

# Asylum claim — political persecution by state actors (Nigeria, Rivers State)

**GENERATED** 04 June 2026 at 05:04 UTC  
**CLIENT** Amara Okonkwo — verified  
**JURISDICTION** England and Wales — UK Home Office asylum process  
**MATTER** Immigration / Asylum — pre-substantive interview representation and evidence preparation

## RECOMMENDATION & STRENGTH

**RECOMMENDED TO TAKE** moderate-to-strong

**Case strength**  72%

This is a well-grounded asylum claim with meaningful medical corroboration already in place and a coherent, consistent core account of state-actor persecution on political opinion grounds. The GP letter is a solid foundation but the case requires urgent and substantial work before the substantive interview: the date discrepancy must be resolved with phone metadata evidence, a specialist medico-legal report must be commissioned immediately (Medical Foundation referral should be made today), country of origin evidence on the PDSF and RSSS must be sourced, and [CLIENT] must be thoroughly prepared for the credibility-focused questioning she will face. The safe third country transit through Spain is a procedural risk that must be addressed proactively. The case is time-critical — if the firm cannot commit to full pre-interview preparation within the three-week window, consideration should be given to requesting an adjournment of the substantive interview, though this should be weighed against [CLIENT]'s wellbeing and the desirability of early resolution. On current evidence, the claim is moderate-to-strong and the firm should take it.

### Strongest grounds

- Medical corroboration: GP letter documents physical injuries (forearm scar, back contusions) with injury ages temporally consistent with March 2026 events, and explicitly states injuries are 'consistent with the account provided by [CLIENT] of assault and ill-treatment by state actors' — this is independent clinical corroboration of the core claim
- Psychological evidence: PHQ-9 and GAD-7 scores indicating moderately severe depression and severe anxiety, with presentation consistent with PTSD — consistent with a person who has experienced genuine persecution and forced displacement
- State actor persecution: Claim identifies named state actors (RSSS, Commissioner Adeyemi) — if country of origin evidence corroborates their existence and activities, this directly engages the 'unable to seek state protection' limb of the refugee definition
- Political opinion as Convention reason: PDSF membership and protest attendance, if corroborated, provide a clear Convention reason (political opinion) for the persecution

- Consistent and coherent core account: The narrative of protest, raid, brother's detention, and flight is internally consistent across screening notes and intake conversation, with the date discrepancy being the only material inconsistency and one capable of explanation
- No post-incident voluntary contact with persecutors or return to Nigeria — [CLIENT] has maintained complete separation from Nigeria out of genuine fear, consistent with a well-founded fear of persecution

### **Key risks the lawyer needs to manage**

- Date discrepancy (14 March vs 16 March) is already on the Home Office record with an officer's note that [CLIENT] 'appeared uncertain' — this will be a credibility focus at substantive interview and must be resolved before the interview
- Absence of PDSF membership evidence — the political opinion ground rests entirely on [CLIENT]'s oral account without documentary corroboration; this is the single greatest evidential gap
- No specialist medico-legal report yet commissioned — GP letter explicitly states it does not constitute a specialist report; without one, medical evidence carries reduced weight
- Safe third country issue — [CLIENT] transited through Spain (EU member state) without claiming asylum; the Home Office may raise this and the lawyer must prepare a response
- Brother's detention uncorroborated — a central element of the claim (state actors targeting the family) has no independent evidence
- Protest photograph does not identify [CLIENT] personally and does not show confirmed PDSF branding — limited direct evidential value in current form
- Three-week window to substantive interview is very tight for the volume of evidence-gathering required

### **Red flags / immediate concerns**

- Client is unrepresented with a substantive Home Office interview approximately three weeks away — immediate instruction is required to avoid the interview proceeding without legal support
- Specialist medico-legal report not commissioned despite being flagged at screening on 22 April 2026 — 22-day delay while unrepresented; Medical Foundation referral lead times may be longer than three weeks
- No PDSF membership evidence in any form — if country of origin evidence does not corroborate the party's existence and activities, the political opinion ground is vulnerable
- Passport confiscated by travel facilitator — identity documentation gap that may require additional steps to address
- No contact with brother since incident — while consistent with genuine fear, it means a key potential witness is entirely inaccessible

