caprice of the Minister of Information</p>	<p>There is a compelling case to review the VON Act</p>
<p><b>The Electoral Act (2010) As Amended</b></p> <p>The Electoral Act has provisions requiring the state owned print and electronic medium to give equal access on daily basis to all registered political parties or candidates of such political parties.</p> <p>A denial of such access and equal time constitutes an offence punishable in the first instance with a maximum fine of N500, 000 and a withdrawal of the license of the offending electronic media house by the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) for a period of 12 months on any subsequent violation.</p>	<p>This legislation is not limited to the press, but to regulate the conduct of federal, state and Area Council elections and for related matters, there are provisions therein for rules and regulations in the conduct of the press (print and electric media) regarding campaigns for elections by political parties and candidates.</p> <p>(ii) sections 100 and 101 of the Act, provisions are made regarding media time and coverage to be allocated among the political parties and candidates, the use of public media, and prohibition of broadcast at certain hours preceding the election and on election day</p> <p>(iii) The Act makes a contravention of these provisions an offence and prescribes monetary fines on conviction.</p>	<p>The objection to the proposal to increase fines for violation of the Electoral Act by media outlets and extend the sanctions to individual editors should be sustained</p>

	<p>There is a bill to amend the Electoral Act in the Nigerian National Assembly with a proposal to increase the fines for violation and extend it to editors.</p>	
<p><b>The Copyright Act Nigeria (2004)</b></p> <p>The Act provides for the “definition, protection, transfer, infringement of and remedy and penalty thereof of the copyright in literary works, musical works, artistic works, cinematograph films, sound recordings, broadcast and other ancillary matters”</p>	<p>The Copyright Act provides for the protection, transfer, infringement, penalty, the remedy of the creative works of authors, artistic works, songwriters, music publishers, cinematograph films, photographers, and all rounds creative in the media and entertainment industry.</p> <p>Journalists sharing manuscripts and rewriting colleagues’ manuscripts can be risky here. Give credit and quotation marks appropriately</p>	<p>There should be capacity building for the media and journalists on the provisions of this and related laws</p>
<p><b>The Defamation Law (1959 and 1961)</b></p> <p>According to section 3 of both the defamation Law 1961 and the defamation Law 1959 “defamatory words contained in a radio broadcast are also within the ambit of the sections, which define ‘words’ as including ‘pictures, visual images, gestures and other methods of signifying meaning”</p>	<p>Defamation law is one of the most serious dangers facing journalists and publishers today. Journalists may feel that they should have the right to say or publish whatever they feel, after all the constitution provides for freedom of expression, conviction, or opinion. But even in the most liberal society, freedom of expression is not absolute. Journalists should note that while the 1999 Constitution(Sections 22</p>	<p>To prevent cases of libel (print) or slander (broadcast), journalists should bear the following in mind: verify all possible defamatory material, check all facts that question persons’ competence on their job, allegations that indict persons, that peoples commit crimes or stories that imply or directly state persons are</p>

	<p>and 39 provide that everyone has the right to freedom of expression, as well as hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of the frontiers, the same constitution makes provisions that restrict this freedom in the interest of national security, territorial integrity or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, etc.</p>	<p>mentally unstable or are afflicted with diseases.</p> <p>Besides, newsmen should exercise caution with arrest reports, damage suits and criminal court proceedings.</p> <p>Journalists are also enjoined to be extra-judiciously careful of statements made by the police or court officials outside the court. Newsmen need to note that truth is a defence but good intentions are not.</p>
<p><b>The Law of Sedition.</b> The Sedition law in Nigeria was one of the earliest that was enacted during the British colonial era in Nigeria to curtail the spate of criticisms against the administration and put a check on the press. This law was intended to curtail the operation of the nationalist press of the time. Known then as the Seditious Offence Ordinance of November 6, 1909, enacted to restrict the press from publishing the "railway scandal", which was widely reported by the nationalist journalists such as Sir Herbert Macaulay. A</p>	<p>Although an Appeal Court had in 1982 ruled that the law should not have any place in a democratic society, the Nigerian Police prosecutors still regularly charge journalists and civil society activists with it. The cases must be heard before lawyer cite judicial precedents, after all.</p>	<p>The media should sustain the argument that the law has been set aside by the Court of Appeal</p>

<p>statement or publication is said to be seditious, when it is intended to incite the people against the federal or state government and to make the people call for a change of government through unlawful means.</p>		
<p><b>The Official Secrets Act 1962</b> The Act provides for “securing public safety and for purposes connected therewith”.</p>	<p>The provisions of the Act that provides for the ‘protection of official information’; ‘protection of defence establishments’; ‘restriction on photography, et, during periods of emergency’; ‘control of mail forwarding agencies’; ‘power to require information as to offence under this Act’ and ‘Search Warrants’ may easily be used against the media.</p> <p>This Federal Legislation restricts access of journalists and other persons to official information. It makes it an offence on the part of any person to transmit any classified matter to a person to whom it is not authorized on behalf of the government to transmit it or who obtains, reproduces or retains any classified matter which he is not authorized on behalf of the government to obtain, reproduce or retain, as the</p>	<p>The media should continue to advocate that the law has no place in a democracy</p>

