

# PUBLIC STATEMENT

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## **TIGER BASE RESPONDS TO #TIGERBASEMUSTFALL CAMPAIGN WITH MASS ARRESTS: 41 PEOPLE REMANDED IN TWO WEEKS**

**Seven Women Held for Up to Two Years Finally Arraigned; Children Separated from Mothers Remain Missing**

**ABUJA/OWERRI :** Less than two weeks after the launch of the #TigerBaseMustFall campaign and the release of CAPTI's comprehensive report documenting at least 200 deaths in Tiger Base custody, the Anti-Kidnapping Unit of the Imo State Police Command has responded not with accountability but with escalation and cover-up, remanding at least **41 people** in Owerri Correctional Centre between December 10 and December 23, 2025.

"This is retaliation masquerading as law enforcement," said Juwon Sanyolu, Coordinator CAPTI . "Within days of our report launch on December 15, Tiger Base dramatically tries to cover up its atrocities by decongesting its terror cells. The message is clear: demand accountability, and they will demonstrate exactly why accountability is needed."

### **Mass Remands Following Campaign Launch**

CAPTI has documented the following pattern of remands to Owerri Correctional Centre in the last few days:

- **December 10, 2025:** 19 people remanded
- **December 16, 2025:** 17 people remanded (including 7 women held at Tiger Base for 1-2 years)
- **December 18, 2025:** 4 people remanded
- **December 23, 2025:** 1 person remanded

**Total: 41 people remanded in 14 days**

This represents an average of nearly 3 people per day being sent from Tiger Base to prison, a dramatic spike that coincides precisely with increased scrutiny of the facility following the campaign launch and international media coverage.

"The timing is not coincidental," said Juwon Sanyolu "For years, Tiger Base held people for months or years without charging them. Suddenly, within days of our campaign launching, they are rushing dozens of people through magistrate courts. This is not the rule of law, this is a performance designed to create the appearance of legal process while continuing systematic abuse."

## Seven Women Held Up to Two Years Finally Arraigned

Perhaps most damning, seven women who had been held at Tiger Base for between one and two years without trial were suddenly arraigned on December 16, 2025, the day after our report launch. Their cases expose the cynical manipulation of the justice system and the practice of holding family members hostage for alleged crimes of male relatives.

### Women Held Since October 2023 (Over Two Years):

1. **Nkechinyere Ogu** : Detained since October 11, 2023, when she went to Tiger Base to negotiate bail for her sister-in-law and stepmother. Despite paying ₦950,000 for her own release, she was not freed and has been held for 26 months without trial.
2. **Chinenye Obi** : Arrested with her one-year-nine-month-old son in October 2023 because of allegations against her husband. She was beaten and tortured mercilessly, bleeding from the nose. Her son was taken from her to an unknown location, and she has neither seen nor heard anything about him in over two years.
3. **Onyebuchi Anyanwu** : Arrested with her three children, Peculiar (8 years), Ihuoma (5 years), and Onyinyechi (3 years), in October 2023 over allegations against her husband. When her health deteriorated, she was released briefly. After treating herself, she was arrested again. She paid ₦500,000 for release but was not freed. Her three children were taken from her to unknown locations over two years ago, and she has no information about their whereabouts.

### Women Held Since October/November 2024 (Over One Year):

4. **Chinaza Ifeanyi** : Arrested November 12, 2024, with her two-month-old son, Chidiuto Paul, and several other family members by Tiger Base officers led by Inspector Chidiebere Nwosu. Her husband, Ifeanyi Anayo, and two other men (Kingsley Sunday and Chibuikem Maduka) were killed by Tiger Base on February 26, 2025. A pregnant woman (Mmesoma Faith) and two children (Zikora Chimezie, 10 years old, and Ihechi Ifeanyi, 13 years old) arrested with them remain missing. Chinaza's infant son was taken from her and his whereabouts are unknown.
5. **Onyemuwa Chidera** : Arrested in November 2024 because her husband was accused of being a terrorist. When a lawyer, Barrister Modestus, came to negotiate her bail, he was detained by Tiger Base.
6. **Munachi Ifeanyi** : Wife of Ifeanyi Anayo (killed by Tiger Base in February 2025). Arrested in November 2024 over allegations that her husband was IPOB/ESN member.
7. **Ngozi Ogbonna** : Arrested in October 2024 by Tiger Base and held without trial until arraignment on December 16, 2025.

All seven women were charged with offenses under Sections 401, 402(2)(a)(b)(e), and 403 of the Criminal Code; essentially terrorism-related charges based solely on their relationships to men accused of IPOB/ESN membership. All cases have been adjourned to January 15, 2026, at Magistrate Courts 1 and 10 in Owerri.

