

TREATMENT OF PRISONERS OF WAR IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The protection and treatment of persons deprived of liberty, more so prisoner of war (POW), is a central principle of International Humanitarian Law (IHL), which, among others, symbolizes the extent to which human dignity is protected during war and conflict. This study inquires into the legal and operational principles of treating detainees. Although the term POW applies only to international armed conflicts, the essence of their protection applies to all detained persons, especially in the context of non-international armed conflicts. Using a doctrinal and analytical approach, this work inquires into legal norms, institution(s) and ethical guidelines that influence the treatment of detainees. Particular interest is placed on Nigeria, which due to the on-going contemporary security crisis, particularly insurgency, has determined the pattern of detention. In the circumstances, persons detained are rarely labeled POWs in the strictest sense, but are still afforded basic minimum protections as guided by Common Article 3 to the Geneva Conventions and the Nigerian Constitution. Utilizing hypothetical examples, cases studies of military detention, de-radicalisation and rehabilitation programmes, pre-trial detention by police, it highlights some of the persistent challenges, including pre-trial detention, prison congestion and restriction of due process, and institutions such as the Nigerian Armed Forces, the judiciary and the International Committee of the Red Cross as custodians of compliance. However, disparity between standards and actual practice is noted. In conclusion, there is a need for improved institutions capacity, accountability, and co-ordination to realize the efficient protection of persons deprived of their liberty in conformity with international humanitarian law and human rights law.

Introduction

One of the most pertinent issues within international humanitarian law is the treatment of prisoners of war (POWs), as this most clearly illustrates how humanity can be sustained during armed conflict. Armed conflict, whether international or non-international, can never be fought without participants being captured and detained by the adversary forces. The history of conflict demonstrated that in the absence of a specific legal regime to govern the treatment of captured

combatants, there was no protection against cruelty, torture and extrajudicial killing and no guarantee of proper detention, all of which is the *raison d'être* of International Humanitarian Law (ICRC, 2020).

International law concerning the treatment of prisoners of war evolved into a comprehensive regime enshrined in the Geneva Convention (III) Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War (1949). This convention outlines in detail the rights, duties and general welfare of captured fighters, stating that POWs should be "humanely treated at all times and protected...against insults and public curiosity and against all forms of violence or intimidation, against the assaults of insult and public curiosity". (ICRC, 2020). The detaining authority must be able to adequately house, feed and supply the POWs with appropriate medical care and allow communication facilities; additionally, it must be realised that detention is not a form of punishment but a mechanism by which the captor may remove a combatant from the ongoing fight (Henckaerts & Doswald-Beck, 2005).

The framework for POW protection also finds root in customary international humanitarian law. In both international and non-international armed conflict, all those captured and who are no longer participating in armed hostilities must be treated humanely; rules governing distinction and proportionality require military action to differentiate between combatants and civilians and protect non-combatants, including those detained. These rules of custom apply to all states irrespective of treaty obligations and demonstrate global consensus on the minima of human standards in war (Henckaerts & Doswald-Beck, 2005). Enforcement of these standards also involves a number of international institutions, including the International Committee of the Red Cross, which may, *inter alia*, monitor compliance with international humanitarian law in various parts of the world.

Nigeria, as a sovereign state and a party to the Geneva Conventions, is legally obligated under both treaty and customary international humanitarian law to comply with these norms when engaged in armed conflict, whether international or non-international. In the light of the current security situation involving insurgency and counterterrorism operations, particularly within the northeastern regions of Nigeria, the question of classification of persons held in security custody as POWs has been raised, as these conflicts potentially fall under the classification of internal armed conflicts. Nevertheless, it is in no doubt that irrespective of the classification of the ongoing conflict, the legal imperative to treat all individuals held in detention humanely persists (ICRC, 2016).

However, practice has shown that Nigeria may not always meet the obligation to treat all detained individuals humanely. Information received from local and international human rights organisations has documented issues of prolonged arbitrary detention, prison overcrowding and inadequate medical care, and this suggests a lapse between the commitment on paper and in practice. The establishment of effective monitoring mechanisms and accountability for violations of fundamental rights is essential to address this situation and requires strengthening of national institutional capacities.

This research aims to investigate the treatment of prisoners of war within Nigeria, determine the extent to which international legal standards are upheld and ascertain any discrepancies between international norms and practice, contributing to the debate surrounding effective protection of individuals in times of armed conflict.