	<p>case may be (see section 1).</p> <p>Section 9 of the Act defines "classified matter" as "any information or thing which, under any system of security classification from time to time in use by or by any branch of the government, is not to be disclosed to the public and of which the disclosure to the public would be prejudicial to the security of Nigeria."</p>	
<p><b>Obscene and Harmful Publications Act, 1961.</b></p> <p>Section 3 (1) of the Obscenity Act of 1961 states that an article shall be deemed obscene if its general effect tends to deprave and corrupt audience or readers who might have either read or heard the matter.</p> <p>The Federal Legislation which seeks to prohibit publication or distribution of any article or object deemed to be obscene and provides a fine or imprisonment not exceeding 3 years or both (section 4 (1)). Section 3(1) in particular contains the provisions for obscenity.</p>	<p>Two critical issues here can be exploited to sue journalists: tendency to deprave and corrupt and the audience who are likely to read and the matter embodied herein.</p> <p>Another danger zone is the state's enabling instrument, which guards against publication of books and magazine that can negatively affect children as expressed in Children and Young Persons (Harmful Publications Act of 1961). The Act defines harmful publication as, "publication, which consists wholly and mainly of stories told in pictures (with or without the addition of written matter..."</p>	<p>The intentional use of the law to stifle press freedom, whereby legitimate information to the public is curtailed by the government should be highly avoided.</p>



**Cybercrime Act. 2015.**

The (Nigeria's) 2015 Act seeks to provide an effective, unified, and comprehensive, legal regulatory and institutional framework for the prohibition, prevention, detection, prosecution, and punishment of cybercrimes in Nigeria. Journalists are advised to read the provisions of this law, which defines cybercrime as any crime that involves computer and a network". The computer must have been used in perpetrating a crime or may be a target.

Part II of Section 3 of the Act is titled, "Designation of computer systems or networks as critical national infrastructure".

This law gives the President powers to make Orders, among others, "to prescribe minimum standards, guidelines, rules and procedures on access to, transfer and control of data in any critical information infrastructure".

This is a danger zone for journalists. There is a specific provision on "Cyber Stalking", which is gathering information to harass, or sending multiple emails to annoy, embarrass, intimidate, or threaten a person. \*The EFCC holds the power here in trust for the state

Certain provisions in particular section 21 (1) (b) and 24(b) of the law has been used to arrest, jail and prosecute several journalists in relation to their work in the country, the misappropriate use of the law should be avoided.

Campaigns and advocacy on the amendment of harsh provisions against the backdrop of the importance of press freedom should be actively implemented by key stakeholders.

Collaborative efforts towards the safety, protection and Legal intervention mechanisms for journalists should be set up by stakeholders as a means to ensuring press freedom in the country.

**Nigerian Criminal Code 1990.**

The Nigerian Criminal Code derives from Nigeria Criminal Code Act 1916,[1] Nigeria Penal Code Act 1960[2] and

(i) Chapter 7 which runs from sections 50 to 60 deals with sedition and the importation of seditious or undesirable publication. Section 51 makes it an offence to, inter-alia, utter

The abuse of the law in stifling press freedom, to arrest, jail and prosecute journalists in relation to their work in the

other criminal laws enacted by Nigerian Parliament from time to time. The latest consolidated version of the code is contained in Nigerian Criminal Code 1990.

sedition, words, print, publish, sell, offer for sale, distribute, or reproduce or import any seditious publication and prescribes imprisonment of 2 years or a fine or both and for a subsequent offence, imprisonment for 3 years and forfeiture of any seditious publication to the state. It is also an offence to publish false news (s.59) and to publish defamatory matter against any foreign sovereignty.

(ii) Chapter 33 which is made up of sections 373 to 381 makes it an offence to publish any defamatory matter and prescribes a term of imprisonment of 1 year. Where the publisher knows the publication to be false he is liable to imprisonment for 2 years (section 375). However, that section is subject to the other provisions in that chapter 33, e.g. publication is not an offence if at the time it is made is for public benefit and the defamatory matter is true. The chapter goes on to make provisions for cases where certain publications may be absolutely or conditionally privileged.

It should be noted that the Criminal Code Act is an

country, should be campaigned against.

Provisions should be amended against the backdrop of the importance of press freedom and protecting the rights of journalists in the Country.

	<p>important legislation on criminal matters. Moreover, The Federal legislation has been enacted by all the states in southern Nigeria as Criminal Code Law.</p> <p>Additionally, the criminal code in Nigeria does not apply equally to all people in all provinces of the country. Majority of the provisions of the Penal Code apply only to the Northern Provinces in Nigeria.</p>	
<p><b>Nigeria Penal Code Act 1960</b></p>	<p>The Act which prescribes sedition as an offence, also listed provisions in sections 416–421 for offences relating to publication either by words, spoken or written, or by mechanical means which are capable of inciting disaffection to the government (s.416); inciting hatred between classes (S.417); false news with intent to cause offence against public peace (S.418) and possession of seditious articles (S.419); power to prohibit importation of publications (S.420) and punishment for importation of prohibited publication (S.421). Various terms of imprisonment extending to 7 years or fine or both are</p>	<p>The abuse of the law in stifling press freedom, to arrest, jail and prosecute journalists in relation to their work in the country, should be campaigned against.</p> <p>Provisions should be amended against the backdrop of the importance of press freedom and protecting the rights of journalists in the Country.</p>

