Women Affairs minister demands end to violence against women, children

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The Minister of Women Affairs, Imaan Sulaiman-Ibrahim, has expressed concern over the alarming rise in violence, sexual abuse, and other crimes against women, children, and vulnerable groups in Nigeria.  
  
Ms Sulaiman-Ibrahim, in a statement issued on Monday, declared that enough is enough, calling for immediate action to address these crimes.  
  
According to the statement signed by her Special Adviser on Media and Publicity, Jonathan Eze, she highlighted the increasing prevalence of sexual assault, physical violence, emotional abuse, child trafficking, and online exploitation occurring in schools, homes, and communities.  
  
She described the situation as a violation of fundamental human rights while also promising to strengthen national response for social protection of women, children, and other vulnerable groups in Nigeria.  
  
“Violence against women and children must be stopped with immediate effect. We have a moral and legal obligation to protect our women, children, and other vulnerable groups from all forms of abuse and violence,” she said.  
  
She added that reports of violence against children are heartbreaking and “every child deserves to live in a safe, secure and nurturing environment free from fear, violence, and abuse.  
  
Call for action  
  
The call for action follows the tragic murder of a Youth Corps Member Salome Adaidu by a gospel singer Timileyin Ajayi, who claims to be her boyfriend.  
  
PREMIUM TIMES reported that the artiste was apprehended in Agwan Sarki Orozo, Nasarawa State, while allegedly attempting to dispose of the severed head of 24-year-old Ms Adaidu, a Youth Corps Member serving in Abuja.  
  
Mr Ajayi alleged he found messages suggesting she was unfaithful, which led him to attack her in his bathroom. He admitted using a knife despite her apologies, insisting he had no regrets and voluntarily turned himself in to the community, who handed him over to the police.  
  
However, the victim’s family refuted his claims, insisting there was no relationship between them and alleging she was kidnapped rather than visiting him willingly.  
  
The Nasarawa State High Court has ordered Mr Ajayi’s remand, and the police confirmed his court appearance and detention, pending further proceedings. Authorities have assured the public that investigations are ongoing to ensure justice is served.  
  
Strengthening legal frameworks  
  
The minister highlighted ongoing collaborations with relevant persons to enhance legal protections and enforcement mechanisms.  
  
She reiterated plans to review existing legislation, including the Child Rights Act of 2003 and the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act of 2015, to introduce severe penalties for offenders and ensure stronger enforcement.  
  
In addition, she said the ministry is developing a National Social Protection Policy to institutionalise comprehensive strategies for safeguarding women, children, and other vulnerable groups.  
  
“We are taking immediate and decisive action against all perpetrators. Crimes of this nature violate the very essence of our societal values,” she said.  
  
Establishing support mechanisms  
  
To address these issues, the ministry has activated all available child protection mechanisms and is working closely with justice actors, law enforcement agencies, and other stakeholders to strengthen coordination.  
  
“Furthermore, the ministry is focused on establishing the necessary reporting mechanisms and crisis management centres to help citizens recognise, report, and seek help from abuse through helplines, school-based programmes, psycho-social support, and community sensitisation initiatives,” the statement reads.  
  
“We believe in a holistic approach to prevention and intervention and we are committed to creating a safer environment for our women, children and vulnerable citizens,” she noted.  
  
\Mrs Sulaiman-Ibrahim also acknowledged the strong backing of President Bola Tinubu, who has committed to zero-tolerance policy for violence under the Renewed Hope Agenda.  
  
She assured Nigerians that protecting women, children, and vulnerable groups remains a top priority for the government.  
  
“The Renewed Hope Agenda is built on equity, justice, and protection for all citizens. We call on all Nigerians to join us in this crucial fight to eradicate violence and all forms of abuse from our society,” she said.