Outline of the Study

This paper presents a discourse on the treatment of Prisoners of War (POWs) with an insight into the various legal, moral and practical aspects of their treatment under International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and other human rights instruments. It starts by first giving a clear definition of Prisoners of War. This aspect seeks to bring out the concept and origin of Prisoners of War. The paper states who an enemy soldier is considered to be a Prisoner of War and why it is important to define and acknowledge them as POWs for the purposes of international protection.

Subsequently, the paper delves into the various legal regulations guiding the treatment of POWs especially under the Geneva Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War of 1949. This discussion will highlight the general duties of POWs toward detaining powers and in turn the duty of detaining powers towards their captured combatants like provisions for accommodation, clothing, welfare and health. It also notes other humanitarian principles that complement these regulations, thereby guiding the actions of detaining powers, regardless of the kind or severity of hostilities, in treating these POWs. This is followed by a focus on both the moral and human relation perspectives to the issue of the treatment of POWs by looking into the various values such as sympathy, justice and regard for human dignity that are associated with this treatment from various perspectives, especially that of religion and the humanities.

It also looks at other factors that contribute to and influence how people treat each other in times of war like social interaction and emotional attachments, whether positive or negative. A number of illustrative examples from different parts of the world where the regulations guiding POW treatment are applied, both positively and negatively will be provided to enable readers to gain a more rounded and realistic understanding of POW treatment.

Lastly, this paper addresses the Nigerian perspective. It is the desire of the paper to provide an analysis on the level of the implementation of international regulations concerning POW treatment in Nigeria, the general duties and obligations of the Nigerian state as regards IHL as Nigeria is a signatory to the Geneva Conventions and to make possible recommendations for improvement by looking into aspects such as the detention facilities, classification issues and institutional capacity.

Contextualization

Concept of Prisoners of War

Prisoners of War (POWs) are those persons who have fallen into the hands of the enemy and fulfill certain conditions laid down in international law (Abonyi, 2023). Based on the terms of the Geneva Convention (III) Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War of 1949, the term "POW" usually denotes member of armed forces of one of the parties to the conflict, member of militias or volunteer corps forming part of the armed forces, or member of another organized resistance group which fulfill conditions like carrying arms openly and abiding by the law and customs of warfare (Jacques, 2025). An individual's classification as POW determines the extent of legal protection guaranteed to him.

International Humanitarian Law and POW Protection

The protection of prisoners of war is derived from the legal basis of international humanitarian law (IHL). According to Yunin (2024), it is the body of law which seeks to minimize suffering and the impact of armed conflict on the humanitarian level. One fundamental principle within IHL is the principle of humanity, requiring humane treatment of all persons no longer, or never, involved in the conflict.

The Third Convention of the 1949 Geneva Conventions on the protection of prisoners of war sets out a complete system governing the treatment of POWs including requirements for housing, food, clothing and health, disciplinary regulations, employment and judicial safeguards as well as freedom of contact with the outside world. The provisions are aimed to ensure prisoners of war are protected from ill-treatment and coercion (Sadozai et al., 2025).

Also applicable to prisoners of war are the rules of customary IHL which supplement the protections offered by treaty law. These rules may be considered part of an 'international public policy' and are therefore binding on all states, whether or not they are signatories to a particular treaty (Aleshoush and Almakhozumi, 2024). They contain absolute prohibitions on torture, cruel treatment, or outrages to personal dignity, supplementing these more elaborate treaty based provisions (Aleshoush and Almakhozumi, 2024).

Legal Framework Governing Prisoners of War

The main legal instrument which regulates POW status and treatment is the Geneva Conventions, which are complemented by Additional Protocols and customary international law (Zahid, 2025). The Geneva Convention (III) specifies the rights and duties of captors. POWs "must at all times be treated with humanity.

Prisoners of war have the right to accommodation and to receive a standard of living commensurate with that of a national in a similar climate. In addition to an adequate ration, they must receive sufficient clothing and accommodation and all possible aid in cases of sickness and infirmity (e.g. Medical care) (Abonyi, 2023). Labor conditions of prisoners of war, the discipline applied and the legal procedures are regulated as well so that POWs should not be punished or prosecuted unfairly.

Communications with the external world (e.g. Correspondence to family and visitors) as well as access to humanitarian organizations is also guaranteed.

