

Drop Ruga & Adopt National Policy On Lands & Boundary Adjustments To Address Land Injustices Against The South
(cede Benue, Plateau, Nasarawa, Kwara, Kogi and FCT to the South and create 'indigenous' Fulani States from Borno & Yobe)

---Intersociety Tasks FGN

Onitsha, Eastern Nigeria: 10th July 2019: The **Int'l Society for Civil Liberties & Rule of Law, Intersociety**, is calling on the present Federal Government of Nigeria headed by Retired Major Gen Muhammadu Buhari and Prof Yemi Osinbajo to go beyond the recently announced moratorium on or 'suspension' of the implementation across the country of the controversial "Ruga" or life-threatening Fulani settlement program. The so called "National (Fulani) Livestock Transformation Plan (NLTP)" should also be put off and discontinued. In their stead shall be a new *National Program or Policy on Lands and Boundary Adjustments* so as to address the age long land injustices against the Peoples of Southern Nigeria.

Under the new national action plan or program being recommended, the Government should initiate a process by way of executive sponsored bill to the National Assembly with necessary constitutional amendments to cede the present States of Benue, Plateau, Nasarawa, Kogi, Kwara and FCT to Southern Nigeria. The States above named are originally part of the Forest Region of Nigeria as opposed to others known as the "People of Grassland of Nigeria". The Nigerian Government is further called upon to carve or acquire enough lands from large landmass being held by present States of Borno and Yobe States in the Northeast to serve as new States for 'indigenous' Fulani Populations in Nigeria. All forms of cattle grazing routes southwards and middle belt wards shall be abolished.

The above was the position of the **Int'l Society for Civil Liberties & Rule of Law** in a statement issued today and signed by Lawyers Chinwe Umeche, Head of Democracy & Good Governance Program and Obianuju Joy Igboeli, Head of Civil Liberties & Rule of Law Program and Emeka Umeagbala, a Criminologist & Graduate of Security Studies and Board Chair of **Intersociety**.

Our Position On Ruga & NLTP Controversies: **Intersociety** still strongly holds that the two controversial programs of the Federal Government are a camouflage for the promotion and propagation of radical Islamism (Islamic Jihad); which is an impeachable affront to Sections 10 and 38 of the 1999 Constitution. Although the Government, as expected, has denied the existence of jihadist content or intent in the two controversial programs, but its body language is very evidential and has continued to rubbish such denials. Aside strong suspicion of jihadist content or intent, there is no other convincing reason whatsoever that can justify such naturalistically and nationalistically disastrous and riotous programs.

Rioting and loitering day and night to depopulate and forcefully impose a violent population dominated by violent aliens or illegal immigrants, on the peace loving Peoples of Nigeria southward are totally unheard of at a State actor level in the history of Nigeria. The action of the present Government of Nigeria is also constitutionally impeachable and further threatens the international peace and security under the UN and AU systems. It is a serious derogation beyond any excuse by the Government of Nigeria as it concerns its regional and international peace, security and law obligations.

The worst is the militarist and unilateral approach adopted by the Government; to the extent that the two controversial programs have no form of legislative inputs till date, except through executive fiat and appointive advisory body cementation. Nigerians are also in total darkness as where, how and when billions of naira worth of public funds being used for same was obtained.

More Christians Massacred Despite Ruga & NLTP: The claims by the same Government of striving to find a lasting solution to the armada of butchery perpetrated by the jihadist Fulani herdsmen through the implementation of the two controversial programs also do not hold water, as Fulani jihadist atrocities across the country have continued and escalated without checks. In all these the same Government has continued to turn blind eyes.