## Children Separated from Mothers, Whereabouts Unknown

Three of the women arrested with their young children have had those children taken from them to unknown locations. Despite over a year (and in some cases over two years) in detention, the mothers have received no information about their children's whereabouts, welfare, or even whether they are alive.

### Missing Children:

1. **Chiemerie Obi**: One year and nine months old when arrested with his mother Chinenye Obi in October 2023. Missing for over 2 years.
2. **Peculiar Anyanwu** : Eight years old when arrested with her mother Onyebuchi Anyanwu in October 2023. Missing for over 2 years.
3. **Ihuoma Anyanwu** : Five years old when arrested with her mother Onyebuchi Anyanwu in October 2023. Missing for over 2 years.
4. **Onyinyechi Anyanwu**: Three years old when arrested with her mother Onyebuchi Anyanwu in October 2023. Missing for over 2 years.
5. **Chidiuto Paul Ifeanyi** : Two months old when arrested with his mother Chinaza Ifeanyi in November 2024. Missing for over 1 year.

"The separation of infants and young children from their mothers, with no information provided about their location or welfare for years, constitutes enforced disappearance of minors," said Juwon Sanyaolu "These are children as young as two months old who have been taken to unknown locations. Their mothers live with the daily agony of not knowing if their babies are alive, where they are, who is caring for them, or if they will ever see them again."

### **Additional Documented Killings**

The case of Chinaza Ifeanyi reveals additional extrajudicial killings not previously documented in CAPTI's report. On February 26, 2025, Tiger Base officers killed three men who had been arrested on November 12, 2024:

1. **Ifeanyi Anayo**
2. **Kingsley Sunday**
3. **Chibuikem Maduka**

Additionally, the following individuals arrested with them on November 12, 2024, remain unaccounted for:

- **Mmesoma Faith** – Pregnant woman
- **Zikora Chimezie** – 10 years old
- **Ihechi Ifeanyi** – 13 years old

The fate of the pregnant woman and the two children is unknown. They have not been produced in court, their families have received no information, and Tiger Base has not accounted for them.

### **Pattern of Hostage-Taking and Collective Punishment**

The cases of these seven women exemplify a systematic practice documented throughout CAPTI's investigation: when Tiger Base cannot find or wants to pressure men accused of crimes, officers arrest and indefinitely detain their wives, mothers, sisters, and children.

#### **Nkechinyere Ogu's case is particularly illustrative:**

She went to Tiger Base voluntarily to negotiate the release of her sister-in-law (Chinenye Obi) and stepmother (Jacinta Ogu), who had been arrested because police could not find her brother, Oluchukwu Ogu, who was alleged to be an ESN member. According to Nkechinyere's account:

- She paid ₦700,000 for the release of her stepmother

- Her stepmother, Jacinta Ogu, was beaten and tortured by Inspector Chidi Igwe until "she started seeing her menstruation all over again" (suggesting torture causing vaginal bleeding in an elderly woman)
- Jacinta was only released after "millions of naira were paid by relatives abroad"
- Nkechinyere herself paid ₦950,000 for her own release but was never freed
- She has been detained since October 11, 2023—over 26 months

Officers told her and other women that "each time human rights [monitors] and lawyers and journalists came around the cell, officers would hide them away and threaten them not to attract any attention. And they would be returned to the cell when the visitors left."

This systematic hiding of long-term detainees from oversight visits explains why the National Preventive Mechanism's June 2025 visit to Tiger Base noted that "few detainees are brought out to the office of the commander" when monitors visit, officers deliberately conceal those held longest to prevent documentation of extended illegal detention.

### **Why Now? The Performance of Justice**

For over a year, these seven women were held at Tiger Base without being charged or brought to court. Suddenly, one day after CAPTI's report launch and the beginning of the #TigerBaseMustFall campaign, they were rushed through magistrate courts and remanded in Owerri Correctional Centre.

This is not justice; this is theatre. Officers who for years defied basic legal procedures suddenly discovered the magistrate courts exist, but only when international scrutiny threatened to expose their practices.

"These women should never have been arrested in the first place," said Sanyaolu "They were taken as hostages for men accused of crimes. They have been tortured, extorted, had their children taken from them, and held for years without trial. Now, facing pressure from our campaign, Tiger Base has manufactured charges and rushed them through courts to create the appearance of legality. But you cannot legalize kidnapping retroactively."

The charges against all seven women are nearly identical: terrorism-related offenses based on their relationships to accused men, with no evidence presented that they themselves committed any criminal acts. Under Nigerian law and international human rights standards, guilt by association is not a valid basis for prosecution.

