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Introduction

The Nigerian Constitution guarantees a general right to freedom of expression in Section 39 but no law offers any express guarantee of freedom of the press. Although Section 22 of the same Constitution confers a duty on the media to hold government accountable to the people providing 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,” Section 6(6)(c), the Constitution makes this provision unenforceable.

An Appeals Court has also ruled that Section 39 of the Constitution does not give members of the media any special right or privilege over and above the general right to freedom of expression given to all Nigerians.

Nigerian journalists face a variety of attacks in the course of carrying out their professional duties, including assault and battery, arrest and detention, shutdown of media outlets, raid of media outlets, confiscation/destuction of work equipment, abductions, prevention from carrying out professional duties among others.

In all of these, the security and law-enforcement agencies do not seem interested in investigating the attacks or bringing the perpetrators to justice as there are no record of these cases being investigated or the perpetrators being prosecuted. In some other cases, the judiciary seems to be coopted into exacerbating the attacks by unnecessarily detaining journalists for civil matters and where judges agree to grant detainee bail, the conditions are so stringent that they end up spending unnecessarily long time in detention: this situation affects journalists and other citizens who post what those in authority consider unfavourable to them.

Elections periods have become dangerous periods for journalists as they are subjected to various forms of attacks including physical assault, restrictions on their news and information gathering activities, arrest and detention, abduction, and destruction of equipment.

In all cases of attacks against journalists in Nigeria, there is no evidence of any diligent effort made by e security and law-enforcement agencies to investigate and prosecute perpetrators; the perpetrators invariably commit these crimes with impunity as they go scot-free without any repercussion for their actions.

Findings

Journalists are frequently victims of different types of attacks including, but not limited to killings, assault and battery, prevention from gathering news, arrests and detention, abductions, disappearances, and destruction of equipment, among others. These attacks are carried out by criminal gangs, politicians and their supporters, law-enforcement, security and intelligence agencies, hoodlums, cult groups, ethnic militias, and in a few cases, individuals.

Assault and battery remain the major form of attacks that Nigerian journalists face in the course of performing their duties. Painfully, the perpetrators are known in most cases but no legal actions are taken in such situations. In fact, there is no indication that investigations were even ever commenced on the matters save some rhetoric from police spokes persons.
Below are some of the crimes perpetrated against journalists in Nigeria 2017 - 2019:

**Assault and Battery**

Police in Kaduna, on June 23, 2017, beat up Ibraheema Yakubu, a correspondent of the German Deutsche Welle (DW) radio who reports for its Hausa service. Yakubu was covering a peaceful procession by the Shiites Muslim sect in Kaduna when the police attacked him. The policemen also arrested and detained the journalists for six hours without stating any reason. The journalist’s equipment was also destroyed during the attack. He was later released on bail following the intervention of some officials of the Kaduna Council of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ).

On July 30, 2017, Unidentified armed persons suspected to be political thugs on July 30, 207 stormed the Secretariat of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) in Kaduna destroying property such as doors, windows, chairs and tables, cameras, mobile phones and recorders. They attackers who were armed with dangerous weapons such as machetes attacked journalists who were at the premises including Lawal Muhammed, a cameraman with Liberty Television, who was injured after the thugs assaulted him with the machetes.

In another incident, operatives of the Department of State Service (DSS), Nigeria’s domestic intelligence agency on September 11, 2017 brutalised two journalists, Timothy Agbor working with *The Point* newspaper and Toba Aadedeji with *The Osun Defender* while they were covering a protest by members of the Nigeria Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE) at the Osun State House of Assembly. The journalists were taking photographs of the NULGE protest on the Gbongan-Osogbo Road on their way to the Osun State House of Assembly when they were attacked.

On September 12, 2017, a group of about 20 soldiers invaded the Secretariat of the Nigeria Union of Journalists in Umuahia in Abia State, damaging properties and inflicting injuries on journalists. They assaulted two journalists whom they suspected had taken their photographs, destroyed some of their equipment, including phones, iPad, laptops and other working devices as well as some property belonging to the NUJ.

