



### **Nnamdi Kanu's Detention & Conditional Freedom: Lessons And Challenges Ahead**

**(Intersociety Nigeria: 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017)**-It is no longer news that Citizen Nnamdi Kanu, leader of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) was unjustifiably detained for 18 months or since 14<sup>th</sup> October 2015 before being granted court bail with stringent conditions on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2017; with the said stiff pre bail conditions fully met, leading to his release two days ago. It is also no longer news that **Int'l Society for Civil Liberties & the Rule of Law** is the first human rights organization in Nigeria to launch its advocacy was arraigned in a Wuse Zone Magistrate Court and granted bail) with a strong worded and informative press statement dated 20<sup>th</sup> October 2015 and titled: **Unanswered Questions Trailing Nnamdi Kanu's Reported Bail And Continued Detention.**

What is news is also not about noises being made by a battalion of celebrants of Citizen Nnamdi Kanu's *conditional freedom*; who are dominated by *aluta spectators* among them are *Judases, cowards* and *political opportunists*. On this same condemnable or damnable page is clear manifestation of ethnic bias, hatred and selective advocacy by Human Rights Watch (HRW), USA as it concerns the butchering or mass killing and maiming of hundreds of unarmed and defenseless Pro Biafra campaigners. The HRW's vicarious liability stems from the fact that its Nigerian research team is headed by a Nigerian of Southwest origin; forcing it to inexcusably opt out of its usual research based investigation and report on the issue till date. The media hostility, particularly media blackout or distorted reporting of the mass killing and maiming of nonviolent Pro Biafra campaigners by most of the print and electronic media of Southwest origin is also worthy of outright condemnation.

While we have nothing to celebrate over Citizen Kanu's conditional freedom because *it is not yet uhuru*; history will never be kind to us if we fail to mention and commend the immeasurable contributions of Citizen Kanu's lawyers, online media particularly those of Southeast and South-south origins and the **Amnesty International, UK**. The supreme sacrifices made by over 270 slain members, supporters and sympathizers of IPOB and other Pro Biafra campaign movements shall forever be remembered and engraved. Those who narrowly escaped being shot dead, but got shot and battered with several of them crippled for life are also worthy to be mentioned and commended; likewise humanitarian roles of some privileged and conscientious Nigerians, on account of which several lives were saved.

### **Lessons Before Buhari Government:**

Different violent approaches adopted by the Buhari Administration so as to crush Igbo People or suppress them particularly as it concerns their nonviolent anti structural and physical violence campaigns are the worst governance policy and approaches any government can think of in this modern age. The said failed violent and hostile attitudes of the Buhari Government are bitter lessons to be learnt by same. Violence has never solved any social or human problem. It has always aggravated same or yielded further violence and acrimony. It is also an incontestable fact that the Buhari Administration is the most dreaded anti Igbo civilian government in Nigeria in recent times; both in terms of *structural and physical violence indexes*.

It is true that successive public office holders of northern origin in Nigeria have for several decades promoted and fueled several Igbo annihilative policies and violence using sponsored third party violent groups and individuals as well as lopsided government appointments and resource allocations. But this is the first time in the history of democracy in Nigeria that Government has adopted Igbo annihilation through structural and physical cleansing as a State policy. This is also the first time Government has directly launched and commissioned mass murder of innocent and defenseless Igbo population. Igbo Society had lost hundreds of thousands of innocent lives since 1945 to unprovoked ethno-religious belligerency and butchery.

The said massacres did not include the Biafra-Nigeria Civil War of 1967-70 in which over 2million mostly Igbo citizens and other citizens of the old Eastern Nigeria were either killed or starved to death. The anti Igbo butcheries of 1945, 1953 and 1967 were chief reasons why the Biafra-Nigeria Civil War erupted in 1967.

Highlights of anti Igbo pogroms or killings in Nigeria since 1945 include the Jos anti Igbo massacre of 1945; Kano anti Igbo pogrom of 1953; 29<sup>th</sup> May to 29<sup>th</sup> September 1966 anti Igbo pogroms in various parts of the North; and the Asaba Igbo massacre of 1967; all resulting in the death of tens of thousands Igbo People.

Other anti Igbo killings or pogroms that had taken place in Nigeria or any part thereof are as follows: Kano 1980, Maiduguri 1982, Jimeta 1984, Gombe 1985, Zaria 1987, Kaduna and Kafanchan 1991, Bauchi and Katsina 1991, Kano 1991, Zango-Kataf 1992, Funtua 1993, Kano 1994, Kaduna 2000, Kaduna 2001, Maiduguri 2001, Jos September 2001, Kaduna 2002, Kaduna's Miss World Riot of November 2002 and Prophet Mohammed Cartoons Riot of February 2006 (Maiduguri), the Apo-Abuja Six killing by the Nigeria Police Force of (six young Igbo traders: Ekene Isaac Mgbe, Ifeanyi Ozor, Chinedu Meniru, Paulinus Ogbonna and Anthony and Augustina Arebu) of June 2005.

