



International Society For Civil Liberties & The Rule Of Law



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Incarceration Of The Mothers Of Igbo Nation & Other Atrocities Against The People Of Old Eastern Nigeria: Before Buhari Administration Creates Another Bunker Of Intractable Insurgency In Nigeria

(Intersociety Nigeria: 22nd August 2018)-Our Organization-Int'l Society for Civil Liberties & the Rule of Law is calling on the central Government of Nigeria and the Government of Imo State, as a matter of uttermost immediacy and importance, to discontinue, withdraw and discharge all the 10-count spurious charges of "treasonable felony", "conspiracy to commit treasonable felony", "terrorism", etc, slammed on the incarcerated Mothers of the Igbo Nation, numbering 114; with their ages between 22 and 64 as well as others likely to be in their 70s. We also demand for their immediate and unconditional release from the Owerri Prison custody and discontinuation of further harassment of such vulnerable members of the Nigerian Human Family.

The incarcerated Mothers of Igbo Nation also deserve apologies and reparative packages for their wrongful detention and being labeled "terrorists" and "felons" in Government's panicky and draconian response to their use of "braziers as human rights kits" to protest Government's sundry atrocities against their children and husbands. In line with the recent Judgment of the Supreme Court of Nigeria on unconstitutionality of the so called "Holden Charge", we further call upon the Chief Justice of Nigeria and the AGF, as case may be, to issue a practice direction to all Magistrates in Nigeria to refrain from using their Courts to effect indiscriminate dumping of suspects in prison custodies especially in offences the said Magistrates and their Courts do not have jurisdiction to try.

Common sense and logic suffix that where a Magistrate Court cannot exercise jurisdiction over an offence before the Court, such zero jurisdiction must be exercised fully including non admittance of the arraignment of the suspects connected to the zero jurisdiction matter or by not allowing the charge sheet to be read in open Court. The arresting and detaining authorities coming to the Court with such zero jurisdiction matter should be sent out of the Court or ordered to take their detainees to the appropriate Courts (i.e. High Court) and charged them accordingly.

All lovers of democracy, justice and human rights in Nigeria and all over the world are respectfully called upon to always analyze and consider the unmitigated consequences that will befall the Nigerian State and her people should the People of Igbo Nation in particular and old Eastern Nigeria in general see themselves as having been abandoned and irreversibly pushed to the wall. Abandonment, isolationism and absence of brotherhood are three major factors contributing to social crises particularly insurgencies and complex humanitarian emergencies around the world.

A race is said to have been terminally pushed to the wall or in a verge of being exterminated or muscled into subjugation of conquest or dictatorial rulership when she is abandoned to her fate by people of good will and conscience including leaders of democracies, lovers of democracy and other exponents of democratic principles of rule of law and human rights. The present central Government of Nigeria must, therefore, avoid pushing the Igbo People and the entire People of old Eastern Nigeria into the bunker of intractable insurgency by discontinuing and ending its policies of physical violence, structural violence and cultural violence targeted at the named innocent and law abiding people.

Particularly as it concerns industrial scale abuses of human rights of the targeted innocent citizens of the Igbo Nation in particular and old Eastern Nigeria in general, little or no attention has been given to same especially from Nigeria's mainstream rights CSOs and print media largely located in the Southwest and to an extent Abuja parts of Nigeria. In various interactions we had recently with some foreign media and rights groups, this has become a recurring decimal as in "why the gross rights abuses in South-south and Southeast Nigeria especially violent crackdowns on unarmed pro Biafra activists and killings associated with Army Python Dance series are hardly discussed or documented elaborately by the Nigerian mainstream media and rights CSOs; despite the fact that human rights are universal, indissolubility and indivisibility".

Internationally, other than Amnesty International and piecemeal others, such industrial scale rights abuses are also shrouded in obscurity. A typical case in point is the ongoing incarceration and torture in Owerri Prison of 112 Mothers of the Igbo Nation and two of their colleagues that collapsed during their Magistrate Court arraignment. Analysis done by **Intersociety** on their social and family backgrounds clearly shows that most of them are mothers of young children. Those under this category are between the ages of 22 and 45, numbering 80.