	<p>prescribed under the chapter. The Penal Code Act is the equivalent of the Criminal Code Act in the northern states of Nigeria.</p>	
<p><b>Newspapers (Amendment) Act/Newspapers Laws 1964</b></p>	<p>(i) This Federal Legislation is regulatory, but it also makes publication of certain statements in a Newspaper an offence (section 4(1)).</p> <p>Some states of the Federation have a similar provision of the offence of publication of false statements in Newspapers. Some of these states are Edo and Delta States created from the old Bendel State (section 28 of Newspapers Law of Bendel State); Cross River and Akwa Ibom states created from the old Cross-River State (sections 16 &amp; 17 Newspapers Law of Cross River State); Lagos State (section 21 Newspaper Law of Lagos State); The South Eastern States of Nigeria (see Newspaper Law, Laws of the South Eastern States of Nigeria).</p> <p>Section 21 (1) of the Newspapers Law of Lagos State Cap N2 Laws of Lagos State, 2003 states as follows:—</p> <p>"21(1) Any person who authorizes for publication,</p>	<p>The abuse of the law in stifling press freedom, to arrest, jail and prosecute journalists in relation to their work in the country, should be campaigned against.</p> <p>Provisions should be amended against the backdrop of the importance of press freedom and protecting the rights of journalists in the Country.</p>

	<p>publishes, reproduces or circulates for sale in a Newspaper any statement, rumour or report knowing or having reason to believe that such statement, rumour or report is false shall be guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a fine or to imprisonment for a term of 1 year.”</p> <p>(ii) Aside from creating the offence referred to supra, this Federal Legislation generally sets out to regulate the operation of Newspapers. Thus it makes provision for the establishment by every Nigerian Newspaper of an office in the Federal Capital Territory; Appointment of Editor of a Newspaper to be notified to the Minister; delivery of signed copy of Newspaper to the Minister and publication of name of its editor in the Newspaper.</p> <p>(iii) In Lagos State, the Newspapers Law CAP N2 (supra) makes extensive provisions in 27 sections for the Registration of Newspapers and for other purposes in connection with Newspapers.</p>	
<p><b>Printing Presses Regulation Act/Printing Presses Regulation Law</b></p>	<p>(i) The Printing Presses (Regulations) Act is a Federal Act for the</p>	<p>The abuse of the law in stifling press freedom, to arrest,</p>

	<p>regulation of printing presses and of books and Newspapers printed in Nigeria.</p> <p>(ii) There are relative Printing Press Regulation Laws in the States of the South-West of Nigeria. Lagos State, has the Printing Presses Regulations Law, Cap P12 Laws of Lagos State 2003. The legislation of five (5) sections with S.5 gives the Governor the power to make regulations, inter alia, generally for carrying out the purposes of the law into effect. The additional legislation under S.5 contains general provisions concerning the operation of printing presses in the state.</p>	<p>jail and prosecute journalists in relation to their work in the country, should be campaigned against.</p> <p>Provisions should be amended against the backdrop of the importance of press freedom and protecting the rights of journalists in the Country.</p>
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## **2.2 REGULATORY INSTITUTIONS IN THE MEDIA SPACE OF NIGERIA**

In Nigeria, the broadcast (Television and radio) and print media (Newspaper and magazine) are regulated by National Broadcasting Commission and the Nigeria Press Council.

**National Broadcasting Commission (NBC)** regulates the broadcasting sector in Nigeria. The NBC Act also established the NBC, which is responsible for regulating the broadcasting industry. There is also the Broadcasting Code (BC), which was made by the NBC under the NBC Act. The BC represents the minimum standard for broadcasting in Nigeria.

**The Nigerian Press Council (NPC)** is a parastatal established by the Nigerian Press Council Act No. 85 of 1992 (as amended in Act 60 of 1999) to ensure the maintenance of high professional standards for the Nigerian Press. Like most other Press Councils around the world, the functions of the Nigerian Press Council revolve

around ethical standards. The Council, therefore, has as one of its major functions, the duty to enquire into complaints against the Press from the Public and also into Complaints from the Press about the conduct of persons or organizations towards the Press. Simply put, the Council serves as a buffer between the Press and the public. The Council, therefore, has as one of its major functions, the duty to enquire into complaints against the Press from the Public and also into Complaints from the Press about the conduct of persons or organizations towards the Press. Simply put, the Council serves as a buffer between the Press and the public.

## **Chapter 3**

### **3.1 KEY PRESS FREEDOM AND SAFETY OF JOURNALISTS' ISSUES**

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A 2020 report on the state of attacks on journalists and media in Nigeria, conducted by the International Press Centre revealed among many other things that, journalists in Nigeria continue to face enormous safety challenges in fulfilling their professional obligations to society.