On February 14, 2018, Samuel Ayara, a reporter with the Akwa Ibom State Broadcasting Corporation who covers the State House of Assembly, was assaulted by policemen charged with providing security at the complex. Samuel was sprayed with tear gas while the policemen gathered round him and collectively assaulted him, including by hitting him with the butts of their guns.

Peter Okolie, a correspondent with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN), was on February 25, 2018 brutalised by a policeman for taking photographs of him forcibly extorting money from a commercial vehicle driver in Awka, Anambra State.

On July 16, 2018, some persons numbering over 20 suspected to be supporters of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) in Osogbo, the State capital raided the venue of a press conference organized by some members of the Osun State Working Committee (SWC). The hoodlums, beat up the journalists who covering the event as well as some members of the APC. The secretary of the Nigeria Union of Journalists, Osun State Council, Bamigbola Boladale, was badly beaten by the rampaging thugs, who also tore his clothes to shreds.

Rose Ejembi of the *The Sun* newspapers and John Charles of *The Punch* newspapers were in October 2018 assaulted at the Makurdi Local Government secretariat by some members of a bereaved family. They were at the Local Government secretariat for a follow up report on the tragic murder in the Adetsav family.
A military officer on October 25, 2018 assaulted Anayo Onukwugha, a correspondent of *the Leadership* newspaper in Rivers State who had gone to cover the commissioning of a new terminal of Port Harcourt International Airport at Omagwa in Rivers State by President Buhari. The soldier who was among others guarding the entrance beat up and injured the journalist. He was hospitalized as a result of the injuries he sustained. Journalists from other media houses including *Daily Trust, The Punch, Daily Independent, New Telegraph* and *The Sun* were all barred from covering the event by the security agents, in spite of the journalists appropriately identifying themselves with their official identification cards.

On March 9, 2019, *The Guardian* newspaper reporter, Benjamin Alade, who was on duty at an election collation centre situated at the Community Primary School in Idimu area of Lagos was attacked by about 15 political thugs and when he reported the incident at the Police Station, he was threatened with arrest.

On the same day (March 9, 2019) there were also two other incidents in which hoodlums affiliated to politicians or politicians themselves assaulted journalists. In the first incident, some hoodlums suspected to have been hired by politicians assaulted journalists, including Amos Tauna, a correspondent with *Daily Post*, who were on duty covering the governorship and State Assembly elections in Kaduna. They were beaten to stupor and also had their phones, cameras and other personal belongings seized and damaged for recording the irregularities being perpetrated by the politicians and their thugs.

In a separate incident, a politician in Lagos, Segun Adewale, a member of the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) popularly called “Aeroland”, slapped a female reporter with the BBC, Ajoke Ulohotse. Ulohotse was covering the governorship and State Houses of Assembly election. The incident took place at Pleasure bus stop along Abeokuta-Lagos Expressway in Lagos.

**Arrest and Detention**

Journalists are arrested and detained mainly by security and law-enforcement agents and in some cases where they are detained and arraigned in court, the collusion of judges becomes obvious when the judges give very stringent bail conditions for release of journalists for alleged offence relating to their work which, ordinarily is a civil matter in many cases and which ought not involve law-enforcement agencies. In none of the cases of arrest and detention do the law-enforcement agencies present any warrant of arrest.

On January 1, 2018, Daniel Elombah, a journalist, blogger and publisher of [elombah.com](http://elombah.com) and five others were arrested by a group of armed officers of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) of the Nigerian Police on January 1, 2018 stormed the home of Daniel Elombah, journalist and publisher of online news portal, [elombah.com](http://elombah.com) and arrested him and five other relatives at about 4.30am. Daniel, together with his three of his brothers and two other relatives were taken to the SARS office at Nnewi and later driven to Force Headquarters, Abuja. The action is widely believed to be related to a critical opinion article by one Eboiwei Dickson titled “IGP Ibrahim Idris’s Unending Baggage of Controversies,” which was *published* by the website. The arrest was effected a couple of days after the publication. The journalists and his family were released a couple of days after following public outcry.