The rest are the November 2008 Jos LGA Poll Riot/killings, the Jos 2010 Christmas Eve bombings, the Madalla Igbo Catholic Church bombings of 2011, the 2011 post general elections' riots/killings that led to killing of 10 Igbo NYSC members and several other Igbo People in the North, the Mubi Igbo killings of 2012 and Nyanya Bombing of April 2014 (where several Igbo citizens and others died).

Over 4000 other defenseless Igbo people residing in the North were also butchered by northern Muslims' backed Islamic Boko Haram terrorists between 2009 and 2014. Since 2015, the Islamic Fulani terrorists have butchered not less than 70 rural Igbo citizens with the highest casualties being the Nimbo massacre of 2016 in Enugu State with at least 48 deaths.

In spite of these chilling and unprovoked butcheries directed at Igbo People, Igbo People have never retaliated or taken up arms till date. They have continued to survive, expand, develop, tolerate, accommodate and feed themselves till date. The Igbo population which its Hausa-Fulani butchers has been seeking to annihilate and wipe off the world map since 1945 have continued to grow and expand hitting over 40million population and found in over 88 countries of the world. Till date, Igbo People are most peaceful, nonviolent, friendly and harmless tribe in Nigeria; despite decades of butchery and annihilative policies ceaselessly directed at the race.

In spite of the butcheries, tribulations and enforced socio-economic retardations, Igbo Society and its People have lowest poverty rate and highest GDP per capita in Nigeria today. The bitter lesson to be learnt by the present Buhari Government in its failed attempts to crush Igbo's anti structural and physical nonviolent campaigns is that the Igbo People must always survive and exercise their sacred rights as clearly enshrined in Nigeria's 1999 Constitution and allied regional and international enactments. It is also an act of impossibility to *beat a child and ask him or her not to cry*. There must be total reversal of anti Igbo structural and physical annihilative policies in Nigeria particularly under the present Buhari Administration.

### **Challenges Facing Leadership Of IPOB**

As earlier stated, we at Intersociety have nothing to celebrate over conditional freedom granted to Citizen Nnamdi Kanu. Rather we see it as *the beginning of all beginnings and a wakeup call*. The conditional freedom has also thrown up more challenges and placed them at the doorsteps of the leadership of Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB).

One of the challenges is imminent dangers in rumored or planned abandonment (i.e. in terms of their personal and family basic upkeep or welfare and proactive legal representations and facilitation of allied basic logistics) of IPOB's detained *comrades-in-aluta*; namely: David Nwawusisi, Benjamin Madubugwu, Chidiebere Onwudiwe, Bright Chimezie and newest arrestee (George Onyeibe) and other detainees across the country held in connection with Pro Biafra Campaign in Nigeria. The case of Mr. Bright Chimezie is most pathetic. He has not been seen privately or publicly since 16<sup>th</sup> September 2016 when he was arrested by Police in Akwa Ibom State and handed over to SSS in the State. He has been detained without trial for seven months and nobody knows whether he is dead or alive in SSS custody till date.

Therefore, our firm position and advice to IPOB stems from what we have been reading on social media where a section of IPOB activists/officials seemed to have lost direction in their nonviolent self determination campaigns and resorted to use of abusive and uncouth words such as "traitors", "saboteurs", "criminals", and other forms of campaign of calumny against some of their key officials and colleagues including some of the their detained colleagues mentioned above.

We strongly and conscientiously advise Citizen Kanu and his IPOB not to make the costly mistake of abandoning its *comrades-in-aluta* at this particular point in time. Citizen Nnamdi Kanu must seek appropriate clarifications from his lawyers and nuclear family on the true state of things during his unjustifiable incarceration so as to get things right and put his group's house in order to avoid making a grave mistake including abandoning his detained comrades and the 370 wounded and 270 slain others.

Most importantly, the second challenge facing Citizen Nnamdi Kanu and his IPOB is the posthumous fate of 270 slain members of IPOB and other Pro Biafra movements. It is the inexcusable and moral duty of Citizen Kanu and his IPOB to ensure at all times that their slain comrades did not die in vain. They must not be seen or treated as *sacrificial lambs, deserving no posthumous justice and remedies*. Accountability and justice for their premeditated murders are as important as the IPOB's self determination or Pro Biafra campaigns.

The leadership of IPOB must learn from the centuries old oral and scientific account of *ghost or soul haunting* by pre colonial Igbo chiefs (*ndi mgburuchi*); numbering 75, who were forcibly sold into slavery in far away Simons Island in present day State of Georgia in USA in May 1803 at average of \$100 each. Because of their unquenchable angers and vows they made before committing mass suicide by diving into the Island's creek, their souls wrecked havoc for centuries until they were appeased and pacified by the Nri Kingdom Dynasty delegation as recently as 2012. In the case of 270 slain IPOB members and other Pro Biafra Campaigners, they must not be abandoned until their killers are brought to justice locally, nationally, regionally or internationally.

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