The report outlines information on the trends of safety of journalists' issues in Nigeria (including types of violations, perpetrators, location of attacks, abuses/injuries suffered, media outlets attacked, identities and gender of victims), among others.

This report was generated through the engagement of desk and field activities of press freedom monitors in each of the country's six geo-political zones. The methodology deployed for collating the report involved monitoring of media reports as well as assessment and follow-up on information relating to reported attacks on journalists and media establishments.

The report states that, not fewer than forty-eight (48) attacks on journalists and eight (8) attacks on media outlets were reported and documented in the year 2020. Thirty-nine (39) of the victims are male, seven (7) are female, while two (2) were not specified. The report generally concludes that the prevalence of attacks, especially by security agents poses herculean challenge that must be engaged by stakeholders to ensure that the media continue to function under an enabling environment.

On types of safety and security issues that journalists are faced with in Nigeria, according to the 2020 report on state of attacks on journalists in Nigeria, it showed that journalists and media houses are faced with at least one of the following violations listed in **table 2**

The 2020 report also further revealed that, more than 50% of the attacks on journalists and media outlets are influenced by duty bearers and perpetrated by security operatives. There were also instances of political thugs who posed threats to journalists' safety, especially during elections.

The report highlighted the following categories of people as the perpetrators of violations, with security operatives (Nigeria Police, Department of State Security, Military, etc) and politicians being the most culpable perpetrators of those violations

***Table 2 Showing nature of attacks, perpetrators and nature of abuses suffered by journalists***

<b>Nature of attacks faced by Journalists</b>	<b>Perpetrators of attacks against journalists</b>	<b>The nature of injuries and abuses suffered by journalists include</b>
<b>Abduction</b>	Nigeria Police/ Military personnel/ The Department of State Security	Loss of valuables
<b>Gunshot Attack</b>	Politicians	Psychological trauma
<b>Intimidation/Harassment</b>	State Environment Taskforce	Body injuries
<b>Murder</b>	Political thugs	Damaged equipments & properties (camera, phone, etc.)
<b>Threat to life</b>	Unknown gunmen	Gunshot injuries
<b>Unlawful Arrest /Unlawful Detention</b>	Hoodlums	Loss of life
<b>Physical Assault/ Battery</b>	Management of media outlet	Loss of official documents



<b>Abduction</b>	Civil servant	Loss of valuables
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The report records 55 attacks on media (print, broadcast and online) outlets. The increase in attacks cannot be unconnected to the lack of safety mechanisms and nonchalance of media owners to tackle the state of insecurity that has bedevilled the industry.

This trend was also validated through a baseline audit on safety and security of journalists in Nigeria conducted by IPC, respondents asserted that the challenges in safety of journalists are partly because of the prevailing negative disposition of managements of media houses further aggravated by institutional encumbrances under which the media operate.

Respondents however proffered several interventions that can create a free Press in Nigeria

***Table 3 showing response to baseline line audit***

**Respondents also identified the following measures as relevant in responding to threats to safety of journalist**

<b>Reporting to human right agencies like National Human Rights Commission</b>	Positive attitude to relationship and confidence building	Featuring and publicising stories on personal experience threats to safety
<b>Communication and networking on safety issues</b>	Tactical retreat or withdrawal when faced with reality of danger	Emotional support measures for victims of insecurity
<b>Capacity building for skills and knowledge on safety</b>	Developing intuition and ability to decode early warning signals	Coordinated protests and blacklist of perpetrators of threats to safety
<b>Sharing information with colleagues</b>	Regular interaction and consultation with security experts	Help desk / help line for emergency and quick response to threats to safety
<b>Encourage teamwork</b>	Effective channels for regular briefings and lodging of complaints	Regular advisories and warnings regarding threats and safety measures

<b>Knowledge of the environment</b>	Adherence to code for professional practice	Regular update and contact with colleagues and organizations when on the field
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International Press Centre (IPC) and other media NGO such as Premium Times Centre for Investigative Journalism (PTCIJ) have regularly organized trainings for journalists on safety precautions while in the line of duty

## Chapter 4

### 4.1 SUMMARY OF PRESS FREEDOM VIOLATIONS RECORDED IN 2020 AND STATUS OF REDRESS OF VIOLATIONS

According to the 2020 Report on State of Attacks on Journalists in Nigeria, conducted by International Press Centre (IPC), Lagos-Nigeria with support from the Open Society Foundation, recorded fifty-six (56) cases of attacks on the media (journalists and media outlets).

***Table 4 shows a summary of the cases, date of attacks and their status.***

	The cases in the 'GREEN' have either been concluded, settled, resolved.
	The cases in the 'ORANGE' columns' are under investigation/inconclusive/stalled/dropped/abandoned.
	The cases in the 'BLUE' were not taken up legally by the victims/ ignored/not reported by the victims.