### **WHAT THE CLIENT WANTS**

**Goal:** Obtain refugee status / asylum in the United Kingdom on the basis of political persecution by state actors in Nigeria

**Need from this lawyer:** Urgent pre-interview representation: prepare [CLIENT] for substantive Home Office interview, commission specialist medico-legal report, gather

corroborating evidence of PDSF membership and brother's detention, and address date discrepancy in screening notes before interview

**Desired outcome:** Grant of refugee status or humanitarian protection; safety from return to Nigeria

#### PROCEDURAL POSTURE

- Asylum claim lodged at port of entry (Heathrow, 19 April 2026). Screening interview completed 22 April 2026. ARC issued. Substantive asylum interview pending — approximately three weeks from intake (estimated mid-June 2026). No legal representative currently instructed. No asylum decision issued.
- **Next hearing:** Home Office substantive asylum interview — exact date not confirmed; client states approximately three weeks from intake
- **Deadline:** URGENT — Substantive Home Office interview in approximately three weeks: legal representative must be instructed and interview preparation completed before that date
- **Deadline:** URGENT — Specialist medico-legal report (Medical Foundation or equivalent) must be commissioned immediately given lead times and interview proximity
- **Deadline:** Pre-interview — Date discrepancy (14 March vs 16 March for protest/raid) must be clarified with [CLIENT] and a consistent account prepared
- **Deadline:** Pre-interview — Country of origin evidence for Rivers State / PDSF / Commissioner Adeyemi must be sourced by legal representative (flagged in screening notes Part E)
- **Deadline:** Pre-interview — Evidence of PDSF membership (membership card, party letter) to be pursued via contacts in Nigeria if safely possible
- **Deadline:** Pre-interview — Witness statement or any evidence regarding brother's detention to be explored

#### DOCUMENTS ON FILE 3

##### **02-screening-interview-notes.pdf — Home Office Screening Interview Record**

Official Home Office screening record from Heathrow ASU, dated 22 April 2026. Records [CLIENT]'s personal details, journey route, summary of asylum claim, physical observations, documents outstanding, and officer sign-off. HO ref HOC/2026/4782291.

##### **Gemini\_Generated\_Image\_7riiz97riiz97rii (1).png — Protest photograph**

Single photograph uploaded by [CLIENT] purportedly taken at the PDSF protest. Shows a crowd scene on an urban street, people in dark clothing, one person holding a cardboard sign, banners/flags visible in background. Late afternoon lighting. No individual is identifiable from the image.

##### **03-medico-legal-letter.pdf — GP Medico-Legal Letter, Burngreave Medical Centre**

Clinical letter dated 14 May 2026 from [CLIENT]'s registered GP at Burngreave Medical Centre, Sheffield. Documents physical injuries and psychological assessment following two consultations (2 May and 12 May 2026). Provided at [CLIENT]'s written request for medico-legal purposes.

**Specialist medico-legal report (Medical Foundation or equivalent)** HIGH

GP letter explicitly states it does not constitute a specialist medico-legal report and recommends one. A specialist report from a clinician experienced in documenting torture and ill-treatment carries significantly greater evidential weight with the Home Office than a GP letter. Given the three-week interview window, this must be commissioned immediately.

Status: **Client doesn't have**

*Client has GP letter but no specialist report. GP letter states: 'A [THIRD\_PARTY] medico-legal assessment by a specialist experienced in documenting torture and ill-treatment - such as a Medical Foundation clinician - would be of significant evidential value.'*

**PDSF membership card or party letter confirming membership** HIGH

The Home Office will require corroboration of [CLIENT]'s claimed political opinion / party membership as a Convention reason. Without this, the political persecution claim rests solely on [CLIENT]'s oral account. Screening notes flag this as outstanding.

