



## Federal Ministry of Justice

### **AGF INAUGURATES JUSTICE BELLO-LED NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON PRISONS DECONGESTION TUESDAY**

The prisons system in Nigeria is expected to get a boost as the Honourable Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Mr. Abubakar Malami, SAN will on Tuesday inaugurate the stakeholders' committee on prisons decongestion in Nigeria. This is contained in a statement made available to newsmen on Sunday by Comrade Salihu Othman Isah, Special Adviser, Media and Publicity to the Honourable Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice.

The national stakeholders' committee to be led by Honourable Justice Ishaq Bello, the Chief Judge of the Federal Capital Territory will oversee the implementation of the Federal Executive Council's directives to fast track decongestion of prisons. This renewed effort to put prisons across the nation under proper perspective, is geared to mark a paradigm shift from previous attempts towards prison decongestion in the country.

Therefore, the Federal Ministry of Justice intends to realign the program to pay greater emphasis on true reforms of the prison and shifting of emphasis from retaining the services of external solicitors for awaiting trial inmates only to the Reformation, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (RRR) of the inmates. The stakeholders' committee is also expected to come up with a roadmap for the prison decongestion program, providing a comprehensive user friendly approach for tackling the problems bedeviling the Nigerian prison system.

It would also, provide an insight into the past and present efforts of the Federal Ministry of Justice and other stakeholder institutions towards repositioning Nigeria prisons system. The committee would equally develop a strategy for the deployment of technology for the decongestion of prisons in Nigeria and the implementation of the Virtual Automated Case Management System.

Other functions of the committee include to:

- (1) Aid the systematic decongestion of Nigeria prison
- (2) Analyze periodically, the number of detainees either; discharged, granted bail or convicted as the case may be
- (3) Advice on periodic visits to prisons for effective monitoring of the program
- (4) Liaise with relevant government agencies on the progress of the prison decongestion program
- (5) Organize a national summit on Prison Reform and Decongestion in Nigeria
- (6) Conduct the Audit of criminal cases pending in courts to enable the determination of the reasons for the delay.
- (7) Undertake a legal audit of prison facilities in Nigeria with a view to identifying persons who should not be in prison, and
- (8) Carry out any other duties as may be assigned to it by the Honourable Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice.

Besides Justice Ishaq Bello who chairs the committee, other members include Mr. Dayo Akpata, Solicitor General of the Federation and Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Justice (FMOJ), Comrade Salihu Othman Isah, Special Adviser on Media and Publicity to the Honourable Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Mr. Pius Oteh, Special Assistant to the President on Coordination and International Affairs, Mr. Sylvester Imhanobe, Special Assistant to the President on Research and Special Projects, Mr. Reuben Mathew Jego, Supreme Court of Nigeria, Lieutenant Colonel O.N. Adesuyi (Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA) and Mr. Olawale Fapohunda of the Legal Resources Consortium.

Others are Mr. Clement Nwankwo, Executive Director, Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre (PLAC), Ms Melissa Omene, Office of the Vice President, Mr. Tunde Ikusaga, Legal Aid Council, Titilayo Samuel, National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) Patrick Enyeting of the Nigerian Police Force (NPF), Mr. Barkan Hadi, who is representative of the Director of Public Prosecution of the Federation, Mrs. Sarah H. Daniel, Citizens Rights Department of the FMOJ, Mr. Felix Ota-Okojie, Federal Justice Sector Reform Coordinating Committee (FJSRCC) of FMOJ, representatives of the

Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) and Nigerian Prisons Service (NPS) and Mrs. Leticia Ayoola-Daniels of the FMOJ who serves as secretary of the committee. Their inauguration comes up at the Conference Room of the Honourable Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice by 11am prompt.