The protection from inhumane conditions and torture is entrusted to humanitarian organizations which visit camps and monitor the treatment of POWs. The role of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) as a neutral observer and helper is key to a transparent administration of the penal system towards prisoners (Abonyi, 2023).

Rights and Protections of Prisoners of War

Prisoners of war (POWs) are accorded a number of fundamental rights that aim to protect their physical, psychological and moral integrity (Sadozai et al., 2025). One of these core rights is the right to humane treatment. They include; No torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment shall be inflicted on prisoners of war. This is an unconditional right that must always be respected. POWs shall be accorded safe and habitable food, clean water, clothing and shelter which meet acceptable public health and sanitation requirements. Medical treatment must be free of charge and provided to all wounded or sick prisoners as required. POWs must not be forced into any form of work and must not be compelled to give any information beyond their names, rank, and age (or identification number).

Communication rights are a vital component in POW protection, for which they are accorded the right to send and receive mail, send and receive relief parcels, and communicate with their families(Wylie, 2025).

Role of International Institutions

International institutions are indispensable in securing respect for the POW system. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is the most significant organization that monitors the condition of detained persons in times of armed conflict. It visits detention facilities and interviews detainees in its neutral, independent and impartial capacity and it will inquire into conditions in detention (Sadique and Naskar, 2022). Apart from monitoring, ICRC enters into dialogue with State authorities and non-State actors to increase their respect for humanitarian norms. It provides aid where it deems necessary such as medical items, food aid, etc. The ICRC performs this task based on the mandate accorded to it in the Geneva Conventions where it has been accorded an important role as the keeper of International Humanitarian Law. Other international bodies, such as the United Nations and other regional bodies, indirectly contribute to the protection of POW through human rights monitoring, advocacy and peace support operations (Safdar et al., 2023). These bodies enhance international norms and put pressure on states to honor their legal duties.

Customary International Law and Ethical Principles

The treatment of prisoners of war is not merely based on treaty law; it is also governed by customary international law. The principles are based on state practices that they believe constitute

binding international law (Yunin, 2024). Customary rules reiterate the prohibition of torture, inhumane treatment, and degrading treatment of the prisoner.

Ethics also plays a vital role in guiding how prisoners are treated. Principles like human dignity, sympathy, fairness, and justice are all values which are well entrenched in both secular and religious doctrines (Hossain, 2023). Ethical beliefs contribute to legal rules by fostering a humane approach to prisoners of war. Law and ethics also combine to underscore the relevance of prisoner of war protection to a human being and not only as a legal imperative (Hossain, 2023).

Illustrations

Case 1: Military Detention Practices and Allegations of Prolonged Detention in Nigeria

One of the main illustration is that regarding the treatment of detainees in Nigeria, comes from cases of holding suspects of insurgency and other security threats, mainly in the northeast region, in detention for a period of time without bringing them to trial. One such illustration could be from the operation against the insurgents Boko Haram where a number of individuals caught during military raids in areas like Borno State, and Yobe State are taken to detention cells by the Armed forces of Nigeria and held while investigations are underway. A number of such individuals might remain in custody for an extended period before they are actually charged, or brought to justice before a competent court. The Geneva Conventions especially common article 3 stipulate that persons deprived of liberty should be treated in a humane manner and afforded basic judicial guarantees even in the case of non-international armed conflict (Altgelt, 2024). All persons who are illegally detained should not be treated with inhumanity and dignity and due process. However, observers and humanitarian organizations express concerns with cases whereby individuals who are suspected of insurgency were detained and were denied quick access to the courts or judicial authorities (Yadav, 2022). This problem could arise due to a variety of factors including; the need for continued intelligence gathering and the lack of identification, logistical problems of taking the individuals to the court through a secure environment. While administrative constraints might present logical reasons that prolong their detentions, questions are raised on the necessity and compliance with both domestic and international law standards when people are not afforded a speedy access to the judicial process. The presence and activity of International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is a relief to a certain extent where they hold talks with authorities and are sometimes granted access to the cells, where they are free to communicate with the detainees and provide them with comfort and make certain recommendations that will help alleviate their circumstances in accordance with international Humanitarian law (Lima, 2022). Nigerian constitution, states that every citizen is entitled to personal liberty, and no one should be unlawfully detained (Olomjobi, 2022). The courts will order a person be released when that person is unlawfully detained. But given the rural nature and presence of conflict in these areas, people do not have a speedy access to legal advice, courts, and appropriate judicial systems that can challenge and effect release when the need arises.