Status: **Client doesn't have**

*I don't have anything with me. My membership card and any papers were at home. I could not take anything when I ran.*

**Evidence of brother's detention (witness statement, custody record, or any documentation)** HIGH

The detention and beating of [CLIENT]'s brother by RSSS officers is a central plank of the claim. Corroboration — even a witness statement from a third party in Nigeria — would significantly strengthen the account. Screening notes flag this as outstanding.

Status: **Client doesn't have**

*No. I have heard nothing from Chidi since that night. I do not know if he is still detained or if he is safe. I have not contacted anyone at home — I am afraid that if I do it will put them in danger or they will use the contact to find me.*

**Country of origin evidence — Rivers State / PDSF / Commissioner Adeyemi / RSSS** HIGH

Screening notes Part E flag this as pending and to be sourced by the legal representative. Country of origin information (COI) corroborating the existence and activities of the PDSF, the RSSS, and Commissioner Adeyemi's political role is essential to contextualise and support the claim. This is the lawyer's responsibility to source.

Status: **Doesn't exist / doesn't apply**

*Not addressed directly by client — flagged in screening notes as 'To be sourced by legal representative'.*

### **Nigerian passport** MEDIUM

Passport was confiscated by the travel facilitator. While its absence is noted and explained, any steps to obtain a replacement or document its confiscation formally may assist in establishing identity and travel history.

Status: **Client doesn't have**

*Screening notes record: 'Nigerian Passport - confiscated by travel facilitator, not in possession'.*

### **Protest photograph EXIF / metadata extraction** MEDIUM

Client states phone metadata confirms the protest date as 16 March 2026. This directly contradicts the 14 March date in the screening notes. Formal extraction and preservation of EXIF data from the original image file is needed to either resolve or explain the date discrepancy before the substantive interview.

Status: **Client has — bringing later**

*It was taken on 16 March. That is the correct date — the same day as the protest. I can check the phone and the date is in the file information.*

### **Any additional protest photographs showing [CLIENT]'s face or PDSF-identifiable material** MEDIUM

The single uploaded photograph does not identify [CLIENT] personally and does not show identifiable PDSF branding. Additional photographs from the same event that show [CLIENT]'s face or clear PDSF signage would materially strengthen the political opinion ground.

*I have some photos on my phone from the protest but I am not sure if they show my face clearly.*

### **Cousin in Manchester — contact details and potential witness statement**

LOW

Cousin is aware of [CLIENT]'s presence in the UK and may be able to provide a supporting statement regarding [CLIENT]'s background, political activities, or the family's situation in Nigeria. Name and contact not recorded at screening.

*She knows I am here and she calls sometimes to check on me. But she is in Manchester and I am in Sheffield so it is difficult.*

### **Date of the PDSF protest and the RSSS raid on the family home**

**Prosecution / other side:** "Screening notes record: 'She attended a PDSF protest on 14 March 2026 in Ahoada town. On the evening of 14 March 2026 [NB: applicant appears uncertain of the exact date - to be clarified at substantive interview], applicant states that officers of the Rivers State Security Service (RSSS) came to her family home.'"

**Client:** "Client stated in intake: 'It was taken on 16 March. That is the correct date — the same day as the protest. I can check the phone and the date is in the file information.' Client asserts 16 March is the correct date for both the protest and the raid."

### **Whether [CLIENT]'s face is identifiable in the protest photograph**

**Prosecution / other side:** "No Home Office position yet; screening notes record no photographic evidence provided at screening."

**Client:** "Client stated: 'I have some photos on my phone from the protest but I am not sure if they show my face clearly.' The uploaded image shows a crowd scene; the individual in the foreground group is not identifiable from the image description."