## Summary of 2020 Report of Attacks on Journalists in Nigeria and Status of Redress of the Violations

No	Cases Reported from January 2020 – December 2020	Date of Attack	Status of Cases
1	Maxwell Nashan a reporter with Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN) was abducted from his home and physically tortured on the roadside by suspected hoodlums in Yola, Adamawa State. He suffered deep body cuts and bled to death before he could be taken to the hospital.	15 <sup>th</sup> January, 2020	Eight (8) suspects were arrested by the police and later charged to court. The nature of the charges was not made public, and the case inconclusive.
2	Kayode Olabanji a reporter with The Hope Newspaper & Leke Adegbite a reporter with Positive FM were harassed by the Police and Chief Magistrate in Ondo State.	17 <sup>th</sup> January, 2020	The case was only reported in the media, but not taken up lawfully.
3	Alex Ogbu a reporter and editor with Regent Times, died after being shot in the head by the Police while covering a protest in FCT Abuja, held by members of the Islamic Movement of Nigeria's Religious Organisations. The Police claimed Alex Ogbu died after he slipped and hit his head on a rock, which contradicted his medical certificate which listed Ogbu's cause of death as damage to the brain caused by a gunshot.	21 <sup>st</sup> January, 2020	The Police claimed the incident was under investigation but did not answer follow-up phone calls or reply to text messages.
4	Tuned Akinlabi a reporter with Adaba FM, Adeola Ade a reporter with Galaxy Television and Sukanmi Ogunmoko a reporter with Core Television were physically tortured and threatened by miscreants within the environs of Federal University, Oye Ekiti State. They suffered body injuries and damaged cameras.	23 <sup>rd</sup> January, 2020	The case was amicably settled by the authority of the institution.
5	Godwin Sunday a journalist whose medium was not specified was physically assaulted by political thugs while covering the election in Akwa-Ibom State. He suffered some cuts in his eyes and a damaged video camera.	25 <sup>th</sup> January, 2020	The case was only reported in the media, but not taken up lawfully.
6	Journalists and officials of Nigeria Union of Journalists in Akwa-Ibom State were denied access by political thugs to cover events of the election in Akwa-Ibom State. Some of the victims suffered gunshot injuries and damaged equipment.	25 <sup>th</sup> January, 2020	The case was only reported in the media, but not taken up lawfully.

<b>7</b>	Edidiong Udobia a journalist whose medium was not specified was physically assaulted by political thugs while covering the election in Akwa-Ibom State.	25 <sup>th</sup> January, 2020	The case was only reported in the media, but not taken up lawfully.
<b>8</b>	Olatunji Omirin a reporter with Daily Trust Newspaper was unlawfully arrested and detained for hours by military personnel in Maiduguri, Borno State.	30 <sup>th</sup> January, 2020	Members of the Nigeria Union of Journalists in Borno State protested and boycotted military events until he was released.
<b>9</b>	Bayelsa State Broadcasting Corporation was attacked by an angry mob suspected to be supporters of the All Progressive Congress (APC) political party following the Supreme Court judgement declaring Senator Diri Duoye, of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) Governor elect of Bayelsa State. The mob looted computer and television sets, phones, cash, and studio equipments, while staff sustained various degrees of body injuries.	14 <sup>th</sup> February, 2020	The General Manager of the corporation suspended nine (9) staff in connection to the case for one-month. This was to ensure a preliminary investigation on the incident. They returned to work after the suspension and the case was dismissed.
<b>10</b>	Muskilu Mojeed, Editor of Premium Times was molested by officials of the Department of State Security (DSS) in Lagos State	1 <sup>st</sup> March, 2020	The case was only reported in the media, but not taken up lawfully.
<b>11</b>	Joseph Osademe a reporter with African Independent Television (AIT) was abducted alongside his wife by four (4) armed men in Rivers State. His vehicle was stolen, but later recovered by the Police.	7 <sup>th</sup> March, 2020	They were rescued from an uncompleted building and released days after by the Police.
<b>12</b>	Victor Ake a reporter with Tide Newspaper (State owned newspaper) was sacked by the Rivers State government for publishing a report on the first case of COVID-19 pandemic in the state, without getting approval from the COVID-19 State Taskforce.	26 <sup>th</sup> March, 2020	The case was only reported in the media, but not taken up lawfully.
<b>13</b>	Comrade Michael Ikeogwu, NUJ Chairman Delta State Chapter & Matthew Omonigho a reporter with Daily Trust were physically assaulted by overzealous members of the Delta State Taskforce on Environmental Sanitation while they were monitoring the level of compliance with the stay- at- home directive of the Delta State	1 <sup>st</sup> April, 2020	The NUJ Delta State Chapter demanded an apology from the environmental taskforce, but their demand was ignored.