Just last two Sundays ago on 30th June 2019, not fewer than 25 Christian worshipers were attacked during their church service in Okokolo Village in Agatu, Benue State, North-Central Nigeria and massacred by the marauding and Government backed Fulani jihadists. No fewer than 750-800 defenseless Christians mostly of old Middle stock have been massacred in the first six months of 2019 or Jan to June by Jihadist Fulani Herdsmen alone. The Buhari and Osinbajo Administration now operate as if its main policy direction is *the cattle republic, colony and policies*. As a matter of fact, the “Ruga” and “NLTP” programs have ushered in a new dark era whereby, the lives of cows or threats to them are now worth more than those of human citizens and their living in Nigeria.

Millions Of IDPs Abandoned For Ruga & NLTP: It is totally unheard of, other than in Nigeria of the Buhari and Osinbajo Administration that a victim population or victims of jihadist Fulani butchery could be so uncared for and abandoned in exchange for Luga and NLTP programs for killer-herdsmen; who, from every indication, are being presidentially red-carpeted and celebrated. It does not matter to the Administration that Nigeria is now home to about three million IDPs, drawn from rampant Boko Haram and Jihadist Fulani attacks; to the extent that many of their houses and lands have been taken over, occupied and renamed by the same Jihadist Fulani attackers.

Southerners Want Land-Justice From The North, Not Ruga & NLTP: Since the present Government of Nigeria has decided to occupy itself with lands and resettlement issues through ‘Fulani Ruga and NLTP’ programs, to the extent they have become so topical or a major policy direction of the Government of the day in Nigeria, **Intersociety** has resolved to present a better idea or task before the Government.

The Government is commended for raising or trying to revisit the land distribution and settlement issues in today’s Nigeria. However, its parochial and mischievous pursuit of same through “Ruga and NLTP” programs is out-rightly or roundly condemned. For too long, the Peoples of the South have been groaning and gnashing their teeth endlessly in pains over the age long *land-injustice* or acutely lopsided land allocation between the North and the South, to the extent that 78% of the country’s landmass or 731,085km² are in the hands of the North, out of the country’s total of 923,952km². The entire South is allocated with only 192,867km². Our idea here therefore is to assist the Federal Government to have it done holistically with human face, inclusiveness, legislative inputs and constitutional amendments.

It must be pointed out that there is acute lopsidedness in the current land allocation to the States, geopolitical zones and regions in Nigeria. The fact that the seventeen States in Southern Nigeria are merely allocated with only 192, 867 square kilometers out of the North’s total of 723, 770 square kilometers excluding the FCT’s 7,315 square kilometers is a geographic and demographic injustice of the highest order. Yet the Buhari and Osinbajo Administration still have the audacity to threaten the same Southern Nigeria to provide “lands for ‘Ruga and NLTP programs for permanent Fulani settlement” in the Nigeria’s Rain Forest Region.

More Lands In Fulani Motherlands Than In Nigeria: From our recent research checks, the entire Nigeria is allocated with or has a total landmass of 923, 952 square kilometers. The Republic of Senegal where the Fulani Population originally hailed (Futa Toro) is measured 196, 839 km² with 2017 international population estimates of 15.8m; which is sixty times more than the size of Lagos State with about 20m population. The Niger Republic where Fulani People operate too has a total landmass of 1,267,000 km² with a 2017 international population estimates of 21.48m; likewise the Republic of Chad, another Fulani root, which has a total landmass of 1,284, 000 km² and a 2017 international population estimates of 14.9m.

Northern Nigeria Controls 731,085km² or 78% Land Allocations: In Nigeria and by its geopolitical zonal landmass, Northeast has the largest landmass of 272,595km² involving: Borno-70,898km², Yobe-45,502km², Taraba-54,473km², Bauchi-45,837km², Adamawa-36, 917km² and Gombe-18,768km². Northeast is followed by North-Central with a total of 235,110km² involving: Niger State-76,363km², Kwara-36,825km², Benue-34,059km², Plateau-30,913km², Kogi-29,833km² and Nasawara-27,117. North-Central is followed by Northwest with a total of 218,271km² involving: Kaduna-46,053km², Zamfara-39,762km², Kebbi-36,800km², Sokoto-25,973km², Katsina-24,192km², Jigawa-23,154km² and Kano-20,131km². The FCT (Abuja) is allocated with 7,315km²; all totaling 731,085km² for the North.

