



## Federal Ministry of Justice

### **MALAMI EXPRESSES CONCERN OVER GENDER BASE VIOLENCE**

The Honourable Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice Abubakar Malami, SAN, has said that the federal government is of great concern to particular reference associated with violence against women and children and no amount of collaboration and working together that can be too much to ensure that this menace is curbed. Malami made this known when a delegation of International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA), Nigeria led by the National President, Rhoda Prevail Tyoden paid a courtesy visit to the Honourable Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice (HAGF) Abubakar Malami, SAN in Abuja on Tuesday June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020.



*THE HONOURABLE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE FEDERATION/MINISTER OF JUSTICE, ABUBAKAR MALAMI, SAN, RECEIVES A DELEGATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF WOMEN LAWYERS (FIDA) NIGERIA, LED BY THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT, RHODA PREVAIL TYODEN IN ABUJA ON TUESDAY JUNE 16<sup>TH</sup> 2020.*

The Minister noted that, “there are serious challenges that cause serious and great danger to the society. I share in your grief and the position you have taken and in that direction, I want to say categorically that the government is not only worried but we have taken steps to express our worries to indeed do the needful that will formulate necessary policies, legislature in that respect”. He disclosed that a Federal Executive Council Memo was filed last week, expressing great concern over the development and agreed on a collaborative action with the Ministry’s, Departments and Agencies(MDA’s) and indeed well-meaning Nigerians to address and come up with effective strategies for addressing the problems. Proffering solution to the problem, Malami said, “I think we can equally revisit the idea of law making, the idea of legislations to see if there are any adjustment with the existing law in the society”.

The Minister expressed appreciation to the association in their efforts to fight against Gender-Based Violence in the Country. Earlier, the National President, International Federation of Women Lawyers (**FIDA**) Nigeria, Rhoda Prevail Tyoden called on the Nigerian government to declare a state of emergency on gender-based violence so as to tackle it forthwith, most efficiently and effectively across all states of the Federation. Rhoda said the call is for all major key players to join force for a more holistic and aggressive approach in tackling the serious challenge across Nigeria. She noted that it is no longer news that there has been a tremendous acceleration in the number of gender-based violence cases, particularly the abuse and rape of women and the defilement of babies and children across the States of Nigeria. She added that with the evil and unpleasant happening in the communities, children, girls and women are no longer safe.

“FIDA Nigeria strongly objects to this evil trend of the incessant abuse and sexual molestation of women and children and demands speedy and decisive action”, she said. She explained that FIDA's mandate is to protect, preserve, and promote the rights of the vulnerable in society, especially the indigent women and children who are often preyed upon, adding that they must heed their cry and come to their immediate aid. Rhoda emphasized that, “the shaming, victimization, and stigmatization of victims of Gender-Based Violence must stop. Rather let us sham the

ACT and the perpetrators while encouraging victims to speak out and report all abuses''.

She highlighted some recommendations made by the Association which included the following among others; that all States should ensure that they have in place the enacted laws or have reviewed their laws to deal with this menace adequately; calling for the implementation of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (**VAPP**) Act; Child Rights Law and other related laws. All states that have not adopted the **VAPP ACT** should with utmost urgency adopt the Act.

Furthermore, the Police saddled with the responsibility to arrest, investigate these cases must be well equipped to fight this menace diligently so as to secure convictions which will serve as a deterrent to offenders. Also, it was recommended that Chief Judge in the different States are to designate a special fast track court to handle Gender-Based Violence matters while issuing practice direction on GBV cases and children related matters to ensure we expedite the prosecution of such matters in court, establishment of the family court in line with the provision of the Child Rights Act/ Law and the provision of all machinery to ensure it begins operation speedily, Protection and support for victims of GBV, including shelters in all states, free medical (including Psycho-analysis) treatment for victims of rape/defilement.

Opening and operation of the Sex Offenders Register across all the states of the Federation in line with the provision of the **VAPP Act/ Law**.