Case 2: Detention and Treatment of Suspected Insurgents in De-Radicalization and Rehabilitation Programs

One other instance of Nigerian practice as relating to detainees is to address actors engaged in groups involved with insurgencies through the provision of rehabilitative and de-radicalisation schemes. In attempting to address continuing insurgencies in the northeast of Nigeria, the Nigerian state has adopted programs that deal with the rehabilitation of former detainees and individuals that had surrendered from organizations that engaged in insurgency such as Boko Haram (Osungboye, 2021).

These detainee programs for example will generally include moving them from prison to facilities where the detainee will undergo psychological therapy, skills development and indoctrination (Dewey ET AL., 2020). Such program are usually a partnership between Nigerian Armed Forces and other entities and will cater to the issue of security as well as social reintegration. Such efforts are made with the hope that participants will transition from a prison environment to a more controlled setting, with a view to readapting to civil society.

With respect to international humanitarian law, this program and others of a similar nature seem to mirror the principle that the practice of detention need not always necessarily be for solely punitive purposes (Basra, 2022). The Geneva Convention stipulates that detainees must be treated humanely and with dignity while they are not engaged in hostilities, and to this extent rehabilitation programs seem to supplement humanitarian law provided they address and respect all fundamental rights and that participation is voluntary (Basra, 2022).

Some International bodies have participated in initiatives aimed at bringing such programs closer to humanitarian law principles, for instance the ICRC may participate in activities aimed at guaranteeing humane treatment, transparency as well as providing advice regarding relevant prisoner management procedures and reintegration programs (Levchenko et al., 2024).

Nevertheless issues such as ensuring voluntariness of participation, transparency of the program, protection of all fundamental rights, the role of monitoring, and the success of reintegration programs must be examined so that human dignity can be preserved and the participants may not relapse. The aforementioned constitutes an instance of Nigerian practice with regard to detainees where more emphasis is placed on rehabilitation rather than simply the containment of detainees (Levchenko et al., 2024). This program seems to demonstrate Nigeria seeking a compromise between security needs and humanity and addressing issues pertaining to the cause of conflict and the rights of individuals.

Case 3: Detention Conditions in Police Custody and Pre-Trial Detention

A further example of detention practices in Nigeria is related to police custody and pre-trial detention under the domestic civilian criminal justice systems (Ibrahim, 20219). Suspects accused of standard crimes like robbery, fraud or public order offenses are arrested and detained in facilities controlled by the Nigeria Police Force, while criminal investigations are underway (Ilo and Imosemi, 2022). Sometimes the suspects are kept under police detention for a period longer than

legally permitted as a result of delay in investigation, absence of evidence or administrative shortcomings.

In cities like Lagos and Abuja, and smaller areas, the detained are sometimes kept in overcrowded police cells pending completion of case files and their arrangement in the court (Nwosu, 2025). For instance, suspects arrested during normal operations might delay in being formally charged, where coordination between investigative and prosecutorial authorities is lacking, resulting in prolonged pre-trial detention especially for those who are unable to meet their bail requirements.

According to the standards set by the international and national human rights regimes, any person deprived of their liberty is supposed to be brought before a judicial authority and be informed of the grounds of arrest promptly (Lorincz and Stancu, 2025). Keeping the suspects in prolonged detention without charge violates the right to personal liberty and fair trial. It has been asserted in a number of Nigerian cases by the courts that the detention of suspects is only legal if it is reasonable in the circumstances and is subject to judicial review.

Detention facilities managed by police authorities also raised concern due to some prevailing problems like overcrowding in cells, sanitation issues, poor medical service and mixing of inmates of different categories like minors, adults and convicted individuals, suspects. These problems may arise as a result of lack of infrastructures and overwhelming high arrest rates and limited resources for law enforcement agencies (Baffour et al., 2024).

The Nigeria Police Force and its partners under the criminal justice system have come up with measures that endeavor to ameliorate the condition and make them fall within the ambit of law. Other watchdog institutions including human rights bodies also play a crucial role in keeping an eye on detention facilities and influencing the respect for due process standards (Onuoha 2024).