Tony Ezimakor, the Abuja Bureau Chief of the privately-owned *Daily Independent* newspaper, was arrested on February 28, 2018, detained for seven days and released without charge on March 6, 2018 by the DSS. Tony was detained for refusing to reveal his source in respect of a report
detailing how the federal government allegedly paid Boko Haram millions of dollars to secure the release of 82 of the kidnapped Chibok girls.

On August 14, 2018, a reporter with the online newspaper, PREMIUM TIMES, Samuel Ogundipe, was arrested by officers of SARS after he honoured an invitation by SARS by reporting at its headquarters in Abuja. He was later taken to the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Monitoring Unit at Force Headquarters where he was detained. The Police also froze his bank account.

On March 9, 2019, Nonso Isiguzo, a news manager with the privately owned Nigeria Info radio station; Sunday Isiitu, his driver, and five other unidentified journalists were detained on the roadside in the Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers state by armed men, some of whom were wearing military uniforms. The media practitioners were on duty, driving around as they covered the governorship and State Houses of Assembly elections. They were released after being detained for about two hours.

In March 2019, SARS reportedly arrested Sunday Fashe, publisher of the online portal, African Examiner, took him to its detention facility called the “abattoir” and questioned him on how his reporter got information about a story he was working on. He was later released but asked to report back for further interrogation.

Jones Abiri, publisher of Weekly Source newspaper, was on March 30, 2019 rearrested at Ayabowei Plaza, which houses his office, in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State by four armed men suspected to be operatives of the DSS. He was taken straight to Abuja after his arrest and released in the afternoon on April 1, 2019 from the secret police’s detention facility in Abuja, according to his lawyer, Samuel Ogala. No reason was given for the re-arrest.

**Prevention from Carrying Out Professional Duties**

On March 12, 2018, security operatives from the Presidency barred correspondents of some media houses from covering President Muhammadu Buhari’s visit to Makurdi, Benue State.

On March 9, 2019, Channels TV reporter, Collin Ossai; his cameraman and a radio journalist with Speed FM were blocked from covering the voting process at a polling station in the Esan Central Local Government Area of Edo state by an unnamed politician. The man who identified himself as a candidate in the March 9, 2019 State Parliamentary election barred journalists from getting into the vicinity of the polling station.

On March 9, 2019, Soldiers at ORO3 Union Bank formation in Damaturu, the Yobe State capital, detained two journalists, Musa Mingye of *Blueprint* newspaper and Hamisu Kabir Matazu of *Daily Trust* newspaper, preventing them from covering the governorship and State Houses of Assembly elections for hours. The soldiers also confiscated the vehicles the journalists were using.

On April 30, 2019, reporters from various media outlets assigned to cover the induction for newly-elected and returning governors were barred from accessing the Banquet Hall of the State House Conference Centre in Abuja. The Federal Government-owned national broadcaster, the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) crew was however allowed into the conference centre.

The management of the National Assembly on May 20, 2019 issued new stringent guidelines for fresh accreditation of journalists who want to cover proceedings at the National Assembly. It was meant to commence on June 11, 2019, the day of inauguration of the ninth National Assembly and restrict access to the National Assembly.
**Threat to Life**

On June 2, 2017 at about 7pm, unknown gunmen reportedly shot at Samuel Nweze, Publisher of a local tabloid, *People’s Leader*, in front of his office at No. 2, Awolowo Street in Abakaliki, Ebonyi State.

Wale Odunsi, the Deputy Editor of Daily Post online on April 9, 2018 petitioned the Inspector General of Police (IGP), Ibrahim Idris, over alleged threat to his life by Edward Onoja, the Chief of Staff to Yahaya Bello, Governor of Kogi State. Wale alleged that Edward threatened to kill him.

