LEDAP CALLS THE NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT TO STAND UP AGAINST GENDER INEQUALITY

Release date: 7th March 2018

As the world marks the International women’s day, LEDAP lends its voice to that of the global activists, global governments, and women’s organizations to press for the progress of all women in all spheres of life and particularly for gender equality.

LEDAP recognizes the gains in women’s rights advocacy in the recent years ridden on the back of active campaigns for women’s progress. It is apparent that the eras where women were satisfied with being subjugated and subdued have phased out and a new dawn of free-expression and voicing-out against the oppression and tyranny of parochial society is at the horizon.

LEDAP particularly recognizes the active social media campaigns against sexual violence and abuse of women highlighted by the #MeToo and #Timesup movement, the involvement of several women in politics vying for the high offices which were hitherto inconceivable aspirations for women, the outcry against sexual violation of women in the work place and several other cases. LEDAP however admits that despite these pockets of achievements there is still much to be done for the actualization of gender equality in Nigeria.

LEDAP observes that in Nigeria several women especially those in the rural areas remain exploited, discriminated against and are unable to actualize their dreams due to illiteracy and lack of enabling environment. Many of these women do not get a fair opportunity for progress in politics, employment and have no access to reproductive health services. Women in the internally displaced camps have encountered all forms of sexual and gender based violence including sexual exploitation often in exchange for food and other necessities. These women exist
in several societies as the **voiceless women** for whom the press for progress has remained largely illusive.

LEDAP expresses concern that in Nigeria the issues of women’s rights such as the need to create an enabling environment for women in the Nigerian society to receive expression and attain self actualization has not received much attention and many bills to address these grey areas have not been passed under the current President Buhari-led administration. LEDAP believes the confinement of women to the “kitchen” or “the other room” does not align with global trends and civilized existence and Nigeria Government has a major role to play in the emancipation of the Nigerian woman.

LEDAP beckons on the government to take immediate steps to ensure the domestication and implementation of the convention on the elimination of discrimination against women (CEDAW) and the protocol to the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights on the Rights of women in Africa.

LEDAP therefore uses the commemoration of this day to advocate for the voiceless women and girls who continue to live daily facing discrimination, violation and abuse. LEDAP calls on the Nigerian government at Federal and State level to create an enabling environment for women empowerment and ensure equal rights for all women in all spheres of life; access to education, access to reproductive services, equal pay for equal work as well as protection from all forms of violence.

FOR: Legal Defence& Assistance Project

[Signature]

Chino Obiagwu
National Coordinator