## **UNDISPUTED FACTS**

- [CLIENT] is a Nigerian national from Ahoada, Rivers State, Nigeria
- [CLIENT] is a self-described member of the People's Democratic Salvation Front (PDSF), an opposition political party in Rivers State
- [CLIENT] left Nigeria on 17 March 2026 and arrived in the UK on 19 April 2026 via Niger, Morocco, and Spain
- [CLIENT] arrived at London Heathrow Terminal 2 and claimed asylum at port of entry
- Screening interview conducted 22 April 2026 at Heathrow ASU with a certified Yoruba interpreter present throughout
- ARC issued at screening, HO ref HOC/2026/4782291
- [CLIENT]'s Nigerian passport was confiscated by the travel facilitator and is not in her possession
- Physical marks (scarring on left forearm, contusions on upper back) were observed at screening and documented
- GP examination on 2 and 12 May 2026 confirmed: 6cm scar on left forearm consistent with laceration; multiple contusions on upper back consistent with repeated blunt-force trauma; injury ages consistent with events in March 2026
- GP assessed [CLIENT] as presenting with PTSD symptoms, moderately severe depression (PHQ-9: 16/27), and severe anxiety (GAD-7: 14/21)
- GP states: 'I have no clinical reason to doubt the authenticity of her account'
- [CLIENT] has had no contact with her brother or anyone in Nigeria since leaving

## **CONTRADICTIONS NOTED** 4

**Date of the PDSF protest and RSSS raid on the family home — 14 March vs 16 March 2026**

This is a between-party / within-record discrepancy that the Home Office will probe at substantive interview. The officer's note that [CLIENT] 'appears uncertain' is already on the record and will be used to test credibility. If [CLIENT] now asserts 16 March with confidence and phone metadata supports this, the lawyer must prepare a clear, consistent explanation before the interview — either that the officer misrecorded the date, or that [CLIENT] was confused at screening due to distress (consistent with her documented PTSD and the break taken during interview). Unresolved, this is a credibility risk. Resolved with metadata evidence, it becomes a demonstration of [CLIENT]'s reliability and the limitations of screening-stage note-taking.

**Within [CLIENT]'s own account — protest date stated as 14 March at screening vs 16 March confirmed in intake, but [CLIENT] left Nigeria on 17 March 2026**

If the protest was on 16 March and [CLIENT] left Nigeria on 17 March, the timeline is extremely compressed — protest, raid, escape, and departure all within 24-48 hours. This is internally coherent and actually supports the urgency of her flight, but the lawyer must ensure [CLIENT] can articulate this sequence clearly and consistently. If the protest was 14 March (as originally recorded), there is a two-day gap before departure which also needs explanation. Either way, the tight timeline should be presented as corroborating the immediacy of the threat rather than as a credibility gap.

**Extent of physical examination at screening vs GP findings — 'not fully examined' at screening but significant injuries documented by GP**

This is not a contradiction adverse to [CLIENT] — it is a gap in the Home Office's own process that works in her favour. The screening officer observed injuries but did not fully document them. The GP's subsequent detailed clinical findings fill that gap and are consistent with the screening observation. The lawyer should use this to argue that the Home Office's own screening record corroborates the existence of injuries, and the GP letter provides the clinical detail the Home Office failed to obtain. This supports the credibility of the physical persecution account.

**Claim of political protest attendance vs absence of any identifiable evidence of [CLIENT]'s personal presence**

This is not a contradiction between parties but a gap between claim and corroborating evidence — the most significant evidential weakness in the claim. The Home Office will test the political opinion ground hard. The lawyer must urgently pursue PDSF membership evidence via safe channels and ensure country of origin information corroborates the party's existence and activities in Rivers State. The GP letter and psychological findings provide indirect support (consistent with persecution) but do not directly evidence political membership.

**TIMELINE**

<b>2026-03-14</b>	PDSF protest in Ahoada town — date as recorded in Home Office screening notes (officer noted [CLIENT] appeared uncertain of exact date) 02-screening-interview-notes.pdf Part C
<b>2026-03-16</b>	PDSF protest — date as asserted by [CLIENT] in intake conversation, confirmed by phone photograph metadata Intake conversation — [CLIENT]
<b>2026-03-14 or 2026-03-16</b>	Evening: RSSS officers attend [CLIENT]'s family home in Ahoada. Brother detained and beaten in [CLIENT]'s presence. [CLIENT] flees through neighbour's house. Last known contact with brother.