### **Continued Operations Despite Campaign**

The mass remands following the campaign launch demonstrate that Tiger Base continues operating with complete impunity despite:

- Publication of comprehensive report documenting 200+ deaths
- Launch of national and international advocacy campaign
- Submission of report to UN Special Rapporteurs
- Widespread media coverage
- Demands for suspension of commanding officers
- Calls for independent investigation

Rather than suspending implicated officers, initiating investigations, or implementing reforms, Tiger Base has responded by:

- Dramatically increasing remands
- Finally charging women held for years (but only after campaign pressure)
- Continuing to hold children separated from mothers in unknown locations
- Maintaining the same commanding officers and investigators named in allegations

ACP Oladimeji Adeyeyiwa, promoted in August 2025 despite commanding the unit during the period when at least 200 people died, continues as Tiger Base commander. Inspector Chidiebere Nwosu and Inspector Chikadibia Okebata (Kill and Bury), named in multiple cases of torture and extrajudicial killing, continues serving as Investigating Police Officers.

## Legal Violations

The documented practices violate:

### Nigerian Law:

- Constitution Sections 33 (right to life), 34 (dignity and freedom from torture), 35 (personal liberty), 36 (fair hearing)
- Anti-Torture Act 2017
- Police Act 2020
- Child Rights Act 2003 (separation of children from mothers)

### International Law:

- Convention Against Torture (ratified 2001)
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ratified 1993)
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (ratified 1991)
- African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (ratified 1983)
- International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (separation and disappearance of children)

## OUR DEMANDS

CAPTI reiterates and expands its demands to Nigerian authorities:

### Immediate Actions Required:

1. **Account for missing children:** Police must immediately disclose the location and condition of the five children separated from their mothers, allow immediate mother-child reunification, and explain the legal basis for separating infants and young children from their mothers.
2. **Independent investigation into February 26, 2025 killings:** Investigate the deaths of Ifeanyi Anayo, Kingsley Sunday, and Chibuikem Maduka, and account for the missing pregnant woman (Mmesoma Faith) and two children (Zikora Chimezie, 10, and Ihechi Ifeanyi, 13).
3. **Suspend implicated officers:** Immediately suspend ACP Oladimeji Adeyeyiwa, Inspector Chidiebere Nwosu, Inspector Chidi Igwe, Inspector Chikadibia Okebata (Kill and Bury) and other officers documented in cases of torture, extrajudicial killing, and enforced disappearance.
4. **Review all Tiger Base cases:** Conduct independent review of all cases where individuals were arrested as relatives of accused persons, with presumption of immediate release unless individual evidence exists.

5. **Investigate systematic hiding of detainees:** Investigate the practice of hiding long-term detainees from oversight visits and threatening them to remain silent.
6. **Halt retaliation arrests:** Ensure that increased arrests following campaign launch are based on genuine evidence, not retaliation or performance of justice under pressure.

### **Structural Reforms:**

7. **End collective punishment:** Prohibit arrest and detention of family members solely based on relationship to accused persons.
8. **Prohibit child separation:** Establish absolute prohibition on separating infants and young children from detained mothers except where mother poses demonstrable threat to child.
9. **Mandatory charging timelines:** Require that all detainees be charged and brought before court within constitutionally mandated timeframes (24-48 hours).
10. **Oversight access:** Grant unhindered access to National Human Rights Commission, National Preventive Mechanism, and civil society monitors to all detention areas without advance notice.

### **International Community Response**

CAPTI has submitted documentation of these cases to:

- UN Special Rapporteur on Torture
- UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions
- UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances
- UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention
- Committee on the Rights of the Child
- African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights
- ECOWAS Court of Justice

We call on diplomatic missions in Nigeria to raise these cases in bilateral engagements and condition security cooperation on demonstrable progress in police accountability.

### **Family Support**

CAPTI is coordinating legal representation for the seven women and other recent detainees. We are working with families to locate the missing children and pursuing habeas corpus applications for their production. We are also coordinating psychosocial support for mothers traumatized by extended separation from their children.

Families seeking information about detained relatives or assistance with legal representation can contact CAPTI.

### **Campaign Continuation**

The #TigerBaseMustFall campaign will not be deterred by these cover-ups. If anything, they demonstrate exactly why sustained pressure is necessary. We are:

- Documenting all new arrests and remands
- Providing legal support to detainees
- Tracking cases through court system
- Maintaining international pressure

- Coordinating with legal professionals for strategic litigation
- Expanding coalition of organizations demanding accountability

"Tiger Base's response to our campaign proves our point," said Sonyaolu "They cannot reform because they are not interested in reform. They can only escalate, hide detainees from monitors, separate children from mothers, and rush people through courts under pressure. This is not a police unit, it is a criminal enterprise operating under state authority. It must be shut down."

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***"Tiger Base must fall. The children must be found. The killings must stop. Justice must be served."***