Prince Amour Udemude, a journalist and member of the Asaba Correspondents’ Chapel of the NUJ in Delta State, in July 2018 petitioned the State Commissioner of Police and the State Director of DSS in Asaba over alleged plans by unknown persons to assassinate him. Prince claimed that: intelligence report at his disposal revealed that a certain guy who goes by a nickname ‘Colonel’ had been contracted to assassinate him by an unnamed chairman of a local government.

Jaafar Jaafar, publisher of *Daily Nigerian* newspaper, an online medium, went into hiding following series of the threats to his life that he allegedly received after he published a video showing the Kano State governor, Alhaji Abdullahi Ganduje receiving cash bribe in dollars from unnamed contractors.

Three journalists, namely Emmanuel Oladesu, Group Political Editor of *The Nation* newspaper, Temitope Ogbonanke, correspondent of the *New Telegraph* newspaper, and Abiodun Yusuf, cameraman working with Ibile Television who were covering a political rally on January 8, 2019 sustained injuries after they were shot at by security agents. The journalists were covering the campaign of ruling APC candidate, Babajide Sanwo-Olu for the Lagos state governorship elections at the Skypower field in Ikeja, Lagos.

**Abduction**

On February 28, 2018, at 1:30am about 30 armed men broke into the home of Malam Nasir Birnin-Yero, a reporter with Voice of America (VOA), in Birnin Yero, near Kaduna and abducted his wife and son. The abductors wanted to know his whereabouts. When informed that he was not at home, they vandalised his television set and refrigerator before taking away his wife and son insisting that they must be taken to where he was. The victims were released on March 2, 2018 at 9:00pm at Sabon Birni, a village near Kaduna International Airport after a ransom of NGN2 million (about USD6,536) was paid.

On March 2, 2018, Ngozi Blessed Onwukwe, a blogger and publisher of AbaCityblog.com, was ambushed and abducted by unknown gunmen in Umuahia, the Abia State capital, while he was on his way to cover an event in Arochukwu. He was taken away in a Toyota Sienna car on Ikot Ekpene Road in Umuahia.

On March 24, 2018, at about 6:25pm, hoodlums suspected to be members of Plateau United Supporters Club invaded the premises of Jay 101.9 FM station. They assaulted and abducted Ferdinand Mbum, a presenter, shortly after a magazine sports programme called ‘Sports Extra’. The abductors took the presenter to the A Division of the Nigeria Police Command in Jos, where lawyers to the radio station were later able to locate him. They handed him over to the Police who thereafter detained him, turning a blind eye to the fact that the presenter was assaulted and abducted from his office.
On January 12, 2019, a prominent broadcaster with the state-owned Cross River Broadcasting Corporation (CRBC), Peter Etim, popularly known as Petex, was abducted in Calabar, the State capital, while leaving home for his office. As at June 2019 when Officials of the Nigeria Police gave update on his abduction, he had not been found and the Cross Rivers State Commissioner of Police, Austin Agbonlaho, said the matter was still being investigated.

On March 9, 2019, Kunle Sanni, a journalist with the online newspaper, PREMIUM TIMES, was abducted by political party thugs in Shendam Local Government Area of Plateau State for taking pictures of underage voters during the governorship and State House of Assembly elections. They later forced him to delete the pictures he had taken.

**Attacks on Online Freedom of Expression**

In February 2017, authorities in Kaduna State arrested Audu Maikori for allegedly “inciting” tweets about citizens being killed by herdsmen in Southern Kaduna that were proven false. Released a day later on bail, he was arrested again in March, reportedly for the same issue out of insistence of the Kaduna State Governor.

In March 2017, blogger Kemi Olunloyo was arrested for a post about a pastor’s alleged extramarital affairs. She was granted bail in April.

In March 2017, Gambo Saeed was sentenced to nine months’ imprisonment by a Chief Magistrate court in Katsina for defaming the governor of Katsina state in northwest Nigeria.

Austin Okai was on April 9, 2017 arrested in Abuja for his social media posts deemed unacceptable to the Kogi State government.

