

Cooking Gas Price Surge: HURIWA Condemns Economic Cruelty, Says Uncontrolled Profiteering Violates Citizens' Right to Life

The Human Rights Writers Association of Nigeria (HURIWA) expresses deep outrage and grave concern over the alarming escalation in the price of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG), commonly known as cooking gas, which is now reportedly selling for as much as N2,000 per kilogram in many parts of Nigeria. This disturbing development has pushed cooking gas beyond the reach of millions of ordinary citizens and has further worsened the already unbearable cost-of-living crisis confronting Nigerian households. It is unacceptable that in a nation blessed with abundant natural resources, citizens are being subjected to economic conditions that make basic survival increasingly difficult. HURIWA strongly asserts that the astronomical rise in the price of cooking gas is not merely an economic issue but a fundamental human rights concern. The direct consequence of making essential household energy unaffordable is mass hunger, malnutrition, disease, and avoidable deaths among vulnerable populations. Families already struggling with rising food prices, transportation costs, electricity tariffs, and healthcare expenses are now being forced to choose between cooking their meals and meeting other basic necessities. The association maintains that this situation offends the spirit and provisions of Chapter IV of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, particularly the fundamental right to life. While the Constitution places a solemn obligation on government to safeguard the lives and welfare of citizens, the prevailing atmosphere of unchecked price increases is producing the exact opposite effect.

A government that watches helplessly while essential commodities become inaccessible to the majority of citizens cannot claim to be fully discharging its constitutional and moral responsibilities. The right to life is not limited to protection from bullets and violent attacks; it also encompasses the obligation of the state to create conditions that make life sustainable and dignified. When citizens are pushed into extreme deprivation through unchecked economic hardship, the consequences are often fatal. HURIWA is particularly alarmed by what appears to be the absence of effective regulatory intervention to curb the activities of profiteers who exploit citizens during periods of economic uncertainty. No serious democracy

permits unrestrained profiteering at the expense of public welfare. Across the world, responsible governments deploy regulatory mechanisms, market interventions, strategic reserves, consumer protection frameworks, and anti-monopoly measures to prevent exploitative pricing of essential commodities. It is therefore unacceptable that under the current administration, Nigerians are being left at the mercy of market forces and profit-driven actors whose actions are worsening poverty and deepening social misery. Government cannot continue to distance itself from the suffering of the people by attributing every hardship to market realities while citizens sink deeper into economic despair. The Tinubu administration must immediately investigate the factors responsible for the outrageous increase in cooking gas prices and take urgent steps to stabilize the market. Regulatory agencies must be empowered to identify and sanction individuals and companies engaged in exploitative pricing practices. The government should also consider targeted interventions and fiscal measures capable of reducing the cost burden on consumers.

HURIWA warns that continued inaction could trigger wider social and humanitarian consequences, including increased dependence on firewood and charcoal, environmental degradation, worsening public health conditions, and greater hardship for already impoverished households. The association reiterates that governance must ultimately be measured by its impact on the lives of citizens. Any economic policy or regulatory failure that results in widespread hunger, suffering, and preventable deaths cannot be justified under any democratic system.

Nigerians deserve a government that actively protects them from economic predators, safeguards their welfare, and upholds the constitutional guarantee of the right to life and human dignity.

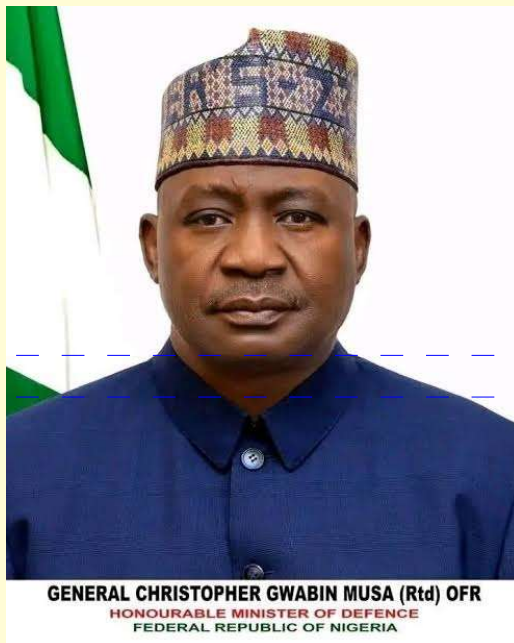


Musa's 70% Security Scorecard is an Insult to Victims of Terrorism, Banditry and Kidnapping – HURIWA