It is relevant to point out the role of humanitarian actors in helping to bring these situations in Nigeria to book. Though the work of the ICRC and other relevant bodies often does not take place in the context of "conflict detention", it is very essential for them to try and extend their influence to the situation in police detention centres in Nigeria. The ICRC and other bodies provide dialogue, support and advocacy toward the respect for the dignity and the treatment of all persons deprived of liberty, including prisoners in police facilities in Nigeria (Hill-Cawthorne, 2024).

The case is also illustrative of issues with regard to pre-trial detention in the criminal justice system in Nigeria, balancing the requirements for the effectiveness of criminal law with the respect for human rights. It demonstrates the importance of swift judicial intervention, collaboration between the agencies in the system and proper detention conditions in line with Nigerian law and international standards.

Treatment of prisoners of war in Nigerian perspective

Understanding the practical application of prisoner of war principles within Nigeria necessitates an examination of the interplay of international legal obligations, national constitutional provisions and the realities of internal armed conflict. Despite the fact that Nigeria has not experienced large-

scale interstate wars in recent decades it has continuously grappled with internally focused security concerns characterized by insurgency and internal armed conflict (Babaita, 2020). The nature of these conflicts and attendant internal armed confrontations bring into effect circumstances similar to armed conflict and call for application of standards derived from international humanitarian law and national laws relating to arrest, detention and human rights of the individual.

Nigeria is a party to the Geneva Conventions, and, accordingly, its membership binds it to the minimum standards for humane treatment of all persons deprived of their liberty during the period of armed conflict (Olusegun and Ogunfolu, 2019). Particular relevance is accorded to Common Article 3, which is equally applicable in Nigerian internal armed conflict and, among other guarantees, obliges all persons captured, to be treated humanely without adverse distinction. It categorically prohibits torture, cruel treatment and humiliating or degrading treatment and demands that they shall be treated with due respect to their person. They shall also enjoy adequate judicial safeguards.

The types of conflict in which Nigeria finds itself, more often than not, qualify as NIACs, rather than IACs. This status is important because the formal concept of Prisoner of War status primarily applies during IACs. For individuals captured during operations conducted against groups engaging in insurgencies, it is important to note that they may be considered detainees rather than prisoners of war. Despite this fact however, the protections enshrined in Common Article 3 are still available to such individuals regardless of their specific status in law (Ukhuegbe and Fenemigho, 2021).

The role of Nigerian Armed Forces in the management of persons apprehended during counter insurgency operations such as against the insurgent group Boko Haram in north-east Nigeria is crucial. Military personnel operating within affected areas of the country apprehend a large number of individuals involved or associated with the insurgent group in combat, or offering support and intelligence (Yalmi, 2020). In situations such as this, the responsibility for managing and treating the detained falls on the Nigerian armed forces, ensuring that all detainees are accorded treatment that meets international standards of human treatment and national requirements. Adequate provisions are made to ensure their living conditions are sound, their protection against violence assured, and basic human rights respected.

Despite these efforts, limitations and operational challenges continue to hamper the effectiveness of international standards. Detention facilities in conflict-afflicted areas are faced with overcrowding, inadequate infrastructure, dearth of essential facilities, lack of sufficient medical attention, as well as resource constraints and pressures which may sometimes tend to focus attention on operational efficacy rather than due process considerations. It is as a consequence of these issues that some detainees may be subject to prolonged periods of pre-trial detention or have delayed access to due process, often as an unavoidable consequence of prevailing realities rather

than deliberate official policy, but nevertheless resulting in concerns about the application of both domestic constitutional principles and international commitments.

Humanitarian agencies such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) have been indispensable in tackling the issues. Through confidential dialogue and a structured visiting mechanism which focuses on visits to places of detention, humanitarians endeavor to influence and assist relevant authorities towards compliance with international humanitarian law. Such engagement usually leads to improvements in several aspects of detainee life, ranging from sanitary conditions to health care, nutrition and living standards in general. The ICRC's impartial position helps it work with government authorities constructively towards a humane detention environment without interfering with their domestic affairs.