	government during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their camera was destroyed.		
<b>14</b>	Nobert Amede a photojournalist with The Pointer Newspaper was physically assaulted by men of the Police force attached to Ibusa Community, Delta State while he was monitoring the level of compliance in the area with the stay-at-home directive of the Delta State government during the COVID-19 pandemic. His head was bruised, and his camera confiscated.	2 <sup>nd</sup> April, 2020	The case was only reported in the media, but not taken up lawfully.
<b>15</b>	Nkan-kpo Johnson a reporter with Silverbird Television was physically assaulted and flogged by a military officer while the soldiers enforced the lockdown order at the Ikoku area of Port Harcourt, Rivers State.	Not Specified	The case was only reported in the media, but not taken up lawfully.
<b>16</b>	Chigioke Agwu a reporter with Sun Newspaper was unlawfully arrested and detained by police officers over an alleged published report on the intending plan by the Ebonyi State governor to ban journalists for life. He was arrested during a press conference on the state's COVID-19 response at Ebonyi State government house.	18 <sup>th</sup> April, 2020	He was detained for more than nine (9) hours and then released without a charge.
<b>17</b>	Mike Osarogiagbon whose medium was not specified was unlawfully arrested and detained by the Chief Security Officer, Edo State government house over report on extra-judicial killings.	21 <sup>st</sup> April, 2020	He was released hours after stakeholders demanded his immediate release.
<b>18</b>	Peter Okutu a reporter with Vanguard Newspaper was unlawfully arrested and detained by the police over published reports on military activities in the State at Woodberry Hotel, Abakaliki Ebonyi State.	21 <sup>st</sup> April, 2020	He was detained for two (2) hours and then released without a charge.
<b>19</b>	Kufre Carter a reporter with XL 106.9 FM was unlawfully arrested and detained by the Department of State Security Officers over a leaked audio on COVID-19 outbreak in Akwa-Ibom State. His mobile phone was collected, and he was tortured while in custody.	28 <sup>th</sup> April, 2020	He was charged to court, arraigned and given difficult bail conditions which he met and was released. The case was later stalled.
<b>20</b>	Chinenye Iwuoha a reporter with Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN) was abducted by	5 <sup>th</sup> May, 2020	She was later released.

	unknown gunmen at her residence. Her phone and laptop were stolen in the process.		
<b>21</b>	Vivian Ottih a reporter with Imo State Broadcasting radio station was suspended by the management of the station over a Facebook post published on the pending salary of staff.	14 <sup>th</sup> May, 2020	She was suspended by the management of the station for months without pay and the case was later abandoned.
<b>22</b>	Ivy Kanu a reporter with Television Continental (TVC) was unlawfully arrested and detained by police officials in Lagos State	19 <sup>th</sup> May, 2020	She was later released
<b>23</b>	Chinyere Okoye a reporter with Nigeria Television Authority (NTA) was abducted by unknown gunmen at her residence in Aba. Her car was stolen in the process.	27 <sup>th</sup> May, 2020	She was later released
<b>24</b>	Omonigho Mathew a reporter with Daily Trust, Edeki Igafe a reporter with News Agency of Nigeria and Francis Sadhere a reporter with The Reformer were allegedly arrested and detained by police officers from the NUJ office in Cross River State. They were tortured while in custody.	27 <sup>th</sup> May, 2020	They were released the following day without charge, after the intervention of the State Commissioner of Police and the NUJ State Chairman.
<b>25</b>	Saint Meinpamo Onitsha a reporter with Naija Live Television was unlawfully detained, charged for violating Nigeria's Cybercrime Act and arraigned at a federal court. Meinpamo's arrest was prompted by a report he published on an alleged collapse of a COVID-19 isolation centre in Kogi State.	4 <sup>th</sup> June, 2020	The bail conditions set were strict. The case was later dropped after several press statements were issued demanding his release and a drop on all charges.
<b>26</b>	Matthew Onwuasoanya a reporter with National Light was abducted by alleged security operatives at his residence in Anambra State for reasons unknown.	18 <sup>th</sup> June, 2020	He was later released.
<b>27</b>	Tony Nwizi, Chairman Ebonyi State Chapter Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) was abducted by alleged armed police officers from his residence in Abakaliki for reasons unknown. He sustained body injuries.	4 <sup>th</sup> July, 2020	He was later released
<b>28</b>	Benjamin Ekom, former treasurer of NUJ Nasarawa State Chapter was murdered by unknown gunmen at his	3 <sup>rd</sup> August, 2020	Stakeholders condemned the incident and condoled with the family. The police claimed the

	residence in Washo Village, Eggon Local Government Area, Nasarawa State.		case was under investigation, but it was later abandoned.
<b>29</b>	Mustapha Yauri a reporter with News Agency of Nigeria was physically assaulted and detained by the police in Zaria, Kaduna State for reasons unknown.	11 <sup>th</sup> August, 2020	He was later released.
<b>30</b>	Eyo Charles a reporter with Daily Trust Newspaper was verbally assaulted by former aviation minister, Femi Fani-Kayode at a press briefing in Calabar, Cross-River State for asking him who bank rolled his tour of projects in Cross-River and other states in the South-South.	25 <sup>th</sup> August, 2020	The following day, the politician publicly issued a statement of apology to the journalist after facing several public criticism.
<b>31</b>	Barry Agbanigbi a reporter with the Champion Newspaper was barred from covering activities in the Delta State government house by the Chief Press Secretary to the Delta State Governor over report published on teenage prostitution in the State.	14 <sup>th</sup> September, 2020	Despite efforts by stakeholders to condemn and request he should be allowed to carry on with his duties in the state house, he was not granted entry/access. The case was abandoned.
<b>32</b>	Samson Adenekan a reporter with Premium Times was physically assaulted and detained by political thugs while taking pictures of alleged vote fraud in a polling unit in Edo State. He sustained body injuries and lost some vital official documents.	19 <sup>th</sup> September, 2020	The case was only reported in the media, but not taken up lawfully.
<b>33</b>	Nathaniel Offem Ubanga a reporter with Gee Television was physically assaulted by political thugs while taking pictures of alleged vote fraud in Iyamho Primary School in Edo State. His cloth was torn as he sustained minor body injuries and his phone destroyed.	19 <sup>th</sup> September, 2020	Fellow journalists covering the same process alongside five (5) police officers intervened and Ubanga was released.
<b>34</b>	Olukayode Jaiyeola a photojournalist with the Punch Newspaper was physically assaulted by a police officer while covering a protest against an increase in fuel and electricity tariff in Lagos State. He sustained head injury.	1 <sup>st</sup> October, 2020	He was taken to a hospital for treatment, which was paid for by the Lagos State Commissioner of Police. The Commissioner also ordered the immediate arrest of the police officer who perpetrated the attack.