The Human Rights Writers Association of Nigeria (HURIWA) is outraged by the astonishing claim by the Minister of Defence, General Christopher Musa, that the security situation under President Bola Ahmed Tinubu deserves a score of between 65 and 70 per cent. To millions of Nigerians who cannot sleep with both eyes closed, who cannot travel safely on highways, whose loved ones have been kidnapped, murdered, displaced or terrorized, such a rating is not merely unrealistic—it is an insult to the pain, suffering and anguish of the victims of Nigeria's worsening insecurity. HURIWA categorically rejects the attempt by the Defence Minister to draw a distinction between terrorism and kidnapping as though they are unrelated phenomena. This argument collapses under the weight of reality.

In Nigeria today, kidnapers operate as terrorists and terrorists operate as kidnapers. Both deploy violence, fear, intimidation, murder, abduction and ransom-taking to achieve their objectives. Both destroy communities, cripple economic activities and undermine national security. To argue that terrorism has reduced because kidnapping has become more prevalent is akin to claiming that a patient is recovering from cancer because another deadly disease has taken over his body. Such reasoning is illogical, misleading and dangerously disconnected from the realities confronting Nigerians daily.

Even more disturbing is the continuing official defence of the controversial deradicalisation and rehabilitation programme for former terrorists. HURIWA has repeatedly warned that government officials are sending the wrong message when they appear more committed to reintegrating former terrorists than ensuring justice for victims. What Nigerians expect is the vigorous enforcement of the Terrorism (Prevention and Prohibition) Act, the prosecution of terrorists and their sponsors, and the dismantling of criminal networks—not public relations campaigns designed to justify the return of individuals associated with terrorism to communities that suffered unspeakable devastation. The proposition that some terrorists should escape the full consequences of the law because they were allegedly "forced" into terrorism is fraught with legal and moral contradictions. If accepted as a general principle, such reasoning would undermine criminal justice itself. Every criminal could seek refuge under the argument of coercion or circumstance. A nation that seeks to defeat terrorism must demonstrate that participation in terrorism carries severe legal consequences. Anything less weakens deterrence, emboldens criminal elements and undermines confidence in the justice system.



General Musa's glowing assessment is further demolished by events unfolding across the country. Is the Minister unaware that retired Major General Rabe Abubakar, a former Director of Defence Information, and his wife were recently abducted by armed criminals in Katsina State? Is he unaware of the continuing kidnappings of schoolchildren, teachers and travelers across different parts of Nigeria? Is he unaware of repeated attacks on communities in several states and the growing climate of fear affecting citizens in both rural and urban areas? Is he unaware that countless Nigerians still avoid major roads because of the persistent threat of abduction? These are not indicators of a nation that has attained a 70 per cent security success rate. They are symptoms of a security crisis that remains far from being

resolved.

HURIWA submits that the Tinubu administration's third anniversary should be an occasion for sober reflection rather than self-congratulation. The reality confronting Nigerians is one of continuing insecurity, escalating kidnappings, deadly attacks on communities, economic disruptions caused by criminal violence and widespread public anxiety.

No amount of official optimism can erase the daily headlines of abductions, killings and attacks that continue to dominate the national conversation. The greatest disservice government officials can do to the nation at this critical moment is to minimize the severity of the crisis. Nigeria does not need inflated scorecards. Nigeria needs results.

The country needs stronger intelligence gathering, more aggressive implementation of counterterrorism laws, effective border control, improved protection of vulnerable communities, swift prosecution of terrorists and their collaborators, and measurable justice for victims.

HURIWA therefore urges the Federal Government to abandon the temptation of celebrating questionable security milestones while innocent Nigerians continue to pay the ultimate price for insecurity. History will not judge this administration by optimistic speeches, impressive percentages or carefully crafted narratives. History will judge it by whether Nigerians became safer, whether terrorists were decisively defeated, whether kidnapers were brought to justice, and whether citizens could once again live, travel and work without fear. Until that happens, claims that Nigeria has achieved a 65 to 70 per cent security success rate remain, at best, detached from reality and, at worst, profoundly insensitive to the suffering of the Nigerian people.