Yet their incarceration and torture has attracted little or no attention locally and internationally. This is in spite of the fact that they did not commit any felony during their street protest, with no gun or rifle of any kind or IEDs found in their possession or from any of them; except flags and insignias and other faith objects such as bangles, chaplets, bibles, necklaces, sachets of water, etc. Still they were arrested, detained, tortured and labeled "terrorists" and "treasonable felons"; with the world maintaining inexplicable silence of congregated and aggregated proportion till date.

If it is in the Southwest that these Mothers of the Igbo Nation numbering 114 were arrested and treated in such draconian manner including being cramped in a prison guardroom under such frivolous circumstances, hell would have been let loose. But right inside there in Owerri Prisons, unspeakable global silence has greeted their arrest, torture and detention since 17th August 2018. Their family members especially children and husbands have also been turned back and chased away by police and prison officials citing "orders from Aso Rock". The incarcerated mothers were also denied access to foods and medicines brought by their children and husbands.

Not minding the atrocities trailing the Federal Government's "Army Python Dance 11" of 2017 including the slaughtering in less than one week of over 170 unarmed and defenseless citizens in the respective prime ages as well as terminal maiming of over 130 others, all in Abia State, the present central Government has again concluded plans to storm the Igbo Land in another obvious genocidal operation code named "Army Python Dance 111".

This is not minding the fact that there are no less than 3000 police roadblocks and hundreds of military roadblocks steadily stationed in all major exits and entries in Igbo Land; with their menaces and criminal conducts found as atrocious as those of traditional criminal entities such as armed robbers and kidnappers. It is sad and shocking that any attempt by members of the civil population including the incarcerated Mothers of the Igbo Nation to protest or kick against or ask question or demand justice over the central Government's atrocities; such civil and constitutional expression becomes deemed by Federal Government as acts of "terrorism" and "treasonable felony".

It is recalled that the incarcerated Mothers of the Igbo Nation whose names are provided below had on 17th August 2018 embarked on peaceful street protest (guaranteed by Sections 39 and 40 of the 1999 Constitution under rights to freedom of expression, assembly and movement) in Owerri, Imo State. The street protest was organized by the unarmed, defenseless and innocent women to express their deep displeasure over persecutory policies of the present central Government in Igbo Land including ceaseless killing in hundreds by the same Government of unarmed and defenseless pro Biafra activists and maiming of hundreds of others as well as planned "Army Python Dance 111" and non disclosure of the whereabouts of Mr. Nnamdi Kanu and his royal parents, HRH, Eze Israel Okwu and Lolo Ugoeze Nnene Kanu who reportedly went missing following the military invasion of their Afara-ukwu Palace near, Umuahia on 14th September 2017.

The police and other security agencies, on orders of the Government of Imo State and the Federal Government of Nigeria resorted to use of draconian methods by getting them rounded up and detained for three days at the State Police Command Headquarters in Owerri; from where they were arraigned at Owerri Magistrate Court, presided over Mrs. S.K. Kaduruma. The arraignment was with charge number: **OW/430/2018: CP Imo State v Ijeoma Okorie (30yrs) & 111 ors.** The Legal and Prosecution Department of the State Police Command represented by SP Thaddeus Okechukwu later read 10-count spurious charges of "treasonable felony", "conspiracy to commit treasonable felony", "terrorism", among others.

Despite efforts made by their team of lawyers led by Barr Ifeanyi Ejiofor to draw the judicial attention of the presiding Magistrate, Mrs. S.K. Kaduruma to the recent judgment of the Supreme Court of Nigeria to the effect that "a Magistrate Court that does not have jurisdiction to try an offense brought before her, cannot exercise same jurisdiction she does not have by remanding the alleged offenders of the offence to prison custody", the presiding Magistrate ignored same, hiding under the same cover of "orders from above" and remanded the 112 Mothers to prison custody and adjourned till 3rd September 2018.

The "orders from above" was also reported to have been repeatedly used by a DCP and a Controller of Prisons in Owerri, yesterday, 21st August 2018 while dispersing husbands and children of the incarcerated who came to feed them; saying they have received "orders from above" not to allow the families of the detained mothers or items brought including foods and medicines to be given to them.