<b>35</b>	Imo Etimudo a reporter with Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) was physically assaulted by staff of Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps (NSCDC) for refusing to offer bribe in Akwa-Ibom State. He sustained body injuries.	17 <sup>th</sup> October, 2020	The case was only reported in the media, but not taken up lawfully.
<b>36</b>	Toyin Yusuf a reporter with Osun Broadcasting Corporation was physically assaulted by miscreants in Osun State while covering the END SARS protest.	17 <sup>th</sup> October, 2020	The case was only reported in the media, but not taken up lawfully.
<b>37</b>	Television Continental (TVC) and Channels Television Lagos were attacked during the END SARS protest. TVC was partly burnt by hoodlums, while security personnel working with Channels TV were assaulted. The attack led to the suspension of broadcast by TVC television station for days.	21 <sup>st</sup> October, 2020	Television Continental station moved to a temporary studio while they renovated the affected building.
<b>38</b>	The crew of Arise Television station were prevented from carrying out their legitimate duty by soldiers at the Lekki toll gate, Lagos State where the END SARS protest took place.	21 <sup>st</sup> October, 2020	The case was only reported in the media, but not taken up lawfully.
<b>39</b>	The Nation Newspaper was attacked by hoodlums who set cars parked outside on fire, shot the buildings severally with guns and stole computers and broadcast equipments during the END SARS protest. The incident resulted in the disruption of activities in the organisation	21 <sup>st</sup> October, 2020	Security operatives and fire fighters arrived the scene of the incident, forcing the attackers to leave.
<b>40</b>	Policemen in Lagos State tortured journalists Femi Dawodu and Segun Odunayo with Punch Newspaper for covering the END SARS protests.	21 <sup>st</sup> October, 2020	The case was only reported in the media, but not taken up lawfully.
<b>41</b>	Africa Independent Television (AIT), Benin Edo State was set on fire by hoodlums during the END SARS protest. The incident halted broadcast by the station.	21 <sup>st</sup> October, 2020	The station had to halt activities until a temporary studio was gotten while they renovated the affected building.
<b>42</b>	Osun State Broadcasting Corporation was attacked by hoodlums during the END SARS protest. the hoodlums destroyed the gate of the station, broke windows, threw stones at vehicles parked within the premises	21 <sup>st</sup> October, 2020	Security operatives intervened to stop them. The station suspended broadcasting activities until five (5) days after the incident.

	and made a bonfire in front of the state-owned television station.		
<b>43</b>	Akpokona Omafuaire a reporter with Vanguard Newspaper was brutalized by the police, on his way to a meeting at the NUJ office in Warri during the curfew imposed by the Delta State Governor. His car windows were smashed.	23 <sup>rd</sup> October, 2020	The case was only reported in the media, but not taken up lawfully.
<b>44</b>	Emmanuel Adeyemi a reporter with the Sun Newspaper was hit by a stray bullet by protesters in Kogi State while covering the END SARS Protest aimed at stopping police brutality in the country.	26 <sup>th</sup> October, 2020	He was rushed to a private clinic where he was treated and later discharged.
<b>45</b>	Grace Alheri Abdu a reporter with Voice of America (Hausa Language Service) was unlawfully detained for five (5) hours by military officers in Rivers State while covering a story about protests in Nigeria.	28 <sup>th</sup> November, 2020	She was released through the intervention of the United States Embassy in Nigeria after spending five hours in detention.
<b>46</b>	Samuel Wemimo a reporter with Television Continental (TVC) was unlawfully detained by State Security Services (SSS) in their office in Lagos State.	30 <sup>th</sup> December, 2020	She was released while tweeting the irregularities of the operatives.

## Chapter 5

### 5.1 ANALYSIS OF TRENDS OF VIOLATIONS, KEY PERPETRATORS AND VICTIMS

The 2020 baseline report on state of attacks on journalists in Nigeria revealed that most of the attacks perpetrated occurred in the South-South geo-political region of the country, while the least attacks occurred in the North-West geo-political region of the country. The analysis of the six geopolitical zones is as follows:

- South-East (SE): Eight (8)
- South-West (SW): Sixteen (16)
- South-South (SS): Twenty - five (25)
- North-West (NW): One (1)
- North-Central (NC): Three (3)
- North-East (NE): Three (3)

The patterns of attacks on journalists and media outlets were based on unlawful arrest and detention; physical assault; destruction of properties and abduction. The circumstances upon which these attacks were meted against journalists and media outlets, were mostly while performing their constitutional obligation of covering protests, doing investigative stories, and after publishing reports rating the performances of duty bearers, etc.

