

## **Int'l Inquiries Into State Aided Killings In Nigeria As A Missing Point In Gen Theo Danjuma's Call**

**(Intersociety Nigeria: 26<sup>th</sup> March 2018)**-The call made on Saturday, 24<sup>th</sup> March 2018 by a former Army Chief and Defense Minister in Nigeria, Retired Lt Gen Theo Danjuma to all Nigerians of non Muslim faith particularly members of Christian faith in Northeast, North-central and Southern parts of the country to defend themselves against the ongoing widespread massacres across the country by radical armed Islamic groups such as Islamist Fulani and Boko Haram killers.

Gen Theo Danjuma also joined other informed and courageous Nigerians to accuse the Armed Forces of Nigeria and the country's security establishments' managers of protecting the attackers particularly the Jihadist Fulani Herdsmen and aiding their atrocious conducts. We therefore see his call as not only grossly belated but also incomplete without addition of urgent steps by the United Nation System to set up an international commission of inquiry under the Chapter VII of the United Nations' Charter so as to unravel the remote and immediate causes and perpetrators as well as profiteers of the killings.

The panic, hastiness, emptiness, tactlessness, self indictment and self guilt contained in the reactions to the call by the duo of Nigerian Army and the Federal Ministry of Defense further showcase necessity, urgency, inexcusability and inevitability of the international inquiries under demand.

We make bold to say that the indictable body language of the present Federal Government in the ongoing killings as well as emerging facts and developments have clearly shown that the external demystification and solution to the unabated and raging butcheries in Nigeria are practically rooted in the confines of int'l criminal and civil inquiries under UN System alongside other local content solutions. It is recalled that we have earlier identified gross lopsided security and paramilitary appointments and compositions as a major factor internally responsible for intensification and escalation of the butcheries.

In the time of the immediate past, such int'l inquiries under demand were launched by the UN System in several countries where the fears or eruption of "complex humanitarian emergencies" or grievous violations of human rights or commission and aiding (by the State) of heinous crimes against humanity by the governing States or violent pro government or opposition groups were heightened or became beyond the capacities of governing municipal territories; especially where there were strong point-blank or circumstantial evidence of State protection, aiding, conspiracy, condoning, abetment, complicity, unwillingness and inability.

Instances also abound where such inquiries were timely invoked or instituted; leading to return of stability and collective security, justice and mercy; truth, forgiveness and reconciliation to the former troubled territories or societies. Where such were the case such as in Lebanon, Pakistan and Darfur (Sudan), the affected countries were relatively saved from drifting into total collapse or failed States. But where they were belatedly invoked, pariah or failed State status became the end result. We saw such in Libya, Somalia, Afghanistan and Syria; collectively referred today as "the world's failed States".

Typical example of such international inquiries and associated UN interventions was in Lebanon after the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafic Hariri and 21 others by suspected Iranian backed Lebanese Hezbollah militias on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2005; leading to setting up of the UN Special Tribunal for Lebanon. Another example was in Pakistan after the assassination of former Prime Minister Ms Benazir Bhutto on 27<sup>th</sup> December 2007 and associated political turmoil including riots. The assassination took place few weeks to the country's presidential election fixed for January 2008; leading to UN enquiry set up on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2009.

Of particular and striking of all was the "UN Int'l Commission of Inquiry for Darfur (Sudan)". Acting under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, on 18 September 2004, the Security Council of UN adopted resolution 1564 requesting that the Secretary-General 'rapidly establish an international commission of inquiry' in order immediately to investigate reports of violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law in Darfur (Sudan) by all parties including the strong accusation of complicity of the Sudanese central Government of Gen Omar Hassan el-Bashir and its aiding of the Janjaweed Islamist guerillas. Other terms of reference were to determine whether or not acts of genocide have occurred, and to identify the perpetrators of such violations with a view to ensuring that those responsible are held accountable.

Based on a thorough analysis of the information gathered in the course of its investigations, the Commission established that the Government of the Sudan and the Janjaweed are responsible for serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law amounting to crimes under international law.

In particular, the Commission found that Government forces and militias conducted indiscriminate attacks, including killing of civilians, torture, enforced disappearances, destruction of villages, rape and other forms of sexual violence, pillaging and forced displacement, throughout Darfur. These acts were conducted on a widespread and systematic basis, and therefore amounted to crimes against humanity.

In July 2008, the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC), Luis Moreno Ocampo, accused al-Bashir of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes in Darfur. The court issued an arrest warrant for al-Bashir on 4 March 2009 on counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity, but ruled that there was insufficient evidence to prosecute him for genocide.

We therefore join Gen Theophilus Danjuma by repeating our several warnings to the likes of UN, AU and western democracies that Nigeria is steadily drifting towards the Somali way. Gen Danjuma as one of the strongest supporters of the present diarchic Administration in Nigeria and one of perceived personalities responsible for Nigeria's present political, economic and social woes must have been shocked and traumatized by the level of unprovoked attacks and killings perpetrated against members of his Takum tribe and Christian faith alongside other non Muslim nationalities of Northern and Southern Nigeria.