South Shares Only 192, 867km² or 22% Lands In Nigeria: In the Southern part of Nigeria, the entire seventeen States of the Region are allocated with only 192, 867km²; with the largest being the South-south with 84,587km² involving: Cross River-20,156km², Edo-17,802km², Delta-17,698km², Rivers-11,077km², Bayelsa-10, 773km² and Akwa Ibom-7,081km². South-south is followed by Southwest with a total of 79,755km² involving: Oyo-28,454km², Ogun-16,762km², Ondo-15,500km², Osun-9,251, Ekiti-6,353km² and Lagos-3,335km². Southwest is followed by the Southeast with a total of 29,525km² involving: Enugu-7,161km², Abia-6,320km², Ebonyi-5,670km², Imo-5,530km² and Anambra-4,844km²; totaling 192, 867km².

Four States With Largest Landmass: Niger, Borno, Kaduna & Yobe: We have also in the course of the analysis above found Niger, Borno, Kaduna and Yobe States in the Northeast, Northwest and North-Central Nigeria to be the four States with largest landmass in Nigeria. While Niger State has the highest landmass of 76, 363km², Borno is second with 70,898km²; Kaduna and Yobe are third and fourth with 46,053km² and 45,502km² respectively.

More Facts Exposing Ruga & NLTP As Programs With Ulterior Motives: Our study of modern agriculture, geography, ethnography and Nigerian Peoples and Culture in the country have further revealed the following facts: *that Hausa, Kanuri and Fulani Peoples share a lot in common including belonging to Afro-Asiatic larger family of language speakers and its sub-families, that they also have common trait in religion, tradition and culture, that the modern Fulani movement into Nigeria (Niger-Chad route) is majorly done through Borno and Nguru (Yobe State), that it is now out-fashioned and archaic to apply medieval pastoralism or inter-communal or inter-tribal grazing route methods in modern animal husbandry particularly cattle rearing.*

That the modern day animal husbandry is operated using technological and scientific animal husbandry including mechanized sedentary rearing and foliage methods and vet and botanical sciences, that nothing if not jihadism is circumstantially the chief motive behind the retention of the above highlighted obsolete cattle rearing methods in Nigeria heavily backed by the Government of Nigeria, that among the ten largest producers and exporters of cows in the world (excluding Nigeria), none still uses the said out-fashioned methods; that this is more so when the Fulani Herdsmen attacks in the country are no longer seasonal or attributable to quest for animal pasturing and foliage southwards but purely for purpose of violently propagating radical Islamism.

Cede Benue, Plateau, Kwara, Nasarawa, Kogi & FCT To The South: Therefore, the task before the present Federal Government is not the promotion and implementation of 'Ruga' and 'NLPT' programs or 'makeshift suspension of same' or their re-baptism in part or in whole but to initiate constitutional amendments and legislative enactment processes to: cede part of the North, specifically Benue, Plateau, FCT, Nasarawa, Kogi and Kwara back to the South to join their brothers, sisters and ancestors as "the Peoples of the Forest Region or Rain Forest Region of Nigeria" or People of Southern Nigeria.

While the FCT will remain the Capital of Nigeria, but cited as located in "Southern Nigeria", Kwara State should be ceded back to the Southwest. When this is done, it will add additional landmass to the Southern Nigeria and give them a true sense of belongingness. The addition under recommendation will bring the Region's new landmass to 358,969km², after extra 166,102km²; involving Kwara-36,825km², Benue-34,059km², Plateau-30,913, Kogi-29,833km², Nasarawa-27,117km² and FCT-7,315km²; must have been added.