On April 19, 2017 Midat Joseph, Bureau Chief of the Leadership newspaper in Kaduna State, was arrested for alleged incitement on a WhatsApp group that called for protests against the killing of civilians.

On June 3, 2017 at about 6pm, Charles Otu, the Ebonyi State Correspondent of The Guardian, a privately-owned newspaper, was accosted at Vanco Junction in Abakaliki, the Ebonyi State capital, by armed men suspected to be political thugs who beat him with clubs and other weapons. Charles said his assailants later drove him to the ‘Ebonyi Cabinet Office’ where they asked him to sign an undertaking never to write any story against the state government or he will be silenced permanently. The Ebonyi State Police Public Relations Officer, Jude Madu, a deputy superintendent of police, confirmed the incident, adding that the police had launched an investigation to unravel the motive behind it. That was the last heard of the matter. No arrests were made and it is doubtful if an investigation was even carried out on the matter.

On June 10, 2017 Frank Utoo was arrested in Abuja for comments made on Facebook which were deemed insulting by a prominent political leader in Kogi state.

On June 15, 2017 Danjuma Katsina, a journalist, was arrested in Katsina over comments questioning the legitimacy of a newly elected member of the House of Representatives from the state to represent his constituency. He was released the next day with no charges and given no official reason for his detention.

Two journalists, Oluwole Adeboye and Yemi Itodo, who work for online news media covering the activities of the National Assembly, were in July 2017 assaulted by the Chairman of the House of Representatives Committee on Telecommunications, Hon. Saheed Akinade Fijabi, over
publications that displeased him. They were physically assaulted, arrested and taken to the offices of the DSS where they were detained and their phones were seized for several hours before they were released when a DSS officer intervened.

A primary school teacher, Biodun Baba, was arraigned before a magistrate court in Ilorin on July 27, 2017 for allegedly insulting the then Senate President, Bukola Saraki, on Facebook. The charges against him were however withdrawn.

On August 3, 2017 Johnson Musa was arrested by DSS operatives for posting an image of the state governor’s Abuja residence in a WhatsApp, alongside comments which were deemed inappropriate by the authorities.

The authorities of the University of Ibadan in April 2018 rusticated a final year law student, Kunle Adebajo over an article he published in a daily newspaper which they alleged was “highly defamatory” and capable of bringing the name of the university into disrepute. According to school authorities, “the piece portrays you [Kunle] as someone who is rude, a false proclaimor and very insubordinate”.

On May 29, 2018, persons suspected to be militants, accompanied by two policemen, stormed the Yenagoa home of Saint Mienpamo, a blogger and former Senior Special Assistant to Governor Seriake Dickson of Bayelsa State. He was severely beaten by the invaders. They later took him by force to the home of a former militant leader, Africanus Home and there, they threatened to kill him. The assault is suspected to be in connection with a report on his blog alleging attack on the boat of a former militant leader and immediate past Caretaker Chairman of Southern Ijaw Local council, Joshua Machiver, by some suspected members of the State Waterway Security.

Umar Ridwan, a presenter with DITV-Alheri Radio in Kaduna, was dismissed from the station through a letter dated October 15, 2018 over pro-President Buhari comments he posted on Facebook.

On November 28, 2018, Deji Adeyanju, a political activist and convener of “Concerned Nigerians” was arrested in Abuja by officers of the Nigeria Police at its Headquarters, where he was leading a peaceful protest over the alleged involvement of the Police in the siege on the Akwa Ibom House of Assembly Complex. Also arrested were Daniel Abobama and Boma Williams.

On March 1, 2019, policemen in Umuahia, the Abia State capital, arrested Obinna Don Norman, Managing Director and Editor-in-Chief of the online news medium, The Realm News, while he was on air at local radio station, Flo FM, discussing politics. He was taken to a Magistrate Court where he was charged with cyber stalking under the Cybercrime Act, 2015 and remanded at the Afara prison in Umuahia on the orders of the Magistrate.

