Man Jailed 9 Years for Sexually Assaulting Neighbour’s Son

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An Ikeja Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Court on Thursday sentenced one Francis Onwuzulike to a term of nine years and six months imprisonment for the sexual assault of his neighbour’s son, a 13-year-old minor, (name withheld).  
  
While delivering the judgment, Justice Rahman Oshodi convicted Onwuzulike pursuant to his plea bargain agreement on amended charges comprising three counts: indecent treatment of a child, sexual assault, and indecent acts.  
  
The convict was initially charged with sexual assault by penetration, which carries a life sentence, to which Onwuzulike pleaded not guilty.  
  
During the trial of the convict, the state prosecution counsel, Ms. Bukola Okeowo, called the 13-year-old victim as its sole witness.  
  
The witness testified that in July 2018, when he was 13 years old, Onwuzulike, his neighbour, committed acts of sexual abuse against him on three separate occasions.  
  
The victim narrated that the convict would send him on errands and, upon his return, would lock the door before perpetrating the acts of sexual violence.  
  
The boy further testified: “He would position me face down on his bed, mount me from behind, and insert his penis into my anus.”  
  
He also recounted that the convict threatened him with death should he disclose the abuse to anyone.  
  
The victim narrated that the abuse was discovered following the intervention of Onwuzulike’s younger brother, who witnessed one of the incidents and subsequently informed his mother.  
  
During cross-examination by the defence counsel, Mr Olanrewaju Ajanaku, the survivor disclosed suffering from constipation and other health complications attributable to the abuse.  
  
In his judgment, Justice Oshodi stated, “I am satisfied that Onwuzulike fully understands the nature of the offences to which he has pleaded guilty.”  
  
He said, “You stand before this court for sentencing, having pleaded guilty to indecent treatment of a child, sexual assault, and indecent acts, contrary to Sections 135, 263, and 134 of the Criminal Law, respectively.”  
  
The judge noted that the original charge of sexual assault by penetration attracts life imprisonment.  
  
He held, following negotiations between the prosecution and defence counsel, that a plea agreement was reached on May 27, 2025.  
  
Under the amended charges, the prescribed sentences are seven years for indecent treatment of a child, three years for sexual assault, and two years for indecent acts.  
  
Justice Oshodi said, “I have carefully considered your plea of guilty, which demonstrates a degree of acceptance of responsibility.  
  
“I have also considered the remarks you made during the sentencing proceedings, in which you expressed profound regret and made a compassionate plea for mercy.”  
  
The court further considered the comprehensive bundle of 10 certificates tendered by the convict, obtained while in custody, which demonstrates “remarkable dedication to self-improvement and rehabilitation.”  
  
“The demonstrated commitment to personal transformation and tangible evidence of rehabilitation justify a reduction of 20 per cent from the agreed sentence of 12 years, amounting to a decrease of two years and four months,” the judge held.  
  
Accordingly, he sentenced the convict to nine years and six months imprisonment, with the sentence to commence from the date of remand on September 12, 2018.  
  
Furthermore, pursuant to Sections 33 and 38 of the Domestic and Sexual Violence Agency Law of Lagos State 2021, Justice Oshodi ordered that the convict be registered as a sex offender.