

Do Not Be Deterred By Government Intimidation & Verbal Violence As Most Nigerians Are Behind You

---Intersociety Urges Amnesty Int'l

(Chima Ubani Center, Onitsha Nigeria: 2nd November 2018)-Amnesty International must remain undeterred, courageous and committed in exposing large scale rights abuses and violations around the world particularly in Nigeria where such abuses and violations have been raised to an "industrial scale proportion".

This position of ours on AI is sequel to recent intimidation and verbal violence unleashed on the group by the Nigerian Army (DHQ) and the Nigeria Police Force over its advocacy condemnation of the recent killing of "at least 46" or "as much as 60" members of unarmed Islamic Movement in Nigeria (Shiites). The growing intolerance of the present central Government of Nigeria to democratic free speeches including street protests and religious processions is alarming and deafening and poses greatest threat to the sustenance of democracy, human rights and rule of law in Nigeria.

The globally respected rights watchdog must not allow itself and its works to be "industrially scaled down" on account of mounting intimidation and verbal violence by the present Government of Nigeria and its security establishments. The promotion and advancement of constitutionally and internationally guaranteed fundamental human rights and other human rights of all Nigerians must remain non-negotiable, irrevocable and sacrosanct.

There is irreconcilable disconnect and deepened disagreements between the present political office holders in Nigeria, numbering only 17,500 and most Nigerians, numbering over 180m; over the former's mounting intimidation and verbal violence against the human rights works and leadership of Amnesty International in Nigeria. Among the paltry 17,500 top elected and appointed public office holders in the present Nigeria, there are "silent majority" who utterly disapprove the said Government intimidation and verbal violence; and among the 380,000 members of the Nigeria Police Force and 120,000 members of the Nigerian Armed Forces, there are also "silent majority" utterly disapproving such intimidation and verbal violence against **Amnesty Int'l** and other well meaning rights and justice groups working in the country.

Therefore, the rising wave of intolerance, remorselessness, blunders, unprofessionalism, clannishness, intimidation and verbal violence characterizing the policies and conducts of the present crop of federal political office holders and their security establishments; on justice, security and human rights in Nigeria or any part thereof; are far from being consented or approved by most Nigerians. This is more so when every single member of the present federal ruling class in Nigeria has never toyed or played with his or her own human rights and those of their children and relatives. Their children and other household members are so secured that most, if not all of them are kept and sustained in safest places overseas with best education, healthcare, security, economy and pleasure; only for them to turn around and massacre the governed citizens at will or with reckless abandon.

It is so bad that over N1trillion is spent annually for nothing or without anything to show for same to equip the country's security establishments for the purpose of safeguarding "the citizens in law" against the menaces of "the citizens against the law"; only for the same security agencies to turn their guns against law abiders and turn off same against the lawbreakers. The level of security threats and other unsafe conditions in present Nigeria has already reached a maddening proportion; to the extent that innocent and defenseless Nigerians now have their lives and liberties trapped in double jeopardy: state actor and non-state actor atrocity criminalities.

From the history of this modern world, there had never been conflict or difficulties between "national interests" or "national security" and human rights. As a matter of fact, a better "national security" or "national interests" is ensured in the atmosphere of respect and promotion of human rights. This position has remained the core foundation of the world's two famous schools of human rights; namely: "libertarian school of human rights" and "egalitarian school of human rights".

While the former is founded on the concept of American liberty (i.e. human rights and welfare of US citizens first before those of other citizens), the latter is founded on European Union concept of liberty (i.e. equality of human rights and welfare of EU citizens and those of other citizens around the world).

But in present Nigeria, neither of the two is in place as a national policy for generality of the Nigerian citizens, except “human butchery” or death and vendetta policies. The present central Government and its security establishments in the country are so incorrigible and unprofessional that they keep repeating the same blunders and death policy over and over again despite their socially catastrophic consequences on the unity, security and image of the country. As a matter of fact, impunity has steadily reigned supreme in the Administration in the past three and half years or since June 2015.

The present central Government of Nigeria and its security agencies has been shooting and killing Nigerians en masse since mid 2015 so as to send message of “might” and “conquest”; yet “might” and “conquest” have refused to swallow and overrun Nigeria and Nigerians. The presence of Nigeria’s leading human rights activists in the present central Government is also responsible for the endangerment of the lives and liberties of Nigerians.