A Federal Capital Territory (FCT) High Court sitting in Abuja, on April 15, 2019 sentenced an activist, Ibrahim Wala, popularly known as ‘I G Wala’, to 12 years’ imprisonment for criminal defamation and related offences without an option of fine.

**Shutdown of Media Outlets**

On January 6, 2019, armed soldiers raided, occupied and sealed off the offices of the privately-owned newspaper, Daily Trust newspaper in Abuja and Maiduguri. They confiscated computers and arrested the newspaper’s regional editor, Uthman Abubakar, and one of its reporters, Ibrahim Sawab in Maiduguri.
Other Forms of Attacks
On December 10, 2018, Olarenwaju Lawal, the Kebbi State correspondent of The Sun newspaper was arrested, hurriedly arraigned in court, and charged with publishing false information and without a defence lawyer, he was remanded in prison custody. He was charged to court on the orders of the State Governor, Abubakar Atiku Bagudu.

On November 9, 2018, armed operatives of the DSS raided newspaper distribution centres in various locations in Asaba, the Delta State capital, and confiscated all publications affiliated with Biafra separatist group.

Rivers State Governor, Nyesom Wike, on November 26, 2018 sacked the Managing Directors of Rivers State Television, Radio Rivers and Garden City Radio, three media houses owned by the State, over their failure to attend the 71st General Assembly of the Broadcasting Organizations of Nigeria (BON) held in Rivers State capital, Port Harcourt.

Addressing Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists in Nigeria
In Nigeria, as in many countries on the continent, journalists face a myriad of attacks which most often are carried out with impunity as the perpetrators are never prosecuted even where they are known. These journalists are victims of various forms of attacks including assault and battery, arrest and detention, prevention from performing professional duties, threat to life, and abduction, Among others.

Both journalists and other members of the public also face attacks for their online expressions, while there are also shutdown of media outlets and other forms of attacks against the media and freedom of expression online.

For at least two decades, Media Rights Agenda (MRA) has monitored attacks on journalists and the media, documented, analysed, published and used the data to escalate the matter both at the regional as well as the internationally levels, including using domestic mechanisms, and in some cases, the mechanisms of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights (ACHPR) and relevant United Nations bodies and organs.

MRA has also collaborated with local and international bodies to carry out safety training for journalists in times of crises. However, a lot remains to be done.

Nigerian statute books are full of laws which in themselves contribute to worsening the attacks on the media. Nigeria has criminal defamation in its laws contrary to established international norms and standards. These criminal defamation sections of Nigeria’s laws need to be expunged or amended. In addition, other anti-freedom of expression laws, including many provisions in the Penal Code, the Criminal Code and the Official Secrets Act need to be amended or repealed. MRA had attempted to achieve this objective by initiating legislative reform but the process could not be completed in the four year cycle of the Legislature.

Unfortunately, successive governments have shown no interest in the safety of journalists as these governments see journalists as too nosey and uncooperative.

Governments frequently seek to control any initiative or mechanism suggested to tackle issues of media ethics or safety; it is for this reason that the Nigerian Press Council (NPC), a body
established as a multi-stakeholder arrangement to maintain ethical and professional standards in the media, has not been able to function as such. Efforts made at setting up an independent ombudsman in this respect has also not succeeded.

MRA renders free legal services to journalists whose right to freedom of expression are violated or who are denied access to information. It is however limited by lack of adequate resources.

Over the last few years, a number of collaborative initiatives have been established to address the issue of safety of journalists and wide media freedom needs in Nigeria. One of such initiatives is of the Partnership for Media Development (PAMED), made up of the Institute for Media and Society (IMS), the International Press Centre (IPC), and Media Rights Agenda and focused on ensuring an enabling environment for media practices in Nigeria.

In 2017, the Coalition for Whistleblower Protection and Press Freedom (CWPPF) was created, with membership drawn from among civil society organizations and media outlets, to address issues of attacks on the press and speak for the media sector in Nigeria in a unified manner, draw political attention and the attention of political figures to such issues while media outlets in the coalition conduct collaborative investigative reports through a community whistleblower platform.