<b>2026-03-17</b>	[CLIENT] departs Nigeria — assisted by 'church contact' who arranged travel documents and transport 02-screening-interview-notes.pdf Part B
<b>2026-03-17 to 2026-04-19</b>	Transit through Niger, Morocco, and Spain (approximately 33 days in transit) 02-screening-interview-notes.pdf Part B
<b>2026-04-19</b>	[CLIENT] arrives at London Heathrow Terminal 2 and claims asylum at port of entry 02-screening-interview-notes.pdf Part B
<b>2026-04-22</b>	Home Office screening interview conducted at Heathrow ASU (11:05–12:47, including one break). ARC issued. Physical marks observed. GP referral arranged. HO ref HOC/2026/4782291. 02-screening-interview-notes.pdf Parts A–F
<b>2026-04-30</b>	[CLIENT] registered at Burngreave Medical Centre, Sheffield, following referral by Sheffield NASS support services 03-medico-legal-letter.pdf
<b>2026-05-02</b>	Initial GP assessment at Burngreave Medical Centre — physical injuries and psychological state documented 03-medico-legal-letter.pdf
<b>2026-05-12</b>	Follow-up GP consultation at Burngreave Medical Centre 03-medico-legal-letter.pdf
<b>2026-05-14</b>	GP medico-legal letter issued by Dr [THIRD_PARTY_2], Burngreave Medical Centre 03-medico-legal-letter.pdf
<b>2026-05-14 (approx)</b>	Intake conversation with Legal Aid Centre — [CLIENT] seeks representation; three weeks to substantive interview Intake conversation
<b>Approx 2026-06-04 (estimated)</b>	Home Office substantive asylum interview — exact date not confirmed; client states approximately three weeks from intake Intake conversation

#### TIMELINE GAPS TO EVALUATE 4

##### **10-day gap · 2026-04-22 → 2026-05-02**

**From:** Home Office screening interview completed

**To:** First GP examination at Burngreave Medical Centre

10-day gap between screening (where injuries were observed but 'not fully examined') and first GP examination. This gap is short and not strategically adverse. However, the lawyer should note that the GP's injury age estimates (6-12 weeks for forearm scar; 6-10 weeks for back contusions, measured from 2 May 2026) are fully consistent with injuries sustained in mid-March 2026. This temporal consistency should be explicitly highlighted in submissions to the Home Office as corroboration of the claimed date of assault.

### 22-day gap · 2026-04-22 → 2026-05-14

**From:** Screening interview — specialist medico-legal report flagged as recommended

**To:** Intake conversation — specialist report still not commissioned

22 days elapsed since the Home Office's own screening record flagged a specialist medico-legal report as recommended, and no such report has been commissioned. [CLIENT] was unrepresented throughout this period. The lawyer must commission this immediately. If the substantive interview proceeds without a specialist report, the Home Office may give reduced weight to the medical evidence. If an adjournment is needed to obtain the report, the lawyer should consider whether to request one — though this carries its own risks given [CLIENT]'s distress and the desirability of resolving her status promptly.

### 33-day gap · 2026-03-17 → 2026-04-19

**From:** [CLIENT] departs Nigeria

**To:** [CLIENT] arrives in UK

33-day transit period through Niger, Morocco, and Spain. The Home Office may raise the 'safe third country' point regarding Spain (an EU member state) or Morocco. The lawyer must be prepared to address why [CLIENT] did not claim asylum in Spain or Morocco. [CLIENT]'s account attributes her travel entirely to the 'church contact' who arranged documents and transport — she had no independent agency over her route. This should be addressed proactively in the substantive interview preparation. Country guidance on Spain and Morocco as safe third countries for Nigerian asylum seekers should be reviewed.