This, also, must have been occasioned by the fact that no sane member of human family keeps a sealed lip or mouth-gums himself or herself for forever when his or her rights of existence, social identity and religion are illegitimately questioned and subjected to serious threat of extermination or annihilation; irrespective of his or her career, political or economic attainment. Totality of them constitutes core and non-tradable social values of human family and existence.

Nigerian policy makers and managers particularly those presently holding political and legislative positions at the Federal level must be reminded again that in the event of full scale and provoked uncontrollable civil warfare, AK-47 rifles and their likes being paraded, wielded and rioted today by the aggressors will become the least instruments of war. The serving and retired generals (apologists and instigators of religious radicalism) instigating the attacks and protecting the attackers today will end up in IDP or refugee camps as refugees or IDP destitute. Instances abound in the Republics of Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda and Zaire (DRC), etc of not long past.

In modern theory of violence, therefore, there are no sole repositories or possessors of same. In such provoked retaliatory civil war; animals, ants, herbs, substances and human brains can be transformed into more formidable and menacing instruments of retaliatory and victorious or devastating civil warfare than AK-47 assault rifles and their likes. This is the centrality of Gen Theo Danjuma's message to the Federal Government of Nigeria and its operators; warning them to act beyond their present primordial and ethno-religious cleavages before it is too late.

Gen Danjuma's call; though grossly belated, should not be treated dismissively by all and sundry including the Government of Nigeria as it is presently doing; the United Nations and the entire members of the int'l community. Granted that it is strongly held in several social quarters that Gen Theo Danjuma is one of the country's ex public office holders believed by many to be living far above his legitimate incomes and of stupendous wealth unbecoming of a military pensioner; in addition to his not-too-good roles during his career in the country's military's inglorious epoch particularly in the 60s, but his latest call is a welcome development and tantamount to that of wise words of an "Amicus Curiae from Military Citadel".

In matters bordering on commission or fears of commission or possibility of commission of crimes against humanity or perpetration of widespread human rights abuses; whipping or invocation of ethnic cleavages or primordial sentiments in defense or protection of the perpetrators and their atrocious conducts are set aside; on account of the fact that human rights are indivisible and universal; transcending beyond boundaries, tribes, classes, races and religions including territorial State and Stateless societies.

Such a strong worded voice from a former chief of army staff (October 1979-April 1980) and minister of defense (June 1999-May 2003) also exposes undeniable and conspiratorial roles of members and headships of the Nigerian Armed Forces and the entire security establishments in the killings. It further demystifies the despicable and unpatriotic roles of the present central Government especially its ongoing *Nollywood Movies* called *counter-insurgency operations against Boko Haram insurgency in the Northeast*.

Just recently, Nigerian media was awash with breaking news of a character called "Sergeant David Bako" who said he has deserted the Nigerian Army and made a startling revelation of another *Nollywood Movie* called "Dapchi Girls' Abduction & their Return"; which he claimed to have executed alongside other soldiers camouflaging as "Boko Haram insurgents" at the cost of N80m presidential bribe; with his cuts being N3m. Such is the continuation of drama unfolding in the country since June 2015 in the so called "counter-insurgency operations in the Northeast".

We hereby call on the United Nations and other members of the int'l community to take urgent steps to save Nigeria from drifting into "complex humanitarian emergencies" or widespread ethno-religious killings and counter killings (civil war) occasioned by ongoing State aided butcheries in the name of "reading or deepening Koran in the Sea". Nigerians will like to find out from the said UN inquiries the number of Nigerians killed by the Fulani Jihadists since June 2015, their religious faith and sacred places of worship and properties destroyed or torched. The number of violent Fulani Herdsmen killed by retaliatory Nigerians since then, if any, should also be unravelled by the UN's int'l commission of inquiry under demand.

The roles of the Government of Nigeria and its security heads in the ongoing butcheries by Jihadist Fulani Herdsmen should also thoroughly be investigated by the United Nations. The inquiries under demand should inclusively investigate the ongoing strong accusations levelled against the central Government in Nigeria of its aiding and abetting the killings particularly its inability and unwillingness to protect the victim populations; uncover the sources of sophisticated firearms used by the Jihadists and fish out and put them on trial in accordance with existing local and int'l laws.

The roles of Government of Nigeria in its counter operations against Boko Haram also call for international involvement and scrutiny so as to ensure full compliance by the Government of Nigeria and the non State violent actors involved with the international laws including the Geneva Conventions or Laws of Internal Conflict of 1949 and the Int'l Human Rights and Humanitarian Laws. Our call for UN involvement through institution of criminal and civil inquiries is in furtherance of the powers and mandates of the UN under the Chapter VII of its Charter of 1945.

**Signed:**

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