### **Key Perpetrators of the Violations**

For key perpetrators of the alleged attacks against journalists and media outlets under the period of review are see **table 2**

### **Victims of the Violations**

From the report, the victims of the attacks are journalists and media outlets. See the **table 4** on the summary of report of attacks on journalists & status of redress of violations above for the names and description of victims.

## Chapter 6

### **6.1 STATUS OF REDRESS OF VIOLATIONS**

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On the status of redress of the violations recorded in 2020, according to the report on state of attacks on journalists, conducted by IPC, **of the recorded 56 cases** on the intimidations, assaults, arrests and detentions of journalists and destruction of properties of media outlets, the data showed that:

- **Thirty of the cases have been concluded, settled, resolved.**
- **Six are under investigation, inconclusive, stalled, dropped, abandoned.**
- **Twenty were not taken up legally by the victims, ignored, not reported by the victims.**

Please see **table 4.1** Summary of report of attacks on journalists & status of redress of violations for detailed explanation on the redress of the violations.

## Chapter 7

### Recommendations

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**Press Freedom in Nigeria can only be tackled through a multi- stakeholder approach which should involves all journalists, media stakeholders’ government and international bodies.**

**IPC therefore recommends the following:**

#### **For Journalists and media organisations**

- Journalists should pursue professionalism and the ethics of journalism rather than succumb to socio-political forces influencing the quantity and quality of information made available to the public
- Journalists and their professional bodies should prioritise the campaign for insurance policies for media practitioners to guarantee welfare at the workplace
- The media should collectively highlight attacks on journalists, demand justice for victims up to and including adequate compensation, and ensure the investigation and prosecution of alleged perpetrators

#### **Media professionals’ bodies & Associations**

- The Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ), the Newspaper Proprietors Association of Nigeria (NPAN), the Nigerian Guild of Editors (NGE) and similar organisations should work hard to professionalize and sanitize the profession to give it the needed integrity.
- Media professionals and stakeholders must close ranks and put forward a formidable, united front, partnership and solidarity to resist efforts by state agents to undermine the right to press freedom and freedom of expression
- Media professionals and stakeholders must resist the use of existing laws and regulatory frameworks legislations including the Cyber Crime Act 2015, the Anti-Terrorism Act, the Nigeria Broadcasting Code, etc, to intimidate and assault the media and prevent it from fulfilling its obligation to monitor governance and hold government accountable to the people;
- Media stakeholders should regularly draft joint statements when attacks on journalists occur. This will inform the public of the vulnerability of the profession. There should be a lot of noise around issues pertaining to the safety of journalists in the media space
- Media professionals and stakeholders should have further engagements with regulatory bodies such as Nigeria Broadcasting Commission (NBC) and Nigeria Press Council (NPC) on acceptable standards of regulation

- Media professionals and stakeholders should seek a review of existing regulatory provisions to make commitment to welfare of journalists by employers enforceable.

### **For the Government**

- Those in position of authority, must be more tolerant of the press, knowing that the press is contributing its own quota in national development
- The government should ensure that all laws or enactments that hamper the freedom of information and the press in Nigeria are repealed.
- The government should immediately discharge and release all journalists unconditionally who were arrested solely for doing their work.
- Repeal or amend section 24 of the Cybercrime Act (2015) and bring it in line with the rights to freedom of expression
- Set up an independent panel to investigate all the attacks against journalists as well as all cases of arrest and prosecution
- Create a reparation fund for journalists and media victims of attacks.
- Protect journalists and ensure they can do their work freely by adopting security and protection measures in compliance with the human rights principles and a gender-sensitive approach.
- Undertake a comprehensive security sector reform with a view to protect against human rights violations by security forces and end impunity.
- Implement without delay the UPR commitments aiming to protect freedom of expression, access to information and free media.
- Implement recommendations of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR)<sup>31</sup> to create an enabling environment for independent media and freedom of expression

### **For International Bodies**

- The United Nations Special Rapporteurs of freedom of expression and opinion on extrajudicial killings and the African Commission and Human and Peoples' Rights Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression and information to urge the Nigerian government to investigate these crimes and issue a joint recommendation, provide support for its implementation and monitor the progress.
- UN Secretary-General should set-up a list of countries and armed groups that are the worst perpetrators of attacks on journalists that the Secretary-General would be tasked with presenting to the Security Council and the General Assembly. Inclusion on the list would lead to a range of graduated measures

including, potentially, targeted financial sanctions against perpetrators of attacks on journalists. The measures could be taken through a UN framework (eg, a resolution at the General Assembly or Security Council) or through the Media Freedom Coalition, a group of countries that has committed to ending impunity for attacks on journalists. Removal from such a list would require listed countries to show that they conducted effective investigations into attacks on journalists and brought those responsible to justice.

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