Also as it has been the case before the country's independence in 1960, there shall be "the National Policy on Southern Minorities' Rights Protection" and "the National Policy on Northern Minorities Rights Protection". It must be recalled that one of the main reasons for the enshrinement of "the Fundamental Human Rights" into the 1960 Constitution as recommended by the Willink Minority Rights Commission of 1957 was for the protection of the rights of minorities in Nigeria particularly the rights of 'Southern and Northern Minorities', which included their religious freedoms. While the minorities in the new States ceded to the South will join others as "Southern Minorities" with cementation of their inalienable rights to exist, identity, development and worship, those in the new 'North' will join others there as "Minorities of the North" with same rights fully accorded them.

Creation Of 'Fulani States' & Ors: More States are also needed to be created including new states for 'indigenous Fulani Populations (I.e. those with fore-parents or generations traced to early AD1800s)', to be carved out of Borno and Yobe States (owing to their large lands and identical socio-cultural affinities including language and religion with Fulani People). Just as Bayelsa State presently serves as "Ijo (Ijaw) State" and five Southeast States as "Igbo States" and six Southwest States as "Yoruba States"; two States, to be created from present Borno and Yobe should serve as "Nigeria's indigenous Fulani States". The 'Fulani States when created may be fondly called "Nigeria's Cattle States", just as Ijaw People are fondly called "Nigeria's People of the River".

Boundary Re-Adjustments Must Include Relocation Of Wrongly Carved Away Igbo Communities: In the course of the national boundary adjustments under recommendation, Igbo clans wrongly ceded out of Igbo Land and separated from their ancestral brothers and sisters shall be located and integrated with the home land Igbo Nation or their offshoots such as the mainstream Igala People. Those balkanized Igbo communities include: the Igbo People of Oraeri, Ekpweri (Ekpe-eri) and Igberi (Igbe-eri) in present Kwara State, North Central Nigeria as well as the Igbo People of Isoko and Orogon in Delta State-now "Isokonized" and "Orogonized".

Also found are the Igbo People of Obiaruku (part of it) and Igbanke or Igboakiri in Edo State; Osekwenike, Abuetor and Eke-Okpokiri Igbo communities in Sagbama area of Bayelsa State as well as Igbo people of Ukwuani and Anioma stocks in the same Bayelsa State in South-south of Nigeria. In Cross River State, there are also Isobo Igbo community in Abi Local Government in the State; the birth place of former Governor Liyel Imoke and his wife-Ijeoma, among others.

There are also Igbo Communities of Umuezeakaoha Clan with several villages numbering over 300 located and scattered in Ado, Oju, Obi and Okpoku Local Government Areas of Benue State, North-central Nigeria with over 1million people and large landmass. There are Eke Avurugo, Umuoye (Umuonye), Ubulie, Ozara and Nwajara Igbo Communities in Igalamela, Ibaji and Odudu Local Government Areas of Kogi State, North-central Nigeria.

To actualize these, there is need for creation of "Adada State" from present Enugu to take care of the Igbo People of Benue and Kogi or creation of "Ezeakaoha State" from present Benue and Kogi States to take care of the Igbo People of "Umuezeakaoha", "Eke Avurugo", "Umuoye (Umuonye)", "Ubulie", "Ozara" and "Nwajara" clans, etc in the two States, numbering over 1.5m to 2 million and fraction of others found in Kwara State.

The Igala People of Kogi (mainstream Igala People excluding macro nationalistic others), an offshoot of Igbo, should be given a State called "Igala State"; likewise Anioma Igbo in Delta State which should be given "Anioma State". In Rivers State, "Igweocha State" is needed to be created from present Rivers State. Port Harcourt is originally an Igbo city called "Igweocha". Other smaller Igbo communities like those in Cross River and Bayelsa States (should be joined with the nearest Igbo LGAs located in the mainland Igbo States) and Igboakiri (Igbanke) and part of Obiaruku in Edo States should be joined with those in Delta and those in Kwara joined with those in Kogi State, etc. OHANAEZE Ndigbo, Ekwenche (USA), ADF, Igbo-Biafra movements and Igbo political office holders and intelligentsias should also take note, please!

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