

“Nigeria Cannot Go Silent”

HURIWA Demands Answers Over 600 Citizens Abducted in Niger Attack

Rights group says govt must give families updates, rescue hostages, and explain security failure

Abuja — The Human Rights Writers Association of Nigeria, HURIWA, has condemned what it called the Federal Government's “continued silence” over the reported abduction of about 600 residents in Niger State, warning that the incident represents a grave national security and humanitarian emergency. In a statement issued on September 5, 2026, and signed by National Coordinator, Comrade Emmanuel Nnadozie Onwubiko, HURIWA said the August 22 attack on Dekera, Gidan-Zana and Sabon Gida communities,

her husband and three children, including the newborn. “What kind of country allows a mother and her newborn baby to disappear into the hands of armed criminals while government agencies remain unable to tell the family what they are doing to rescue them?” HURIWA asked. The association also condemned the destruction of homes and displacement of residents following the coordinated assault. “Citizens whose homes are reduced to ashes cannot be abandoned to the mercy of the rains and hunger. The government has a constitutional responsibility to



protect lives and property,” it said. HURIWA insisted that government responsibility goes beyond deploying soldiers after an attack, and demanded that displaced victims be provided with food, shelter, medical assistance and protection from further attacks. The rights group urged the Federal Government, Niger State Government and security agencies to immediately establish a dedicated communication channel to give families credible and regular updates on rescue efforts. It also demanded an urgent investigation into how attackers were able to carry out a “large-scale and coordinated assault resulting in mass abductions and killings.” “The government must explain how hundreds of Nigerians can

which also left at least 40 people dead, must not be treated as “another routine security incident.” The group expressed alarm that families of the victims have received no communication from the kidnappers for two weeks, while government authorities have also failed to provide clear information on ongoing rescue operations. “Nigerians deserve to know what concrete measures the security agencies are taking to locate the victims and bring them home safely,” HURIWA said. It noted that President Bola Tinubu had directed security agencies to rescue the hostages, but stressed that presidential directives “must translate into visible and measurable action.” “A presidential order to rescue abducted citizens cannot end as a statement in the media. Nigerians need results. Families need information. The abducted citizens need to come home alive,” the association said.

be taken hostage in a single operation without an effective intervention. Nigerians cannot continue to live in communities where terrorists and kidnappers determine who lives, who dies and who disappears,” HURIWA said. The association called for intensified intelligence gathering, surveillance and coordinated operations to locate the abducted citizens, with rescue missions prioritizing the safety of victims. It warned that “prolonged silence could deepen public distrust and leave victims' families feeling abandoned by the state.” “Every abducted Nigerian is a citizen whose life is protected by the Constitution. Their families are not asking for charity. They are demanding the most basic duty of government — protection of life and the safe return of their loved ones,” the statement read. HURIWA concluded by demanding “urgent action, transparent communication and accountability” over the mass abduction, stressing that government must demonstrate that “the lives of ordinary Nigerians are not expendable.”