Apart from the fact that the Government is headed by a brute, the said leading rights activists are undeniably emboldening the Government to commit more atrocities and turn deaf ears on horrible human rights situations in the country. The *activist-friends and appointees* in the present Government are also devising escape routes or corridors of impunity for atrocity criminals including by installing stooges as heads of some important regional and international intergovernmental criminal and civil justice bodies.

A clear case in point was the installation in April 2018 of a stooge of the present central Government as “President of ICC”. The ICC “President” has since abandoned his onerous tasks of protecting the vulnerable and endangered populations around the world and fishing out and bringing to justice the perpetrators of their tragedies; to become the “international lobbyist and image launderer of the head of the present central Government of Nigeria who has several cases, vicariously and directly, to answer before the ICC and other civil courts around the world.

Intersociety, hereby, commends **Amnesty International** for its steadfastness in its priceless works on human rights in Nigeria. As a matter of fact, **Amnesty International** “has become the international last hope of the common or ordinary Nigerians”. **Intersociety** has tremendous respect for the globally respected rights watchdog and sees the group and **Human Rights Watch, USA** as its international mentor and great source of encouragement.

Intersociety particularly celebrates **Amnesty International’s** statistical or database soundness and thoroughness of its investigations which has never been validly faulted anywhere in the world including Nigeria. This is one major area that **Intersociety** borrowed and learned from **Amnesty International** and **Human Rights Watch**. The aptness and accuracy of **AI’s** sources of information solidly gladdens our heart as well. Totality of these has remained our guiding principles and major backbone till date.

Our silence on the casualty figures of those killed in and around the Afara-Ukwu Palace in Umuahia-Ibeku, Abia State on 14th September 2017 as recently given by Mr. Nnamdi Kanu during his re-appearance speech, which is technically or expertly deliberate; is a clear case in point. Our report findings in the entire massacre of September 2017 including the Afara-Ukwu massacre of 14th September 2017 remain intact and irrefutable. This is on account of their independence, neutrality and thoroughness. **Intersociety’s** investigation into the massacre was not only year-long, but also thorough, forensic and indisputable.

This also accounted for our silence in the report and subsequent statements over the whereabouts of Mr. Nnamdi Kanu or whether he was killed during the military invasion of his father’s Afara-Ukwu Palace on 14th September 2017. We had investigated and have it on dependable authority that Mr. Nnamdi Kanu and other members of his royal family had left the Palace before the murderous soldiers stormed same. That is to say that Mr. Kanu’s reappearance can never absolve the Nigerian Army of genocidal and heinous criminal responsibilities into the unlawful and violent invasion and massacre.

Intersociety also recalls that in the course of our year-long investigation and issuance of report into the Army Python Dance 2 in Abia State, calls came to us in torrents from youthful and adult pro Biafra activists as well as other members of the public to issue a statement joining others to “condemn the Federal Government of Nigeria for killing Nnamdi Kanu on 14th September 2017 and requesting same to produce or release his dead corpse”; this we declined to do till date on account of superiority of information at our disposal over their requests.

Consequently, **Amnesty International** and other well meaning rights groups and apostles of justice around the world including **Intersociety** must not only rebuild the hopes of the victims when shattered by atrocity crimes committers, but also go beyond investigation and issuance of rights abuses’ reports and ensure three-way justice for the slain, the wounded and the psychologically affected victims and the society at large on one hand; and the perpetrators and their collaborators on the other.

As a former State Commissioner of Police in Nigeria once begged **Intersociety** as follows: ***Please Intersociety, I am calling you because one of your advocacy reports has made my retirement life miserable and unbearable to the extent that all the places I applied for security consultancy jobs abroad and here turned down my request citing your report against me on roadblock extortion when I was a Commissioner in ---State; please how can we can meet so that you can give me a retracting statement;*** so shall we make the service and retirement eras of those perpetrators miserable and nightmarish until they pay heavily for the atrocities the committed in office or while in service.

Signed:

For: Int’l Society for Civil Liberties & the Rule of Law

Emeka Umeagbalasi, Board Chair
Mobile Line/WhatsApp: +2348174090052
Email: botchairman@intersociety-ng.org

Obianuju Joy Igboeli, Esq.
Head, Civil Liberties & Rule of Law Program
Email: igboeliobianuju@gmail.com