Names & Ages of tortured and criminally incarcerated Mothers of the Nation : Afoma Umoh (64yrs), Virginia Akwufube (62yrs), Ezike Emmanuela (62yrs), Uzoma Oraka (62yrs), Charity Obioha (60yrs), Chinyere Nwachukwu (55yrs), Udeogu Margret (58yrs), Ratchel Okengwu (58yrs), Angelina Felix (55yrs), Monica Anaelechi (54yrs), Esther Osuji (52yrs), Florence Olewembu (52yrs), Nkechi Ekwedisika (52yrs), Kosarachukwu Udegbumam (51yrs), Josephine Ogolo (51yrs), Monica Nwaeleke (50yrs), Mabel Okoire (50yrs), Chika Njoku (50yrs), Grace Nkemakolam (50yrs), Paulina Awunezi (50yrs), Christiana Muonwuba (50yrs), Margret Eze (50yrs), Florence Egede (50yrs), Rose Osuchukwu (50yrs), Comfort Uti (50yrs), Nnedinma Onuoha (49yrs), Agatha Nwachukwu (49yrs).

Ijeoma Okorie (30yrs), Uloma Ejiogu (30yrs), Victoria Jacob (45yrs), Vivian Ozuruigbo (30yrs), Chinenye Imo (40yrs), Chinyere Egbulom (38yrs), Cynthia Onyebuchi (31yrs), Chigbata Chinyere (38yrs), Egesi Josephine (41yrs), Hope Eze (45yrs), Ikejiofor Amechi (44yrs), Nkeiru Ajagba (45yrs), Ngozi James (46yrs), Nnene Nweke (46yrs), Lucy Mary Kanu (21yrs), Irole Goodness (30yrs), Ogechi Okechukwu (30yrs), Tochukwu Eze (38yrs), Onyemaechi Ijezie (38yrs), Ginika Awuzie (39yrs), Vero Nnamani (30yrs), Nkwoagu Chinenye (22), Ijeoma Victoria Nnadozie (43yrs), Blessing Udeme (25yrs), Nnewuchi Obiageli (31yrs), Ngozi Onyenwugo (22yrs), Ruth Onwumere (45yrs), Nkeiruka Ohanebo (45yrs), Nzube Uwaigwe (22yrs), Eberechi Iheanacho (39yrs), Ego Nwafor (40yrs), Chinyere Eze (32yrs).

Adaku Inyama (45yrs), Ndidi Uchenna (45yrs), Nneka Kingsley (38yrs), Nkeiru Nwankwo (37yrs), Chinwendu David (38yrs), Juliet Nwaiwu (42yrs), Juliet Innocent Onwuka (40yrs), Chinyere Nwankwo (25yrs), Nkeiru Orji (34yrs), Joy Uwabunike (47yrs), Nnene Ibeneli (38yrs), Jane Isaac (25yrs), Kelechi Emmanuel (40yrs), Ngozi Nwajiaku (34yrs), Ugochi Okwum (32yrs), Ifeoma Emmanuel (42yrs), Nkeiru Onyegbari (35yrs), Eucharika Eke (42yrs), Ijeoma Onyedinefu (33yrs), Blessing Nnedede (26yrs), Iheanyichukwu Ogueri (35yrs), Ogochukwu Alaribe (35yrs), Uchechukwu Okoro (48yrs), Iheomachi Ejiaku (40yrs), Uchchukwu Ahamuefula (32yrs).

Evelyn Usulo (38yrs), Joy Chimezie (45yrs), Precious Ogbonna (40yrs), Obiageli Nwite (48yrs), Ginika Ndibe (20yrs), Chinelo Ugwueze (38yrs), Nwachukwu Blessing (22yrs), Rita Edet (29yrs), Nnenna Okorie (36yrs), Chinyere Eze (43yrs), Iwuneme Bibian (45yrs), Onuoha Ogechi (no age), Peculiar Nwachukwu (28yrs), Felicia Ike (42yrs), Obiageli Obumsolu (39yrs) Ugonne Godwin (45yrs), Kalunwoke Ekemiri (28yrs), Nwauwa Cecelia (44yrs), Igboka Ngozi, Angela Okeke, Blessing Aguama, Oguchim Chinedu and Mary Okorie(classified in their charge sheet as “adults” but possibly in their 70s). Names of three young women including a sick patient and a pregnant woman who collapsed in the presence of Magistrate S.K. Kadurumba during their arraignment are not included in the above.

Signed

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