### 37-day gap · 2026-03-16 → 2026-04-22

**From:** Incident — RSSS raid, brother's detention, [CLIENT]'s flight

**To:** First formal statement (Home Office screening interview)

37 days elapsed between the traumatic incident and [CLIENT]'s first formal account at screening. This gap is explained by the transit period (33 days in transit before UK arrival, then 3 days to screening). However, the Home Office may probe why [CLIENT] did not claim asylum in transit countries. More importantly, the officer's note that [CLIENT] 'appeared uncertain of the exact date' at screening — combined with her documented PTSD and severe anxiety — is consistent with trauma-related memory effects. The lawyer should obtain expert evidence or submissions on the impact of trauma on memory and date recall, to pre-empt credibility challenges on the date discrepancy.

## FIRST MEETING CHECKLIST

- Confirm exact date of substantive Home Office interview and obtain written confirmation from the Home Office
- Take full witness statement from [CLIENT] covering: complete chronology of PDSF involvement; full account of 14/16 March protest and raid; escape route; transit countries and why asylum was not claimed there; current circumstances in Sheffield
- Clarify and resolve the date discrepancy (14 March vs 16 March) — examine [CLIENT]'s phone in person and extract/preserve EXIF metadata from the protest photograph; take a signed statement from [CLIENT] confirming the correct date and her explanation for the screening note discrepancy

- Commission specialist medico-legal report immediately — contact Medical Foundation (or equivalent) today; explain the three-week interview window and request urgent appointment; provide GP letter and screening notes to the specialist
- Obtain [CLIENT]'s ARC card and take a copy for the file
- Source country of origin information on: PDSF (existence, activities, Rivers State operations); RSSS (existence, powers, human rights record); Commissioner Victor Adeyemi (political role, opposition to PDSF); general human rights situation in Rivers State for opposition political activists
- Explore safe channels for obtaining PDSF membership evidence — consider whether [CLIENT]'s cousin in Manchester has any contacts, or whether PDSF has a UK diaspora presence or contact point
- Advise [CLIENT] on the safe third country issue (Spain transit) and take full instructions on her lack of agency over the travel route
- Assess whether to request an adjournment of the substantive interview to allow time for specialist medico-legal report and evidence gathering — discuss with [CLIENT] and advise on pros and cons
- Obtain [CLIENT]'s written consent for GP to liaise with specialist medico-legal assessor and to release clinical records
- Record cousin in Manchester's contact details and assess whether a supporting witness statement would add value
- Advise [CLIENT] on what to expect at the substantive interview, the importance of consistency, and how to address questions about the date discrepancy

#### HANDOFF SUMMARY

This is an urgent asylum matter: [CLIENT] is a Nigerian national who claims political persecution by state actors (RSSS, acting on orders of Commissioner Adeyemi) following her attendance at a PDSF opposition party protest in Ahoada, Rivers State in March 2026. She has a Home Office substantive interview in approximately three weeks and is currently unrepresented. The core claim is supported by a GP medico-legal letter documenting physical injuries and PTSD-consistent psychological findings, with the GP explicitly stating the injuries are consistent with state-actor assault and that she has no clinical reason to doubt [CLIENT]'s account — this is a solid evidential foundation. The most pressing issues are: (1) a date discrepancy between the screening notes (14 March) and [CLIENT]'s own account (16 March) that the Home Office has already flagged and will probe at interview; (2) the absence of any PDSF membership evidence; (3) the urgent need to commission a specialist medico-legal report before the interview; and (4) the safe third country issue arising from transit through Spain. The case is moderate-to-strong on current evidence and the firm should take it, but the three-week window demands immediate action on all fronts — the first meeting should be arranged within 48 hours.

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*Decision support, not legal advice. Names in client documents are redacted to role tags (e.g. [CLIENT], [OTHER\_PARTY]) — the firm restores actual names from the audit log. The lawyer's professional judgment governs all decisions about this case.*