The Coalition partners include the Premium Times Center for Investigative Journalism (PTCIJ), Paradigm Initiative, the African Centre for Media and Information Literacy (AFRICMIL), the International Centre for Investigative Reporting (ICIR), Media Rights Agenda, Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP), Premium Times, the Wole Soyinka Centre for Investigative Journalism (WSCIJ), Order Paper NG, the International Press Centre, the Daily Trust newspaper, Civil Society Network Against Corruption (CSNAC), The Cable newspaper, and the Nigeria Union of Journalist (NUJ).

**Conclusion and Recommendations**

**Media owners and Journalists Unions/Associations**

- Media unions and associations should work together to protect their own: this they can do by documenting attacks on journalists, media workers and media houses for use as advocacy tool and seeking redress.
- They should also seek resolution of all cases and incidents of attacks against journalists, media workers, and media houses either through alternative dispute resolution or legal means in order to bring perpetrators to justice with a view to drastically reducing attacks against journalists with impunity.
- They should engage with the law-enforcement and security agencies to reach an understanding of what the duties and obligations of journalists are to the public; what constitutes attacks against journalists and how journalists and law-enforcement/security agencies can work peacefully together.
- They should hold regular training and sensitization programmes with security and law-enforcement agents on acceptable means of civil engagement especially in times of violence, conflicts and elections when attacks against journalists are most pronounced.

**The Media Regulatory Bodies**

- Media regulatory bodies in Nigeria include the National Broadcasting Commission and the Nigeria Press Council. They should ensure that they regulate media and journalism practice in accordance with international best practices, standards, and norms.
• At all times, they should speak out against attacks on journalists and make their positions on these issues very clear, and in particular, demonstrate their disapproval of attacks on the media and the fact that they do not support such attacks, rather than allowing themselves to be used by political actors or other interest groups to undermine the independence of media or news outlets.

• They should work with other stakeholders to come out with appropriate policies and legislation that will ensure the safety of journalists and see that perpetrators of attack against journalists are brought to justice.

Civil society organisations
• Freedom of expression organisations should sensitise journalists about their safety and train them on how to keep safe in all situations, including how to determine situations that may likely degenerate into violence and how to ensure their safety under such circumstances.

• They should carry out regular advocacy activities to all relevant stakeholders, including the Executive, the Legislature, the Judiciary, civil society, law-enforcement, security and intelligence agencies, government officials and civil servants in general, and the public on the role of the media in society and the need to work together to ensure the safety of journalists.

• They should liaise with journalists and media associations to take up cases on safety of journalists through litigation and ensure that perpetrators do not go free.

• They should track, document and publicise incidents of attack against journalists and the media and use the information generated to advocate for government and other sectors ensure the safety of journalists.

• Produce and distribute safety guidelines for journalists especially those covering dangerous or crisis situations.

The Nigerian Government (including their respective ministries, departments, and agencies - such as security agencies).
• Government should introduce and implement policies and legislation that ensure the safety of journalists at all times. Such policies and legislation should contain preventive measures which should be aimed at eliminating or reducing attacks against journalists and should result in the routine but diligent prosecution of perpetrators of attacks against journalists to ensure that perpetrators do not go free and are discouraged from conducting future attacks.

Security, Law Enforcement and Intelligence Agencies
• Security, law-enforcement and intelligence agencies need to train their personnel on the tenets of democracy and the vital role that the media play in society in ensuring good governance, among other things.

• They should carry out training and sensitization programmes for personnel and members on the rules of civic engagement.

• They should investigate and prosecute cases of attacks against journalists and the media to send the message that no attacks against journalists and the media will go unpunished.

General Public
• The general public should realize that attack on journalists affect the ability of the media to do their work and provide the public or society with a range of news and information that are critically important by members of the public or society for decision-making, whether on personal, professional, business, political or other levels. They should therefore cooperate with journalists to ensure their safety and take measures to defend journalists and the media whenever they are under attack or simply to protest such attacks.