

## **Brazilian Army Butchery Award: Heightening The Gong Of Justice Over Buratai's Military Atrocities In Nigeria**

**(Intersociety, Onitsha Nigeria: 27<sup>th</sup> April 2017)**-The news of the award of “the Brazilian Military Order of Merit Award” (*Brazilian Army Butchery Award*), to Nigeria’s Chief of Army Staff, Lt Gen Tukur Yusuf Buratai, said to have recommended by the Brazilian Army Commander, Gen Eduardo Villas Boas and approved by President Michel Temer; is not surprising to us at Intersociety. The “award”; touted, noisily celebrated and overblown by the COAS’s media and image managers and aides as “the highest military honour in Brazil”, is nothing short of “Brazilian Army Butchery Award”.

The socio-political circumstances leading to the said butchery award are also utterly cloaked in the layers of controversy and diplomatic quackery, which have further rendered the award laughable and watery and messed up general credibility that follows modern meritorious or excellence award.

For the avoidance of doubt, President **Michel Miguel Elias Temer Lulia, age 75**; as he is truly called, became President of Brazil only seven months ago or on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2016, following the celebrated impeachment over serious charges of corruption of his boss, Madam Dilma Rousseff, whom he has been deputizing since 2011. The central government headed by his boss was seriously accused of involvement in the [Petrobras scandal](#) which involved kickbacks and corruption. The serious accusation later snowballed into country wide protests by millions of Brazilians calling for her resignation, arrest and prosecution; which eventually led to her impeachment in late August 2016.

Also the Brazilian Army Chief, General Eduardo Dias Costa Villas Bôas, as he is truly called, who was said to have recommended the butchery award to be bestowed on the Nigeria’s COAS; was appointed the Army Chief by impeached and former President, Madam Dilma Rousseff on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2015. That is to say that the Brazilian Army Butchery Award truly stems from reward for being artistic in civilians’ butchery. It is also an act of diplomatic roguery and quackery.

From the foregoing, therefore, it is an incontestable fact that those who were diplomatically facilitated to engineer the military butchery award in Brasilia for the COAS know nothing about the atrocious activities of the Nigerian Army under the midwifery of COAS, Lt Gen Tukur Yusuf Buratai, particularly from July 2015 when the current COAS was appointed.

Another reason for the butchery award may most likely be a sort of *thanking the Nigerian Army and Government for patronizing Brazil’s State owned or controlled warehouses responsible for production and shipment of licit small arms and light weapons (SALWs)* to Nigeria. This is more when it is unhidden that Nigeria now serves as a major buyer and dumping ground for small arms and light weapons from Europe, China and Americas. Nigeria is also about to overtake Algeria and Angola licitly as Africa’s largest arms spender and buyer annually. Illicitly speaking, the country through *conflict profiteers or profiteers of violence* is one of the largest buyers of SALWs in Africa.

It is also on global and scholarly records that the State of Brazil and its Army has no place in the *global hall of fame, gold* and human rights. From various scholarly research accounts, Brazil is one of the world's leading producers and exporters of small arms and light weapons (SALWs) and it is responsible for a reasonable percent of licit and illicit trade or shipment of same to West Africa including Nigeria where they are used recklessly and murderously by killer State and non State actors including Lt Gen Tukur Buratai's Nigerian Army.

Through the shipment of SALWs to Nigeria, which Brazil co-participate, over 40,000 defenseless citizens have been killed by Islamist Boko Haram and Fulani terrorists since 2009. Through the procurement and use of same partly from Brazil, the Nigerian Army headed by Lt Gen Tukur Yusuf Buratai and its sister armed agencies including the Nigeria Police Force have massacred not less than 6000 unarmed, nonviolent and defenseless citizens since July 2015 when the COAS was appointed. The Nigeria Police Force, through its SARS and CIDs account for 4000 extra judicial killings between June 2015 and this 2017; on average of 200 citizens per month. The former chair of the National Human Rights Commission, Dr. Chidi Odinkalu was recently quoted by Mr. Emma Onwubiko of HURIWA to have disclosed on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2012 that *Nigeria Police Force tortures and kills 2500 citizens extra judicially on annual basis.*

The COAS and his Army are specifically responsible for the massacre of not less than 1000 unarmed and nonviolent members of the Islamic Movement of Nigeria (Shiites) who were on religious processions in a broad day light in Zaria in December 2015. The COAS made a hoax claim of assassination attempt on his life to justify the mass murder and till date, he has not proved or provided common or fundamental ingredients accompanying modern assassination attempts (i.e. weapons and cartridges used portions of his vehicle shattered by shot bullets, soldiers or attackers wounded or killed; names of the specific attackers, etc).

