

Commonwealth Disabled People's Forum Ltd

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General Secretary Richard Rieser

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8 August 2024

Marlborough House

Dear Honourable Patricia Scotland

Re: Urgent Call for Public Enquiry into Police Brutality against Disabled Protester Hamza Waziri

To whom it may concern,

The Commonwealth Disabled People's Forum (CDPF) is writing to express its deep concern and condemnation of the alleged assault on Hamza Waziri, former chairman of Persons with Disabilities in Bauchi State, by the Nigeria Police Force during a peaceful protest in Bauchi. We urge that the Commonwealth oversee the Kenyan government to launch a public enquiry into this incident and take immediate action to address the systemic issues that led to this unacceptable violence.

As you know, Nigeria has made significant strides in promoting disability rights, including the passage of the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act in 2018. Moreover, as a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), Nigeria has committed to upholding the rights of disabled people, including the right to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression. Article 21 of the UNCRPD guarantees the freedom of expression and opinion, including the right to seek, receive, and impart information. Additionally, Article 29 affirms the right of persons with disabilities to participate in public and political life, which includes the right to peaceful assembly and protest.

Nigeria's legal framework, including the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition), further enshrines these rights, mandating equal treatment and non-discrimination. The alleged assault on Mr Waziri during his exercise of these fundamental rights is a grave violation, and it calls for an immediate and thorough investigation.

The CDPF recognises and applauds the efforts made by your government to promote disability inclusion. However, the incident involving Hamza Waziri highlights the need for further action to ensure that disabled people can exercise their rights without fear of violence or discrimination.

Considering this incident, we call on the Nigerian government to:

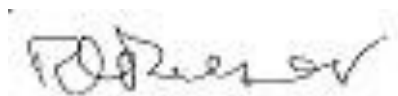
1. Launch a public enquiry into the assault on Hamza Waziri and ensure accountability for those responsible.
2. Provide disability equality training for police and other public servants to address systemic ableism and promote inclusive practices.
3. Take concrete steps to ensure the safety and inclusion of disabled people in all aspects of public life, including protests and democratic processes.

The CDPF remains committed to empowering disabled people across the Commonwealth, including Nigeria. We will continue to work with governments, civil society, and disabled people's organisations to promote disability inclusion and equality.

We look forward to your prompt response and action on this matter.

Yours Sincerely

Richard Rieser



General Secretary Commonwealth Disabled People's Forum