Through constitutional guarantees and judicial mechanisms, detainee rights in Nigeria can be protected through review of the legality of detention and judicial review. The Nigerian constitution guarantees that all individuals are protected against cruel and inhuman or degrading treatment and that they are afforded dignity as a human person, protection of liberty and freedom from unlawful detention. The courts have powers to review the actions of those in detention and are empowered to order their release. The remedy of habeas corpus is readily available, though due to the remoteness of most regions of conflict and limited legal infrastructure, access to legal representation and judicial review procedures remain major hurdles.

In line with the above, Nigeria has implemented rehabilitation and de-radicalization programs in areas prone to the threat of insurgencies designed to reintegrate into society the individuals caught in the net of armed groups. Such programs are usually a blend of psychological counseling, vocational skills training and ideological reorientation, all run in partnership with government security agencies and supported by international partners. Such initiatives, while welcome, need to be transparent and voluntary and safeguards have to be put in place to ensure that dignity is respected.

Past experiences also inform the country's current practices. The Civil War in Nigeria, for example, involved massive detention of individuals by both warring sides and the challenges encountered then have helped evolve national standards as to how detainees ought to be treated, though the status of Prisoners of war were inconsistently applied and not given uniform respect. Lessons learned from the war provided impetus for legal and procedural reforms related to the handling of prisoners.

Another complicating factor to this is the use of asymmetric warfare by non-state actors. Asymmetries in warfare render the situation complex since armed group do not strictly adhere to rules of engagement and it makes determining who is a combatant and who is not a complicated

affair. As a result, the decision making process surrounding the detainment and prosecution of suspects may vary based on these difficulties, despite the International Humanitarian Law rules that each detainee shall be treated with respect and not subjected to any adverse distinction.

Finally, ensuring effective prisoner management in Nigeria involves a high degree of cooperation among various bodies including, but not limited to, the military, the police, the correctional services and the judiciary. This inter-institutional co-operation should focus on the proper and timely prosecution of prisoners in accordance with national and international standards. Training of security personnel and institutional strengthening in all these fields are some of the steps needed to improve standards.

In summation, bringing the concept of prisoners of war into the Nigerian framework necessitates looking beyond conventional interstate armed conflicts and taking on board the challenges inherent in combating the contemporary wave of internal armed conflict. Nigeria, being a party to the Geneva Conventions, subscribes to the standards of humane treatment and International Humanitarian Law is thus integral to Nigeria's efforts in ensuring this. Despite the obvious limitations that arise from classifications of armed conflicts, operational pressures, institutional shortcomings and the peculiarities of asymmetric warfare, rehabilitation initiatives, judicial review, and the tireless efforts of humanitarians are all geared toward ensuring that the treatment of those deprived of their liberty are up to the minimum standards required, with the ultimate goal of preserving their human dignity at all times.

Conclusion

The treatment of prisoners and detainees in Nigeria is a complex process based on the balance between its international humanitarian obligations and its own domestic constitutional guarantees, and the context in which its armed conflict has increasingly taken place. While the conventional understanding of prisoner of war is mostly concerned with international armed conflicts, it is the internal armed conflict which predominates the current Nigerian situation. Hence while an international prisoner of war may not generally fall under the scope, a detained combatant under these domestic situations has been accorded minimum humanitarian protection under the Geneva Conventions, mainly the Common Article 3. Minimum treatment involves humane conduct, respectful treatment, no torture and degrading practice.

The primary institutions responsible for management of detained combatants include the Nigerian Armed Forces, in managing detention in the fight against insurgency. International Committee of the Red Cross(ICRC) play vital roles in monitoring detention sites and encouraging observance of humanitarian norms. In practice however, detention issues like overcrowding, detention without trial, limited access to legal proceedings, resource constraints persist.

Nigeria's legal system and its constitution provide various ways of redress and protection for the rights of the detainee. It appears that some limitations however hamper the complete effectiveness of the judiciary and constitutional provisions in some instances. Past experiences such as during the Nigerian Civil War emphasize the necessity for humane treatment in conflict settings. It is generally acceptable that Nigeria is committed to the International humanitarian law and its domestic law guarantees but institutional capacity and enforcement mechanisms need more attention and improvement for proper treatment of detained combatants.

Recommendation

To improve detainee treatment in Nigeria, authorities should strengthen adherence to international humanitarian law through training of security personnel, ensure timely judicial processes, and upgrade detention facilities. Independent monitoring and accountability mechanisms must be reinforced, while increased funding and inter-agency collaboration are essential to promote humane and lawful management of prisoners.

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