As if that was not enough, the COAS and his Army also went out of modern military ethics and codes; opened fire and shot and killed over 270 unarmed and nonviolent pro Biafra campaigners who engaged in nonviolent street processions, protests and religious vigils. The Army killings took place in ten different locations in the Southeast and the South-south of Nigeria. Over 800 members of IMN and pro Biafra campaign movements were also brutally shot and terminally wounded by COAS and his Army; with several of them crippled for life.

Not done and satisfied with the enormity and gravity of butcheries so perpetrated, the *Brazilian Army Butchery Award-winning* COAS and his Army; according to Amnesty Int'l Report of 2016/2017, caused or facilitated the killing of 240 civilians including 29 children aged between new born and five years. They were held in captivity in connection with Boko Haram insurgency at the Giwa Military's detention facilities in Maiduguri, Borno State; leading to their mass killing. As we speak, all the perpetrators including the COAS are still on the prowl with the military atrocities continuously swept under the carpet.

The referenced *army butchery award* is therefore not surprising to us. All the butchers in Africa including late Idi Amin, Mobutu Sese Seko, Emperor Bokasa, Sani Abacha, Charles Tarlor, Hissene Habre, Maummar Gaddafi and several murderous past and present African Armies' chiefs had at one time or the other flooded their restrooms, bathrooms and sitting rooms with tens of hundreds of paper, wooden and ceramic "merit awards". The erstwhile SARS commander in Anambra State, who has been indicted by several internationally respected rights groups and research institutions on torture and extra judicial killings; parades one of the highest numbers of "merit awards" including those facilitated from foreign and national "rights NGOs" .

We therefore see the "Brazilian Military Order of Merit Award" bestowed on the COAS as **heightening of the gong of justice and accountability over Buratai's military atrocities in Nigeria**. The barrage and litany of condemnations and shocks trailing the award, which are trending on web media, are substantially responsible for the issuance of this statement. We will not be surprised to see Nigeria's print and electronic media being awash in coming hours with adverts from gullible and conformist individuals and groups pouring out congratulatory messages on the COAS over his "well deserved award". It is also not surprised if Nigerians see another round of rented crowd marching down Nigerian streets in "solidarity" with the military butchery award and its winner.

Finally, the Brazilian military butchery award is a wakeup call on all conscientious and courageous Nigerians of social versatility and *letteredness* within and outside Nigeria to continuously sound the gong of justice and accountability to the ears of COAS Tukur Yusuf Buratai and other perpetrators of military and other regime atrocities in Nigeria or any part thereof; by reminding them that the clock of justice and accountability is ticking and steadily closing in on them.

There shall be intensification of scholarly searches across the world so as to explore available criminal and civil judicial remedies and safeguards in various jurisdictions in various countries of the world such as *the Belgium's Int'l Criminal and Civil Laws Jurisdictions of 2005 (Sorry Day)* (for punishment of the perpetrators of heinous crimes and grievous rights abuses perpetrated outside Belgium).

There are also *Torture Victims and Alien Torts Acts* in USA as well as Int'l Criminal Court Enforcement Jurisdiction in South Africa, etc. These should be fully studied and exploited alongside judicially existing safeguards and remedies in Nigeria, the Rome Statute, ECOWAS and AU Rights courts, African Special Criminal Court (i.e. that sentenced Hissene Habre to life imprisonment for crimes against humanity at Dakar Senegal in May 2016).

The leaderships of IMN and IPOB worldwide and their supporters and sympathizers must not allow their slain comrades to die in vain. Curses following such nonchalance and moral obligations will never be cleansed in generations to come. Their killers must never be allowed go scot free even if they end up procuring trailer loads of paper, wooden and ceramic "merit awards".

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